

MILITARY news & notes

Online Community For Navy Families

(NAPSA)—When young men or women consider the military as a career choice, oftentimes parents aren't sure what to think or say. They may feel they have no one to speak with on a peer-to-peer basis on military life.

Fortunately, the United States Navy has a solution: straight talk and honest answers—not from a recruiter, but from the parents and family members of Sailors and officers currently serving in the Navy.

In March 2008, Navy Recruiting Command launched NAVY ForMoms.com, an online community made up of folks with loved ones both in and thinking about joining the Navy.

With over 10,000 members and growing, the Web site enables anyone looking for candid answers about the Navy to join the community, post questions and receive straightforward answers from members who convey their firsthand experiences. "I'm so thrilled I found this site," NAVYForMoms.com member "Del El Bor" from California posted on the Web site's message board. She has two sons thinking about joining the Navy. "I don't feel like an outsider anymore but as a member of this NAVYForMoms.com family."

Additionally, members of the site—who include moms, dads, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends—are using it as a source of strength and support in times of uncertainty. Many also show their pride in their Sailors by posting pictures of them at their graduation ceremonies and other memorable moments.

Sue Schouten of Albany, N.Y., joined the site in support of her son, Joe, who is serving as a computer network defense expert.

"NAVYForMoms.com has grown into an incredible sisterhood filled with pride for our Sailors," she



Navy parents and those with children who are considering enlisting can now get answers from other moms and dads.

says. "The site has been a great support for me and it's a treat to connect with moms across the country who are going through the same experiences as I am."

Members have formed more than 500 groups on the Web site, including "Boot Camp Moms" and a "Moms' Cookbook" group complete with recipes for worry-free food that can be prepared and easily shipped to Sailors around the world without fear of it spoiling.

Moms enjoy chatting with each other online as well as blogging.

Many members organize offline events and initiatives to show their Navy pride and travel locally and even across the country to meet with friends they've met online. Members have also walked in local parades and have participated in community service projects together in honor of their Sailors.

"NAVYForMoms.com has enabled many strong friendships and support groups to develop while providing an online gathering spot where potential Navy parents and current Navy moms can access information," said Rear Adm. Robin Braun, deputy commander, Navy Recruiting Command. For more information, visit www.NAVYForMoms.com.