



SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION – ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS, AFL-CIO

ITF: Mariner Abandonment Hits All-Time High in 2025

A new report from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) finds that cases of worldwide mariner abandonment topped 6,200 last year, the most ever recorded. Among the victims were crew from the *Navimar 3* (above), pictured in Bangladesh. SIU President David Heindel (right, inset), who also serves as Chair of the ITF Seafarers' Section, called the collective abandonments "nothing short of a disgrace." *Page 3*



U.S. Court Decision Supports Jones Act

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia late last year issued a comprehensive ruling that supports America's freight cabotage law. Jones Act vessels (including the SIU-crewed *Isla Bella* and the SIU-crewed Crowley tug pictured above) support U.S. national, economic and homeland security. *Page 5.*



Honolulu-Area Seafarers Spread Holiday Cheer

SIU personnel are pictured at the hiring hall in Honolulu, Hawaii, where they volunteered for community outreach supporting Family Programs Hawaii, a local nonprofit social services organization self-described as "dedicated to strengthening children and families at risk in Hawaii." SIU VP Hazel Galbiso noted, "The Honolulu port and its membership generously supported the most recent Adopt-a-Tote-Bag campaign, helping brighten the holidays for local foster children and families. As a result of their contributions, we reached our goal and distributed 1,050 tote bags at the Family Programs Hawaii Christmas party on Dec. 7." *Page 20 (back page)*



Historic Partnership



David Heindel

The SIU's close ties with our military – and our members' unwavering dedication – were on display early last month when Iranian gunboats threatened the Seafarers-crewed tanker *Stena Imperative* (Crowley) in international waters in the Strait of Hormuz, approximately 16 nautical miles north of Oman.

The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) confirmed that its forces promptly supported the American-flag tanker after individuals from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps stated their intentions to unlawfully “board and seize” the *Stena Imperative*. A U.S. Navy destroyer that had been operating nearby responded, as did the U.S. Air Force. As a CENTCOM spokesman put it, “The situation de-escalated as a

result, and the U.S.-flagged tanker is proceeding safely.”

This story was in the headlines for no more than a day or two, despite high-level tension between our countries in recent months. In some ways, I believe that the “just another day on the job” reaction to the attempted boarding of a U.S.-flag vessel powerfully underscores several noteworthy points.

First, the U.S. Merchant Marine never hesitates to answer the call, whether the mission involves obvious risks or less-likely ones. We also don't back down when challenged. American mariners have supported U.S. national, economic and homeland security from our country's first days, “In Peace and War.” That will remain the case as long as our elected political leaders stay committed to supporting a strong American maritime industry, prominently including well-trained, dedicated, reliable U.S.-citizen mariners.

Second, we are proud of, and grateful for our consistently outstanding, respectful relationship with U.S. armed forces. Whether we are delivering for our troops in times of crisis, or receiving much-needed assistance as in the case of the *Stena Imperative*, it's a simple but vital fact that we've always got each other's backs.

Those bonds are much more than transactional. As you may have read in some recent *LOG* features, we've got many military veterans in the SIU's ranks,

both among our members and our officials and staff. In many ways, we're part of the same patriotic workplace family.

Finally, it's significant that the *Stena Imperative* is part of the U.S. Tanker Security Program (TSP). This is a relatively new but unquestionably valuable policy that boosts our military capabilities across the globe. The TSP, like the Maritime Security Program that preceded it by many years, symbolizes America's investment in strengthening the industry.

Last month's incident won't be the final one involving a foreign country and an American-flag ship. Whenever and wherever the next such challenge happens, we'll be ready. Meanwhile, I thank all of the SIU members and officers on the *Stena Imperative* for your professionalism and courage.

Big Win in Texas

In what has been described as a stunning victory for workers, the president of a Machinists local in Fort Worth easily won a recent election for an open state senate seat there. Democrat Taylor Rehmet's pro-union message resonated with voters, whose million-member district had only elected Republicans since 1979.

As most if not all Seafarers know, our union does not care about political party affiliation. We support candidates who support the U.S. Merchant Marine and who back workers' rights. In Rehmet's case, it is noteworthy that his pro-worker platform propelled him to an unlikely win despite being severely outspent.

His victory reminds us of the importance of grassroots action. As we promote our industry plus the benefits of union representation, with the midterm elections not all that far off, I'm hopeful that other voters across the country will see the wisdom of backing candidates who share our values and our goals.

By the way, this is a good time to make sure you are registered to vote.

Rest in Peace

You may have seen the notice on our website or social media pages or elsewhere, but, for anyone who missed it, Sophie Sacco passed away in early February. Sophie was the widow of Mike Sacco, our union's longest-serving president.

Sophie's unwavering support of Mike's work definitely benefited Seafarers. She was a dependable source of strength, and she loved the SIU. She especially valued the educational opportunities available in Piney Point, and she served as an unofficial recruiter for much of her life.

This feels like the end of an era, and while I am saddened by her passing, I salute Sophie for her many sacrifices on behalf of Mike and us. Rest in Peace.

'Strong Unions, Stronger Communities and Democracy' New Report Spells Out Numerous, Widespread Benefits of Unionization

A brief but powerful “fact sheet” from the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) enumerates many community-wide benefits of unionization.

Co-authored by Margaret Poydock and Celine McNicholas for the nonprofit, nonpartisan think-tank, the report leaves no doubt that union membership helps more people than just the rank-and-file. The online version includes links to specific, individual reports supporting all of the data cited in the fact sheet.

“There is an undeniable correlation between higher levels of unionization and stronger economic, community, and democratic outcomes,” the writers noted. “States with a larger share of workers represented by a union enjoy higher incomes, greater access to health insurance, and fewer voting restrictions.”

The fact sheet pointed out that union contracts provide workers with:

- **Higher wages:** Workers covered by a union contract earn, on average, 12.8% more in wages than those of nonunionized peers with comparable characteristics. When union density is high, nonunionized workers benefit too, because nonunion employers must raise wages to retain and attract workers they need.



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The SIU engaged an environmentally friendly printer for the production of this newspaper.

- **Reduced racial wage gaps:** Black workers represented by a union are paid 12.6% more than their nonunionized Black peers, and Hispanic workers represented by a union are paid 16.4% more than their nonunionized Hispanic peers.

- **Higher wages for women:** Wages for women represented by a union are, on average, 9.8% higher than those of nonunionized women with comparable characteristics.

- **Reduced income inequality:** By directly raising wages for union members and indirectly lifting pay for nonunionized workers, unions play a crucial role in raising wages for working people and narrowing income inequality.

- **Healthier and safer workplaces:** Union workers are more likely to have access to employer-sponsored health care and paid sick leave compared with their unrepresented counterparts. Further, unions foster safer workplaces by empowering workers to bring up unsafe working conditions without fear of retaliation.

- **Secure retirement:** Unionized workers are more likely to have access to employer-sponsored retirement plans (94% compared with 72% of nonunion workers). Further, union employers are more likely to contribute toward retirement plans compared to non-union employers.

The report continued, “Unions do more than give workers a voice at work – high union density also shapes the strength and the health of our communities.” For example, states with high union density experience:

Higher wages and income

- **Higher minimum wages:** The average minimum wage of high-union-density states is \$13.70, compared with an average minimum wage of \$9.30 in low-union-density states.

- **Higher incomes:** Median household incomes in high-union-density states are more than \$12,000 higher, on average, than median incomes in low-union-density states.

- **Greater access to retirement security:** States with smaller declines in union density experienced smaller reductions in employer-provided retirement plans.

Healthier communities and stronger social insurances

- **Greater access to health insurance:** The share of people without any form of health insurance was 5.7% in states with higher union densities, compared with 9% in states with lower union densities.

- **Greater access to paid sick leave:** 70.6% of states with the highest union density have enacted paid sick leave legislation, compared with just 11.8% of low-union-density states.

- **Greater access to unemployment insurance:** Unemployed workers are twice as likely to receive unemployment benefits in high-union-density states than in low-union-density states.

- **More spending on education:** States with higher rates of unionization spend \$22,777 per pupil on education, compared with \$15,568 per pupil in low-union-density states. Further, states with higher unionization rates are less likely to have universal voucher programs.

Stronger democracy

- **Fewer voting restriction laws:** Since 2021, low-union-density states have passed 44 voter restriction laws, whereas high-union-density states passed six such laws. Further, 70% of states with the highest union density had not passed any voter restrictions between 2021 and 2024, while less than a quarter of medium-union-density states and low-union-density states can claim this distinction.

The report concluded, “The evidence is clear: When unions are strong, workers have more power and communities thrive. Building union density is not just a worker or workplace issue, but it is also a mechanism to uplift families and communities. In the face of rising inequality and authoritarianism, unions organize, educate, and mobilize working people to defend voting rights, push back against disinformation, and expand civic participation. Rebuilding worker power by strengthening unions is not just good policy – it is a democratic imperative in the face of authoritarian backsliding.”

ITF Report Finds Global Mariner Abandonment at All-Time High

In a report released in January, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) found that cases of seafarer abandonment reached an all-time high in 2025, with 6,223 seafarers abandoned across 410 ships. Those totals, according to the ITF's data, represent a 31 percent increase in ship abandonments and a 32 percent increase in seafarer abandonment when compared to 2024.

"It's nothing short of a disgrace that, yet again, we are seeing record numbers of seafarers abandoned by unscrupulous ship owners," said David Heindel, SIU President and Chair of the ITF Seafarers' Section. "Every day, all around the world, seafarers face horrific violations of their human and labor rights, all so that bottom-feeding companies can make a quick buck at their expense. It's very clear that this is a systemic issue in the industry - and that means we need the entire industry to come together with seafarers and their unions to say, 'enough is enough,' and take action together to end this crisis."

The report, which will be submitted to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) ahead of its discussion at a legal committee meeting this year, also found that mariners were due \$25.8 million in 2025 because of those abandonments, of which the ITF has recuperated and distributed \$16.5 million so far.

According to the IMO, seafarer abandonment is defined as "failing to cover the cost of a seafarer's repatriation; leaving a seafarer without necessary maintenance and support; unilaterally severing ties with a seafarer, including failure to pay contractual wages for a period of at least two months."

ITF General Secretary Stephen Cotton said, "How many more seafarers have to be put through the

misery of abandonment until we see the changes that we know are needed to end this disgraceful practice? In 2025, we've yet again seen the worst year on record for seafarer abandonment. But this isn't just a story about numbers, these are the people - the workers - who keep our economy moving forward being forced into absolutely desperate situations, far from home and often without any clear resolution in sight. As we've long said, the solutions to abandonment lie in accountability in the shipping industry ensuring that ship owners can't dodge their responsibilities. The International Maritime Organization must be given more power to play a coordinating role in eradicating abandonment."

Indian seafarers were the worst affected national group in 2025, with 1,125 mariners abandoned, followed by Filipino mariners (539) and Syrian mariners (309). So-called flag-of-convenience (FOC) vessels accounted for 337 vessels abandoned in 2025 - 82% of the total. The ITF estimates that around 30% of the entire global fleet of merchant vessels fly FOCs.

The ITF is calling for the following steps to be taken to tackle seafarer abandonment:

- Flag States to be compelled to log a ship's beneficial owner, including contact details, as a pre-condition for registration
- National blacklisting of vessels to protect seafarers from ships with repeated involvement in abandonment cases, following the lead of India's DG Shipping
- Government investigations into the use of FOCs (also known as runaway flags), as is currently underway in the U.S.

