

# **Minnesota Council of the Navy League of the United States**

## **Strategic Plan 2022/23**

### **The Navy League of the United States**

The Navy League of the United States is the governing body for every local council around the world. The Minnesota Council covers the geographic boundaries of the state of Minnesota but may, from time to time, support Navy League efforts in North Dakota, South Dakota, and parts of Wisconsin or Iowa.

As such, the Minnesota Council has crafted this strategic plan to align our local council's efforts with the three core objectives of the Navy League of the United States. The core objectives are:

- *Enhance the morale of sea service personnel and their families through national and council level programs;*
- *Provide a powerful voice to educate the public and Congress on the importance of our Sea Services to our nation's defense, well-being, and economic prosperity;*
- *Support youth through programs, such as the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Junior NROTC, and Young Marines, that expose young people to the values of our sea services.*

The objectives at the national Navy League level are equally weighted and the Minnesota Council has chosen to align these three core objectives equally in pursuit of our council's desired end state.

Each main objective has three or more supporting objectives, and each supporting objective is given a timeline toward completion. Benchmarks, where applicable, have been applied to focus the work of the board and membership of the Minnesota Council to more effectively focus our Councils activities.

## Objective One: Enhancing the morale of sea service personnel



### Minnesota Council

### First Set of Broad Objectives

- *Enhances the morale of sea service personnel and their families through national and council level programs*

#### Support Active and Reserve Naval Units in Minnesota

- Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Merchant Marine, and Navy Commands and Activities
- Support key events & activities linked to active duty and reserve Naval Service units in MN. (i.e. State Fair, Navy Week Activities and Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Balls, etc.)
- Serve as a resource for Naval Service Families (Coordinate/partner with appropriate MN veteran organizations)

#### Support Afloat Forces

- Continue Support for Crew of USS MINNESOTA
- Establish and Maintain Support for Crew for USS MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL
- Establish and Maintain Support for Crew of USS MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL
- Establish and Maintain Support for Crew of USCGC SPAR

#### Grow Partnerships with Naval Service and Other Veterans Organizations

- Continuously seek to enhance relationships with all Naval service veterans organizations.
- Build Linkages to Broader Association of Minnesota Veterans Organizations

## Supporting Objectives

General. As a support organization for Minnesota-based naval and maritime units that experience regular command changes and staff transfers, it is important for the Minnesota Council to establish a presence in the ongoing ‘rhythms’ of each organization the council supports. Activities like offering annual awards or sponsoring annual events offer valuable and visible support, but more importantly, serve as a platform for building and enhancing ongoing relationships, mitigate disruption of command changes, and identify opportunities for additional areas of support. Establishing these types of annual engagement opportunities is embedded in each objective.

### **A.Support Active and Reserve Naval Units and Maritime Organizations in Minnesota**

Active Duty Naval Units in Minnesota. The U.S. Navy has three active duty units in the state of Minnesota. These units include the Navy Operations Support Center (NOSC) headquartered at the Air Force Reserve Base at the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport, the Naval ROTC (NROTC) Unit located at the University of Minnesota and the University of St. Thomas, and the Navy Talent Acquisition

Group (NTAG i.e. recruiting) headquartered in the Whipple Federal Building at Fort Snelling. The Minnesota Council has already established a supporting relationship with these three units and this support is most readily demonstrated by the annual Navy Birthday Ball., Additionally, every other year the Blue Angels flight demonstration team visits Minnesota and the Minnesota Council will continue to collaborate with the NTAG to assist their recruiting efforts at these marquee events. The Minnesota Council will continue to expand these supporting relationships over the course of the strategic plan and will accept and operationalize identified needs from the three active-duty U.S. Navy units.

Additional support will be coordinated, through the years 2019-2024, with the 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing Support Squadron 471, the Marine Corps Recruiting Station Twin Cities, and the 4<sup>th</sup> Law Enforcement Battalion, which are Marine Corps units located in the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area. The recruiting station is an active-duty unit. The wing and division units are reserve units. The headquarters for the Marine Corps reserve units reside at the Marine Force Reserve Headquarters in New Orleans, LA. (NOLA).

The U.S. Coast Guard has headquartered the Upper Mississippi River Maritime Safety Detachment in Bloomington, Minnesota, and the Minnesota Council will contact this unit to provide support as requested. Additional support for the Coast Guard Station Duluth will also be provided as requested.

While the Port of Duluth provides service to numerous commercial ships, the U.S. Merchant Marine is underrepresented in the state of Minnesota. The Minnesota Council will seek ways to support merchant seaman and will advocate on their behalf in other sections of this strategic plan.

