

New Leadership Takes Helm of Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps

From JAG Corps Public Affairs

This past year, the Navy JAG Corps welcomed all new leaders at the top of our global law firm, including Vice Adm. Nanette M. DeRenzi, Rear Adm. James W. Crawford, III, Rear Adm. Janet R. Donovan, Master Chief Legalman Karen Colaiacovo and Master Chief Legalman Paul St. Sauver.

"The Navy and the JAG Corps could not ask for a better team of qualified officers and proven leaders to guide our Corps into the future," said Vice Adm. James W. Houck, the former Judge Advocate General of the Navy.

DeRenzi became the 42nd Judge Advocate General of the Navy during a ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard July 20. She had previously served as the Deputy Judge Advocate General and Commander, Naval Legal Service Command. DeRenzi will serve as the Navy JAG for three years.

"Today is a day for the men and women of the JAG Corps to recommit ourselves to service, to each other, and to those we serve," said DeRenzi during the ceremony. "Some may look back and long for the time when resources were abundant and challenges were traditional and predictable. Not me. This is our time and we will embrace the challenges that come with it."

During the same ceremony, Crawford became the Deputy Judge Advocate General and Commander, Naval Legal Service Command. He previously served as Commander, Rule of Law Field Force-Afghanistan.

"It is a distinct honor to be standing here today. I'm mindful of the honor bestowed upon me today and trust given" said Crawford during the ceremony. "[Trust] is the belief in two old fashion qualities - consistency and integrity. It is these two words that will guide me as I begin my watch today."

In November 2012, Donovan assumed her new duties as Deputy Judge Advocate General (Reserve Affairs and Operations). Donovan has served in a variety of active duty, reserve duty, and active duty for special work assignments. She most recently served as the Navy Reserve Law Program Manager and Force Judge Advocate on the staff of Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command.

"The Navy legal community is privileged to have the

benefit of Rear Adm. Donovan's talent and experience to fill this important position," said DeRenzi.

St. Sauver took the reins as the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Judge Advocate General of the Navy and Command Master Chief, Naval Legal Service Command following a July 2 ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard.

"Master Chief St. Sauver is uniquely qualified to lead the legalman community into the future," said Houck. "[He] knows the Navy and the JAG Corps community. Most importantly, he knows legalmen. He is a leader who will help us continue to shape the future of the legalman community."

Colaiacovo became the Command Master Chief for the reserve component JAG Law Program in December 2012.

"Master Chief Colaiacovo is the best-qualified candidate to build upon the past accomplishments of the Reserve Legalman program," said Rear Adm. Steven M. Talson, the former Deputy Judge Advocate General (Reserve Affairs and Operations) and Deputy Commander, Naval Legal Service Command. "She brings 28 years of experience to the job, including both sea and shore operational time. While on active duty, she served three years aboard USS Cape Cod (AD-43) and more recently, deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan for a year as an individual augmentee with the Third Naval Construction Regiment."

Also this year, the JAG Corps said farewell to Houck, Talson, Master Chief Legalman Jeffery N. Luthi, and Master Chief Legalman Christopher J. Browning.

During these leaders' tenures, the Corps provided counsel on a number of important issues, including the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," Military Commissions,

protection of navigational rights and freedoms, combating sexual assault, and support to Wounded, Ill, and Injured Sailors and Marines.

Houck retired after 32 years of service during a traditional change of office ceremony, presided over by the Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert, in July 2012.

"As his deputy JAG, I had the privilege of working with Vice Adm. Houck every day," said DeRenzi during the change

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-- Vice Adm. Nanette DeRenzi,
Judge Advocate General



Vice Adm. Nanette M. DeRenzi assumed the office of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy from Vice Adm. James W. Houck after he retired from the position. Rear Adm. James W. Crawford, III relieved DeRenzi as the Deputy Judge Advocate General of the Navy and assumed command of Naval Legal Service Command. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Peter D. Lawlor)

of office ceremony. “He was the most visionary leader the JAG Corps has ever known. He understood the changing nature of warfare, the world’s politics, and the law. He was a man of tremendous ambition - not for himself, but for the organization he led. He recognized that each member of the JAG Corps community provides a vital service, linked directly to the success of our Navy and Nation. He worked tirelessly to ensure that we had the right people, the right training, and the best processes to deliver superb legal solutions to our clients wherever and whenever they needed us.”

After 32 years, Talson retired from the Navy during a formal ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard in November 2012. He spent more than seven years on active duty, followed by 25 years of Reserve service.

“Admiral Talson’s future vision of the Reserve forces was essential during our JAG Corps realignment and improved the seamless integration of the Reserves’ support to the active duty,” said DeRenzi.

Browning retired after more than 25 years of service in the Navy. He most recently served as the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Judge Advocate General of the Navy and Command Master Chief, Naval Legal Service Command.

“As the senior enlisted advisor for our community, Master Chief Browning demonstrated unparalleled strategic vision and leadership,” said Houck. “His direct involvement in the day-to-day operations of the legalman community positively impacted recruitment, training, integration, and operational support.”

Luthi spent more than 20 years in the Reserves, the last four as Reserve Command Master Chief.

“Master Chief Luthi worked tirelessly throughout his entire career to take care of Sailors and the JAG Corps,” said Talson. “Through his leadership of the reserve component – Master Chief provided wise guidance and hands-on assistance to make sure we were best serving our clients.”

The Judge Advocate General of the Navy provides legal and policy advice to the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations on all legal matters from military justice to environmental law. The Judge Advocate General also directs a worldwide law firm of more than 2,300 attorneys, paralegals and support staff.

Naval Legal Service Command provides prosecution, defense, personal representation, legal assistance, and other command services to shore and afloat commands throughout the world. 🌐