



SEALIFT

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

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The John Lewis-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206) transits the San Francisco Bay during a namesake visit, March 28. USNS Harvey Milk, the first U.S. Navy ship to be named after an openly gay person, was the centerpiece of an invitation-only event welcoming the ship and commemorating the ship's namesake. USNS Harvey Milk will deliver fuel, food, supplies, repair parts, and materials to U.S. Navy and allied ships while at sea. This capability allows these warships to remain at sea for extended periods of time to execute their assigned missions. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joseph R. Vincent)

USNS HARVEY MILK COMMEMORATES NAMESAKE IN SAN FRANCISCO

By Chief Petty Officer Joseph Vincent, Navy Region Southwest Public Affairs

USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206), the first U.S. Navy ship to be named after an openly gay person, arrived in San Francisco, March 28, for a short port visit.

The ship hosted San Francisco elected officials, community leaders, and friends and family of Navy Veteran and LGBTQ activist Harvey Milk, March 29, for an event commemorating the ship's namesake.



The John Lewis-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206) transits the San Francisco Bay during a namesake visit, March 28. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joseph R. Vincent)

The ship honors Milk, one of the first openly gay candidates elected to public office as a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1978. Milk was assassinated in City Hall 10 months into his term, along with Mayor George Moscone. Milk was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009 for his activism.

San Francisco Mayor London Breed said that USNS Harvey Milk, "symbolizes the love we have as a city for all people, and honors our beloved Harvey Milk, who spent his life and his career fighting for the LGBTQ community here in San Francisco, a movement that has had an impact, not just in the United States, but all over the world."

Rear Adm. Richard Meyer, Deputy Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet, said, "the ship, emblazoned with the name Harvey Milk, would communicate the values of the nation and the Navy wherever she sails. 'Her crew will carry her namesake's legacy and represent his courage of conviction. Always fighting for right.'"

Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) echoed Meyer's comments with a quote from Milk's swearing-in ceremony speech 46 years ago, "This victory signals a green light to all who feel disenfranchised, a green light to move forward, and that the doors will be open to everyone."

The USNS Harvey Milk event was followed by a special ceremony to mark National Vietnam War Veterans Day the same day. Meyer and Pelosi thanked 40 local Vietnam War-era veterans at the Port of San Francisco, presenting them with official DoD lapel pins.

USNS Harvey Milk continued on page 8



Capt. James J. White, Commanding Officer of the John Lewis-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206), left, gives a tour of the ship to Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, center left, and other distinguished visitors during the ship's namesake visit to San Francisco, March 29. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joseph R. Vincent)

in this issue

USNS Harvey Milk - page 1

USNS Robert E. Simanek - page 2

USNS Hector A. Cafferata Jr. - page 2

SAAPM Walk a Lap for Survivors - page 3

Operation Signature - page 3

We are MSC "75" - page 4

MV Cape Horn - page 6

USNS Joshua Humphreys - page 6

MSC Blast from the Past - page 7

Fitness Corner - page 7

THE U.S. NAVY’S NEWEST SHIP USNS ROBERT E. SIMANEK CHRISTENED AT GENERAL DYNAMICS NASSCO SAN DIEGO

By Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs



The official party at the christening ceremony for the U.S. Navy’s newest ship, USNS Robert E. Simanek (ESB 7), render honors as the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Color Guard presents the colors, May 4. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Cannon)

Expeditionary sea base USNS Robert E. Simanek (ESB-7), the U.S. Navy’s newest ship, was christened during a ceremony at the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard in San Diego, California, May 4.

The event was attended by VIP guests including Rep. Scott Peters, California 50th District; Vice Adm. Yvette Davids, superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; Brig. Gen. Robert Weiler, Assistant Division commander, First Marine Division; Capt. Micah Murphy, Commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific; Medal of Honor recipient Special Warfare Operator Master Chief Britt Slabinski; The Honorable Sean Coffee, General Counsel of the Navy; Capt. Bobby Summers, Simanek’s Civil Service Master; three other Medal of Honor recipients and members of the Simanek family.

The 785-foot ship honors Private 1st Class Robert E. Simanek, a United States Marine who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Korean War at Outpost Irene, Korea. During the battle, Simanek

honor the industrious sense of the local workers who constructed this ship, and the ingenuity of companies like General Dynamics NASSCO, who designed and built this vessel, to help us meet the complex challenges of this world during uncertain and dangerous times. And of course, we honor the legacy of the U.S. Marine, Robert Earnest Simanek, who received the Medal of Honor for his conspicuous gallantry during the Korean War.”

The official christening moment happened when the ship’s sponsor, Simanek’s daughter, Ann Simanek Clark, broke a bottle of champagne over the ship’s bow with the words, “For the United States of America, I christen you the USNS Robert E. Simanek. May God bless this ship and all who sail on her.”