### Support Afloat Forces

USS MINNESOTA. The Minnesota Council provided significant support for the USS MINNESOTA commissioning effort and continues to advocate and support the crew of SSN 783. Routine trips by Minnesota Council board members to visit USS MINNESOTA will be reviewed and approved by the Minnesota Council, on a yearly basis. The Minnesota Council will also support every visit by crew members from LCS-21 when they come to Minnesota.

USS MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL. The Minnesota Council provided support for the USS MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL commissioning effort and will continue to

advocate and support the crew of LCS-21. Routine trips by Minnesota Council board members to visit USS MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL will be reviewed and approved by the Council, on a yearly basis. The Minnesota Council will also support every visit by crew members from LCS-21 when they come to Minnesota.

USCGC SPAR. The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter SPAR is home ported in Duluth, Minnesota. As part of the Minnesota Council's pledge to support afloat naval forces, we are officially adopting the USCGC ALDER and her crew as a supported afloat platform. The Minnesota Council will coordinate with the commanding officer of the SPAR to offer our support. Just like USS MINNESOTA and USS MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL, the SPAR will be second-to-none in support for her crew as they make Lake Superior safer for all maritime traffic and sailors.

### **B. Grow Partnerships with Naval Service Veterans and Veterans' Organizations in Minnesota**

The Minnesota Council and the Marine Corps Coordinating Council will continuously seek to grow our partnerships with other naval and maritime service veterans' organizations throughout the state of Minnesota. The Minnesota Councils see our role as a support element to these other naval service and veterans' organizations, meaning we will do our utmost to enhance and enable other naval service veterans' organizations as they pursue their agendas. Support may come from manpower, volunteer time, funding, or other resources as appropriate and as the Minnesota Councils are able to provide said services.

## Objective Two: Provide a powerful voice to educate the public and Congress on the importance of our Sea Services



### Minnesota Council

### Second Set of Broad Objectives

- Provides a powerful voice to educate the public and Congress on the importance of our Sea Services to our nation's defense, well-being, and economic prosperity

#### Community Engagement

- Foster connections between the Naval Services and the general public (Professional sporting events, Airshows, Fleet Week, Birthday Balls, et al)
- Hold public speaking events to inform and educate the public about the importance of the Naval Services
- Liaison with MN media outlets for Naval Service-related topics, including naval history topics

#### Legislative Affairs

- Advocate on behalf of the Naval Services with the MN State Legislature and the MN Congressional Delegation
- Promote Naval Service Commands with State of Minnesota

#### Business Community Engagement

- Promote awareness of Naval Services with the MN business community
- Organize a routine visit by senior speakers to engage business community leaders

## Supporting Objectives

### A. Community Engagement

The Minnesota Council will use all available methods to enhance our communication to the citizenry of the state of Minnesota. As part of this engagement effort, the Minnesota Council will draft a Strategic Communications Plan 2019-2024 designed to ensure the Navy League 'brand' is presented to Minnesotans of all stripes, and the work the Navy League does is highlighted for all. The board's engagement with stakeholders across Minnesota will continue throughout the timeframe in this strategic plan.

### B. Legislative Affairs

In full coordination with the Navy League of the United States, the Minnesota Council will engage Minnesota's political leaders, legislators, and even members of Congress to make the case for strong support to all four of America's naval services. We shall also ensure we build relationships with Minnesota's military community to enhance the "joint" concept behind America's first line of national defense.

### **C. Business Community Engagement**

As a non-profit charitable entity, the Minnesota Council depends heavily on the generous support given to our organization by business community leaders and companies who share an interest in, or affinity for, veteran-related organizations like the Navy League. It is our most profound desire to continue long-established relationships with our traditional sponsors, but also to greatly expand our network of sponsors so that we may fully realize our many goals in this strategic plan.

## Objective Three: Support youth through programs that expose young people to the values of our sea services



### Minnesota Council

### Third Set of Broad Objectives

- Supports youth through programs, such as the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Junior NROTC, and Young Marines, that expose young people to the values of our sea services

#### Grow Sea Service Youth Programs

- U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps
- Naval & Marine Corps Junior ROTC
- Funding Grants for Units
- Guidance for students in these programs regarding joining the Sea Services

#### STEM Education Initiatives

- Fund STEM Programs for Sea Cadets and NJROTC
- Scholarships for Summer STEM Programs at USNA and other Universities or Colleges
- Support STEM Initiatives in Minnesota Schools to reach Grades 7-12

#### Support Navy and Marine Corps Recruiting Programs

- Community Outreach to Guide Students to Sea Services
- Fund Scholarship Programs for NROTC

## Supporting Objectives

### A. Grow Sea Service Youth Programs

There are two main youth sea service programs in the state of Minnesota – the Naval Sea Cadets, and the Junior Navy & Marine Corps ROTC Programs.

