

# INDOPACOM Commander Visits NPS, Discusses Strategic Challenges, Technological Innovation

*In his address to the Naval Postgraduate School, U.S. Navy Adm. Sam Paparo highlighted Indo-Pacific challenges and how defense education can help solve them.*

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Adm. Samuel Paparo, commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), visited the [Naval Postgraduate School](#) (NPS) to hear updates from students, faculty, and leadership on priority research efforts, and address the command in the latest [Secretary of the Navy Guest Lecture](#) (SGL), on the security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region, and highlighted the critical role NPS plays in developing military leaders and warfighting solutions, Dec. 10.



U.S. Navy Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), discusses education, technological advancement and its importance at the Naval Postgraduate School.

An NPS graduate, Paparo's day began with updates on relevant research efforts from faculty and students in briefings and poster sessions addressing the unique needs of the Indo-Pacific region, including logistics and force design.

"This was a great opportunity to discuss real-world applications touching both defense management and operations research that will have immediate and lasting impact for INDOPACOM," said Harrison Schramm, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Defense Management who is leading a project addressing joint force sustainment. "We are leveraging the intersection of student operational experience, practitioners, and industry to assist with scaled implementation."

Prior to his guest lecture, Paparo engaged with students at a research poster session. Included

were U.S. Navy Lt. Jordan Whittle and U.S. Navy Lt. Adam Summers, who both graduate this December. They presented their capstone/thesis work titled "Unmanned Flotillas: A Cost-Effectiveness Analysis for Sea Denial Operations," which won the Surface Navy Association award for academic excellence.

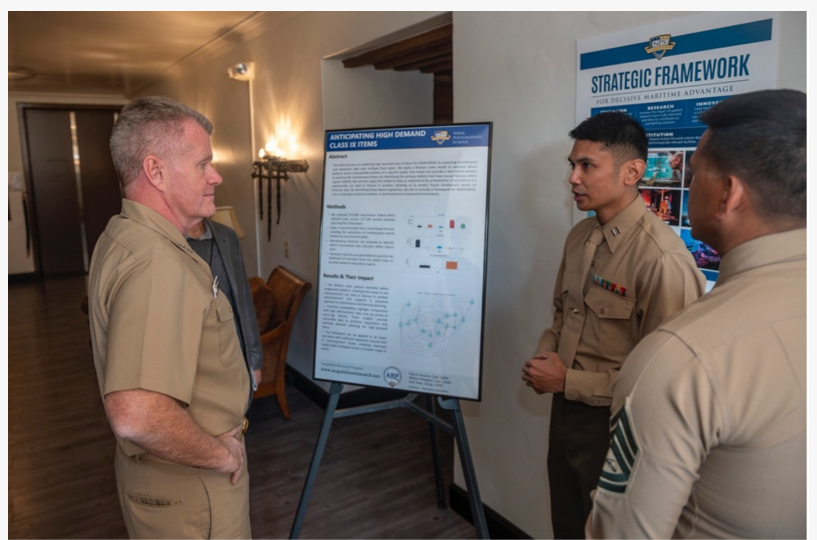
"Our classified thesis gave us a chance to apply what we learned to real-world operational needs," said Whittle. "The opportunity to share our solution directly with Admiral Paparo was something Adam and I did not expect, but it went very well."

"For both of us that was our first time briefing a four-star Admiral," Summers added. "When we shared the nature and sponsor of our research, he asked us to send him our completed thesis. He is in receipt of our work."

Following the poster session was the SGL with more than 1,300 students, faculty, and staff in attendance to hear from Paparo, who leads all U.S. military operations across the vast Indo-Pacific covering 36 nations, 14 time zones, and 60 percent of the world's population.

During the guest lecture, he stressed the importance of the region where nearly a third of global trade passes through the South China Sea. With seventy percent of U.S. Joint Forces under his command, Paparo expressed the magnitude of the challenge emphasizing technological superiority to counter threats from regional adversaries and conveyed a sense of urgency to the NPS community assembled.

Paparo also emphasized the transformative role of technology in modern conflict. He explained that future wars will be won by those who can "see, understand, decide, and act faster,"



U.S. Navy Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), discusses student applied research solutions at the Naval Postgraduate School.



During his address at the Naval Postgraduate School, U.S. Navy Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) highlighted challenges and the role of education and research to drive innovative solutions.

underscoring the necessity of integrating artificial intelligence (AI), electronic warfare, and space operations into military strategies, and “finding ways to combine AI tools and human decision making that deliver a decision advantage.”

“The information age will not replace the industrial age, it will accelerate it,” he said, underlining the critical importance of combining knowledge tools with precision effects in order to maintain a strategic edge.

He also highlighted the vital role that institutions like NPS play in preparing future leaders to navigate this rapidly changing landscape. He recognized the school’s proximity to Silicon Valley, praised its pioneering history, and its continued focus on technical research, noting these as key assets for advancing defense innovation.

“We must have elite institutions that are focused on defense problems, and this is why the Naval Postgraduate School was started in the first place,” said Paparo. “I can clearly see the importance of NPS today. First, its students have a unique understanding of warfare, second is its geography in such close proximity to the hub of innovation for the world, and third you are in the Pacific – where I need you most.”

Paparo urged students and faculty to continue driving innovation and discussed how collaboration with the private sector can accelerate technological advancements.

“NPS is one of the elite schools of this country,” Paparo noted. “America needs elite, highly technical institutions that are executing research and development at the zenith of science to address our unique defense problems.”

Following the lecture, students asked their own questions on the daily challenges he faces in INDOPACOM as well as in the DOD. In response to a question on why the U.S. private sector has outpaced DOD in technological innovation, Paparo emphasized the importance of partnerships between the military and industry, noting NPS’ comparative advantages and collaborations with tech leaders that will be crucial in closing this gap.

He was also asked about the significance of unmanned systems in modern warfare, citing their expendability and innovative potential. Paparo made the point that autonomous, unmanned,



After his address at the Naval Postgraduate School, U.S. Navy Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) answered questions from students, faculty and staff.

weaponized drones have been a feature of the U.S. arsenal for decades, citing the Tomahawk cruise missile from 1980's, and noted the difference today is low cost and diffusion of the technology.

"The value in drones is their lack of value," Paparo said. "I don't want to send a human being to do something that an unmanned aerial vehicle can do. But the weak link in drone warfare today is the network that it's acting on. Every night they learn this in Ukraine. Every night they're putting drones out, and every night they're switching up their network. I believe electronic warfare is the next level of overmatch, and I favor AI for use in this way."

Concluding his remarks, Paparo gave a sobering reflection on potential impact of modern conflict in the Indo-Pacific, stressing that deterrence remains America's highest duty. He reaffirmed the importance of strength, readiness, and alliances in securing peace. Paparo's visit underscored the essential role of defense education and research at institutions like NPS to develop tech-savvy, decisive military leaders, while driving [relevant innovation with industry partners](#) to meet the complex security challenges of the 21st century.

"This institution [NPS] is important to the Navy, the United States of America and the world. I saw some great capstone thesis projects today, and it just made me beam with pride about the level of thinking that's going on here. So, I'm proud to be your teammate."

Watch Adm. Paparo's guest lecture at NPS: <https://youtu.be/FD8A2Fr5OAY>

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