“This ship will serve as a floating testimony to Private First Class Simanek’s valor and esprit de corps that all Marines and Sailors carry with them,” said Weiler. “Just as Private First Class Simanek stood as a protector amongst his fellow Marines and Sailors, this ship will daringly sail

threw himself on grenade, absorbing the explosion with his body and shielding his fellow Marines from serious injury or death. While he sustained severe injuries to his legs, Simanek survived, and spent a year recovering.

“Today we gather in a time-honored tradition to christen this vessel, which will represent the unmatched strength and fortitude of the United States Navy and the United States Marine Corps,” said Peters. “We

the oceans as a protector of American freedom. Simanek is the seventh ship in the expeditionary mobile base platform build for MSC, and the third expeditionary staging base model. When activated, Simanek will primarily support aviation mine countermeasure and special operations force missions. In addition to the flight deck, the ship has a hangar with two aviation operating spots capable of handling MH-53E Sea Dragon-equivalent helicopters; accommodations, work spaces, and ordnance storage for embarked force; enhanced command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence to support embarked force mission planning and execution; and reconfigurable mission deck area to store embarked force equipment to include mine sleds and rigid hull inflatable boats.

“The USNS Robert E. Simanek will be ready to serve as a power for peace; a critical asset during crisis, or deliverer of decisive action during time of war, if called to do so,” said Davids.

Upon completion, Simanek will be delivered to the MSC fleet, where it will undergo testing and qualifications in preparation for its support of a variety of maritime-based missions, including Special Operations Forces and Airborne Mine Counter Measures support operations, humanitarian and traditional military missions.

MSC directs and supports operations for approximately 140 civilian-crewed ships that replenish U.S. Navy ships at sea, conduct specialized missions, preposition combat cargo at sea around the world, perform a variety of support services, and move military equipment and supplies to deployed U.S. forces. Celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2024, MSC exists to support the joint warfighter across the full spectrum of military operations.

KEEL LAID FOR USNS HECTOR A. CAFFERATA JR.

By Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command Pacific’s Commanding Officer, Capt. Micah Murphy joined Employees of Military Sealift Command and General Dynamics NASSCO of San Diego to celebrate the keel laying of the expeditionary sea base USNS Hector A. Cafferata Jr. (ESB 8) at the NASSCO shipyard San Diego, April 25.

The time-honored tradition of the keel laying marks the official start of construction of the ship. Part of the tradition is for the sponsor to weld their initials into the keel plate of the new ship. After a pre-ceremony instruction at “Welding School,” the ship’s sponsors, Heather Cafferata, and Jessica Cafferata, the daughter and granddaughter of the ship’s namesake donned protective equipment, took welding torches in hand and stepped into the ship’s history. The steel plate with their initials will be permanently affixed to the ship’s keel, remaining with the vessel through its time in service.

“My grandfather would be honored to know that this ship, with all its successes and challenges, will bear his name,” said Jessica Cafferata. “With profound honor and pride, I stand here, at the star of construction of this ship, named after my grandfather, Hector Cafferata Jr.”

The ship honors U.S. Marine Corps Private First Class Hector A. Cafferata Jr., who was awarded the Medal of Honor for heroic actions during the Korean War Battle of Chosin Reservoir, November 1950. According to his Medal of Honor citation,



Heather Cafferata, USNS Hector A. Cafferata (ESB 8) sponsor, welds her initials into the keel plate of the new expeditionary sea base as part of the ship’s keel laying ceremony at NASSCO shipyard, April 25. The steel plate with her initials will be permanently affixed to the ship’s keel, remaining with the vessel through its time in service. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Cannon)

during the battle, Cafferata single-handedly held off a regimental-strength enemy and saved wounded Marines by hurling away a live grenade that had landed in their midst, at the cost of serious personal injury.

Cafferata is the sixth and final ship of the Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) variant of the Expeditionary Transfer Dock platform. ESBs are highly flexible platforms that provide logistics movement from sea to shore supporting a broad range of military operations. The ESB variant is designed around four core capabilities: aviation, berthing, equipment staging area, and command and control.

“Dad wasn’t one to talk about things. I can’t comprehend what he went through,” said Heather Cafferata. “He loved his family, and he loved his Marines. I am so honored and overwhelmed to be here honoring my dad today.”



The plates with the sponsors’ initials ready to be welded onto the keel of the expeditionary sea base USNS Hector A. Cafferata Jr. (ESB 8). Military Sealift Command and General Dynamics NASSCO of San Diego celebrated the ship’s keel laying at the NASSCO shipyard San Diego, April 25. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Cannon)

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND HOLDS ANNUAL SAAPM “WALK-A-LAP FOR A SURVIVOR” EVENT

By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs



Service members and civilian teammates assigned to Military Sealift Command perform the annual Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month “Walk-a-Lap for a Survivor,” April 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Brian Suriani)

Military Sealift Command held its annual Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM) “Walk-a-lap for a Survivor” event at MSC headquarters at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, April 22.