The Minnesota Council will assist these youth programs with fund matching, recognition awards for outstanding performance, and will support annual key events like inspections, banquets, End-of-Year ceremonies, and provide mentorship for young people toward career paths linked to the naval services.

The Minnesota Council will also coordinate with the Navy Talent Acquisition Group and the Recruit Station Twin Cities to foster opportunities for Navy and Marine Corps recruiters to answer questions posed by youth personnel who serve in these youth sea service programs. Youth in the sea service programs often choose a life of service, to include career paths in the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and the U.S. Coast Guard. There may also be opportunities to foster engagement by the merchant marine with these highly motivated young people, perhaps guiding them toward lucrative careers as merchant mariners.

Additional engagement with the NROTC program at the University of Minnesota and University of St. Thomas will foster greater opportunities for youth in the sea service programs to pursue higher education and perhaps commissions in the naval services.

Finally, engagement with the U.S. Naval Academy Information Program and the Area Coordinator's Office will begin and will expand throughout the term of the strategic plan in full coordination with additional support provided by the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association – Upper Midwest Chapter.

## **B. STEM Education Initiatives**

The Minnesota Council has already made STEM Initiatives a core part of our mission. Throughout 2019 and up through 2024, the Minnesota Council will work tirelessly to expand our support for Minnesota youth to participate in STEM programs across the state and beyond.

The Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) hold an annual STEM Expo which will continue to be focal point each January. Shared funding by the Minnesota Council and the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association – Upper Midwest Chapter, and joint participation by the Naval ROTC Unit from the U of M and the Navy's Talent Acquisition Group will continue throughout this strategic plan. Marine Corps units and organizations, coordinated through the Marine Corps Coordinating Council, will also be invited to participate in the annual MPS STEM Expo as partners of the Minnesota Council.

The Minnesota Council will advocate with the Saint Paul Public School District and the Anoka-Hennepin School District to create a similar STEM Expo program, or to piggyback onto the MPS program as it already exists. Tripling our reach to these other two large school districts will dramatically advance the cause of STEM education.

The Minnesota Council will also work with the Navy League of the United States to secure robotic kits to foster growth of STEM education in the youth sea service programs, as well as schools that request this support. Grant funding will also be pursued in support of these initiatives.

## **C. Support Navy and Marine Corps Recruiting Programs**



While it is not a primary mission for the Minnesota Council to seek out and guide young people toward recruitment by the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or Merchant Marine, council members will nevertheless serve as advocates for such opportunities and career paths for young people seeking an opportunity to serve the nation.

The Minnesota Council has already funded an annual NROTC Scholarship through the University of Minnesota Foundation and will enhance the funds in this scholarship program with any funds left over from the commissioning of LCS 21 in fall of 2020. The council will work closely with the U of M NROTC Unit to recognize the outstanding academic achievements of future officers in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps.

Additional support will be provided on an ad hoc basis to the NTAG and RS Twin Cities to support enlisted recruitment, and the Minnesota Council will also find ways to guide interested young people toward the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Merchant Marine.

As discussed earlier in the strategic plan, the Minnesota Council's support for youth sea service programs blends well with mentorship toward career paths in the naval services. We will continue this support and will expand the youth sea service programs to build into our future citizens a sense of service to country, integrity, resilience, and honor.

The Minnesota Council will also serve as a resource for families who have sons or daughters who've joined, or wish to join, the naval services. Every member of the Minnesota Council, to include officers and members alike, will be available to answer questions posed by families of sea service members, or will guide these family members to the right people to meet their need.

The Minnesota Council will contact the NTAG and RS Twin Cities to assess how we can best support their respective recruiting efforts, then initiate relevant program support. Work with the NROTC Unit will continue as is with possible expansion regarding STEM opportunities. Additional initiatives will be developed and implemented as needed or as they become relevant or pertinent to this supporting objective. Finally, the Minnesota Council will expand and enhance support for the Naval Academy Information Program in full coordination with the program's Area Coordinator and Blue and Gold Officers, as well as with the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association – Upper Midwest Chapter.