The full report is available online.

Case Study: The Eleen Armonia

One Indian mariner who is currently abandoned alongside three other Indian crew spoke to the ITF about his ongoing ordeal. Those four individuals have been aboard the ship, the *Eleen Armonia*, off the coast of Nigeria, since June 2025 without receiving pay (the ITF filed the ship as abandoned in August 2025). Despite repeated appeals and the expiration of contracts, they have not been repatriated by the ship owner - Eleen Marine - despite seeing other crew members signing off to go home.

"Every month we've asked the company to pay our wages and send us home, but they don't care. We're in touch with many authorities, including the ITF, who are trying to help us, but right now it feels like we will only go home when the company decides," the mariner said. "The situation here is worse than hell. We keep hearing false promises from the company, it's maybe 10 times that they've promised us we can go home, then nothing. The ship's insurer contacted us in December and said that since our wages have been pending for more than two months, they would get involved and help us sign off. But then they said they are still waiting for company permission, and the company hasn't replied for a week."

He added, "It's become a daily routine for me that I can't sleep from stress, and if this continues, I honestly don't know how it will affect my health. I joined this vessel quickly because the assignment meant I could spend Christmas and New Year with my new daughter and family - I have now missed Christmas, New Year and an important family event. As seafarers, it feels really shameful that we're treated this way."

Earlier in 2025, an ITF report detailed Eleen Marine's relationship with the Slovenia-registered sham union, the so-called International Seafarers' Union (ISU). The ISU was established alongside and operates in tandem with the company, Lanibra, which sells anti-union services to ship owners. This means the ISU violates international and national laws that forbid interference by employers in a union.

Agreements Eleen Marine purchased from ISU-Lanibra are believed to have expired in June and have not been renewed.

The mariner's name has not been used to protect his identity. Mariners fear reprisals and blacklisting by employers for speaking out.

Source: International Transport Workers' Federation



Mariners were stuck aboard the tanker *Global Peace* for more than 15 months. The ship had no known flag or insurance.



The rusting tug *Navimar 3* (directly above) was detained near Bangladesh for a year, leaving crew members (including the one in photo above, right) abandoned and unpaid.



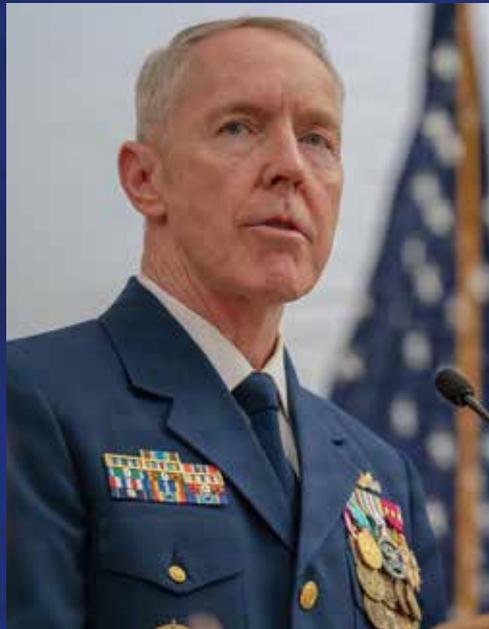
Adm. Lunday Takes Helm at Coast Guard

On Jan. 15, the United States Coast Guard conducted a formal swearing-in and assumption of command ceremony for Adm. Kevin Lunday as the 28th commandant of the agency. SIU President David Heindel and Vice President George Tricker represented the union at the event, which took place at Coast Guard headquarters in the nation's capital.

Upon taking the oath of office, Lunday formally assumed the responsibilities of commandant and reaffirmed what the agency described as "the Coast Guard's enduring role as a vital instrument of national power responsible for controlling, securing, and defending the U.S. border and maritime approaches; facilitating the safe and secure flow of commerce that is vital to economic prosperity, strategic mobility, and America's maritime dominance; and responding to crises and contingencies that may come without warning."

"I am honored to assume command of the United States Coast Guard," said Lunday. "Every day, Coast Guard men and women carry out missions that protect our homeland, secure our maritime borders, save lives and protect national security. I am humbled to serve alongside them while ensuring they have what they need to succeed - today and in the future."

Lunday served as acting commandant since January 2025. He previously served as the 34th vice commandant from June 2024 to January 2025.



Adm. Kevin E. Lunday addresses the gathering in the nation's capital. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Gabriel Wisdom)



Pictured at the ceremony are (from left) SIU President David Heindel, Coast Guard Rear Adm. Wayne Arguin, and SIU VP George Tricker.



Attendees prepare for the ceremony at Coast Guard headquarters.

IMB: Global Piracy Increased in 2025

The ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has issued their annual report of global piracy incidents, hot spots and other trends from 2025. As stated in the IMB Annual Piracy and Armed Robbery Report, there were 137 documented incidents against ships in 2025, which is an increase from 116 in 2024, and the highest recorded level in the last five years.

The compiled data revealed that far fewer crew members were taken hostage in 2025, with 46 reported hostages, compared to 126 taken hostage in 2024. Twenty-five crew members were reported kidnapped, while 10 were threatened, four injured and

three were assaulted. Additionally, the use of guns in incidents of piracy increased, with 42 reported cases in 2025 as opposed to 26 in 2024.

The vast majority of worldwide incidents occurred in the waters around Southeast Asia, with 95 incidents reported in 2025, followed by Africa (29 incidents) and the Indian sub-continent (eight).

According to the report, "Although only a small number of incidents were reported off the Somali coast in 2025, two incidents in November took place far from shore, showing that Somali pirate groups still have the ability to operate at range. In both cases, well-prepared crews, together with the swift response of naval forces, ensured the safety of the vessels and their crews.... The lack of a broader resurgence in Somali piracy continues to reflect the strong deterrent effect of sustained naval presence, supported by vessel hardening and the use of best management practices. IMB acknowledges active patrolling and robust responses to piracy by naval forces and encourages their continued presence in these waters."

IMB Director Michael Howlett said, "Reported incidents off the Somali coast highlight the ongoing importance of a sustained naval presence in these trade-critical waters. We also commend the Gulf of Guinea authorities for the steps taken to reduce reported incidents, while recognizing that crew members continue to be affected. Sustained and strengthened cooperation between regional authorities, navies, international partners, and industry remains essential to protect seafarers and safeguard trade."

Howlett concluded, "Timely reporting is key to preventing further incidents and protecting other vessels in the area. We continue to urge all ships to report incidents promptly, so that risks can be better

understood and effective measures taken to protect crews and vessels."

The full report is available online.

Weighing in on the subject, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has reported, "The threat posed by piracy and armed robbery against ships has been on the IMO's agenda since the early 1980s. In the late 1990s and the early 2000s the focus was on the South China Sea and the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. More recently, since 2005, IMO has focused on piracy off the coast of Somalia, in the Gulf of Aden and the wider Indian Ocean, and is currently implementing a strategy for enhancing maritime security in West and Central Africa, in line with the region's maritime security agreements. The Organization, with support and cooperation from the shipping industry, has through the years developed and adopted a number of antipiracy measures, which have contributed towards the mitigation of the negative impact posed by piracy worldwide. Information regarding acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships is publicly available (subject to registration) in IMO's Piracy and Armed Robbery module within the Organization's Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS).

"In addition," the statement continued, "IMO provides assistance, to Member States seeking to develop their own national or regional measures to address the threat of piracy, armed robbery against ships and other illicit maritime activities, if and when requested. This was the case of the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden (Djibouti Code of Conduct), agreed between countries in and around the western Indian Ocean and the case of the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery against Ships, and illicit maritime activity in west and central Africa in the Gulf of Guinea region of West Africa."

Total incidents by region

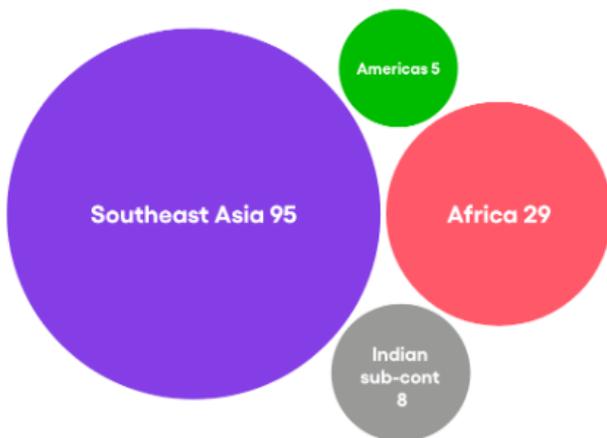


Chart courtesy of IMB Piracy Reporting Center

Court Ruling Backs Jones Act

A recent court decision jettisoned a challenge to America's cornerstone maritime law.

On Dec. 20, a U.S. district court dismissed a challenge to the U.S. Merchant Marine Act of 1920, commonly known as the Jones Act, which ensures vessels transporting cargo from point to point in the United States must be American-built, -owned and -crewed.

In a comprehensive 46-page opinion, Chief Judge James E. Boasberg of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia resoundingly rejected claims that the Jones Act violates the Due Process Clause and the obscure Port Preference Clause of the Constitution. The ruling, siding with the Trump administration's defense, reaffirms the statute's vital role in maintaining America's merchant marine for commercial and national security purposes as part of a long-standing history of American cabotage.

"We commend the Trump administration for vigorously defending the Jones Act in court and defending the men and women who serve America's national security, homeland security and economic security," said Jennifer Carpenter, President of the American Maritime Partnership (AMP, a major coalition to which the SIU is affiliated). "The Jones Act is foundational to our nation, and we thank the Court for its thoughtful analysis of the history of the law. This decision reaffirms not only the constitutionality but also the critical importance of the Jones Act to every American."

Judge Boasberg found that the Jones Act is "neutral legislation that does not create any direct preferences by channeling commerce through the ports of one state at the expense of others." The ruling emphasized that the Jones Act "emerged from a centuries-old

tradition of cabotage laws" and "applies uniformly across transportation modes, including aviation," reflecting consistent national policy across modes of transportation rather than discrimination against any particular state or region as the plaintiffs claimed.

The opinion concludes that the Jones Act also satisfies a rational basis review, noting that maintaining "a strong domestic merchant marine, protecting national security by ensuring that vessels are available for military use, and supporting American maritime employment" are "paradigmatic examples of legitimate governmental interests."

The policy is so consistent with national interests that a 2025 legal review by Seafarers Rights International found that 105 nations – representing over 85% of the world's coastlines – are covered by laws similar to the Jones Act.

"As we celebrate our nation's 250 years of independence, it is good to see the Trump administration, the courts and the private sector all aligned on how important a strong, American merchant marine is," Carpenter continued.

The lawsuit was brought by the Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF), which has been described as a "Dark Money" group by critics. As part of the PLF's filing, the organization did not disclose what donors, either foreign or domestic, financially supported this case.

As noted by AMP, "More than 45,000 American vessels built in American shipyards, crewed by American mariners, and owned by American companies, operate in our waters 24-hours a day, seven days a week. This commerce sustains nearly 650,000 American jobs, \$41.6 billion in labor compensation, and more than \$154.8 billion in annual economic output."

