

SUSAN FRITZ

Washington 

I am Susan Fritz, a 30-year Navy veteran. This is my story.

I was originally an Ocean Systems Technician (OT). I detected and classified submarines using passive acoustics.

After 20 years, I was promoted to Master Chief and then a Command Master Chief (CMC). My first CMC tour was as **the first female CMC** assigned to an aviation squadron, to serve as one of the first women ever on board a combatant ship, in this case the USS EISENHOWER, CVN 69.

I retired in 2004 as the CNO Directed CMC for Naval District Washington. I also worked for the federal government and retired from that in September 2018. Immediately after, I was ordained as a deacon in the Episcopal Church.

Although I have not served directly in combat, I was still affected by my experiences. Through Warfighter Advance, **I came to recognize my triggers.**

The most frightening for me is 9-11. Two sons of a new chief whose selection we were celebrating that very day were on the plane that went into the Pentagon. Days later, I learned that my Sailor of the Year had also been killed in the Pentagon. He had only been there two weeks, having just left the Navy Ceremonial Guard. I still feel this loss.

I did not recognize the emotional toll this took on me until I visited the 911 memorial in New York and left there in tears. I learned to manage my feelings at Warfighter Advance.

The day I met Doc Vieten, she asked if I would be willing to attend an evolution and sign on as the chaplain. I agreed. At every evolution, I learn more about my triggers. Mainly, though, I am there to support the participants and to watch over the alumni.

The souls we train learn about their triggers and manage them better because of their association with Warfighter Advance.

Susan Fritz, CNOCM (AW) Navy, 1974-2004