



July 11, 2012

Anderson, part of NAVAIR's next generation of leaders, learns life lessons through NLDP's continuous process improvement track



Karrie Anderson, a NAVAIR instructional systems specialist, credits the NAVAIR Leadership Development Program with giving her the confidence and courage to lead. The program serves as NAVAIR's flagship developmental program, blending critical leadership learning with vital productivity skills to better prepare civilian and military employees for future leadership roles (U.S. Navy photo).

NAVAIR Leadership Development Program (NLDP) Spotlight

NAVAL AIR WARFARE CENTER TRAINING SYSTEMS DIVISION, ORLANDO, Fla. — Karrie Anderson cites NAVAIR's Leadership Development Program as the reason she continues to work for NAVAIR.

"I crave the information and treasure the relationships that I have made during this program, and it is important to me that I finish," she said.

Anderson, who has worked for NAVAIR for three years, began the program in November 2010 and plans to graduate this October.

The NAVAIR Leadership Development Program (NLDP), established in 2005, is the command's flagship leadership program, designed for high performing mid- to senior-grade NAVAIR employees with demonstrated leadership



July 11, 2012

Anderson, part of NAVAIR's next generation of leaders, learns life lessons through NLDP's continuous process improvement track

potential, such as Anderson. The program helps develop their leadership, management and productivity improvement skills and clarify their career goals.

"This flagship program is one of the cornerstone items in achieving NAVAIR's long-range workforce strategy. A key component of this strategy is creating an organizational culture that encourages, rewards and promotes professional development — NLDP does just that," said Stephanie Peppler, program manager for NAVAIR's leadership development programs.

Anderson is part of the program's continuous process improvement learning track, which focuses on AIRSpeed training and projects. At the end of the program, Anderson will become a certified Master Black Belt, part of a business management strategy to improve the quality of process outputs.

NAVAIR's AIRSpeed tools directly involve employees in reducing cycle time and cost, ensuring every step contributes value to the end product or result.

" 'AIRSpeed' refers to how fast an aircraft flies in relation to the air in which it is flying. The air we're flying in, a transformational Navy is congested with demands for newer and faster technologies and an ability to get quality products to our warfighter faster," said AIRSpeed champion and Director of Flight Test Engineering Leslie Taylor. "To keep up, we've got to continuously improve the way we perform our work. Our business needs to move faster, be more efficient, and provide higher quality to meet the demands of today's warfighter."

Peppler agreed. "AIRSpeed training provides tremendously important tools for our developing leaders, especially in an environment where we are encouraged to 'do more with less,'" she said.

For Anderson, NLDP also gave her the confidence and courage to join NAVAIR's learning organization group, whose mission she described as creating a culture where employees feel comfortable to share and learn from each other, a culture that is diverse, open, transparent and trusting. The goal is a workforce that challenges basic assumptions, pursues innovative solutions, and focuses on continuous learning and growth.

"You have a spot at the table. No matter what your level, your age — you have a voice," Anderson explained. "NLDP and our learning organization together could prove to be a fantastic combination in my career and life," she said.

Seeing the big picture

Anderson was convinced from her first day working at NAVAIR that she wanted to join NLDP. While new to NAVAIR,



July 11, 2012

Anderson, part of NAVAIR's next generation of leaders, learns life lessons through NLDP's continuous process improvement track

she was eager to see how she fit in to the overall national defense picture.

Her favorite class was the five-day Washington Arena Seminar, which introduces employees to the interaction and communication issues and challenges between NAVAIR, the Department of the Navy and Department of Defense. The seminar includes a guided tour of the Pentagon, briefings addressing current NAVAIR organizational and policy issues, and formal and informal interfaces between NAVAIR and higher organizations.

Anderson said she has taken the lessons she learned there to her co-workers on the F/A-18 Program and others around her, particularly her exposure to how NAVAIR fits into the grand scheme of defense and the influences the command receives from the Navy.

"I really like to know the big picture and how I fit into the bigger organizational system," she said.

The classes are also beneficial to Anderson's personal life; she has focused on eating better and exercising after the tips she learned in her wellness class.

"The importance of integrating health and wellness throughout all the seminars in NLDP is critical in preparing and sustaining a vital and productive workforce," said Dr. Katherine Skerl, Focus Group Corporation chief executive officer and prime contractor for NLDP classes. "Modeling healthy behaviors and decision-making not only makes a significant contribution to personal changes, but begins to transform the culture, along with the values and beliefs, of an organization."

Anderson said she often finds herself referring back to her NLDP class notebooks, because the lessons she has learned are priceless.

"I have taken many leadership courses in my lifetime, and I have learned so much about myself and others," she said. "This program is helping me understand how and where I can apply those skills to best serve the command."

Learn more about how NAVAIR [develops and grows its employees' careers.](#)