Important Benefits of Jones Act

- The Jones Act assures the U.S. mainland and its offshore communities continue to have reliable domestic water transportation service subject to national control in times of emergency
- Jones Act vessel construction and repair in U.S. shipyards assures the availability of the skilled professionals and the modern facilities needed in times of war or national emergency.
- Freight revenues earned by domestic carriers, shipyards, and repair yards are subject to taxes. Foreign-owned carriers and shipyards are not!
- Because of these requirements for the U.S.-manned vessels, the American merchant mariner is kept employed and trained, while at the same time maintaining readiness to man essential vessels in times of war or national emergency.
- Environmental standards, liability, safety, and enforcement are assuredly improved by having American-owned vessels and U.S.-citizen-crews responsible for safely delivering the goods along our nation's waterways.

Jones Act vessels support a wide range of American industries. For ocean shipping, the coastwise and intercoastal fleet primarily employs crude oil and product tankers while the domestic offshore fleet mainly employs container vessels. For Great Lakes shipping, the Jones Act fleet carries iron ore, coal and limestone. Inland waterways shipping carries more domestic cargo than ocean shipping and Great Lakes shipping combined, transporting farm products, petroleum products, coal and non-metallic minerals, and chemical and allied products in bulk by barge.

Source: Transportation Institute



Vessels including Crowley's SIU-crewed *American Energy* (above, left) and *eWolf* (remaining photo) bolster the U.S. shipboard manpower pool while reinforcing national sealift capability.

Op-Ed Captures Essence of Crucial Law: 'Jones Act keeps America Sovereign'

A recent online op-ed crystallizes the indispensable nature of America's freight cabotage law.

Writing for the maritime industry website Dredge-Wire, George Landrith powerfully made the case for the Jones Act, which has served U.S. interests for more than a century. The law requires that cargo moving between domestic ports is carried on vessels that are owned, flagged and crewed American.

Landrith is a law professor at George Mason University's School of Law, and also serves as president of the Frontiers of Freedom Institute.

After citing potential dangers from (respectively) China and Russia, Landrith wrote, "In such a world, the United States cannot afford to be naïve about the strategic importance of maintaining a strong domestic maritime capability. Yet there are still voices in Washington and the think-tank circuit who call for gutting or repealing the Jones Act, the century-old law that forms the backbone of America's maritime security."

He described the law as "simple in concept and profound in impact," adding the Jones Act "ensures that, in times of war or crisis, the United States has the ships, shipyards, and trained mariners it needs to defend itself and sustain its military. Without it, America would quickly find itself dependent on foreign powers – many of them adversaries – for essential

shipping within our own borders. That would be economic suicide and a national security nightmare rolled into one."

Landrith pointed out that most maritime countries across the globe maintain cabotage laws.

"Consider China, which prohibits foreign ships from carrying goods or passengers between Chinese ports," Landrith asserted. "All coastal trade must be done by Chinese-built, Chinese-owned, and Chinese-crewed vessels. Beijing even subsidizes its shipbuilding industry to the tune of \$130 billion annually to maintain dominance. Yet Chinese officials and their allies in American academia and media routinely deride the Jones Act as 'protectionist.' The hypocrisy is breathtaking.... In short: the world runs on cabotage laws. The only difference is that America is pressured to apologize for enforcing hers."

Reflecting on the law's origins, Landrith reminded readers about its national-security roots.

"When Congress passed it in 1920, the wounds of World War I were still fresh," he noted. "Lawmakers understood that a nation without a strong merchant marine cannot project power, defend itself, or sustain its military. Modern military leaders understand this. They're right. The U.S. Military Sealift Command and the Ready Reserve Force depend heavily on the Jones

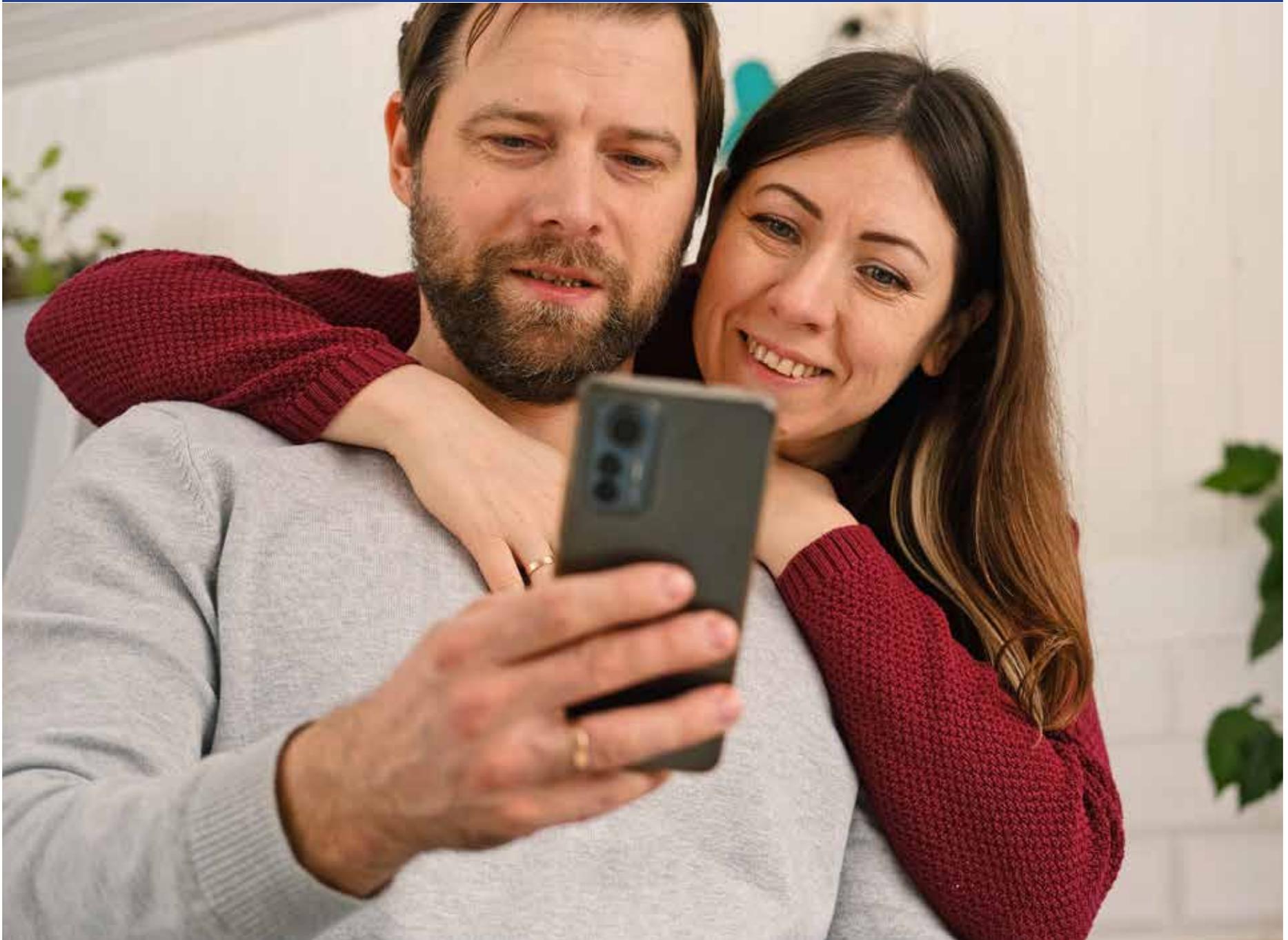
Act fleet and its mariners. Those civilian mariners, trained and loyal Americans, are the logistical backbone of the U.S. Navy in times of war. Without them, our military would be forced to rely on foreign-flagged ships and crews of uncertain allegiance. That is not a risk a serious nation takes."

Moreover, the Jones Act acts as a critical "maritime barrier" that protects homeland security, the author said.

"Imagine Chinese or Russian state-owned vessels navigating America's interior, loaded with surveillance gear, mapping infrastructure, or worse," Landrith wrote. "The Jones Act ensures that only American-crewed, American-flagged ships – manned by trained, vetted citizens – operate within most of our ports and waterways. It is, quite literally, border control for the seas."

He concluded, "A nation that cannot move its own goods cannot defend its own freedom. Instead, we must strengthen the Jones Act – modernize shipyards, train more mariners, and ensure that America remains the world's foremost maritime power. Because history is clear: when nations neglect their shipping, they lose their sovereignty. The Jones Act keeps America sovereign."

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At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



RECRUITING THE NEXT GENERATION – Seafarers earlier this year took part in a hands-on maritime expo and career fair in Corpus Christi, Texas. Some of the attendees (from local schools) boarded the SIU crewed G&H Towing vessel *Mark E. Kuebler* for a firsthand look at operations. Participants (many of them pictured above) included AB Wyatt Hickman, Mate Jose Padron, Port Captains Mark McGinnis and Michael Long, Mate Garrett Scott, AB Zane Coates, Capt. Bryce Martin, Engineer Stephen White, SIU Asst. VP Joe Zavala (fourth from right) and SIU Port Agent J.B. Niday (right).



WELCOME ASHORE IN FLORIDA – Chief Cook Carlos Diaz (left), who sailed with the SIU for 25 years, obtains his first pension check. He's pictured at the Jacksonville, Florida, hall with SIU Patrolman Eddie Pittman.



ABOARD CAPE SABLE – SIU Oakland Port Agent Chad Partridge (striped shirt) meets with Seafarers aboard the TOTE vessel. Recertified Bosun Artis Williams is in the coveralls in the photo above, left, while Recertified Bosun Ritche Acuman (stopping by from the *Cape San Juan*) is in the remaining pic.



FAMILY TRADITION – Conor Westbrook (center) picks up his union book at the New Orleans hall after completing the apprentice program and obtaining his oiler endorsement. Proud Pappa – aka SIU Asst. VP Chris Westbrook – is at right, while his other son, Aedan (who sails as a deckhand with Crescent Towing) is at left.



ACTIVE IN RETIREMENT – Recertified Steward Denis Burke may be retired, but he remains involved with his union, as evidenced by these recent photos. The three-person snapshot above, right, taken in Piney Point, includes Burke (left); his wife, Jeannet; and SIU President David Heindel. In photo above, left, SIU Exec. VP Augie Tellez joins the Burkes at the school. The remaining photo was taken at the Honolulu hall, and it includes SIU VP Hazel Galbiso (left) and Chief Steward Marcus Rowe (second from right).



ABOARD TANKER FLORIDA – As seen during a Jan. 8 servicing of the Intrepid tanker by Safety Director Dennison Forsman and Patrolwoman Kate Jansone. From left in the group photo are AB Lucas Anderson, AB Zachary Ballard, GVA Bashar Hasan, QEP Mohsen Mohamed, QMED Saddam Yahia, Steward/Baker Shari Hardman, and Jansone.



At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



PROMOTING UNION LABOR – SIU VP Gulf Coast Dean Corgey (fifth from left) recently took part in a meeting with Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) at the governor's mansion, along with other representatives from the maritime and building trades communities. They discussed how to create jobs and grow the market with skilled union labor.



ABOARD GEORGE III – Proudly displaying pro-Jones Act flyers aboard the Sunrise Operations/Pasha ship are (from left) Recertified Bosun Kissinfor Taylor, AB Josesimo Balerite, Chief Cook Ahmed Hussain, AB Joseph Toth, and AB Thyron Dy.