During the month of April, MSC joined the rest of the military and civilian community in emphasizing the importance of eliminating sexual assault throughout the nation. This year’s SAAPM theme, “Step Forward. Prevent. Report. Advocate,” is a call to action for members to use their personal and collective strength to advance meaningful change in preventing and responding to sexual violence.

Sexual Assault Prevention Response Program (SAPR) Manager Tina Carter told attendees that every 68 seconds someone is being sexually assaulted and that 65 percent of Americans are affected by sexual assault each year. Those statistics served as a reminder that combating sexual assault is an everyday battle.

“Prevention shouldn’t just happen one month out of the year, it must happen every day,” said Carter.

She then introduced guest speaker, Jacquelyn Grace, President of Healing Heroes, an organization which aims to empower survivors and victims, including veterans, by providing specialized trauma-informed care and evidence-based interventions.

Grace, a survivor herself, shared a deeply, emotional testimony about how she overcame years of sexual abuse. She then encouraged those in attendance to step up and act when they know someone needs help.

“I think we can stand here in solidarity and agreement that sexual assault impacts so many, but just as it impacts the nation, we can also impact the nation,” she said. “We can also speak up. We can be bold. We can be courageous and when you see something wrong and encourage those people who we know who have been impacted not to hide in the darkness. Not to cover up their wounds; to address them.”

After Grace’s remarks, MSC Chief of Staff Capt. Daniel Broadhurst recognized the hard work and dedication of the command’s SAPR team and presented letters of appreciation to MSC Volunteer SAPR Victim Advocate Carrie Souslin and Civilian Afloat and Ashore Victim Advocate Lisa Wimbush on behalf of MSC Commander, Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck thanking them for their efforts in preventing sexual assaults and ensuring victims are protected.

At the conclusion of the event, MSC First Class Petty Officers led attendees in the traditional “Walk-a-Lap for a Survivor” around MSC headquarters in solidarity with survivors of sexual assault.



A static display presented for Military Sealift Command’s annual Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month “Walk-a-Lap for a Survivor,” April 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Brian Suriani)

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND KICKS OFF OPERATION SIGNATURE TO CELEBRATE 75TH

By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command Executive Director Steven Cade kicked off Operation Signature, April 10, at MSC Headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia, by signing the first scroll to commemorate the command’s 75th Anniversary this year.

Operation Signature entails two scrolls (wooden dowels encircled by lined parchment paper) simultaneously circumnavigating the globe. One will start at MSC Atlantic and



Steven C. Cade, Executive Director, Military Sealift Command (MSC), signs MSC’s 75th anniversary scroll to kick off the organization-wide signing of the document April 10. The scroll was designed to commemorate MSC’s 75 years of maritime excellence. (U.S. Navy photo by Ryan Carter)

the other at MSC Pacific. They will be sent to MSC commands and ships around the world to be signed by MSC ashore staff members, Civil Service Mariners and service members. The scrolls will be sent back to headquarters in October then signed by MSC Commander Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck and displayed in perpetuity.

This year marks the 75th Anniversary of Military Sealift Command. Established as Military Sea Transportation Service in 1949, MSC is the premier logistics and special mission provider for the Department of Defense.

“We are very excited to give MSC staff and Civil Service Mariners around the world the opportunity to be part of history, to commemorate 75 years of maritime excellence,” said Jo Crawford, MSC Legal Office Supervisory Acquisition Attorney and Operation Signature Coordinator.

Crawford will map the course for the scrolls and help coordinate getting them from one command to the next. As the scrolls are sent around the world, members are encouraged to help document their journey by taking photos and videos to share with the command.

“We want to get the scrolls in as many hands as possible around the world over the next few months. It will be a logistical task that will require coordination and cooperation throughout the fleet,” said Crawford. “It’s going to be fun seeing all the photos of our team members signing the scrolls throughout their treks.”

WE ARE MSC75: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY SPECIALIST TAMMIE BINGLEY-GADSON

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs



This year, Military Sealift Command is celebrating its 75th anniversary. For 75 years, MSC has provided agile logistics, strategic sealift and specialized mission capabilities to the Department of Defense. At the heart of the MSC’s longevity are thousands of dedicated Civil Service Mariners and civilian employees who work at sea and ashore to ensure the mission is accomplished.

The “We Are MSC75,” series focuses MSC’s team members who have worked relentlessly over the years to make MSC what it is today – the nation’s premier maritime logistics provider. All of them have their own

unique path and story, but the one thing they have in common is pride in working for MSC.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Specialist Tammie Bingley-Gadson is a member of MSC’s EEO Team. MSC’s EEO Team offers the command’s Civil Service Mariners and civilian support staff an avenue to report alleged workplace incidents involving unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, genetic discrimination, age, disability, and prohibited acts of reprisal.

