

**Bonds of Gold Ceremony
Memorial Hall
26 April 2021**

Remarks by Marc Goldberg, 26th Company

Greetings from North Carolina. I am sorry I could not join you in person for this important event, but I wanted to share a few thoughts with you. I appreciate Joe Stewart relaying my remarks- Thanks, Classmate!

Today's ceremony is significant. It may be the first time the Class of '23 can see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. A year from now, you will be wearing your own class rings, and a year later, you will be wearing Ensign and Second Lieutenant bars.

Your ring will be a reminder of the journey you and your classmates have taken, and it will always remind you of a major accomplishment in your life - completing one of the most demanding undergraduate programs in the country. You can be very proud of that.

On my submarines, when we had a particularly tough day, I would tell my officers, "If this job were easy, anyone could do it. But it's not easy, and that's why you are here." Defending our nation and our freedom is one of the toughest jobs there is. That's why you Midshipmen are here, and it was why I served.

Wearing my class ring meant much more to me than just a reminder of graduating from the Naval Academy. It served as an inspiration during those tough days. It assured me that my classmates were serving around the world, doing their equally hard jobs, and expecting me to do my best when times were toughest. It reminded me of the thousands of officers who came before me who persevered, fought,

and died doing the hardest job in the world. If I ever had doubts that I might not measure up, the ring on my hand reminded me who I was.

When I packaged my ring to mail it to Annapolis, a flood of memories came back. This ring has sailed around the world in all of the Earth's oceans - the North and South Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, the North and South Pacific, under the polar ice of the Arctic Ocean, and in most of the major seas. This ring has operated off the coast of every continent.

I am contributing this ring to the Bonds of Gold because I want to infuse the gold in this ring with the gold in your rings. Let it be a reminder that wherever you serve around the world, someone has gone before you, and they are sailing with you in spirit. I hope my ring helps to make your ring very special, so that it will be an inspiration to you all your life.

Best of luck to you, Class of 2023.

Marc Goldberg

Captain, US Navy (retired)