ABOARD GOLDEN STATE – Many thanks to Recertified Steward Delia Peters for these holiday photos from the Intrepid ship. In the smaller group photo are (right to left) SA Roger Sadang, Pumpman Mike Banks, AB Dalrick Fleming, AB Chris Green, GVA Tony Cummings, Bosun Anthony Newbill, and AB Travis Akins. In the larger pic (around the salad bar, also from right to left) are 2nd Engineer Derek Breunig, Capt. Kevin Grove, 3rd Mate Bella Auger, Chief Mate Merrick D'Ingianni, Chief Cook Abraham Pena, AB Dalrick Fleming, SA Roger Sadang, GVA Tony Cummings, Bosun Anthony Newbill, and AB Chris Green. (Visit our social media pages for more *Golden State* holiday photos.)



HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP IN HAWAII – Members gather at the Honolulu hall late last year to share a feast and enjoy camaraderie.



BOOKS GALORE IN JACKSONVILLE – Pictured from left at the January membership meeting in Jacksonville are GUDE Anthony Wallace, ABM Muhammad Khalid, SIU VP Gulf Coast Dean Corgey, SA Chassidy Palmer, and SA Thomas Nguyen. Muhammad received his A-seniority book at the meeting, while the other Seafarers obtained their respective full B books.



BOOK SECURED IN PINEY POINT – AB Joseph McCrea (center) receives his full B book at the SIU-affiliated school in southern Maryland. He's pictured with SIU Port Agent Kelly Krick (right) and SIU Patrolwoman Kianta Lee.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



ABOARD MAERSK DENVER – SIU members are pictured earlier this year as the vessel successfully transits the Red Sea. The voyage made headlines, as the *Maersk Denver* is believed to have been the first U.S.-flag commercial ship to sail there in two years. The SIU crew included Recertified Bosun James Walker, ABS Tyler Willette, Edgardo Opaio, Artavius Coco, Modesto Ordonez, and Marvin Mejia Martinez, Electrician Danielle Gore, QMED Muniru Adam, DEU Abdul Hakin Al Jahmi, Chief Steward James McLeod, Chief Cook Alaa Embaby, and SA Munasar Muthana. (Vessel master Capt. Christopher Kalinowski is an SIU hawsepiper.)



THUMBS UP IN HOUSTON – SA Myriam Sepulveda (right) receives her B book. She's pictured at the hiring hall with SIU Patrolman Anthony Jacobson.



WELCOME ASHORE IN HOUSTON – Longtime Seafarer Nelson "Frenchie" Breaux (center) picks up his first pension check. He is pictured at the Houston hall with his son Cory Breaux (right) and SIU Port Agent J.B. Niday. Frenchie sailed as a captain with G&H Towing; Cory is carrying on the family tradition, currently sailing as a mate with G&H.



OATH TAKEN IN OAKLAND – SA Saleh Fedamah (right) receives his full B book. He's pictured with SIU VP West Coast Joe Vincenzo at the January membership meeting in Oakland, California.



ABOARD MAHIMAHI – Keeping their shipmates well-fed aboard the Matson vessel are (from left) Recertified Steward Frank Ramones, Chief Cook Salah Omar, and ACU Taleb Alarqaban.



WELCOME ASHORE IN NEW ORLEANS – Engineer Tommy Dickerson (left), pictured at the New Orleans hall with SIU Asst. VP Chris Westbrook, picks up his first pension check. Dickerson sailed with Crescent Towing for 35 years.



MILESTONES REACHED – Multiple congratulations are in order for Chief Steward Steven Lopez (left). Towards the end of last year, he completed the chief steward course at the SIU-affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland, then secured his A-seniority book and first steward job around the same time. "Ten years in the making for this photo," he noted. "It's a really proud moment for me and my family." Steven's son is in the middle, and that's Safety Director Ricky Rivera at right, at the San Juan hall.



ABOARD USNS MARY SEARS – These snapshots were taken on Christmas Eve aboard the Ocean Ships-operated vessel. The Seafaring Gierbolinis are featured in the smaller group pic (from left): GUDE Anthony Gierbolini, Recertified Bosun Joseph Gierbolini, and GUDE Joseph Gierbolini.



TEAMWORK IN PUERTO RICO – The SIU joined forces with personnel from TOTE-Puerto Rico, the AFL-CIO, the American Federation of Teachers, the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and other supporters to help ensure reliable distribution of toys for the holidays along with thousands of bilingual education books in the territory. Some of the cargo (transported aboard the SIU-crewed *Isla Bella*, with container donation by TOTE) initially was stored at the hiring hall in San Juan, where these photos were taken. A number of SIU volunteers are shown in the large group photo. In the three-person pic above, middle, standing from left are Chief Cook Carlos Gomez, Safety Director Ricky Rivera, and Bosun Joel Gonzalez. The remaining photo includes (from left) Rivera, Nadry Martinez of LCLAA, and AFT VP Victor Bonilla.



Russell Yale Macomber

Editor's note: This article is the first in an occasional series featuring former SIU members who have risen through the ranks (or, in informal maritime industry terms, have gone up through the hawsepipe). Russell Macomber graduated from the Paul Hall Center's apprentice program in 2008; he currently sails as a deep-sea captain. He has been a periodic correspondent with a member of the LOG team, hence the familiarity within a few of the questions and answers.

It looks as if you connected with Piney Point in your mid-thirties. What type of work did you do before then, and what led you to the maritime industry?

In what I like to say was a different lifetime, I worked in finance. My first job was with a CPA firm doing tax audits for large Pentecostal churches. I then worked in the stock market for a while and had my ups and downs – the downs being what eventually led me to sea.

After leaving the corporate world I worked for a contractor who was remodeling Burger Kings in my area. He taught me how to lay tile, do HVAC work, general construction and other skills. I realized I liked working with my hands. At the same time, I was not feeling very satisfied with life, and I was hit with an extreme urge to travel.

I like to write. I decided it sounded romantic to travel the world, write about my adventures and make my fortune as a best-selling novelist. Unfortunately, I didn't have the money to just take off so I hopped on the computer and used my dial up internet to search how to trade my labor for free passage on ships. I thought I could swab a few decks while hitching a ride to exotic ports.

During my internet search I came across a newspaper article about Piney Point. It said something along the lines of, in this age of rising educational costs you could go to a union school, get a free education and a guaranteed job on a merchant ship.

I had never heard of Piney Point, had never seen a ship and didn't even know anyone who had ever worked in a union, but I immediately knew the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education was for me. I sold everything, took a physical, bought my first pair of steel-toed boots and flew to Maryland.

I feel compelled to point out, in case my employer is reading this, I am no longer willing to work for free no matter how amazing the port of call.

I'm hopeful they exist, and if that's the case, please share a good memory or two from your days as an apprentice.

One of the four sailors who stood next to me when I exchanged vows with my precious bride is a friend I made in class 715 (two of the others came out of the apprentice program as well). As is always the case, the lifelong friendships formed from shared experiences – good and bad – are the most cherished and enduring memories.

For me, it was a whole new world. I was in my 30s as you mentioned, had already had a successful career and was not necessarily accustomed to being told what to do. Suddenly, I was with a bunch of kids, forced to shave my head, wear uniforms, march around, live in barracks and scrub the galley 14 hours a day.

I didn't love it all, to be honest. But I was determined to make it through so I could join a ship. I enjoyed the classes. I particularly liked firefighting and lifeboat training.

My favorite day as an apprentice was my first day on a ship. The first person I met was the bosun, Rafael from Guyana. He spoke with a thick accent, had a rag on his head and a gold earring. He looked like an actual pirate. I thought he was the coolest guy I had ever met.

From the moment I shook his hand, all I wanted to be was a salty sailor just like him. Every day from that day forward I never stopped feeling like I had the coolest job in the world.

So, to circle back to your question: my fondest memory of Piney Point is that it provided a starting point to sitting on a ship at this very moment, at anchor on the far side of the world, waiting to call on a country I never thought I would visit. That "free education and guaranteed first job on a ship" led to me being the captain on what I believe is the best vessel in the U.S. fleet, the *ARC Commitment*.

I am eternally grateful to the apprentice program for that.

How long did you sail with the SIU and what made you move on? What were your jobs since then?

I was with the SIU for six years, I believe. Maybe close to seven. I left the SIU only because I was looking for the quickest and cheapest way to get my third mate's license.

On my first ship as an apprentice, I was simply looking to see the world. I had no idea it could be a career until my captain told me about the process of becoming a hawsepiper. As I approached the point of having enough sea time to test, I was offered a job on a drill ship. They offered to pay for all my third mate classes if I would come work for them.

I was in a hurry to get my classes completed and it would have taken too long trying to fit them into my schedule at Piney Point. The price tag to take them at other schools was more than \$20,000 plus room and board. When the drilling company offered to pay for it all, I jumped at the chance.

I spent two years on a drill ship. They did pay for my third mate's license. Also, the food was great and someone cleaned your room and did your laundry every day. Other than that, it wasn't for me. Every day I would call AMO (the Seafarers-affiliated American Maritime Officers) and ask for a third mate job, but shipping was tight at that time. About six months after I got my license, I was offered a third mate job on a tanker with a non-union company. I worked there for 18 months until finally AMO had something for me and I returned to sailing deep sea where I belong.

Since becoming an AMO member, I've been fortunate to always have work. I was second mate on a heavy lift ship and then moved over to a bulker, which I enjoyed. In my career I have sailed on almost every type of commercial vessel, but my favorite memories were on car carriers with the ARC fleet – the old *Integrity* and *Independence II*. I had been trying to get over to ARC ever since I joined AMO



Former Seafarer Russell Macomber (right) gets a visit from his wife, Kaley, during his first job as a captain (aboard the *ARC Commitment*).

and finally got offered the chief mate job on the *ARC Integrity*. The old *Integrity* was my first paying job as a sailor, so having my first chief mate job on the new *ARC Integrity* was a very special moment for me.

Not everyone takes advantage of the upgrading opportunities to the extent that you've done, but the sentiment "you can go as far as you want" in this industry quite obviously is true. How did you stay motivated, and how difficult was the professional journey, both in terms of earning the licenses and doing the shipboard work?

This is going to sound cocky, and I don't mean it that way, but I didn't find it challenging at all. Mainly because I loved the job. You need sea time to hawsepipe. I loved being on ships so that was easy. You need to take some classes. Well, the hardest part of that is scheduling them in your off time. You need to pass the tests. All that requires is treating your studying like a job. If you study seven days a week, 12 hours a day for 45 days – which I did – you will find yourself overprepared and the tests not that difficult.

You will also want to learn from your captain or mates and most likely will need to have some at-sea assessments signed off. Do yourself a favor: take some classes before you start asking every mate to teach you everything there is to know about being an officer. I can tell you I am happy to mentor anyone. But if you haven't even bothered to take a radar class, it is hard to take your ambition seriously. Invest in yourself and others will be more likely to want to invest in you as well.

You worked non-union (or, as we sometimes say in the LOG office, "unrepresented"). What are the biggest differences you saw? Is there anything we could learn from the other side, so to speak?

The single biggest difference – and a major union benefit – is not being tied to one employer. In the SIU you can work for Crowley, then Maersk and then TOTE all in one year while maintaining consistent health and retirement benefits. If you're not happy somewhere, you can finish your time and then go somewhere else. I can't tell you what a refreshing feeling that was coming from the corporate world where if you're not happy, you just feel trapped.

I was fortunate to never be unhappy on a ship. But I did move around a lot because I wanted to see every type of vessel. That freedom does not exist in the corporate world.



