

The Information Resources Management College Celebrates the Legacy of Rear Adm. Grace Hopper

By Sharon Anderson

At the invitation of Dr. Elizabeth McDaniel, Dean of Faculty and Academic Programs for the Information Resources Management College of the National Defense University, the CHIPS staff joined a distinguished group of guests in the dedication of the new Grace M. Hopper Auditorium at the IRM College. The dedication, which was held January 12, 2004, commemorated Hopper's pioneering efforts in Navy computing. In view of the IRMC's historic commitment to leveraging the power of information technology, it was a fitting setting for celebrating Hopper's genius in recognizing the essential role that IT would play in government and military operations.

IRM College, the largest at NDU, prepares students to become information leaders in directing information technologies for a national strategic advantage. Primary areas of instruction include policy; strategic planning; leadership/management; process improvement; capital planning and investment; performance and results-based management; technology assessment; architecture; information assurance and security; acquisition; eGovernment; and information operations.

The IRM College offers management courses in the eGovernment Leadership Certificate Program, the Information Assurance Certificate Program, the Chief Information Officer Certificate Program and the Advanced Management Program. AMP students also qualify for the CIO Certificate and have the opportunity to concentrate their studies in Information Assurance, thereby qualifying for an Information Assurance Certificate. The AMP diploma can be used as 15 graduate credits toward selected master's and doctoral degree programs at partner institutions.

The Center for eGovernment Education defines eGovernment as the use of information technologies to transform government operations, processes and systems, to improve effectiveness and efficiency, and service delivery to citizens and customers. The Center conducts research and identifies best practices in eGovernment. To this end, the Center forms partnerships among various government and Department of Defense agencies, sectors of government, private sector organizations, and the academic community to develop eGovernment strategies and initiatives.

Rear Adm. Hopper was a guest lecturer at the DoD Computer Institute, the precursor of the IRM College, beginning in the 1980s, and she left lasting impressions on those who were privileged to hear her speak. Students in the current Advanced Management Program were in attendance to witness the enduring spirit of Hopper's vision: "We are only limited by our imagination to unleash the power of information technology."

Karen S. Evans, Administrator of E-Government and Information Technology, Office of Management and Budget, was guest speaker, and impressed upon the audience the urgency of expanding the cost savings and effectiveness of eGovernment, especially in the areas of homeland security and protection. Other distinguished



Dr. Margaret E. Myers, Principal Director for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Deputy Chief Information Officer and Dr. Robert D. Childs, Director of the IRMC, unveiling the Grace M. Hopper memorial plaque. Photo by Army Sgt. Linda Tsang, Visual Information Specialist for the National Defense University.

Convocation speaker, Karen S. Evans, Administrator of E-Government and Information Technology, Office of Management and Budget. Photo by Army Sgt. Linda Tsang.



speakers included Dr. Margaret E. Myers, Principal Director for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Deputy Chief Information Officer) and Dr. Robert D. Childs, Director of the IRMC.

Howard Looney, IRMC Professor of Systems Management, introduced Rear Adm. Hopper when she was a guest lecturer at the DoD Computer Institute, and attended her lectures whenever he could. Looney said, "Whenever Grace Hopper spoke, everyone listened with rapt attention. The admiral liked to be introduced in a certain way: 'She was the third programmer on the first large scale digital computer in the United States and has been wrestling with the infernal machines ever since.' She gave the same basic speech to each class of students, but she always added something new, typically her most recent concern or discovery. She always shared her philosophy, learned from her own experience: 'It is easier to ask forgiveness than to seek permission.'"

"She was feisty and sharp, and very interested in people as well as



Above: Jim Looney, IRMC Webmaster, shared his memories of Hopper, "Rear Admiral Hopper worked at the DoD Computer Institute from 1984 to 1987.... She was a guest speaker in the Computer Literacy for Intermediate Executive course every other week, the same course that I taught. As down to earth as she was, it could be a challenge [for me] talking with her. Maybe it was the aura surrounding her that put me on guard, although she didn't know it. I hated for her to ask me a question directly, she was just so incredibly smart, and I was so young and inexperienced. We would chat informally in the lounge, and I was still uncomfortable.... There is a picture of us in the coffee mess that was included in the Grace Hopper poster that is being used for the dedication today. I'm very proud of it."

computers. We had a mix of students, mostly military officers and government employees from all departments. Some students were military officers with no background in IT; they would take the course on their way to a new assignment involving computers. Rear Admiral Hopper would tell them to learn everything they could about microcomputers, software and hardware, and to educate their bosses on the subject. She impressed upon them the need to be able to speak and write clearly and effectively, and to teach those skills to their employees. She was eager to share what she knew and she loved teaching."

Retired Rear Adm. Paul E. Tobin, who attended the dedication, said, "Once I was selected to be the Director of Navy Information Systems, I was hoping that I would somehow have a chance to visit with Rear Admiral Hopper. As fate would have it, Rear Admiral Harry Quast and I had dinner with her in Pittsburgh during my second week on the job. She was even more amazing than I expected. This was in 1988, and she had recently retired from the Navy and was working as a consultant for Digital Equipment Corp. The admiral was very much 'with it' and had strong opinions on many subjects. She stressed several times that we were still in the 'Model T' age of information processing, and that I should keep an open mind for the new things coming down the road. I was fascinated by her description of growing up in New York and the early days of computers."

"Most successful people I've met are very intelligent and very energetic. Admiral Hopper had an abundance of both qualities, and on top of that she had an abiding love for the U.S. Navy. The dinner and subsequent meetings and phone calls with Admiral Hopper are some of my most prized memories." 



Above first row from left to right: Retired Rear Adm. Paul E. Tobin and Joyce France, Acting Deputy Director for Planning, Policy & Integration, OASD (NII)/DoD CIO at the dedication of the new Grace M. Hopper Auditorium at IRMC, which was held January 12, 2004.

IRMC Vision World Leader in Information Resources Management Education

IRMC Courses and Admissions

IRMC courses are designed for mid- to senior-level managers in functional programs and CIO offices. While the primary audience is the DoD community (both civilian and military), students are actively recruited from other federal agencies, as well as from private industry and international governments. Federal employees must be GS/GM-13 or O-5 and above. Non-federal employees, to include state and local government employees and private industry employees, must be at a comparable grade. All students must possess a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution.

Exceptions: Requests for waivers are considered for applicants who are within one grade level of the minimum eligible grade or who do not meet the minimum education requirement.

Fees: There are no fees for DoD students in IRM College courses or programs. This includes all course offerings and the Advanced Management Program, but may not include special offerings such as executive or special seminars.

The FY 2004 intensive course fee for non-DoD federal, state and local government employees is \$995. The FY 2004 intensive course fee for private industry students is \$1,295. The Advanced Management Program fee for non-DoD federal, state and local government employees is \$9,000 and \$14,000 for private industry students.

For complete information regarding the educational opportunities offered by the IRM College go to <http://www.ndu.edu/irmc/>.