



# NAMDC

## Navy Air and Missile Defense Command

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### NAMDC NEWS RELEASE

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## NAMDC MEMBER MAKES A “PINNING” SURPRISE

*Retired Chief pins anchors on astonished son*

In a family where tradition of Navy service runs deep, Richard “Rusty” Hopp, a retired Navy CW4 and training and assessment specialist, knew his son’s promotion to chief was a big deal – too bad 5,000 miles separated the two.

Hopp senior works at Navy Air and Missile Defense Command in Dahlgren, Va., Hopp II is stationed at Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Pacific in Wahiawa, Hawaii, as the Pacific Regional Networks Operations Center lead Petty Officer.

“I was really upset that my family was not coming to my promotion ceremony,” said the junior Hopp. “Dad knew how important this was to me, but I also understood the distance, cost and prior commitments made his attendance impossible.”

Remembering his promotion to chief “a million years ago,” and the emotions that went with it, Hopp senior felt a strong emotional tug on his conscious. “I was the induction officer when he enlisted in the Navy; I was there again to re-enlist him in 2004, and in 2006 I re-enlisted him on the USS Blue Ridge - the ship I was acting Command Master Chief in 1998, and the ship my youngest son is currently stationed on. ”

The mixture of tradition, prominence and family patriotism made the event just too big to miss. He had to promote his son. So he and his wife, Trini, decided to go to Hawaii – but with one twist – it would be a surprise.

A week later with the execution of a well planned military operation, Mom and Dad found themselves parked near the ceremony site, watching the chiefs-to-be go through rehearsal. The now perfect plan almost collapsed, however, when their son wandered away from the ceremony site and meandered unknowingly right beside their truck. Fortunately one of the chiefs, who knew the plot, jumped in and mustered the junior Hopp back to the tent.

A short time later they announced, “Information Technology Specialist Chief Selectee Richard Hopp front and center. Unknowing to him, mom and dad were

right behind him. Not until the master of ceremonies announced "Chief Hopp will have his anchors pinned on by his parents," did he know.

"I was shocked; I had no idea. Suddenly out of nowhere, my mom and dad are pinning on my anchors. It was an unbelievable surprise," said the Navy's newest chief.

"Being there and taking part in this event was truly special – I was beside myself bursting with pride. I'm proud of all my kids, but making this promotion to chief, is a giant step." And it was a step they made together – as father to son, Navy Chief to Navy Chief.