



The United States Naval War College

CONVOCATION CEREMONY



RADM Stephen B. Luce
First President of the U.S. Naval War College

SPRUANCE AUDITORIUM | NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

AUGUST 4, 2026



Rear Adm. Darryl "D-Day" Walker is the 59th President of the U.S. Naval War College and a career naval aviator. He enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1985 as an Air Traffic Controller and graduated from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 1990 with a Bachelor of Science in Professional Aeronautics. Walker received his commission in the U.S. Navy through the Naval Aviation Officer Candidate School and was designated a naval flight officer in 1992. He

graduated from the Naval War College in 2002 with a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies. Prior to the Naval War College, Walker served as Deputy Commander of Joint Force Headquarters-Cyber (Navy), U.S. 10th Fleet.



The Honorable Hung Cao was appointed Acting Secretary of the Navy on April 22, 2026. After immigrating to the United States in 1975, Cao and his family moved to West Africa, returning to Virginia at the age of 12. Entering the Navy as a Seaman Recruit in 1989, he was commissioned as a Special Operations Officer from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1996. As a Navy Diver, Cao led underwater missions around the world. As an Explosive Ordnance Disposal

Officer, he led counter improvised threat missions for Special Warfare and Special Forces with multiple deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. In his final tour of duty, he led sensitive activities, exploitation, counter-messaging and counter-drone operations in support of the Geographic Combatant Commanders and Special Operations Command. He retired in October 2021 as a Captain. Previously, Cao served as Under Secretary of the Navy and the Department of War's Senior Defense Official of Guam, where he provided oversight, advocacy, and support for on-island infrastructure development. Prior, Cao was a Vice President and Client Executive at CACI International, assisting in fielding electronic warfare packages, counter-drone technology, optical communications, photonics, enterprise IT and shipyard infrastructure optimization in support of the Department of the Navy. Cao is a decorated combat veteran, a qualified Navy Special Operations, EOD and Diving Officer, Naval Parachutist, and Surface Warfare Officer. He holds a bachelor's degree in Ocean Engineering, a master's degree in Applied Physics, and was a Fellow with MIT Seminar XXI and Harvard Kennedy School.

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

Music by Navy Band Northeast

Arrival of Official Party*

National Anthem*

Invocation*

LCDR Shawn F. Hazel, CHC, U.S. Navy
Command Chaplain, Naval Chaplaincy School

Presentation of Classes

Introduction of Guest Speaker

Rear Admiral Darryl L. Walker, U.S. Navy
President, U.S. Naval War College

Address

The Honorable Hung Cao
Acting Secretary of the Navy

Welcome and Convene the College

Rear Admiral Darryl L. Walker, U.S. Navy
President, U.S. Naval War College

Benediction*

LCDR Shawn F. Hazel, CHC, U.S. Navy
Command Chaplain, Naval Chaplaincy School

*Guests please stand



The motto of the Naval War College is “Victory through Sea Power.” The trident rising from the water symbolizes mastery of naval activities—its three tines are evocative of naval warfare on sea, air, and land. The pilot wheel atop the shield alludes to the mission of the college — education in naval warfare. The wheel’s eight spokes symbolize honor, duty, leadership, command, strategy, tactics, logistics, and weapons. The laurel wreath represents achievement of the mission.