

USS HOPPER (DDG 70)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

USS HOPPER Demonstrates Ship Life to DOD Civilian Employees.

ONBOARD USS HOPPER (DDG 70) – The Pearl Harbor, HI, based Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS HOPPER (DDG 70), went to sea on Friday, 5 December, to showcase the capabilities of a Surface Ship to a group of 67 Federal Government Employees.

The group was the 2009 class of the Executive Leadership Development Program (ELDP), a 10-month long leadership seminar that travels during one week per month to expose class members to different aspects of military service and government affairs. The group spent an entire week in Hawaii with all branches of service. They did “PT” with the Navy Seals, completed the obstacle course on Kaneohe Marine Corps Base, trained at Schofield Barracks, and toured many joint- and single-service commands.

As the representative for the surface fleet, HOPPER made efforts to expose the ELDP class to the extensive array of Naval capabilities. Individual teams of students were assigned two tour guides, who ushered the guests through different activities and displays in the morning and offered in-depth tours of the ship in the afternoon.

From the bridge to the engine rooms, the guests were able to explore and ask questions of their tour guides and watchstanders. As guests walked through the ship and met Sailors of all rates and ranks, they were exposed to every asset of working on a ship. “When talking to the watchstanders, pride was distinctive!” said guest Jeffrey Darrow, civilian employee of U.S. Army.

The goal of the ELDP curriculum is for the students to understand how decisions made by one agency or department affect others in related departments or commands. By expanding the experiences and exposing the decision makers to every aspect of Federal Government operations, students see how their actions and decisions fit into the big picture.

“Our goal was to include the students at every opportunity to give them the widest exposure to what we do at sea,” said Cmdr. Timothy Kott, Commanding Officer, USS Hopper. “We wanted to promote the hands-on spirit of the ELDP, so we sent them to the engine rooms, let them take the helm, and demonstrated the mighty firepower of our warship.”

As the ship departed Pearl Harbor, the students observed line handlers and were given a first-class tour of the Harbor memorials, as only seen from the water. Once in open water, the ship conducted a man overboard drill and used a RHIB to recover “Oscar,” the dummy that was thrown overboard. One

person in the group was even momentarily made part of the Seamanship Training Team and allowed to throw the dummy over the side to start the drill.

The day continued with a 25MM gun firing demonstration, live hose handling training, medical displays, and small arms and crew served weapons training. As the day progressed and the groups explored more of the ship, they were increasingly impressed with the complexity of surface ship operations.

Guests were also able to watch Hopper's flight crew conduct Deck Landing Qualifications (DLQs) with a United States Coast Guard helicopter. The guests lined the rails of the O-2 level to watch as the tour guides explained the danger in conducting flight quarters and the safety precautions and Damage Control capabilities that make the evolution routinely safe. "This is intense!" said Ian Toman, U.S. Army Civilian, of the operations and drills that he had seen at sea.

The day was excellent training for the crew as they prepare to deploy in January, but it also struck a much deeper cord. "Their enthusiasm for what we do was contagious," said Fire Controllman First Class Phillip Coots, one of 11 tour guides. "What we often dismiss as routine, such as flight quarters, was so impressive to them. The day spent showing off our capabilities reminded me how cool my job really is."

"You just can't beat the value of the class and this experience," said Christopher Lindley, of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. "I can see how HOPPER puts into action the guidance our office writes, which makes my job more rewarding."

Through intense, hand-on field experience, the ELDP participants experience first hand the many challenges that our Components face in carrying out the mission of the Department. HOPPER was honored to host the ELDP class and expose them to life as a surface warrior.

"Spending the day at sea is such an amazing experience," said Toman. "I'll never forget this!"

Hopper is a Middle Pacific Surface Combatant, capable of multi-mission warfare. For more information on Hopper, please visit <http://www.hopper.navy.mil>