



# National President's 2020 Guidance

*I am convinced now more than ever that the Navy League of the United States is the most influential nonprofit maritime advocacy, education and support organization in the world. We are the smartest, most respected and capable people any organization can hope to have. With our remarkable Navy League volunteers, we can all feel confident that we will remain a force of influence for our American sea services for many years to come.*

— William A. Stevenson III

## **Priority Focus Areas**



**Communication**



**Member Recruitment and Retention**



**Future Leaders and Mentoring**



**Training**



**Unit Adoption/  
Ships Commissioning**



**Sea Cadets**



**Mission and Vision/Core Values/  
Diversity and Inclusion  
Statements**

## ORIENTATION AND INTENT

On May 11, 2020, volunteer leadership established an ad hoc committee for strategic planning. This committee asked our volunteers to share with us the areas where they felt the Navy League should focus its efforts to better enable our members in the field to carry out the mission of the organization. Specifically, this process was designed to be for the field, by the field. The National President's 2020 Guidance provides the Navy League with an unambiguous strategic direction in the areas that are most in need of attention. The committee is confident that our members would agree that it is not possible to simultaneously work on the different areas that require our consideration.

When everything is a priority, nothing is a priority. To that point, as the ad hoc committee went through the process of developing a strategic plan, we came to realize that the Navy League would be better served not by a long and detailed strategic paper, but by a relatively short and concise document that could be plainly understood and executed on by every member of the Navy League. For this reason, we decided to develop the National President's 2020 Guidance.

National headquarters has also developed a strategy document that fully supports the accomplishments in this guidance. We are grateful for everyone's input and for the time spent by the ad hoc committee in reviewing this information, providing their recommendations that led to the creation this document.



## COMMUNICATIONS

### General Overview

Members of the Navy League have voiced their concerns in the area of communications.

It has been true since the beginning of time that institutional communications are almost always a challenge for any medium or large organization. Determining who communicates, how they communicate, what they communicate and the periodicity in which they communicate are all important elements to well-informed membership.

### Current Processes and Tools Used to Communicate

- *Seapower* magazine
- *Seapower* online
- Navy League social media sites
- Anchor Up newsletter
- Connections newsletter
- Navy League website calendar
- National president's email messages
- Executive Committee meetings
- Annual National Convention
- Annual board meeting
- Region presidents committee meetings
- Region meetings
- Council meetings
- Council websites
- Council social media sites
- Various committee meetings

### Member Guidance

#### Communications Flow

To ensure effective communication, council presidents should:

- Present issues and information first to the area president or the region president when an area president is unavailable.
- The region president should then communicate information to the national president or headquarters as required.

#### Region Presidents Meeting

The national president and national executive director should participate in the monthly region presidents meetings to provide updates on the overall status of the Navy League and any major initiatives that are being considered or are underway.

#### Information Sharing

Region presidents should frequently communicate with area presidents to share information and check on overall well-being of the area. Information from these discussions should be shared with the region president committee chair. As required, the region president committee chair should share any relevant information with the national president. Likewise, area presidents should frequently communicate with council presidents to share information and check on the overall well-being of the council. This information should then be communicated back to the region presidents.

# MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

## General Overview

It is the consensus of Navy League membership across the organization that recruitment and retention has become extraordinarily problematic. If the organization does not resolve this issue, the future of our institution is at great risk. Membership recruitment and retention requires a multi-pronged approach. Both Navy League membership and headquarters staff will play a critical role in this effort.

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## Member Guidance

### Collaboration

Develop a two-part collaborative strategy for marketing and soliciting new members:

- Headquarters will serve as the resource provider for national marketing campaigns. More specifically, marketing campaigns need to be developed for programs, such as active duty, military spouse, diversity and standard membership, for example.
- Members should serve as face-to-face communicators who make contact and complete the onboarding process with new members who have signed up through the national marketing campaign.

### Best Practices

To assist in improving retention, region presidents should ask councils who have a successful retention program to provide an outline on what they are doing to retain members, so it can be shared across the Navy League. If this initiative is to be successful, it will require a reasonable amount of information sharing, interaction and recommendations by the region presidents.

### Sense of Purpose

Retention and engagement will largely rest on individual councils and their ability to connect with council members through meaningful activities that provide them with a sense of purpose. Councils should be open to networking and connecting with other councils that were successful in membership retention. A well-designed succession and membership advancement program are important for council retention.



