

REMARKS AT HONOR COIN CEREMONY BY CAPTAIN JIM CAMPBELL, USN (Ret)

July 15, 2019 – Alumni Hall, U.S. Naval Academy

Good evening, Class of 2023. Take your seats please.

Training Day 19 – drinking from the firehose is probably an understatement describing your experience thus far. However, well done thus far! On behalf of the members of the Class of 1973, we commend you for making a choice to serve in such uncertain times. I also would like to thank my classmates for their trust in affording me the privilege to represent them tonight for this special event.

After your induction, tonight is another of many special events that our class will share with you over the next four years and as you see, we have a pretty large contingent tonight to participate in the Honor Coin presentation and are privileged to have one of our flag officers in attendance tonight, LT General Kramlich. Thank you for your support tonight.

In addition to your classroom lessons, you have heard Major Joe Fay, an Iraq veteran and CDR Kirk Lippold, former Commanding Officer of the USS Cole speaking on honor and character. You were introduced to J.P. Blecksmith, Travis Manion, Brendan Looney, Mel Williams and Leslie Nicole Smith, the officers and crew of the USS Cole and specifically the Cole's Navigator and hopefully by now you have read and discussed A Message to Garcia with your detailers. And shortly, as you continue your classroom discussions, you will have a specific lesson on Honor. That is a lot to take in – so tonight our goal is to talk briefly about the coin and leave you with some thoughts in an attempt to bring some of this together for you.

The coin - Each coin provided to an incoming class is unique and has significance in its design. All coins have the Naval Academy Crest and the core values – Honor, Courage and Commitment. The flip sides however are unique. The ship is the USS Constitution. You had your naval heritage brief recently so there will be no history lesson other than to state that the Constitution, Old Ironsides, was one of the first six frigates authorized by President Washington in 1797 to create the United States Navy. She fought with honor in the Barbary Wars in the early 1800s and most notably in the War of 1812 where she earned the nickname Old Ironsides and also served as a training ship at the Naval Academy during the Civil War. A side note, the Class of 1973 Battle Arch at the stadium pays tribute to these conflicts and the participation of the USS Constitution. The Constitution is a symbol of our maritime heritage but more importantly underscores those values of honor, courage and commitment for both our Navy and by extension, our country.

The phrase, Non Sibi, as you know, means Not for Self (the full phrase is inscribed over the Chapel doors). This concept is one that we adopted as our class motto and that each of our 888 classmates have worked hard to epitomize over the past 46 years. If I may, I would like to acknowledge one of our classmates who is unable to be here this

evening. He very much wanted to join us but he is bed-ridden with ALS- Lou Gehrig's disease. Bob Wakefield, as part of our coin committee was adamant about including these words as they are the backbone of not only our class but also our profession. Thank you, Bob!

Now, once received you can do several things with this coin which you understand parallels what you can also do with your character and honor - you can lose it because you did not take care of it or you may decide, at some point in time, to toss it – get rid of it. This will happen to some of you, sadly. As you will learn this option is difficult from which to recover.

You may also give the coin to your parents or someone else for safe keeping – a nice idea but you cannot transfer your honor or character to anyone else – these are yours and yours alone, as are your actions which define you. As CDR Lippold emphasized – your actions are yours – you must own them.

Finally, what we hope you will do with this coin is to keep it handy – with you, if possible. We know that white works have only one pocket – so keep it in your desk or on a closet shelf if your detailers allow for now but have it somewhere that it can remind you daily of the values to which you are committed.

One important note - we are very aware that not all of you will complete this journey – you will leave either voluntarily or involuntarily. However, the concept of this coin and what it represents is applicable in whatever walk of life you choose. Keep the coin with you.

We want to share one more story and then tie the points presented over the past couple of weeks together. Most, if not all, of you have never heard of John Scolinos – for 5 decades he was a collegiate coach most notably in baseball. He was known by fellow coaches and players not only for his baseball wisdom but his wisdom for life. At one coach's conference John came on stage to speak with home plate hanging around his neck – yes a real home plate. Home plate is 17 inches wide and if you can't throw the ball over the 17 inches – what happens – does the plate widen? Nope – you find a different position or maybe sport but the plate is not widened for you. His question to the coaches – what do they do when their best player violates the rules – is he held accountable or do they change the rules or lower the standard – do they widen the plate? John's message is clear – hold the standard – keep the plate at 17 inches and for the Class of 2023 – hold yourselves accountable to the standards that are set.

In closing, Major Fay gave you a Rule of Thumb – impress these guys up there – what is it? If not me, then who? Great starting point when deciding what to do. To follow with the thoughts of CDR Lippold and John Scolinos – develop your standards for your character and don't widen the plate – hold yourself accountable for those standards –

and set them high. Finally, decisions resulting from these two thoughts will be difficult – the hard right - and may cost you and may cost you dearly. However, in our profession – it is not about us – Non Sibi.

Remember – your character is what you develop and honor is what is bestowed on you based on your character as seen in your choices and actions.

Our submission for the Class of 2023 is when you grab that coin and think of these concepts you are on a solid path to leadership – but it is up to you.

The Class of 1973 wishes you well and we look forward to the next four years as we travel this road with you. Thank you – Non Sibi and Go Navy, Beat Army!