

# NPS' Inaugural Regional Alumni Symposium Highlights Importance of Strong Alliances, Partnerships

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA, USA,  
September 20, 2023 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- With an eye on strengthening the United States' strategic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) brought together more than 100 international graduates for the inaugural NPS Regional Alumni Symposium in Singapore, Sept. 5-7.

The event, hosted by NPS' [International Graduate Programs Office \(IGPO\)](#), was not only a gathering of NPS alumni representing 14 countries from throughout the region, it advanced a key objective of Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro's strategic guidance to strengthen and maintain international alliances and partnerships for maritime advantage. The symposium was sponsored by the Department of State as part of the U.S. International Military Education Training (IMET) program in support of the National Defense Strategy.

"This inaugural gathering in the Indo-Pacific is recognition of the importance of this part of the world, and your significant contributions and role in maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific," said Adm. Sam Paparo, an NPS alumnus and the commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, in a video message to the attendees. "For our area of prime importance in the world, there's only one way to sustain and strengthen the international rules-based order and that's through our friendships, alliances and partnerships."

The Regional Alumni Symposium consisted of three days full of plenary sessions, panels, and a variety of keynote speakers. Presentations covered a range of regional security topics, while NPS



More than 100 Naval Postgraduate School alumni from 14 allied countries gathered in Singapore on Sept. 5-7 for the inaugural NPS Regional Alumni Symposium, highlighting U.S. efforts to strengthen strategic partnerships and alliances in the Indo-Pacific region.

academic leaders provided updates on current research in emerging technologies at the NPS campus in Monterey.

More than that, however, the symposium also afforded an opportunity for NPS to re-engage with its former students.

“Staying involved with our international alumni has always been important because the relationships that are forged during the intensive study at the Naval Postgraduate School are important for the United States in terms of national security and are important for our friends, allies and partners,” said Danial Pick, director of IGPO. “Keeping those relationships strong and rejuvenating those relationships is what we're doing here in Singapore, and it's why alumni events matter.

“Training international officers at U.S. military schools is important,” continued Pick. “Educating officers for long periods of time in an intensive, elite, graduate-level institution like NPS is very unique, and it forms an impression on our international partners that lasts a lifetime.”

In addition to the in-depth discussions on a variety of regional security subjects, alumni also appreciated the opportunity to interact with classmates and professors while also building new relationships.

“I'm very, very happy and thankful for NPS hosting this inaugural symposium for the alumni,” said Philippine Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Arturo Rojas, the new Commandant of the Philippine Marine Corps. “This is a chance for us to meet all other alumni from other countries in the Indo-Pacific and we are very excited for all the things we will do together in the future.”

Rojas and four other international graduates were honored during the symposium with the NPS Distinguished Alumni Award, which recognizes NPS graduates who have made professional achievements which reflect great credit on the recipient and NPS. The other recipients were former Timor-Leste Ambassador to Cuba Mr. Loro Horta, Royal Thai Army Lt. Gen. Wiphusana Klaimanee, Sri Lankan Army Maj. Gen. Nishantha Manage and Singapore Army Col. Ong Cher Howe.

“NPS had a significant impact on my career,” Howe said. “I am in charge of systems integration for the whole Singapore Army. My education has allowed me to have meaningful conversations with my civilian counterparts at science and technology agencies in buying our weapons systems.”

Group photograph of attendees at Naval Postgraduate School Regional Alumni Symposium in Singapore. More than 100 Naval Postgraduate School alumni from 14 allied countries gathered in Singapore on Sept. 5-7 for the inaugural NPS Regional Alumni Symposium, highlighting U.S. efforts to strengthen strategic partnerships and alliances in the Indo-Pacific region.

The U.S. Embassy in Singapore was a key partner in enabling the symposium as a defense security cooperation initiative, providing support for country access and in-country assistance to the NPS team. In addition, one U.S. Embassy staff member and NPS graduate, U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Jennifer Giles, took advantage of the opportunity to attend.

“As an alumna, I’m part of the extensive network of security-minded professionals across the globe,” said Giles, a foreign area officer who serves as the embassy’s Marine Attaché. “We focus on the art and the science of warfare. We have the opportunity to think, to study, to learn, and then eventually to advocate for security cooperation’s in old and new ways. This allows us to be better together.”

For NPS Provost Dr. Scott Gartner, one of the best parts of the symposium was the opportunity to hear from alumni and their experiences while attending NPS.

“It’s the best seeing students that graduated years ago now serving their countries and seeing the smiles on their faces and the warmth with which they recall Monterey,” said Gartner. “There’s nothing better. It warms my heart. And this symposium, frankly, is a great opportunity for us to be able to witness those kinds of experiences.

Gartner added: “We often say at the Naval Postgraduate School that our students are our magic, our ‘secret sauce,’ what makes us special. And it’s 100 percent true. That also means that our alumni leaders are also magic. They’re also special. And what we’re doing here is engaging that magic, engaging our alumni leaders, learning about what works for them from NPS and what they need, learning about where they’re going, their views on the region. It’s been an awesome and wonderful experience.”

By the end of the symposium, all participants were grateful for the opportunity to reunite with professors, classmates and each other, learn from experts, and recommit themselves to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

“Allied countries select and send their very best to study at NPS,” said retired Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau, president of NPS. “The symposium was about building on what they learned, sharing current challenges and strengthening partnerships and our commitment to solve common problems together.”

The Naval Postgraduate School provides defense-focused graduate education, including classified studies and interdisciplinary research, to advance the operational effectiveness, technological leadership and warfighting advantage of the Naval service. For additional information, visit NPS online at <https://nps.edu>.

Watch a recap of the Regional Alumni Symposium: <https://youtu.be/hkDm5JvGmZg>

Lt. Cmdr. Ed Early

Naval Postgraduate School

+1 831-656-3567

PAO@nps.edu

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/656712942>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.