Slushing the crane wires aboard the *Alliance Norfolk*

In Their Own Words: Seafarers Rising Through the Ranks

Obviously, it is different at the management level. As a captain I am proud to work on an ARC ship (crewed by TOTE) and I have loyalty to those companies as well as my union. But for the SIU sailors, being able to try different ships and sail to different parts of the world without burning bridges is a real blessing.

I think the biggest miss in the union world is the lack of merit-based selection, promotion and financial rewards for excelling beyond your peers.

I know we can't get too into the weeds on this, but if I were having a "Ted Talk" on what I think unions get wrong, most of those things wouldn't apply to the SIU or AMO.

You're a family man. How have you maintained harmony at home while still excelling in your career? On this subject, what advice would you give to newer or prospective mariners who may worry about spending long stretches away from loved ones?

The one subject I love talking about more than being a sailor is my amazing family. I might get a little sappy here and risk losing my salty sailor membership card. My wife is a blessing from God. I honestly don't know what I've done to deserve her. (I'm pretty sure you once pointed out that I outkicked my coverage. Truer words were never spoken.)

I didn't think relationships were possible my first 10 years of sailing. It's a real challenge to even think about asking someone on a date when you know you're about to leave for four months or more.

When I met Kaley, everything clicked all at once. I fell in love at first sight (sorry everyone. I warned you.) In that moment, relationships went from seeming impossible to being something at which I refused to fail.

Enough of that.

I believe your partner must have their own life independent from you. You cannot leave someone at home who sits around all day and does nothing but miss you. That missing you will turn into resenting you. They need to miss you and want you home but not have a miserable life while you are away. That's a fine line to walk and I don't have the magic answer to finding the person to make it work. My dad found Kaley for me, so maybe ask your parents for help.

As a 53-year-old man who feels he now has the wisdom of the ages, I would also say that being in a loving relationship, raising kids and providing for a family is the highest purpose we have in life. Having purpose makes you work safer. Having purpose gets you through the rough and lonely days at sea. Having purpose makes you a better shipmate. Having purpose gives you a reason to look forward to going home.

Young sailors: Fall in love. Have kids. Provide for your family. You can make it work. I promise.

On a lighter note, what are some of the things you enjoy most about being a mariner?

I enjoy the unique personalities you encounter at sea. I have written millions of words journaling about the people I have met in this industry. I still read stuff



Macomber (standing fourth from right) is pictured with shipmates and security-team members aboard the *Ocean Atlas*, travelling through potentially risky waters.

I wrote 15 years ago and laugh out loud. And I mean all of that in a positive way. These are some of my best friends and even those that I may not have been close to, I valued them as shipmates. Look, you either know sailors and know what I'm talking about, or you don't. I doubt there is any industry in the world with as wide an array of eccentric personalities as the US maritime industry.

It's hard to keep these answers short so I'll just say, I like doing cool stuff that I know only a few people in the world have ever done. I've slid down crane wires in a bosun chair, greasing them as the ship rolled back and forth, only to look out and see little pirate boats approaching the ship.

No one at the Rotary Club meetings in Deland, Florida, has done that, I assure you.

This is coming from a landlubber, but the perception in the LOG office is that shipboard connectivity is improving, but still has a long way to go. How important is internet access to you and the crew, and how reliable is it, generally?

I think a lot of my crew would give up food before giving up internet access. I would rate internet access as extremely important.

The ARC fleet has Starlink and it is nothing short of amazing. It is fast and while it is not available in every country, it is generally very reliable. I still can't get used to the fact I can video chat with my wife on my cellphone while sitting in my room. That's a long way from \$3 a minute satellite calls on the bridge with no privacy.

Does it have a long way to go? I'm not going to make many friends here, but how good does it need to be? I just don't think we need to be able to mine bitcoin or play some virtual reality live streaming game. It is a ship and we are sailors. Or supposed to be. Being removed from the day-to-day stress of home used to be part of the allure of this job.

"Back in the day," ships used to be much more social. The captain had an 8-page newspaper emailed to him and he would print it out and leave it by the coffee pot. We would all sit around at coffee time, each take a page, then pass our page around as we finished. We watched a lot of movies together. Played a lot of cards. It is different now. People go to their rooms to look at their phones.

I'm guilty as well. I call my wife probably more than she wants me to. In the last month I have watched my girls play volleyball several times from the middle of the ocean.

It's awesome.

But there was something to be said for the days when if the TV stopped working at home, or the garbage disposal broke, it wasn't your problem.

If you could make one or two changes in the U.S. flag maritime industry, what would they be?

You're kidding me, right? One or two? You know I love shipping and I love politics. This is something I could talk about all night.

But since you asked. One: Make ships in America! When I was a 30-year-old man working in the world of finance, if you had told me that much of the US fleet of merchant ships were reflagged after foreign companies had used them for years, I would have thought you were lying. Surely America was building the newest and best ships in the world!

Look, I am currently sitting on a beautiful ship, the *ARC Commitment*. I am fortunate to work for a company that regularly reflags quality vessels. I truly believe I have the honor of being Captain on the best ship in the US fleet. But I would be lying if I didn't say it would be a dream to captain a US built car carrier before I retire.

Two: Stricter cargo preference laws. I think 100% of food-aid should be on US ships. Likewise, 100% of our energy exports. Obviously military cargo should be transported on US vessels. I have been on 3 ships in my career that were re-flagged foreign while I was on them due to lack of cargo. It's a crushing feeling and one I hope to never feel again.

What advice would you give to someone who's considering applying for the apprenticeship program in Piney Point or (if they're already credentialed) joining the SIU?

First: Do it! The apprentice program is the best way to start a sailing career as an unlicensed sailor and the SIU is the best union to put you on a US flagged vessel. When you get to the hall, don't listen to people telling you what is a good ship or a bad ship. Sailors, God bless them, can't help but be negative. Jump on the first ship you can get. Embrace the experience. Become a better sailor every day. I used to sit at night with my first Bosun and he would teach me how to splice lines, make a monkey fist, fix a needle gun. Be willing to learn and work harder than the next person.

That same bosun told me, "If you can't do anything good, be the nicest guy on the ship."

I still think that's pretty solid advice.

It took restraint for me not to ask a college football question, but, that aside, is there anything you'd like to add?

Well, you kind of did ask. So: Geaux Tigers!! Boooooo NIL. Not a fan of the new playoff format. However, this year's Indiana team was one of the best sports stories of my lifetime.

Other than that, I'll just say thanks for letting me talk about most of my favorite topics. Maybe we can squeeze in some BBQ talk next time.



Aboard the *Alliance Norfolk* at anchor in Papua New Guinea

David Heindel, President

Augustin Tellez, Executive Vice President

Tom Orzechowski, Secretary-Treasurer

George Tricker, Vice President Contracts

Dean Corgey, Vice President Gulf Coast

Joe Vincenzo, Vice President West Coast

Joseph T. Soresi, Vice President Atlantic Coast

Sam Spain, Vice President Government Services

Bryan Powell,
Vice President Lakes and Inland Waters

Pat Vandegrift, Vice President

Hazel Galbiso, Vice President



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Inquiring Seafarer

This month's question was answered by SIU members at the hiring hall in Jacksonville, Florida.

Question: Why did you join the union and why have you stuck with it?



Dale Henry
ABM

I joined because I wanted a career and wanted to try something different. I stuck with it because I love the travel, seeing different ports and meeting new people.



Jarrett Andrews Jr.
ABG

I wanted to travel the world. I've stuck with it because I've gotten to travel for free, and I appreciate the flexibility of making my own schedule, plus the money that it brings – the financial freedom I have.



Joseph Crisante
Chief Cook

I joined because I was doing my cooking on land, and I knew a couple of people who were sailing at the time. They told me I could make a better living and see different parts of the world. This is something I enjoy; I like being out on the ocean, kind of getting away from everything.



Michael Fincannon
SA

I joined because I like to cook and I like to travel and explore. This is a good job, and the SIU is a good union. It's a good opportunity for me and I would recommend it to anyone. I've stayed because it allows me to support my family and put my kids through college.



Linnell Coleman
Bosun

I joined because my father was in the union. I saw the hard work and dedication he put into it, and I wanted to be part of something that was positive. Once I found out what the union entailed, that's the way I wanted to go. I've stuck with it because of the progress the union has made through years, (including) efforts with the Jones Act. Being around the maritime industry has given me a broad view of how vital we are to the country.



Willie Dawston
AB

I joined for stability but also for doing something new at first. Once I got into it, I realized there is nothing better. I enjoy meeting new people, people from all over the world.

Pic from the Past



Seafarer Earl Smith is pictured aboard Isthmian's SS Steel Worker in 1956.

Notice

From 1095-B Available Upon Request

Prior to 2025, the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan (SHBP) sent all participants a copy of their Form 1095-B at the end February. This is the form that that SHBP is required to submit to the IRS every year to report all individuals who are eligible for "minimum essential" healthcare coverage from the Plan.

Due to a change in the law, the Plan no longer mails a copy of this form to all participants. However, it will provide a copy of the form to you upon request. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact MAP at (800) 252-4674, option 2, and let them know you are requesting a copy of your Form 1095-B. The Plan will either mail you a copy of the form; or send it by email if you have consented to electronic notification.



March & April Membership Meetings

Piney Point	Monday: March 2, April 6
Algonac	Thursday: March 12, April 16
Baltimore	Thursday: March 5, April 9
Guam	Thursday: March 19, April 23
Honolulu	Friday: March 13, April 17
Houston	Monday: March 9, April 13
Jacksonville	Thursday: March 5, April 9
Joliet	Thursday: March 12, April 16
Mobile	Wednesday: March 11, April 15
New Orleans	Tuesday: March 10, April 14
Jersey City	Tuesday: March 3, April 7
Norfolk	Friday: March 6, April 10
Oakland	Thursday: March 12, April 16
Philadelphia	Wednesday: March 4, April 8
Port Everglades	Thursday: March 12, April 16
San Juan	Thursday: March 5, April 9
St. Louis	Friday: March 13, April 17
Tacoma	Friday: March 20, April 24
Wilmington	Monday: March 16, April 20

Each port's meeting starts at 10:30 a.m.

Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea

"Total Registered" and "Total Shipped" data is cumulative from January 12, 2026 - February 11, 2026.
 "Registered on the Beach" data is as of February 12, 2026.

