



VICE ADMIRAL

JOHN R. RYAN '67, USN (RET.)

“Knowing who has received this award previously and all those talented graduates who deserve future recognition makes the Distinguished Graduate Award a humbling experience for me.”

Vice Admiral John R. Ryan '67, USN (Ret.), is as devoted to the Naval Academy in retirement from active duty as he was during his stellar tour as Superintendent.

During his four-year tour as the 56th Superintendent, which began in 1998, Admiral Ryan developed a strategic plan that was used as the framework for the Academy's monumental \$254 million *Leaders to Serve the Nation* campaign. He was also instrumental in the consolidation of several supporting entities into the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation.

The capital campaign was designed to raise the Academy's margin of excellence in academics, character development, leadership, admissions, athletics and unrestricted support. The campaign paved the way for endowed chairs, academic and professional programs, new facilities and renovations to existing ones, including the dramatic upgrading of the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium.

During his tour as Superintendent, the Faculty Senate unanimously passed a resolution requesting that Admiral Ryan remain for another four-year tour—a first in Naval Academy history.

After retirement from the Navy, Admiral Ryan joined the Naval Academy Foundation Board of Directors and in 2009 became chairman. He also launched a private sector career in higher education, serving as the president of State University of New York Maritime, interim president of the University

at Albany and finally as chancellor of State University of New York, the largest comprehensive university in the United States with 64 colleges and universities, more than 80,000 faculty and staff and 425,000 students.

Admiral Ryan first arrived at the Naval Academy as a plebe from Mountainhome, PA, with his twin brother, Norb. He was designated as a naval aviator in 1968 and assigned to fly the P-3 Orion. The first in his class to be promoted to flag officer, Admiral Ryan, who earned a master's degree in Administration from George Washington University, went on to serve as commander of the Maritime Surveillance and Reconnaissance Force, U.S. Sixth Fleet; commander of Fleet Air Mediterranean; and commander of Maritime Air Forces, Mediterranean, headquartered in Naples, Italy, where he was responsible for operational control of six naval bases in three countries, three military hospitals and all U.S. Maritime Surveillance and Reconnaissance forces in the Mediterranean.

Today Admiral Ryan is president and CEO of the Center for Creative Leadership, a nonprofit organization founded in 1970 and headquartered in Greensboro, NC, that is a global provider of executive education. He also writes for *Bloomberg Businessweek* and *The Washington Post*.

Admiral Ryan and his wife, Diane, have three daughters and five grandchildren. They live in Greensboro, NC.