Susan Marcellino, left, introduces panelists, from left, Susie Raglin, director of Corporate Operations at Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division, Joan Johnson, NAWCWD executive director, and Elizabeth Somerville, Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 31 commander, during the “Women in Technical Project Management” panel discussion held at NAWCWD China Lake on Oct. 25. (U.S. Navy photo)

NAVAIR News Release
NAWCWD Public Affairs
China Lake, CA

NAWCWD hosts national women’s panel

Susan Marcellino, left, introduces panelists, from left, Susie Raglin, director of Corporate Operations at Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division, Joan Johnson, NAWCWD executive director, and Elizabeth Somerville, Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 31 commander, during the “Women in Technical Project Management” panel discussion held at NAWCWD China Lake on Oct. 25. (U.S. Navy photo)


The event featured panelists Joan Johnson, NAWCWD executive director, Elizabeth Somerville, Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 31 commander, and Susie Raglin, NAWCWD director of Corporate Operations, and was broadcast via VTC from China Lake to Naval Air Systems Command sites across the country.

“I thought the event went very well,” said Susan Marcellino, who hosted the discussion. “This event was the first time a WAG panel discussion was held at a NAVAIR site other than Patuxent River. The feedback has been incredibly positive. One of the biggest compliments I heard from multiple attendees was how fast the hour went by.”
NAWCWD hosts national women’s panel

Through a series of questions posed by Marcellino and audience members across NAVAIR, the panelist shared their views on topics such as key enablers for leading a technical project, growing trends within NAVAIR and beyond, connecting to the warfighter, as well as reading material and resources they've found beneficial.

“One of the things that I have found incredibly valuable moving through different commands and positions is the ability to bump heads with somebody and then turn around and attack the problem as teammates,” Somerville said. “The issues we face today are tough and we’re not going to be able to solve those problems without some friction, but being able to come back the next minute, the next hour, or the next day and choose to keeping moving forward as a team, I’ve seen that be very effective over the years.”

The panelists also touched on what inspired them and what has served them well in their careers.

“Often, when you don’t know you’re looking for it, you get inspiration,” Johnson said. “I’m inspired by seeing individuals who don’t look at challenges as barriers, but opportunities and that becomes very infections for everybody that’s around that individual. I’m lucky because I get to see that every single week working here. I very much believe in the notion of servant leadership and understanding the people you work with, respecting them and being compassionate. Instead of asking what the command can do for you, ask what you can do for your command, your teammates and the warfighter.”

Megan Rawson, an operations research analyst who has begun managing more projects, found the discussion helpful and felt it was beneficial not only to her, but to NAVAIR as a whole to see and hear the women’s perspectives.

“All three speakers really valued collaboration and working collectively across competencies and between military and civilians to solve complex problems,” Rawson said. “It serves the warfighter and the country best when we can work together creatively and innovatively. I also think it was beneficial to see three very strong and respected female leaders share what they have learned in their careers. It shows us that we, as women, can be them in the future, there are cracks in the glass ceiling and we can rise to whatever level of leadership we desire in NAVAIR.”

Raglin, who has become a big advocate for collaboration and diversity of thought throughout her career, noted the importance of “boundary spanning” not only at WD, but across NAVAIR and beyond.

“Anybody who knows me may know that I am passionate about doing whatever I can do to help move our culture forward toward being more collaborative,” Raglin said. “There is nothing, now, that we do as individuals or small workgroups. So whether it is spanning technological, geographical or organizational boundaries, I think that emphasis and focus
NAWCWD hosts national women’s panel

on that is going to be critical to our future.”