“As an EEO Specialist, I assist supervisors and senior level MSC leadership to ensure informal and formal EEO issues are processed correctly,” Bingley-Gadson stated. “MSC’s EEO Office ensures that all employees, regardless of their race, color, religion, sex or national origin are afforded a fair and equal opportunity for employment.”

Bingley-Gadson recently completed the 32-hour Counselors Course, which makes her qualified to act as an MSC EEO Counselor.

“I started at MSC in 2021 as an intern under the U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) Work Recruitment Program (WRP),” Bingley-Gadson stated. “Prior to starting my employment with MSC, I worked with various medical facilities working on medical billing and medical reimbursement.”

The WRP for College Students with Disabilities is a free resource co-sponsored by DOL’s Office of Disability Employment Policy and the Department of Defense, through which private businesses and federal agencies

nationwide can find qualified candidates from a variety of professional fields who are looking for internships and permanent positions.

“WRP is a Federal Government program, with select private sector partners, which selects college students with disabilities who are either current students or who have recently graduated,” according to Bingley-Gadson. “WRP gives these students the opportunity to fill internships or permanent employment positions.”

Bingley-Gadson offered some advice to those looking to become an MSC Teammate as well as those considering the WRP program.

“Do your research. Learn as much as you can about MSC and become familiar with WPR and how the program works,” she advised. “Learn what MSC’s mission is and its role in national security as well as the type of work you would be performing at MSC.”

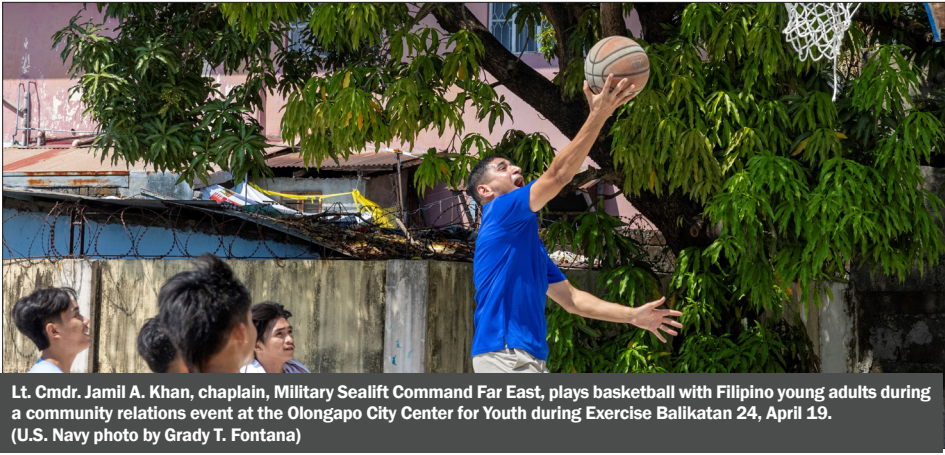
Bingley-Gadson intends on pushing forward with specialized skills training in EEO. She will also be graduating this year from Norfolk State University with a Master’s in Urban Development.

Any MSC Teammates who are seeking the assistance of our EEO Team should call 757-341-3310 or e-mail eeo_msc@us.navy.mil.

Bingley-Gadson concluded by stating she, “is really enjoying her time at MSC so far and would like to offer ‘congratulations’ on 75 years.”

MSCFE TEAM VISITS OLONGAPO CITY CENTER FOR YOUTH

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs



Members of Military Sealift Command Far East visited the Center for Youth to share lunch and fellowship with young adults during a community relations event as part of Exercise Balikatan 24 at Olongapo City, Philippines, April 19.

Olongapo City Center for Youth is a local government facility that provides care and rehabilitation to young adults through counseling, guidance and education. The MSCFE team, composed of active-duty service members and reservists, was in the Philippines assisting in the offload of MSC’s MV Cape Horn at Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Subic Bay, Philippines.

Chief Hospital Corpsman Salvador A. Vergara III, a reservist with MSCFE Expeditionary Port Unit Pearl Harbor and native of the Philippines, spoke to the young adults in Tagalog, emphasizing the importance of education and preparedness.

“My message to the kids was to work hard and be prepared for when opportunity presents itself,” said Vergara.

Marilou Manalo is a psychologist at the Olongapo City Center for Youth; she emphasized the importance of these interactions between service members and the local community.

“This is a therapeutic activity for youths,” said Manalo. “These types of visits give the kids new ideas or information from good role models.”

After lunch and fellowship, the afternoon ended with a pickup game of basketball. The visit left a lasting impact on all participants.

