



U.S Navy Humanitarian Operations in Japan

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Scholars: Science, Discovery, and the Universe

Issue Confronting Site

I worked for Dr. John Sherwood, a historian at NHHC, doing an assortment of research and scanning documents relating to Operation Tomodachi units. Operation Tomodachi took place in Japan and ran from March to May in 2011. It involved many servicemembers of the United States military. These people participated in various disaster relief efforts for Japan after a tsunami destroyed cities and injured many civilians.

Dr. Sherwood is writing a book about the U.S. Navy's role in these humanitarian operations!



Soldiers off the USS Mustin
Image source: 2011 COR



USS Mustin
Image source: 2010 COR

The Internship

My internship was at the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) at the Washington Navy Yard, Washington D.C. NHHC's main mission is to preserve, research, analyze, and write about the United States' Navy's history. Many dedicated historians, librarians, archivists, museum curators, and other personnel work together to contribute to these publications and research projects.

Contact Information:

Archives: Ship and aviation Unit Records – Building 200 of Washington Navy Yard (visiting hours by appointment only)

<https://www.history.navy.mil/about-us/organization/naval-history-and-heritage-command-origins.html>



Image source: <https://www.history.navy.mil/news-and-events/multimedia-gallery/graphics/nhhc-logo-cmyk.html>

Activities

At D.C.: I mainly read through Command Operation Reports (CORs) as well as news articles about the different ships. CORs are narratives and timelines of what each ship did- this might include a mission statement, where the ship was going, who was on it, and more!

I also listened and transcribed oral history interviews with several people involved in Operation Tomodachi. This was especially interesting because I got to hear a firsthand account of what these Naval officers did to contribute and help so many people!



USNS Bridge
Image source: 2002 COR



Decontamination work had to be done on the USNS Bridge in April 2011
Image source: 2011 COR

Impact

My work has helped John with the research aspect of writing his forthcoming book! Sifting through information and documents from the archives has also allowed me to further develop my research skills. I was able to read through and decide what would be most useful to understanding what happened in the Navy Tomodachi units.



USS Enterprise Anchor at Washington Navy Yard (above)
Image source: <https://www.history.navy.mil/our-collections/artifacts/ship-and-shore/anchors/anchor-uss-enterprise-cvn-65-.html>

Future Work



As a result of this internship and the connections I have made, I am hoping to get another military related internship within the next year! One of Dr. Sherwood's previous interns has given me information about the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency. I am also looking to go to Germany next summer to work for the United States European Command (EUCOM)! Many opportunities have resulted from this experience!

Image sources:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Defense_Counterintelligence_and_Security_Agency
<https://fas.org/irp/agency/dod/eucom/jac/>
<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/fed-access/2018/01/innovation-at-the-nga/>
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seal_of_the_Central_Intelligence_Agency.svg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Defense_Intelligence_Agency

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. John Sherwood, for this amazing opportunity! I really enjoyed getting to go into D.C every week to do work and loved contributing and seeing the progress on the research for book he was working on!

I would also like to thank CDT Amy Petrocelli as well as the entire University of Maryland Army ROTC program for helping me make connections in military career fields and presenting this internship position!

Overall, words cannot describe how grateful I am for the mentorship and guidance from everyone listed above! Thank you!



UMD Army ROTC Spring 2020 (pre-COVID)
Image source: Instagram @marylandarmyrotc



<https://militarybases.com/washington-dc/navy-yard/>



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Navy_Yard