

Senate Chaplain Speaks at Navy Installations Command African-American/Black History Month Event

By Ed Wright, Navy Installations Command Public Affairs

Navy Installations Command celebrated African-American/Black History month Feb. 18 at Washington Navy Yard with a rousing speech from Rear Adm. (Ret.) Barry C. Black, current United States Senate chaplain, who was guest speaker for the event.

Prior to coming to Capitol Hill, Black served in the U.S. Navy for more than 27 years, retiring from a distinguished career that culminated as the chief of chaplains for the Navy.

In July 2003, he was elected as the 62nd chaplain of the United States Senate.

"It is my honor to have the opportunity to participate in this celebration of African-American History Month," said Black.

The theme for this year's event, "Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memories" had Black mixing his speech with humor and reminiscing about his time in the military and in the Senate.

The gathered crowd listened as he spoke of how African-Americans were deeply involved in major events in America all the way back to the Civil War.

Black mentioned his time growing up on the streets of Baltimore in what he termed a toxic environment, and the challenges that he faced as a young African-American.

He wrote about his life exploits in his 2006 autobiography entitled, "From the Hood to the Hill" and in his 2011 book, "The Blessing of Authority."

As the Senate chaplain, Black initiates and participates in special observances, leads interdenominational prayer gatherings, and cultivates relationships with local clergy and leaders of humanitarian agencies.

"I see my role as the chaplain to be a confidential counselor, spiritual adviser, scripture teacher, intercessor, and friend to the senators, their spouses, and the Senate staff as they seek to discover and live God's wonderful plan," said Black.

Black has been selected for many outstanding achievements. Of particular note, he was chosen from 127 nominees for the 1995 NAACP Renowned Service Award for his contribution to equal opportunity and



Navy Installations Command celebrated African-American/Black History month Feb. 18 at the Washington Navy Yard with an arousing speech from the United States Senate Chaplain. Rear Adm. (Ret.) Barry C. Black, former Chief of Chaplains for the Navy and now Chaplain of the United States Senate was the guest speaker. The theme for this year's event, Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memories had Black, mixing his speech with humor, and reminiscing of his time in the military and in the Senate.

civil rights. He also received the 2002 Benjamin Elijah Mays Distinguished Leadership Award from The Morehouse School of Religion. In 2004, the Old Dominion University chapter of the NAACP conferred on him the Image Award, "Reaffirming the Dream -- Realizing the Vision" for military excellence.

Navy Installations Command is comprised of approximately 52,000 military and civilian personnel worldwide responsible for the operations, maintenance and quality of life programs to support the Navy's fleet, Sailors and their families.

For more about the Navy's shore enterprise, visit <http://www.cnic.navy.mil>.

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