“This was a good opportunity to talk to these kids,” said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Jamil A. Khan, chaplain, MSC Far East in Singapore. “Hopefully, some seeds were planted, and some of the things that were said will have an impact on them.”

Balikatan is a longstanding annual exercise, between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the U.S. military, designed to strengthen bilateral capabilities, interoperability, trust, and cooperation.



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MV CAPE HORN DELIVERS GEAR DESTINED FOR BALIKATAN 2024

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs



Military Sealift Command operated ship MV Cape Horn (T-AKR 5068) arrives at the New Container Terminal, Subic Bay, Philippines, to offload equipment in support of exercise Balikatan 2024, April 15. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady T. Fontana)

Military Sealift Command (MSC) operated ship MV Cape Horn (T-AKR 5068) continued its voyage through the Pacific and arrived at the New Container Terminal in Subic Bay, Philippines, to offload equipment in support of exercise Balikatan 2024, April 15-16.

The vessel embarked on its voyage from its home base in San Francisco and made stops to load or unload cargo in Tacoma, Wash.; Honolulu; Anchorage, Alaska; Japan; Thailand; and Indonesia, before reaching the Philippines.

Cape Horn transported equipment to support several theater security cooperation exercises with ally and partner militaries in the Indo-Pacific region. Within two days, the ship unloaded approximately 554 pieces of equipment and containers.

Oversight of the offload of equipment in the Philippines was conducted by a detachment of the U.S. Army’s Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.

The equipment coming off Cape Horn will support two exercises in the Philippines: the joint and combined BK24, as well as a separate U.S. Army bilateral exercise with the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Stevedores at the New Container Terminal, Subic Bay, Philippines, begin mooring the Military Sealift Command operated ship MV Cape Horn (T-AKR 5068) before an offload of equipment in support of exercise Balikatan 2024, April 15. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady T. Fontana)



“This is one of the last major discharges in support of BK24. MV Cape Horn was here before and did a partial discharge, today it’s doing a complete discharge,” said Army Lt. Col. Thomas Campeau, commander, 836th Transportation Battalion, 599th Transportation Brigade, SDDC, out of Yokohama, Japan. “It’s discharging 554 pieces of equipment in support of (two) exercises. We’re discharging rolling stock, containers and trailers; all the major components for the exercises are going to come off today and distributed to its owning units to be transported to the various exercise sites.”

The Balikatan discharge is part of a large-scale logistics operation that demonstrates U.S. and Philippine cooperation to enhance interoperability between forces in an increasingly complex Indo-Pacific security environment.

The ship is part of the Ready Reserve Force fleet of vessels. The RRF is a subset of vessels within the Maritime Administration’s National Defense Reserve Fleet ready to support the rapid worldwide deployment of U.S. military forces.

Cape Horn is a 750-foot-long roll-on, roll-off cargo vessel with four decks of cargo space. It can accommodate 186,000 sq. ft. of cargo, which equates to about 4.3 acres of space that can equal roughly 38,000 tons of gear.



A military vehicle is driven out of Military Sealift Command operated ship MV Cape Horn (T-AKR 5068) during an offload for exercise Balikatan 2024 at the New Container Terminal, Subic Bay, Philippines, April 15. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady T. Fontana)

Despite its massive presence, the ship’s characteristically low draft allows for this impressive tonnage while still getting into smaller ports. This ship has a significant cargo capacity and is multi-modal, making Cape Horn ideal for the charter.

According to the MARAD website, RFF provides nearly 50 percent of government-owned surge sealift capability.

To support Balikatan port operations, MSC Far East sent a team of Reservists from Expeditionary Port Unit Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to assist in the discharge and provide an opportunity for MSC to learn more about port operations in the various countries.

These members act as liaisons between the ship, the military service members, and the host nation partners.

“The biggest challenge is all the coordination with the various host nation partners, the various exercise participants, and the different logistics teams,” said Chief Hospital Corpsman Salvador A. Vergara III, EPU Pearl Harbor, MSC Far East. “MSC has learned that having a single MSC representative supporting all the various locations greatly enhances efficiency, especially when working with a commercial vessel that’s not too accustomed to working with the U.S. military.”

Balikatan is a longstanding annual exercise between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the U.S. military designed to strengthen bilateral capabilities, interoperability, trust, and cooperation.



