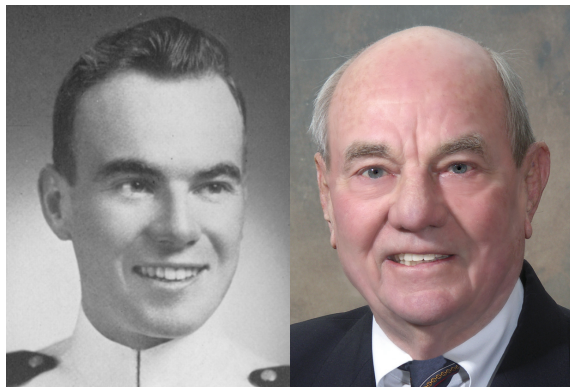


MR. RALPH W. HOOPER

Distinguished Graduate Award—2007



Class of 1951

Ralph W. Hooper grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where a devotion for military service and pride in our nation was passed on to him by his father, a sailing ship master who was one of the earliest bomber pilots in World War I, and his mother, an Army nurse, who treated allied soldiers in Paris.

After attending the University of Missouri for a year in the Navy Preflight V 5 program, Mr. Hooper entered the U.S. Naval Academy with the Class of 1951. At the Academy, Mr. Hooper pursued his keen interest in sailing by participating in the off shore sailing program. He became midshipman sailing master of the schooner FREEDOM his first class year. The *Lucky Bag* called him “the boy with all the superlatives... the loudest laugh, the brightest smile.”

After graduation, Mr. Hooper served aboard USS Des Moines (CA 134), graduated from submarine school, joined USS Grampus (SS 523) and served as an aide to Vice Admiral Frank Watkins, Commander, Submarine Force, Atlantic Fleet. Mr. Hooper left the Navy in 1956 to assume responsibilities at Interstate Ocean Transport,

his family business. Over the next 20 years, Mr. Hooper and his brothers built a shipping company that transported more petroleum products than any other U.S. firm. Under his leadership, Interstate Ocean Transport operated tugs, barges and supertankers, as well as managing port facilities—all keeping the nation's oil line flowing. His service to his country is also evident in a world where great accomplishments achieve critical results, but in the interest of national security, must remain out of the limelight. That's very much in keeping with Mr. Hooper's personality. Throughout his life, his quiet deeds have spoken volumes.

In addition to managing a major shipping company, Mr. Hooper became president and chairman of Marine Concrete Structures, Inc., and is an owner of the world class St. Lucia resort, Ladera. He has distinguished himself as a patriot whose unselfish use of his resources and executive skills have been focused on giving back to the U.S. Naval Academy in gratitude for the values and education he received as a midshipman. Through the years, he has been a major contributor to the Academy's Sail Training program and the Robert Crown Sailing Center. The Hooper Foundation was a major supporter of the Academy's Ship Model collection and Maintenance Fund that cares for this world famous collection of antique dock yard models.

Mr. Hooper supports his alma mater in other meaningful ways, tirelessly meeting with young men and women in search of the best and brightest Naval Academy candidates. Many Naval Academy graduates owe their achievement to scholarship funds provided by Mr. Hooper through the Naval Academy Foundation Athletic and Scholarship Program, where he serves as a Trustee, and the Society of Naval Sponsors.

Mr. Hooper enjoys spending time with those he loves, including his three daughters and grandson. Looking back over a magnificent career, Mr. Hooper is most proud that he has been able to maintain the standards he learned at the Naval Academy, and to imbue all in his professional life with the fundamentals of loyalty, the burden of duty, the excellence of decisiveness and the absolute necessity of unfettered integrity.

Mr. Hooper, a sailor at heart, is a highly respected philanthropist and successful captain of industry whose bold, lifelong journey has served his country's interests and touched the lives of countless countrymen.