# FUTURE LEADERS AND MENTORING

## General Overview

No organization can be successful without good leaders. It is important to recognize future talent early and provide these individuals with opportunities to grow and develop into senior leaders of the Navy League. It is the opinion of the Navy League membership that we need to invest more heavily in leadership mentoring.

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## Member Guidance

### Program Development

The Navy League shall develop a clear program that will better assist in identifying, mentoring and training individual council members for council leadership roles. This process should motivate, educate and prepare members for future growth within their councils. This program should also have processes in place that develop and promote council leaders into region leadership positions and then into national leadership roles.

## TRAINING

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### General Overview

Many of our members have communicated their inability to find or access information pertaining to council resources. These members have also stated that they do not have a clear understanding of all national programs associated with the Navy League or where to find this information. Members have also expressed their concerns with requirements and information contained in the operations manual and bylaws.

### Member Guidance

#### Website

The Navy League will support its membership with a website that will sit on a platform that is far simpler to navigate and more intuitive for the user. The new site will house the various national programs and a shared portal in such a way that members will be able to easily navigate and access required information.

#### Participation

The Navy League will reinforce the need for experienced volunteers to participate in and assist in conducting training, which will provide meaningful information communicated by subject matter experts. Subjects will cover field-focused information.

## UNIT ADOPTION/SHIPS COMMISSIONING

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### General Overview

Councils who are active in unit adoptions and ships commissioning typically have members with a greater sense of purpose that are more engaged. A byproduct of this program is also greater retention of existing members and encouragement for new members to join the Navy League.

### Member Guidance

#### Focus

Region and area presidents should work with councils to provide greater focus on the importance and benefits of this program and outline ways to make it a more focused initiative.



## SEA CADETS

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### General Overview

The Navy League and the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps have a strong and meaningful bond. Both organizations have a vested interest in supporting, educating and training America's youth on the significance of a powerful and viable maritime force. It is important that this robust relationship between the Navy League and the Sea Cadets continues to thrive.

### Member Guidance

#### New Opportunities

We must explore and seize opportunities where Navy League councils and Sea Cadet units can come together as partners in support of America's youth and our sea services.

#### Engagement

Additionally, we must develop a collaborative initiative to encourage graduating Sea Cadets and their families to remain engaged as volunteers and become new members of the Navy League.

## MISSION AND VISION/CORE VALUES/DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENTS

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### General Overview

Currently the Navy League has a mission and vision statement. The Navy League does not have a core values or diversity and inclusion statement. It is important for any organization to clearly and succinctly understand its purpose, positions and direction through these statements.

*We are stronger, more effective and more innovative when our organization reflects the rich diversity of our nation that fosters respect, dignity and equal opportunity.*

A mission and vision statement should be periodically reviewed to ensure it remains relevant for its time. Core values define what an organization believes in and stands for. A diversity and inclusion statement communicates the organization's beliefs and reasons for providing an environment of dignity and respect along with fair and equal opportunities for everyone.

We are stronger, more effective and more innovative when our organization reflects the rich diversity of our nation that fosters respect, dignity and equal opportunity. We must continue to increase cultural collaboration and understanding, broaden our community outreach, and strengthen our organizational support infrastructure now and in the future.

Diversity should include all the different characteristics and attributes of our culture and be reflective of not only the sea services we support and advocate for but also for the nation. These diverse backgrounds, experiences and ways of thinking are essential to optimal performance within the Navy League. Leveraging diversity ensures we maintain our competitive advantage and adaptability.

## Member Guidance

### Input

Leadership should seek input from membership for recommendations on mission and vision, community outreach, core values, and diversity and inclusion statements.

### Develop

The Navy League should review, develop and update these statements to ensure they are relevant and speak to the importance of their meaning.

## SUMMARY

Focusing on these priority areas will enhance the cohesion and collaboration between all Navy League members. Though not all-encompassing, this document provides a clear focus on today's seven most relevant areas to our future success.

To accomplish this, we will:

- Implement a chain of communication with Navy League leadership, with region presidents providing the communication, support and training to council and area presidents and executive leadership providing information to region presidents to pass along to council and area presidents.
- Develop a new website that will provide better navigation for resources and a platform for councils to collaborate and share information.
- Create greater opportunities for member retention and new memberships through continued education on unit adoption and ship commissioning.
- Maintain a strong alliance with the Sea Cadets and continue looking for new opportunities to collaborate together.
- Create and implement unified core values and diversity and inclusion statements that will coincide with our mission and vision.



William A. Stevenson III  
National President  
Navy League of the United States



*It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.*

— President Theodore Roosevelt



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