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MSC’S FLEET REPLENISHMENT OILER PARTNERS WITH LOCAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

By LaShawn Sykes, Military Sealift Command Atlantic Public Affairs



A group of local middle school students received a once in a lifetime experience aboard Military Sealift Command's fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys (T-AO 188), located in Norfolk, Virginia, Feb. 28. Pictured above is eighth-grade AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) student Kenniya Worsley from Oscar Smith Middle School in Chesapeake, Virginia. (U.S. Navy photo by LaShawn Sykes)

A group of local middle school students received a once in a lifetime experience aboard Military Sealift Command's fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys (T-AO 188), located in Norfolk, Virginia, Feb. 28. Twenty-five, focused and highly motivated, eight graders from the Oscar Smith Middle School in Chesapeake, Virgina, participated in a 90-minute interactive learning experience aboard the vessel. There the AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) eight grade students had the opportunity to tour the entire vessel, have their endless supply of questions answered by the Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARs), who run and maintain the vessel, and enjoy a very special sit-down lunch with the Ship's Master Capt. Patrick T. Christian.

Before lunch, the students received a very detailed and informative tour of the ship led by Chief Mate Thomas Pace, Second Mate Joseph Redwood Jr., Operations Chief Larry Gonzales, and a few more selected CIVMARs, said Technology & AVID Teacher MaRae Fleming.

Gonzales, who collaborated with Fleming to organize the ship visit, was very excited to host the students,“I

am always honored to welcome young people aboard the vessel. Being able to show off one of MSC’s 17 fleet replenishment oilers that specializes in refueling and resupplying Navy warships at sea; so that, these ships can remain on station and in the fight, makes me so proud.”

This was an exceptional experience for my students, Fleming said. She first became aware of USNS Joshua Humphreys, after Pace and Supply Officer Khalil Moye visited the school, Feb. 16, and delivered a presentation about their careers as an MSC CIVMAR. Enthralled by their presentations, Fleming requested a ship tour. She wanted her students to see up close and personal how this massive Combat Logistics Force vessel, that can supply everything from food, to repair parts, to movies, mail, and the everyday consumables, daily operates in order to sustain both the warships at sea and the men and women who “proudly” serve aboard them.

Fleming said, her students “absolutely loved everything about the experience and have yet to stop talking about it.” Darius Moore said, “The food on the ship was amazing! I really enjoyed everything about this field trip.” Kenniya Worsley echoed Moore’s sentiment, by stating, “I really enjoyed this field trip, seeing how everything works aboard the ship was very cool.”

“After the ship tour, both the students and teachers were treated to a delicious lunch, along with an assortment of desserts, which were executed exceptionally by Chief Steward John Robinson,” Fleming said. “The students especially loved the delicious chocolate chip cookies made by Cook Baker Glenda Harris, she said. “It was evident that Capt. Christian and all of the Civil Service Mariners who serve aboard USNS Joshua Humphrey worked very hard to ensure that my students enjoyed every aspect of the ship visit.”

“What a wonderful captivating experience for my students,” Fleming said. “Capt. Christian, along with many other CIVMARs, graciously shared various aspects of their careers working for the Military Sealift Command. This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all of us; one we will cherish forever.” Saying thank you does not adequately express how grateful and overjoyed you have made us feel. Blessings to everyone.”

Going forward, Fleming would like to capitalize on this budding partnership between Oscar Smith Middle School and USNS Joshua Humphreys by adding annual ship visits to the school’s curriculum. “An AVID class provides professional learning for educators to close the gap and improve college and career readiness for middle and high school students. A yearly ship visit would be very beneficial to my students and, hopefully, help peak their interest for future career goals with Military Sealift Command.”

The mission of Oscar Smith Middle School is to provide a quality education for all students by setting high academic standards and providing diverse instructional, social, physical, and cultural opportunities with the support of students, families, staff, and community in an inclusive, safe and caring environment.

Oscar Smith AVID students maintain average to above-average grades, test scores and attendance records. All have the determination to improve their writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading skills to succeed academically; and successfully transition into further education.



Twenty-five, focused and highly motivated, AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) eighth graders from the Oscar Smith Middle School in Chesapeake, Virginia, participated in a 90-minute interactive learning experience aboard fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys (T-AO 188), Feb. 28. Pictured above is AVID eighth-grade student Darius Moore who was captured enjoying his lunch aboard the vessel. (U.S. Navy photo by LaShawn Sykes)

USS MOUNT WHITNEY ARRIVES IN NAPLES, ITALY

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Mario Coto, USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20)



Electronics Technician 3rd Class Michael Thompson and Religious Program Specialist 1st Class Ashley Ferguson raise the Ensign during sea and anchor detail aboard the Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) as it arrives in Naples, Italy, April 7. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Mario Coto)

The U.S. 6th Fleet Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) arrived in Naples, Italy, in support of NATO’s 75th anniversary festivities on April 7.

Mount Whitney was scheduled to host the NATO 75th anniversary celebration and provided tours for local groups from Naples. This port visit also provides Sailors the opportunity to experience the rich history of Naples while gaining an understanding of and strengthening relationships with a key NATO Ally.

Mount Whitney is in Naples, Italy for a scheduled port visit to participate in the 75th anniversary of the NATO Alliance and enhance U.S.-Italian relations.