Port	Total Registered All Groups			Total Shipped All Groups			Trip Reliefs	Registered on Beach All Groups		
	A	B	C	A	B	C		A	B	C
Deck Department										
Algonac	24	7	2	5	2	1	3	42	9	2
Anchorage	2	3	2	2	2	0	2	3	1	2
Baltimore	0	5	1	1	5	0	2	3	4	2
Fort Lauderdale	24	16	7	20	7	0	12	23	21	11
Guam	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	2	0
Harvey	5	9	0	10	5	0	2	11	9	3
Honolulu	5	2	1	10	1	1	1	5	3	1
Houston	22	10	10	30	20	6	13	46	29	15
Jacksonville	27	34	11	39	25	8	25	42	44	13
Jersey City	21	14	9	17	10	4	10	30	14	7
Joliet	1	4	1	0	3	0	0	4	3	1
Mobile	5	5	5	6	0	2	5	9	7	7
Norfolk	27	23	8	17	14	5	11	40	23	8
Oakland	11	4	0	7	2	1	4	22	7	1
Philadelphia	5	0	0	4	0	0	0	5	2	1
Piney Point	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0
Puerto Rico	4	4	0	7	3	1	2	4	4	0
St. Louis	1	1	2	0	3	2	1	3	1	0
Tacoma	23	11	3	16	5	0	10	29	9	4
Wilmington	35	12	1	23	9	2	10	38	19	3
TOTAL	245	167	63	215	116	33	113	365	214	81
Engine Department										
Algonac	9	5	0	0	2	0	1	13	5	0
Anchorage	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
Baltimore	3	3	1	2	3	1	3	2	2	1
Fort Lauderdale	7	9	1	5	8	1	3	11	13	1
Guam	3	0	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	1
Harvey	2	4	1	2	1	1	0	2	4	1
Honolulu	4	0	3	2	2	1	2	9	3	3
Houston	6	12	4	9	3	2	5	12	15	5
Jacksonville	15	20	4	18	12	1	9	25	28	7
Jersey City	6	4	0	2	4	0	2	18	7	3
Joliet	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	4	2	0
Mobile	6	1	1	2	0	0	1	8	3	1
Norfolk	10	12	4	10	7	3	9	13	16	3
Oakland	5	2	2	2	1	1	1	4	1	1
Philadelphia	3	1	0	1	1	0	1	4	0	0
Piney Point	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Puerto Rico	3	2	0	4	3	0	0	6	4	0
St. Louis	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0
Tacoma	12	2	1	4	0	1	2	15	5	0
Wilmington	12	6	3	8	7	2	5	21	9	7
TOTAL	108	87	27	76	56	16	46	173	118	34
Steward Department										
Algonac	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	1	0
Anchorage	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Baltimore	0	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	0
Fort Lauderdale	7	4	5	10	2	3	4	8	5	3
Guam	2	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	2	0
Harvey	2	4	0	3	1	0	0	2	6	0
Honolulu	10	1	0	5	1	0	1	11	0	1
Houston	12	10	1	12	9	0	5	23	12	2
Jacksonville	25	28	4	18	9	1	12	38	37	6
Jersey City	5	6	0	4	4	0	5	11	5	0
Joliet	2	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Mobile	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	4	1	0
Norfolk	13	10	2	11	5	0	3	23	13	6
Oakland	15	3	1	5	3	0	3	18	3	3
Philadelphia	1	2	0	2	3	0	2	1	0	0
Piney Point	1	4	1	0	4	0	1	1	1	1
Puerto Rico	2	6	4	4	4	2	1	6	9	2
St. Louis	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Tacoma	6	5	0	4	0	0	2	6	6	1
Wilmington	22	7	4	20	4	2	11	38	8	3
TOTAL	137	94	25	105	51	11	54	202	113	28
Entry Department										
Algonac	0	5	10	0	1	2	0	0	9	24
Anchorage	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Baltimore	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Fort Lauderdale	0	6	14	0	2	2	2	0	11	16
Guam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harvey	0	2	4	0	1	1	1	0	3	11
Honolulu	0	0	3	0	2	1	0	0	1	3
Houston	3	21	7	5	15	4	2	7	27	19
Jacksonville	0	28	31	0	24	12	4	0	48	70
Jersey City	0	11	10	0	9	4	2	0	25	27
Joliet	0	1	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
Mobile	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	0	11	27	0	8	10	5	0	19	54
Oakland	0	8	10	0	3	6	2	0	11	12
Philadelphia	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Piney Point	0	1	3	0	1	0	6	0	0	3
Puerto Rico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tacoma	2	6	5	0	2	2	1	2	8	6
Wilmington	0	11	22	0	7	14	2	3	21	33
TOTAL	5	112	154	5	77	62	28	12	186	283
GRAND TOTAL	495	460	269	401	300	122	241	752	631	426

Digest of Shipboard Union Meetings

The Seafarers LOG attempts to print as many digests of union shipboard minutes as possible. On occasion, because of space limitations, some will be omitted. Ships' minutes first are reviewed by the union's contract department. Those issues requiring attention or resolution are addressed by the union upon receipt of the ships' minutes. The minutes are then forwarded to the Seafarers LOG for publication.

GARDEN STATE (Intrepid Personnel & Provisioning), September 1 – Chairman **Carlos Arauz**, Secretary **Charles Davis**, Educational Director **Daryl Morris**, Steward Delegate **Terry Fowler**. Crew requested 20 for 30 vacation. Chairman reminded crew to check documents and to keep ship clean and sanitized. Educational director recommended members upgrade at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members requested new mattresses. Steward department was thanked for a job well done.

GARDEN STATE (Intrepid Personnel & Provisioning), October 1 – Chairman **Carlos Arauz**, Secretary **Charles Davis**, Educational Director **Daryl Morris**, Deck Delegate **Eddie Major**, Engine Delegate **Renita Walker**, Steward Delegate **Terry Fowler**. Crew requested modification to vacation benefit. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members encouraged each other to read the *Seafarers LOG*, the union's official publication. Crew thanked galley gang for great work.

LIBERTY (TOTE Services, LLC), October 12 – Chairman **Kenney Gaston**. Chairman advised crew to keep documents up to date. Educational director reminded members to check SIU website for courses offered at the union-affiliated Piney Point school and encouraged everyone to upgrade.

Ship treasurer reviewed 401k benefits. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members discussed the latest president's report from the *LOG* and talked about the importance of the Jones Act, America's freight cabotage law. Crew would like to increase vacation to 20 for 30, add penalty rate for handling stores and trash and to add weekend overtime. Members requested increases in benefits, including medical, dental and vision.

GARDEN STATE (Intrepid Personnel & Provisioning), November 1 – Chairman **Carlos Arauz**, Secretary **Charles Davis**, Educational Director **Daryl Morris**, Deck Delegate **Eddie Major**, Engine Delegate **Renita Walker**, Steward Delegate **Dequan Smith**. Chairman advised members to stay on top of documents. Secretary encouraged crew to upgrade when possible. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested new mattresses and more bottled water. Vote of thanks given to steward department for a job well done.

ISLA BELLA (TOTE Services, LLC), November 30 – Chairman **Tavell Love**, Secretary **Richard Jones**, Educational Director **Ashely Burke**, Steward Delegate **Adalberto Colon Rosa**. New furniture purchased for mess hall. Chairman thanked steward department for preparing good meals and reminded crew to keep ship clean and tidy. Positive attitude amongst crew, per secretary report. Educational di-

rector urged members to upgrade at the Piney Point school as often as possible and to renew documents well in advance. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested 20 for 30 vacation. Members would like \$250 boot reimbursement and pay rate increases to match inflation. Next port: Jacksonville, Florida.

GARDEN STATE (Intrepid Personnel & Provisioning), December 1 – Chairman **Carlos Arauz**, Secretary **Breon Lucas**, Educational Director **Daryl Morris**, Deck Delegate **Eddie Major**, Engine Delegate **Renita Walker**, Steward Delegate **Dequan Smith**. Chairman urged members to upgrade their skills at the Paul Hall Center and to keep documents current. He reminded crew to keep dryer and mess hall clean. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested change to vacation benefit and an increased allowance for work boot reimbursements.

LIBERTY (TOTE Services, LLC), December 7 – Chairman **Kenney Gaston**. Chairman reiterated the importance of keeping documents current and allowing plenty of time for renewals. Educational director advised crew to upgrade at the Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew would like to increase vacation benefits along with penalty pay for handling trash and stores, weekend overtime and for tour of duty to be added after sailing 150 days. Members requested increases

in all benefits, including pension, medical, dental and optical.

INDEPENDENCE (Eco Tankers Crew Management, LLC), December 13 – Chairman **Ricardo Guevara**, Educational Director **Josue Iglesia**. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew reviewed latest edition of *Seafarers LOG*, which is published and posted monthly. Members discussed ideas for implementing monthly "in lieu of" day off. Crew requested increases in pension benefits and vacation time allotment on standard ships with consideration to increase 14 days to 25 days.

TORM THOR (Eco Tankers Crew Management, LLC), January 17 – Chairman **Allan Oculam**, Secretary **Arlando Espin**, Deck Delegate **Ronald Poole**, Engine Delegate **Luzern Hawkins**, Steward Delegate **Mahmoud Fares**. Chairman welcomed all crew members and reviewed all positions. Secretary reminded crew to work safely. Educational director recommended members upgrade at the Paul Hall Center, which has offered training for Seafarers since 1967. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Things are going well, per steward delegate report, although food steamer and electric stove require repairs. Crew discussed needs for shipboard printer and improved Wi-Fi. They suggested increasing vacation benefits and reviewed some basics concerning coverage under the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan.

Know Your Rights

FINANCIAL REPORTS. The Constitution of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters makes specific provision for safeguarding the membership's money and union finances. The constitution requires a detailed audit by certified public accountants every year, which is to be submitted to the membership by the secretary-treasurer. A yearly finance committee of rank-and-file members, elected by the membership, each year examines the finances of the union and reports fully their findings and recommendations. Members of this committee may make dissenting reports, specific recommendations and separate findings.

TRUST FUNDS. All trust funds of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District are administered in accordance with the provisions of various trust fund agreements. All these agreements specify that the trustees in charge of these funds shall equally consist of union and management representatives and their alternates. All expenditures and disbursements of trust funds are made only upon approval by a majority of the trustees. All trust fund financial records are available at the headquarters of the various trust funds.

SHIPPING RIGHTS. A member's shipping rights and seniority are protected exclusively by contracts between the union and the employers. Members should get to know their shipping rights. Copies of these contracts are posted and available in all union halls. If members believe there have been violations of their shipping or seniority rights as contained in the contracts between the union and the employers, they should notify the Seafarers Appeals Board by certified mail, return

receipt requested. The proper address for this is:

George Tricker, Chairman
Seafarers Appeals Board
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Full copies of contracts as referred to are available to members at all times, either by writing directly to the union or to the Seafarers Appeals Board.

CONTRACTS. Copies of all SIU contracts are available in all SIU halls. These contracts specify the wages and conditions under which an SIU member works and lives aboard a ship or boat. Members should know their contract rights, as well as their obligations, such as filing for overtime (OT) on the proper sheets and in the proper manner. If, at any time, a member believes that an SIU patrolman or other union official fails to protect their contractual rights properly, he or she should contact the nearest SIU port agent.

EDITORIAL POLICY — THE SEAFARERS LOG. The *Seafarers LOG* traditionally has refrained from publishing any article serving the political purposes of any individual in the union, officer or member. It also has refrained from publishing articles deemed harmful to the union or its collective membership. This established policy has been reaffirmed by membership action at the September 1960 meetings in all constitutional ports. The responsibility for *Seafarers LOG* policy is vested in an editorial board which consists of the executive board of the union. The executive board may delegate, from among its ranks, one individual to carry out this responsibility.

PAYMENT OF MONIES. No monies are to be paid to anyone in any official capacity in the SIU unless an official union receipt is given for same. Under no circumstances should any member pay any money for any reason unless he is given such receipt. In the event anyone attempts to require any such payment be made without supplying a receipt, or if a member is required to make a payment and is given an official receipt, but feels that he or she should not have been required to make such payment, this should immediately be reported to union headquarters.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS. Copies of the SIU Constitution are available in all union halls. All members should obtain copies of this constitution so as to familiarize themselves with its contents. Any time a member feels any other member or officer is attempting to deprive him or her of any constitutional right or obligation by any methods, such as dealing with charges, trials, etc., as well as all other details, the member so affected should immediately notify headquarters.

