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Defense Orientation Conference Association



DOCA's Washington State Visit Overview

August 2014

Thirty eight DOCA members and prospective members recently returned from a fascinating visit with the Navy, Army and Air Force in Washington State. We were very pleased to welcome five new members on their first DOCA program: AJ Hashmi from Paris, TX; Maidee Kirkeby from Newport Beach, CA; Kenneth Kraus from Newport Beach, CA; Vic VanDrake from Fort Wayne, IN and Ted Westerman from Calabasas, CA. Fred Hay from Anacortes, WA and Michael Strong from Tacoma, WA also attended as prospective members.

After Board and Executive Committee meetings on Sunday, 17 August, we enjoyed a Welcome Reception at the Hotel Murano in downtown Tacoma. Early Monday morning we bused to the U.S. Navy submarine base near Bangor, WA. There we split into two groups and took turns touring the USS NEVADA, an OHIO-class Trident ballistic missile submarine, and the Trident Training Facility where submarine sailors hone their skills on state of the art simulators. We also received a very informative briefing from the Commander, Naval Base Kitsap.

On Tuesday, we visited the Army at Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM). There we met with the joint base commander and deputy commander. Participants had the opportunity to test their marksmanship skills on an indoor training range and conducted a combat patrol in the Stryker armored fighting vehicle simulators. A briefing by I Corps officials over lunch was followed by a static display of small arms, mortars, anti-tank weapons and different Stryker variants employed by I Corps Soldiers. We wrapped up the day with a reception at the beautiful American Lake Conference Center where we had the opportunity to ask more questions and engage in follow up discussions with senior leaders.

Wednesday was devoted to the U.S. Air Force at historic McChord Field back at JBLM. We met with the Commander, 62nd Airlift Wing, enjoyed lunch with senior leaders from the Wing and other commands, and toured the Western Area Defense Sector control center. We also toured a C-17 Globemaster aircraft while crew members described their various important missions.