Since NATO’s founding in 1949, Naples, Italy, has played a pivotal role in the alliance’s success. The arrival of the USS Mount Olympus in 1951 in the Bay of Naples marked the start of a continuous presence that has endured for 75 years.

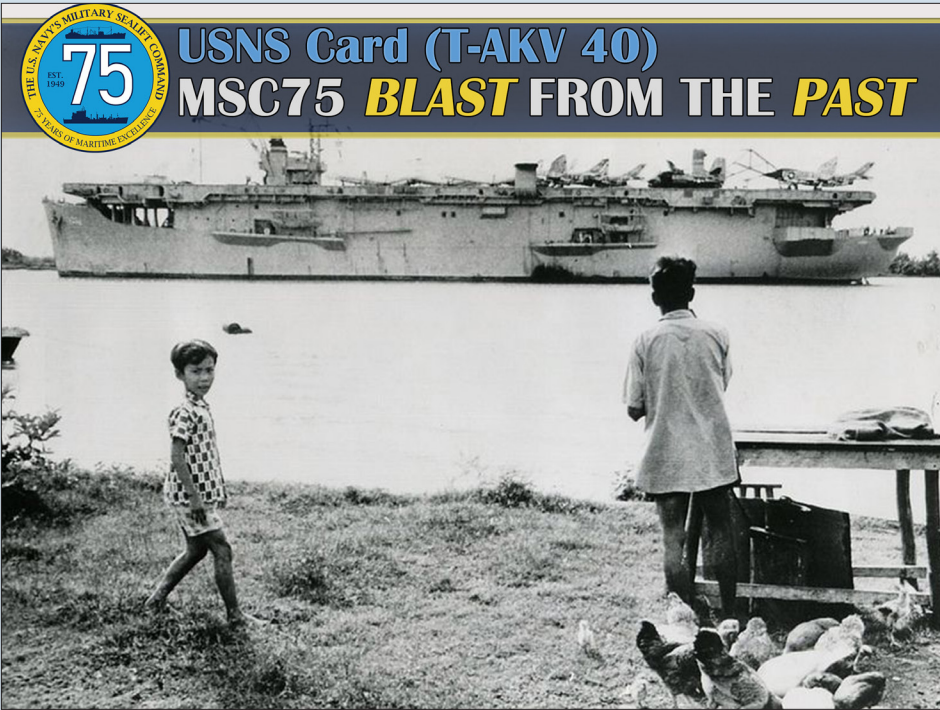
Mount Whitney, forward deployed to Gaeta, Italy, is operated with a combined crew of U.S. Sailors and Military Sealift Command Civil Service Mariners and sails primarily in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations supporting U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa.

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied, and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.



Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Landry Spence, observes sea and anchor detail aboard the Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) as it arrives in Naples, Italy, April 7. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Mario Coto)

MSC75 Blast from the Past - USNS Card (T-AKV 40)



This year marks the 75th Anniversary of Military Sealift Command. In our MSC75 Blast from the Past series, we honor MSC’s significant impact on the maritime environment and 75 years of maritime excellence by looking back at some of the vessels that laid the framework for the MSC fleet as we know it today.

On May 2, 1964, USNS Card (T-AKV 40) became the first major U.S. vessel to be sunk by enemy action during the Vietnam War.

USS Card (ACV-11) was an American Bogue-class escort carrier commissioned in 1942. It was reclassified as a Cargo-Ship and Aircraft Ferry, re-designated as (T-AKV 40) and activated for the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS), later known as Military Sealift Command in 1959.

Crewed by a civilians, Card made several trips to Saigon, Vietnam, carrying helicopters, planes and vehicles. It had just unloaded a cargo of helicopters and fighter-bombers from Manila, Philippines, and was preparing to return to the United States when Viet Cong frogmen planted an explosive charge below the waterline near the engine room that blew a hole in the hull of the 9,800-ton ship killing five crewmen.

Due to rapid response from the crew and authorities, flooding in the engine compartment was stopped and stabilized quickly, leaving Card settled 48 feet below the water level. Salvage operations began immediately and on May 19, only a couple of weeks after the attack, Card was raised nearly 50 feet and towed to Subic Bay in the Philippines and then Yokosuka, Japan, for repairs.

Card would return to service, Dec. 11, and continue to provide helicopter transport support in Vietnam throughout the rest of the decade. On March 10, 1970, Card entered the Pacific Reserve Fleet, at Olympia. She was withdrawn from the fleet, June 9, 1971.

JUNE IS MEN’S HEALTH MONTH

By Meghan Sullivan, Military Sealift Command Health Promotion Program

June is Men’s Health Month, a national observance used to raise awareness about health care for men and focus on encouraging boys, men, and their families to practice and implement healthy living decisions, such as exercising and eating healthy. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, men in the United States, on average, die five years earlier than women and die at higher rates from the three leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, and unintentional injuries. During Men’s Health Month, we encourage men to take control of their health and for families to teach young boys healthy habits throughout childhood.