EQUAL RIGHTS. All members are guaranteed equal rights in employment and as members of the SIU. These rights are clearly set forth in the SIU Constitution and in the contracts which the union has negotiated with the employers. Consequently, no member may be discriminated against because of race, creed, color, sex, national or geographic origin.

If any member feels that he or she is denied the equal rights to which he or she is entitled, the member should notify union headquarters.

SEAFARERS POLITICAL ACTIVITY DONATION (SPAD). SPAD is a separate segregated fund. Its proceeds are used to further its objects and purposes including, but not limited to, furthering the political, social and economic interests of maritime workers, the preservation and furthering of the American merchant marine with improved employment opportunities for seamen and boatmen and the advancement of trade union concepts. In connection with such objects, SPAD supports and contributes to political candidates for elective office. All contributions are voluntary. No contribution may be solicited or received because of force, job discrimination, financial reprisal, or threat of such conduct, or as a condition of membership in the union or of employment. If a contribution is made by reason of the above improper conduct, the member should notify the Seafarers International Union or SPAD by certified mail within 30 days of the contribution for investigation and appropriate action and refund, if involuntary. A member should support SPAD to protect and further his or her economic, political and social interests, and American trade union concepts.

NOTIFYING THE UNION — If at any time a member feels that any of the above rights have been violated, or that he or she has been denied the constitutional right of access to union records or information, the member should immediately notify SIU President David Heindel at headquarters by certified mail, return receipt requested. The address is:

David Heindel, President
Seafarers International Union
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Welcome Ashore!

We pay tribute to our brothers and sisters of the SIU who have recently retired. **THANK YOU** for a job well done and we wish you fair winds and following seas.

DEEP SEA

SALEH AHMED

Brother Saleh Ahmed, 65, embarked on his career with the SIU in 1998 when he sailed on the *Independence*. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded at the union-affiliated Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Ahmed last sailed on the *North Star* and lives in Rockford, Illinois.



MAURICE AYUSO

Brother Maurice Ayuso, 71, began his career with the Seafarers International Union in 1979. He shipped in both the deck and engine departments and first sailed aboard the *Newark*. Brother Ayuso upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He most recently shipped on the *Cape Washington* and resides in Queens, New York.

THOMAS CURLEY

Brother Thomas Curley, 69, became a member of the union in 1972 and first worked aboard the *Suamico*. He upgraded on multiple occasions at the Piney Point school and primarily sailed in the steward department. Brother Curley's final vessel was the *American Freedom*. He makes his home in Eatonville, Washington.



RUDOLPH DANIELS

Brother Rudolph Daniels, 71, joined the SIU in 2001 and first sailed aboard the *Delaware Bay*. He was a steward department member and upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Daniels last sailed on the *Maersk Detroit* and lives in Jersey City, New Jersey.



LEIGHANNE DEANO

Sister Leighanne Deano, 65, joined the union in 2001 and first sailed aboard the *Black Eagle*. Sister Deano was a member of the steward department and upgraded her skills at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. She most recently shipped on the *USNS Robert E. Simanek* and resides in Wilmington, North Carolina.



WILFREDO ESPINOSA

Brother Wilfredo Espinosa, 65, signed on with the SIU in 2000. He was a steward department member and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Espinosa's first vessel was the *Patriot*; his last, the *Alaskan Explorer*. He makes his home in Tacoma, Washington.



JOHN HALE

Brother John Hale, 65, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1994 when he sailed aboard the *Green Island*. He upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and worked in the steward department. Brother Hale's final vessel was the *Golden State*. He calls Harvey, Louisiana, home.



DALE HARRISON

Brother Dale Harrison, 66, joined the union in 1999 when he sailed on the *USNS Capable*. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Harrison's final vessel was the *Cape Starr*. He resides in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



LECH JANKOWSKI

Brother Lech Jankowski, 70, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1999. A deck department member, he first sailed aboard the *Calvin P. Titus*. Brother Jankowski upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He concluded his career aboard the *Ocean Grand* and settled in Youngstown, Florida.



DONALD MCBRIDE

Brother Donald McBride, 67, started sailing with the union in 2001, initially working aboard the *USNS Charlton*. He sailed in the engine department and upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother McBride last shipped on the *SLNC Pax* and makes his home in Forest, Virginia.

GLYNN METCALF

Brother Glynn Metcalf, 65, joined the SIU in 1989 and first shipped on the *Independence*. He upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and worked in the deck department. Brother Metcalf last shipped on the *Liberty Spirit*. He lives in Pensacola, Florida.



SUSAN MOE

Sister Susan Moe, 66, embarked on her career with the Seafarers in 1989. A steward department member, she first sailed aboard the *Independence*. Sister Moe upgraded on several occasions at the Paul Hall Center. She last sailed aboard the *Great Land* and settled in Henderson, Nevada.



VICENTE ORDONEZ

Brother Vicente Ordonez, 65, became a member of the SIU in 1999 when he sailed aboard the *Courier*. He worked in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Ordonez most recently sailed on the *Alliance Fairfax*. He makes his home in Houston.

STEPHAN OSOVITZ

Brother Stephan Osovitz, 65, joined the Seafarers International Union in 1983 and first sailed aboard the *Consumer*. He was a steward department member and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on numerous occasions. Brother Osovitz concluded his career aboard the *Maersk Hartford*. He resides in Manalapan, New Jersey.



JOHNNIE THOMAS

Brother Johnnie Thomas, 78, signed on with the Seafarers in 1979 and initially sailed with Dixie Carriers. He worked in the deck department and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Piney Point school. Brother Thomas last shipped on the *Taurus* and is a resident of Wentzville, Missouri.

RONALD WEBB

Brother Ronald Webb, 60, joined the union in 1988 and first worked aboard the *USNS Bartlett*. He upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center and shipped in the deck department. Brother Webb most recently sailed on the *Arctic* and settled in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.



INLAND

WILLIAM BADGLEY

Brother William Badgley, 62, donned the SIU colors in 1988 when he shipped with Steuart Transportation. He was a deck department member and upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Badgley was last employed with Piney Point Transportation. He resides in South Mills, North Carolina.

JOSEPH CLEMENT

Brother Joseph Clement, 70, began sailing with the union in 1978. He worked in the deck department, initially aboard the *Exchange*. Brother Clement upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions and last sailed aboard the *Robert E. Lee*. He lives in Cape Canaveral, Florida.

DANIEL CONVERY

Brother Daniel Convery, 70, joined the SIU in 2002. A deck department member, he upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school in 2019. Brother Convery worked with Port Imperial Ferry for the duration of his career. He makes his home in Carteret, New Jersey.

KENDAL DEIHL

Brother Kendal Deihl, 62, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1999. Brother Deihl sailed in the deck department. He was first employed with McAllister Towing of Virginia and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Deihl last sailed with Allied Transportation. He calls Heathsville, Virginia, home.



NMU

GREGORY JEWELL

Brother Gregory Jewell, 71, joined the Seafarers International Union during the 2001 NMU/SIU merger. He shipped in the deck department and concluded his career aboard the *Chemical Pioneer*. Brother Jewell resides in Atlanta.

DAVID ROSS

Brother David Ross, 70, became a union member during the 2001 SIU/NMU merger. He shipped in the deck department and concluded his career with Woods Hole Shipping. Brother Ross calls Dennis, Massachusetts, home.

BRIAN TEIXEIRA

Brother Brian Teixeira, 69, joined the Seafarers International Union during the 2001 NMU/SIU merger. He shipped in the deck department and concluded his career aboard the *Columbia Bay*. Brother Teixeira makes his home in New Bedford, Massachusetts.



Final Departures

In solemn remembrance, we honor the legacies of these union members who have crossed the final bar. May they rest in peace.

DEEP SEA

REHUEL ASCANO

Pensioner Rehuel Ascano, 78, died December 25. He began his career with the Seafarers in 1988, initially working with Moran Towing of Texas. Brother Ascano worked in the steward department. He last sailed on the *Diamond State* and became a pensioner in 2012. Brother Ascano was a resident of Anthony, New Mexico.



BENJAMIN BROOKS

Pensioner Benjamin Brooks, 84, passed away December 3. He signed on with the union in 2001 and first shipped on the *Maersk Maryland*. Brother Brooks was a steward department member. He last sailed aboard the *Maersk Montana* and retired in 2011. Brother Brooks made his home in North Miami, Florida.



EARL DIMMICK

Brother Earl Dimmick, 38, died July 14. He embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 2012, initially sailing aboard the *American Mariner*. Brother Dimmick sailed in the engine department, most recently aboard the *Cape Ducato*. He lived in Rolling Hills Estates, California.



JAMES GLADNEY

Pensioner James Gladney, 91, passed away December 15. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 1967 and first sailed aboard the *Baylor Victory*. Brother Gladney worked in the steward department and last sailed on the *USNS Capella*. He went on pension in 1998 and settled in Woodstock, Maryland.



ROBERT GRUBBS

Pensioner Robert Grubbs, 67, died December 17. He donned the SIU colors in 1979. A deck department member, Brother Grubbs first shipped on the *Boston*. He concluded his career aboard the *El Morro* and became a pensioner in 2012. Brother Grubbs made his home in Jacksonville, Florida.



BOUALEM HABIB

Brother Boualem Habib, 71, passed away January 5. He became a member of the SIU in 1990. Brother Habib initially sailed aboard the *Independence*. He worked in the steward department and last shipped aboard the *Santorini*. Brother Habib was a Seattle resident.



ROBERT NIXON

Brother Robert Nixon, 60, died October 30. He donned the SIU colors in 2022, initially sailing aboard the *Ocean Gladiator*. Brother Nixon was a deck department member and most recently sailed aboard the *Potomac Express*. He lived in Chesapeake, Virginia.



HUSSEIN SALEH

Pensioner Hussein Saleh, 80, passed away October 21. He signed on with the union in 1974 when he shipped on the *Newark*. Brother Saleh worked in the steward department. He last sailed aboard the *APL Philippines* before retiring in 2011. Brother Saleh resided in North Chili, New York.



CHARLES SCOTT

Pensioner Charles Scott, 92, died December 17. Sailing first with Victory Carriers, he donned the SIU colors in 1959. Brother Scott worked in the steward department and last shipped on the *Equality State*. He became a pensioner in 2004 and resided in Livingston, Texas.



GREAT LAKES

ALAN CHAPIN

Pensioner Alan Chapin, 76, passed away December 13. He joined the SIU in 1992, initially sailing with Upper Lakes Towing. Brother Chapin worked in the deck department and remained with the same company for the duration of his career. He began collecting his pension in 2011 and made his home in Gladstone, Michigan.



DAVID VUCIC

Brother David Vucic, 75, died November 27. He began sailing with the Seafarers in 1976 when he shipped on the *Schoellkoff*. Brother Vucic was a member of the deck department. He last sailed aboard the *Charles E. Wilson* and called North Port, Florida, home.

INLAND

PAUL BROWN

Pensioner Paul Brown, 73, passed away December 9. He signed on with the SIU in 1972, initially sailing with Mariner Towing. Brother Brown shipped in the deck department. He was last employed with OSG Ship Management and became a pensioner in 2015. Brother Brown lived in Roaring River, North Carolina.

