



December 8, 2020

Dear CPO Selectee Spouse,

Congratulations to you and your spouse on their selection to Chief Petty Officer, and welcome to the Chief's Mess! This is a great achievement for your spouse and I hope you have plenty of opportunity to enjoy this moment with them.

Naval Services Familyline has an established history of providing insightful publications for all Sea Service Spouses, and I hope you find the resources useful. Be sure to take a moment to explore all of the available online information, virtual events, and (when our COVID situation abates) the educational opportunities that will return in person in your areas such as COMPASS and CORE. These events help spouses strengthen their understanding of the Navy and grow their peer network.

As your spouse prepares to enter the Chief's Mess, you may discover that their rise into a position brings new challenges - not just for your Sailor but in any role you may play in our Navy community in a spouse capacity. As spouses we share a common bond of the military spouse experience, and it's important to remember that we are all equals - as spouses we have no rank or seniority. But we do sometimes feel pressure on ourselves as we see the leadership pressures rising through the eyes of our spouses.

So as you embark on this journey, my advice is to remember that the most important role you play as a Navy Spouse (especially as you watch your significant other navigate their growth into the Chief's Mess!) is to be a partner to them in navigating your needs as a family. The demands they'll face over the next few months may mean that they'll need you to help clear the path for them at critical times to focus on learning their new leadership role. And please don't feel obligated to take on more activity in a volunteer command spouse capacity than your life's priorities can keep in balance with. There are many opportunities present to us - especially as our spouses rise in rank - to serve our Navy community, but very few of us (if any) can charge the hill and own them all. Setting an example of balance across the spectrum of life's demands is a great way to set the tone for fellow spouses, and recognize that as spouses we all share this struggle.

Sincerely,

AMY SMITH

Navy Spouse

(Wife of 15th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, Russell Smith)