## Minnesota Council Objectives



### Minnesota Council

### Supporting Objectives

#### Minnesota Council-specific goals, objectives, initiatives, and events

##### Membership

- Develop a marketing campaign to attract new members
- Increase membership by participating in Council public events & bringing back lapsed members

##### Funding

- Develop a comprehensive fundraising plan with detailed funding goals and clear delineations for how funds will be used
- Develop reliable and sustained funding streams from corporate sponsors, fundraising initiatives, and member dues

##### Institutionalize Our History

- Create a regular newsletter to engage current and all new members
- Find ways to celebrate past Minnesota Council successes, recognize members, et al.

- *Host the Annual Navy League Meeting in Minnesota*
- *Craft roles and responsibilities for all board officers and members*

## Supporting Objectives

### A. Membership

Opportunities to experience “Camaraderie” and “Service” are two key attributes an organization must have to attract members and to keep them engaged. All organizations benefit from having a large, active, and connected membership base. The Minnesota Council will expand our membership rolls each year throughout this strategic plan. The strategic planning committee has identified some core population groups we’ll focus on in the first year of this membership drive. These population groups include:

- Naval service veterans
- Family and friends of naval service active duty, reserve, and veterans
- Military enthusiasts

We will craft a marketing campaign to reach these groups of people, working in particular with the Veteran Service Officers in each of the 87 counties in Minnesota.

We will also engage large groups of people to encourage their joining the Minnesota Council and to take part as active members in the many initiatives and programs funded or otherwise supported by us. All members join the Navy League of the United States and are then assigned to our Minnesota Council based on their mailing address. Benefits for membership are significant, to include the monthly publication of Sea Power magazine, as well as discounts at retail locations, travel companies, et al. More information is available on the Navy League of the United States website.

We currently have around 185 people listed on our Minnesota Council rolls, and will work closely with the Navy League membership team in Washington, DC to scrub our current rolls and to make joining and remaining a Navy League member as easy as possible.

In addition to National benefits from joining, our council will enhance these benefits by bringing in guest speakers to engage members, the public, and corporate leaders. We will also provide opportunities for members to participate in service-oriented ventures and to build or expand camaraderie through these service events.

## **B. Sustained Funding**

No non-profit organization functions well without sustained, reliable funding. Membership-driven funding models rarely yield significant financial benefits for any non-profit entity, severely limiting the number and scope of programs and initiatives that might be pursued.

Therefore, the Minnesota Council will build relationships with Minnesota-based corporations with a veteran council or foundation that focuses on veteran issues and organizations. We will also pursue alliances with major defense contracting companies all across the United States, as well as large corporations that traditionally support veterans' groups.

We will initiate fundraising efforts even before this strategic plan is approved and implemented, and continue to enhance our fundraising efforts throughout the life of this plan. We will create separate accounts to control spending and to show supporters and sponsors we are excellent stewards of the funds they give to us. Yearly financial audits will assist us in demonstrating this fiscal discipline to stakeholders.

### **C. Institutionalize Our History**

The Minnesota Council will contact all previous council presidents to request they draft a history document that explains what the council did during the tenure as president. When all the living presidents' histories have been collected, we will build a comprehensive document to institutionalize the history of the Navy League of the United States – Minnesota Council, and all we've done to further missions of the four American naval services.

This document will be updated by each president as he or she leaves the position, and will be included on the Minnesota Council's website as a living document. It is our most sincere hope the document will explain to those who may be interested in joining the Minnesota Council what kind of organization they are joining. This document will also aid in our efforts to attain sustained sponsorship from philanthropic-minded American patriots who support our overall mission, the naval services, or STEM initiatives.

The Council will look into partnering opportunities with the MN Military Museum to educate the public on Naval history.

#### **Summary**

This is a living document. Hence, it should be reviewed regularly by the board of directors and updated as needed, or in accordance with changes that may occur to the Navy League of the United States, or to our local council, commensurate with the laws of the United States and the state of Minnesota.

While the core objectives stated herein are aligned directly with the Navy League of the United States, the Minnesota Council will pursue our supporting objectives in a manner that maximizes our potential impact in our local communities and across the state of Minnesota. We shall pursue the timelines and key goals accordingly as well.

Finally, this document serves as the framework for the board of directors to use to craft a yearly "Work Plan" designed to implement each of the supporting objectives and key goals from all sections of the document. Yearly Work Plans should be crafted and presented to the board of directors for review no later than the November board meeting of each year, with official approval for the Work Plan confirmed and adopted in the December board meeting.