

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS**

May 11 is Military Spouse Appreciation day. I hope you will join me in thanking the wonderful husbands and wives of our Navy's Sailors and civilian employees for all they do to make our service possible.

No one can succeed in this business alone -- no one. It is too tough, too demanding -- especially today as we continue to fight a long and treacherous war against agile forces of terror around the globe. We all need help from time to time. We all need someone to turn to for love, support, and even a little guidance we all need a shoulder at home. For many of us that shoulder belongs to a spouse. I know that has certainly been the case in my home and in my family for more than 36 years.

Our spouses serve as we serve every bit as much. They do not bear the arms, but their open arms provide strength and comfort. They do not set the ship's course, but their internal compass keeps the family ready and on track. They do not ford the stream or build the bridge, but the bridge they provide back to the home sustains and improves the morale and performance of entire units.

The truth is that military spouses play a special, vital role in national security, perhaps even more than they realize. Combat readiness is tied to family readiness, and our spouses are vital to both. I am not sure we can ever say enough or do enough to truly thank them for that effort, but we should try. If you are a married Sailor or Navy civilian, I urge you to take time out on May 11 to recognize the one who serves alongside you. I also encourage commands to thank the husband and wife partnerships upon whose broad, brave shoulders our great Navy rests.

-- Adm. Mike Mullen, Chief of Naval Operations