ROBERT BRUSH

Pensioner Robert Brush, 81, died November 18. He embarked on his career with the union in 1962 and initially worked for Capital Transportation. A deck department member, Brother Brush concluded his career with McAllister Towing of Virginia. He went on pension in 2001 and resided in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



OTTO HEBERT

Pensioner Otto Hebert, 75, passed away October 26. He joined the SIU in 1972 when he sailed with Inland Tugs. Brother Hebert shipped in the deck department. He was last employed with Westbank Riverboat Services before retiring in 2012. Brother Hebert made his home in Picayune, Mississippi.

BOBBY LEWIS

Pensioner Bobby Lewis, 88, died November 12. He joined the union in 1970, initially sailing with Plymouth Towing Company. Brother Lewis sailed in the deck department. He last shipped with Express Marine and went on pension in 1999. Brother Lewis resided in Grantsboro, North Carolina.



NMU

JOHN DE COSTA

Pensioner John De Costa, 92, passed away November 23. Brother De Costa began sailing in 1950. He worked in the steward department and concluded his career aboard the *Nobska*. Brother De Costa went on pension in 1971 and resided in Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts.



FELICIANO GABINO

Pensioner Feliciano Gabino, 86, passed away December 6. Brother Gabino worked in the engine department. He last shipped on the *Delaware Bay* before retiring in 2003. Brother Gabino lived in Schemectady, New York.



MICHAEL GEORGE

Pensioner Michael George, 99, died November 27. Brother George worked in the deck department and last shipped on the *American Marketer*. He retired in 1987 and settled in San Francisco.

FRED MULL

Pensioner Fred Mull, 90, passed away November 19. Brother Mull sailed in the engine department. He concluded his career aboard the *Keystone Georgia* and began collecting his pension in 2000. Brother Mull lived in Fletcher, North Carolina.

EDWARD SCOTT

Pensioner Edward Scott, 83, died September 27. Brother Scott last shipped aboard the *Thompson Lykes* and retired in 1998. Brother Scott called Spanish Fort, Alabama, home.

JAMES SEPANARA

Pensioner James Sepanara, 77, died November 4. Brother Sepanara concluded his career with Woods Hole Shipping and became a pensioner in 2013. He resided in Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts.



Paul Hall Center Class Photos



APPRENTICE WATER SURVIVAL CLASS #929 – Recently graduated: Marcialito Aclaro, Anferney Allen, Clint Cardines, Gabriel Clark, Jade Frehner, Marshod Hawkins, Nathanael Hernandez Briceno, Jack Mrohs, Kimberly Nguyen, Brandon Parker, Brian Parker, Weston Peters-Ring, Luke Possinger, Alex Romero, Andrew Smith, Erica Tompkins, Julian Violanti, Zion Williams and Michael Young.



FIREFIGHTING (HELO) – Graduated January 23 (not all are pictured): Nicholas Allbritton, Samuel Alvarado, Gustavo Anavitate, Simeon Dailey, Kendell Dorsey, Kenneth Gale, Brandon Givens, Kenneth Gonzalez, Kelton Greene, Ian Higgs, Christopher Jack, Sabrina Jean-Baptiste, Jakod McCall, Patrick O'Malley, Maria Ortiz Soto, Christian Perez Gonzalez, Jeremiah Pope, David Ray, Demetria Rhue, Ahmed Saleh, Rory Smith, and Ricardo Vasquez.



ADV. GALLEY OPS – Graduated January 30: Temiaka McLaurin, Michael Ray, Aaron Searcy, Lawrence Wright and Rachael Zavala.



GALLEY OPS – Graduated January 23 (among those pictured): Delvonta Haynes, De'aizja Martin, Astrid Ortiz, Shawn Richard, Myriam Sepulveda and Jacquita Theriot.



TANK SHIP (LG) – Graduated January 16: Shemekia Donald (above) and Victoria Butler.



RFEW – Graduated February 13: Elias Carrier, Deon Daniels, Oscar Garibaldi, Tariq Graham, James Griesse, Sanita Hayes, Elijah Haynes, Darin Holmes, Christopher Johnston, William Land, Yo Evelyn Rodriguez, Michal Spryszynski, Matthew Swift, Noel Vindua, Jordan Vonchampion, Michaelangelo Vonchampion, Christian Wailehua, Tereton Washington Jr., Joseph Wilde and Zkl Williams.

Paul Hall Center Class Photos



VESSEL OPS – Graduated February 13 (not all are pictured): Nicholas Allbritton, Gustavo Anavitate, Hyjalun Burch, Simeon Dailey, Kendell Dorsey, Kenneth Gale, Brandon Givens, Kenneth Gonzalez, Kelton Greene, Ian Higgs, Christopher Jack, Sabrina Jean-Baptiste, Jakod McCall, Patrick O'Malley, Jeremiah Pope, David Ray, Demetria Rhue, Rory Smith and Ricardo Vasquez.



WELDING – Graduated January 30: Jahnia Cain, Randy Corey, Jon Erichsen, Brandon Fore, Ja'von Harvey, Cotisha Long-Green and Jonmark Newman. Instructor Chris Raley is at the far right.



ABLE SEAFARER (DECK) – Graduated February 13 (not all are pictured): Brian Bolden Jr., Lamonica Daniels, Daniel Gilbert, Alexander Greco, Samaria Harper, Jose Hernandez Cuevas, Chantay Martin, Metwa Ojoch, Travon Pinnekins, Maurice Roberts Jr., Shawna-Kay Skinner and Jeremy Marte.



CHIEF COOK – Graduated January 16: Jasmine Brockington, Wilfredo Cosme Ayala, Kevin Devonish, Sherlyen Gedeon, Suzanne Herrera, Suneih Land, Jeremias Luenzo, Anthony Monroe and Zamariya Wilson.



WATER SURVIVAL (UPGRADERS) – Graduated January 30: William Cassel III (right) and Jason Dixon.



SERVE SAFE – Graduated January 30: Samuel Alvarado (right) and Maria Ortiz Soto.



TANK SHIP (DL) – Graduated February 6: James Artis, Elijah Busch, Daniel Cho, Kelvin Huffman, Kaitlyn Lipka, Joseph Romanowski, Cameron Slayton, Dylan Storie, Maciej Szymtkowski, Dena Turner and Cole Waddell.

SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION – ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS, AFL-CIO

Philanthropic Effort Spreads Holiday Cheer For Hawaii Foster Children and Families

SIU members and officials in Honolulu helped make the holidays brighter for foster children and families in their community through their donations to Family Programs Hawaii's Adopt-a-Tote Bag Campaign. Volunteers assembled 1,050 tote bags at the hiring hall in Honolulu and later distributed them at the organization's Christmas party, which took place Dec. 7.

SIU participants in the tote assembly included Apprentice **Kimberly Wilson**, Bosun **Walter Lichota**, GUDE **Matthew Domen**, OMU **Victorino Labrilla**, ABM **Daniel Stavron**, 2C **Jennifer Reid**, Pensioner **Denis Burke** (along with his wife, Jeanet, and daughter, Clarissa), and GUDE **Ken Kan**. SIU Vice President Hazel Galbiso, Safety Director Amber Akana, and Administrative Assistant Caitlyn Wharton also assisted with tote bag assembly and brought the bags to the holiday party with some help from family and friends.

Akana, Wharton, and Galbiso hosted the SIU's booth at the holiday party, where they set up a putt-putt golf station for children and families. SIU Vice President West Coast Joe Vincenzo joined them at the event.

"This is our second year with the same organization, but this is the first time we did the Adopt-A-Tote. Last year, we did Adopt-A-Backpack, but with the amount of money we raised this year, we pivoted to Adopt-a-Tote," said Akana.

"For 2025 we decided to go above and beyond," said Galbiso. "There were a lot of tote bags, and we encouraged the membership to participate and get involved in giving back to the community, because when these foster kids get taken out of their placement, or from wherever they are, they sometimes come with nothing. At least through this program they can have a bag or a backpack to take with them."

In June, Seafarers began collecting toys and other items for inclusion in the tote bags. "Members donated money, and then [port staff] went out and bought the items a month or so prior to the event," said Wharton. "For this upcoming year, we're starting to collect donations this month!"

"Overall, I thought it went well, but we'd like to encourage more members to participate in the future," said Galbiso. "This past year a lot of members told us that they didn't get a chance to participate, so this time we're going to start early and give them nearly the whole year."

Kan, who took part in the most recent event, said, "I supported and participated in 2025, and I have already sponsored 2026 as well, in the hope that it encourages other early adopters."

Tote bag assembly took place at the Honolulu hiring hall, where the industrious volunteers

filled 1,050 bags for the children in need. Wharton described the volunteers who assisted with the assembly process as "very effective. We [put the totes together] within about four days," she recalled. "We had different members come out.... We did an assembly line each day where they went down the line and grabbed one of each of the items that we put out for them to include."

Port staff and officials (with help from their families) loaded the bags into their cars and delivered them to the convention center where the holiday party took place. There, volunteers distributed the totes to children and families as prizes for taking part in the SIU's golf course.

"The organization wanted us to create an interactive activity for the children, so golf was our choice and it was very popular. Some of the parents participated, too," said Galbiso.

Akana said, "The party was a hit; the kids loved it. The event was for kids ranging from as small as six months to probably 18 years old, which is a pretty wide variety."

Akana said that the union's participation not only helps give back to the community, but also helps locals learn more about both the SIU and the maritime industry.

"Volunteering gives us a chance to educate others about why we rely on shipping," Akana said. "The state relies on our industry, but it seems like we're a hidden secret. So, through our volunteer work, we also aim to educate people and promote our industry."

This past year marked Family Programs Hawaii's 27th annual holiday party. Family Programs Hawaii is a local nonprofit organization that focuses on providing care and services for foster children and families in the area.

In a video recap of the event, President and CEO of Family Programs Hawaii La'akea Yoshida said, "This whole event can't happen without our sponsors and all the volunteers and those who give."

Records from the previous year's event showed that 1,470 people participated in the party, including 774 volunteers and more than 50 partner organizations who joined forces to support the 907 youth who attended the holiday party.

"I think it's really important because for children in foster care, the holidays can be really hard when you don't live with your family of origin, or when there's a lot going on emotionally. This is just a day where they can have fun, and they can do something for the holidays that makes them feel good," said Director of Programs for Family Programs Hawaii Chiyomi Chow. "I remember as a foster and then an adoptive mother how important it was for me, and



Safety Director Amber Akana hands out a tote to a child who won at the SIU mini-golf station.



Some of the SIU volunteers pause for a snapshot at the Honolulu hall.

now it's nice giving back to those that could really use some cheer during the holidays."

"I greatly appreciate being part of Adopt-A-Tote. Knowing the totes, snacks, and coloring books are going to keiki in foster care made the experience feel especially meaningful," said Kan. "Working alongside fellow SIU members to fill the totes was genuinely rewarding. It was a hands-on way to take part in an uplifting, community-centered effort. I'm proud to support this program, which brings the SIU and the local community closer together through the spirit of aloha."



From left, SIU VP Hazel Galbiso, VP Joe Vincenzo, Admin. Assistant Caitlyn Wharton, and Safety Director Amber Akana strike a pose at SIU's mini-golf station.



SIU VP Hazel Galbiso (background at left) and Safety Director Amber Akana (right) observe as a young girl lines up her shot on the mini-golf green.