Here are five ways for men to stay at the top of their game:

1. Protect your heart.

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of men. Healthier food choices build a healthier heart – make fruits and vegetables half of your plate.

2. Get exercise.

Getting just 30 minutes if exercise each day can help you live longer and healthier.

3. Preventative maintenance.

Getting regular check-up can catch small problems before they become big.

4. Quit tobacco

Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, stroke, and a great risk of erectile dysfunction.

5. Talk with someone.

Life can get tough and thinking things through with a mental health professional can help.

The Health Promotion program at MSC offers the following free services to its civilian mariners with their health and wellness:

- InBody Screenings (measures percentage of body fat, muscle bass, basal metabolic rate, or how many calories you burn at rest in a day, and more)
- Individualized Health Coaching
- Online health education and exercise classes
- Subscription to Weekly Wellness newsletters, covering a variety of health and wellness topics
- Health Risk Assessment and subscription to online wellness portal
- SHIP FIT: A workout plan distributed quarterly with all bodyweight exercises that can be done while underway or at home

HPP is here for you! We encourage you to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. EMAIL: stephanie.rusnak.ctr@us.navy.mil or msullivan@millenniumhealthandfitness.com



#MensHealthMonth

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USS HERSHEL “WOODY” WILLIAMS (ESB 4) ARRIVES IN TEMA, GHANA

From U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa Public Affairs

The Blue military crew (MILCREW) of the Lewis B. Puller-class expeditionary sea base USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4) and the ship’s Military Sealift Command Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARs) arrived in Tema, Ghana, for a regularly scheduled port visit, March 13.

This port visit strengthens U.S.-Ghanaian partnership as the two nations work together for a stable, secure, and prosperous Gulf of Guinea and West Africa region. It also allows the Sailors and CIVMARs of USS Hershel “Woody” Williams a chance to experience the unique culture, historic sights, and hospitality of a critical regional partner.

“Our crew is excited to be here in Tema and we thank the Ghanaian people for their incredible hospitality and enduring partnership,” said Capt. Amy Lindahl, Commanding Officer of Hershel “Woody” Williams Blue MILCREW. “This is our first port visit on our current deployment to Africa, and Tema is the perfect place to kick off all of the upcoming bilateral and multilateral work we have planned with our regional partners.”

The ship departed Naval Station Rota, Spain to start deployment, Feb. 28. Prior to the Rota port visit, the ship completed a Mid-Term Availability (MTA) at the Viktor Lenac shipyard in Rijeka, Croatia. This type of routine maintenance is crucial to keeping the ship on mission in support of national security objectives.

After departing Tema, Hershel “Woody” Williams will continue its deployment to the African continent, leveraging opportunities to work alongside regional Allies and partners in a variety of exercises and operations. A credible, capable naval presence increases maritime security, and highlights our shared commitment to fostering regional security and stability among partnered and allied nation naval militaries.



Ghana Navy Sailors take a tour of the Lewis B. Puller-class Expeditionary Sea Base USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4), guided by the ship’s Chief Mate Denis Bondarenko, March 20. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ethan Jaymes Morrow)

USNS Harvey Milk from Page 1



The John Lewis-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206) transits the San Francisco Bay during a namesake visit, March 28. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joseph R. Vincent)

Addressing the veterans during the event, Meyer acknowledged many of them came home from that war to a country that failed to fully acknowledge their service and sacrifice.

“For too many of these Veterans, the recognition of their bravery comes too late,” he said. “But for others, while it may be delayed, we can express our gratitude for their service today. Vietnam War Veterans Day gives us the opportunity to right the wrongs of the past and to remember those who served and sacrificed on our behalf.”

The 746-foot Milk, the second ship in the John Lewis class of fleet replenishment oilers, was christened in 2021. The next John Lewis-class ships will also bear the names of American civil rights heroes, including Supreme Court justices Earl Warren, Thurgood Marshall and Ruth Bader Ginsburg; politician Robert F. Kennedy; suffragist Lucy Stone; and abolitionist Sojourner Truth.

USNS Harvey Milk will deliver fuel, food, supplies, repair parts, and materials to U.S. Navy and allied ships while at sea. This capability allows these warships to remain at sea for extended periods of time to execute their assigned missions.

MSC anyday

USNS CHARLTON (T-AKR 314)



U.S. Army vehicles and equipment are staged, ready to be loaded onto the USNS Charlton (T-AKR 314) at Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina, March 25. Over the course of several days, almost 1,500 pieces of equipment were loaded onto the vessel including vehicles, tents, radios, and repair parts. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Alex Fox Echols III)



Military Sealift Command

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