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Strong SIU Turnout for Sail-In

SIU Members, Officials Meet With Congress to Promote Seafaring Jobs

This year's Maritime Congressional Sail-In saw 140 individuals from throughout the industry – including 25 SIU members and officials – converge on Capitol Hill. They met with members of Congress and key staff during what is widely regarded as a vital event to promote the U.S. Merchant Marine. Pictured below are SIU participants, including one spouse of a Seafarer. SIU President David Heindel is in front, sixth from right (brown jacket). *Pages 3-6.*



Great Promise for Maritime's Future



David Heindel

These are genuinely exciting and promising times for the American maritime industry, due in large part to the impending re-introduction of the SHIPS for America Act, along with a recently issued executive order aimed at boosting domestic shipbuilding while addressing shipboard manpower concerns.

We got word right around press time that the bipartisan SHIPS Act is expected to drop in late April. At worst, I think we can expect it to happen no later than National Maritime Day (May 22), based on everything we've been told.

We've reported on the SHIPS Act fairly extensively, going back to when it first was introduced in the last Congress. It is both comprehensive and ambitious, and the SIU fully supports it.

The White House's pro-maritime executive order, issued last month, has some overlap with components of the SHIPS Act, which can be helpful in moving things along. Anyone who's spent time working in the nation's capital undoubtedly knows that advancing new legislation and directives often feels glacial in pace, but I'm hopeful that this will be an exception. There's no fully accurate way to gauge it, but maritime truly may be the most bipartisan issue right now on Capitol Hill. Collectively, our industry has gotten the attention and support we'll need to grow the manpower pool, revitalize our shipbuilding, and strengthen existing pro-maritime laws while adding sensible new ones.

With that said, even if things move along relatively quickly, it'll take time. No undertaking of such a massive scope happens overnight. The SIU will remain fully engaged in promoting your interests, and we'll keep you posted via our usual channels, including our website, the LOG, and the monthly membership meetings.

I'm very optimistic about the future of the SIU and that of the U.S. Merchant Marine as a whole.

Not all of the news from D.C. has been uplifting, though. As you probably know, a separate executive order has taken away collective bargaining rights from hundreds of thousands of federal-sector workers. The extent to which this will affect members of the SIU Government Services Division is still being evaluated, and in the meantime, we are working with allies in the labor movement and the military and in Congress to maintain our members' rights. That's in addition to supporting new, bipartisan legislation that would overturn the order.

Finally, and also at press time, an important update was expected from the U.S. Trade Representative concerning recommendations that follow a U.S. investigation of China's maritime practices. We will post and publish updates.

More Kudos

I recently read the following quote from the captain of the SIU-crewed *Stena Immaculate*, and wanted to share it with anyone who hadn't seen it. Speaking about the heroic firefighting efforts and successful abandon-ship operation, Capt. Thomas M. Leaf (a member of the Seafarers-affiliated American Maritime Officers) stated, "I have never sailed with a more dedicated, professional crew in my career. In the 35 years that I have been sailing, I cannot praise a crew with more drive, competence, ability and unity. Every person, to a man and woman, made sure that everything and everyone was safely accounted for and attended to."

I'm guessing pretty much everyone reading this column is already aware of the *Stena Immaculate* incident, but if you're not familiar with the saga, check out last month's LOG or go to our website. You'll be inspired.

Be Safe Out There

While I fully realize that SIU members keep their documents and related paperwork in order, I wanted to offer some extra encouragement to all of our members in the deep-sea sector to triple check your portfolio before shipping out. Given the tensions between our country and some others, we want to take every precaution in the event of, say, a port-state control inspection.

That's definitely not to say we expect harassment or other problems, but things feel a bit unsettled these days. Better to have your ducks in a row and to minimize the chances of any misunderstandings overseas.

Financial Committee Approves 2024 Records

The SIU Constitution specifies that, once a year, a seven-person group of rank-and-file Seafarers (elected by fellow members) examines the organization's financial records for the previous calendar year.

That requirement was met this year in early April when seven SIU members reviewed and approved the union's monetary records for 2024. The Seafarers were elected by their peers during the union's April meeting in Piney Point, Maryland. Beginning the next day, they convened at SIU Headquarters in Camp Springs, Maryland, to conduct the audit.

That same week, the committee found that the SIU's financial records for 2024 are in good order. Their report, filed with the secretary-treasurer's office, will be read in all ports and presented for approval at the union's May membership meetings.

Serving on the committee were Bosun **Johnny Dozier III** (chairman), OS **Ryan Heimberger**, Chief Cook **Tommy Cyrus**, Bosun **Joe Bowen**, QMED **Mike Joel**, Chief Cook **Gerard Cox**, and AB **James Osborne**.

The members conducted their tasks in accordance with Article X, Section 14-c of the SIU Constitution, which lists the duties of the annual financial committee along with rules and procedures for electing the group.



These photos were taken at the union's headquarters building during the first full week of April, as the committee wrapped up its work. Pictured from left in the posed photo are (seated) OS Ryan Heimberger, Chief Cook Tommy Cyrus, SIU Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski, Bosun Joe Bowen, (standing) QMED Mike Joel, Chief Cook Gerard Cox, Bosun Johnny Dozier III (chairman), and AB James Osborne.

The members reported that they met with representatives from the certified public accounting firm that periodically audits the union's books and records. Those representatives explained their procedures for checking the secretary-treasurer's financial report of the union's records, and they also further discussed the SIU's overall financial operation. SIU Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski also worked with the

committee "and made himself and the records of his office available" to the group, according to the report.

In addition to Orzechowski, the union's legal counsel also convened with committee members in the event any of them had questions.



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

SIU Makes Capitol Hill Port of Call

Annual Maritime Sail-In Promotes Industry to Lawmakers

SIU officials, members and staff eagerly participated in this year's record-breaking Congressional Sail-In event, which took place on April 8. Over 140 members of the maritime industry met with Congressional members and their staffers and discussed the most pressing issues presently facing Seafarers.

Participating from the SIU: President David Heindel; Executive Vice President Augustin Tellez; Vice Presidents George Tricker, Nick Marrone, Dean Corgey, Joseph Soresi and Joe Vincenzo; Political and Legislative Director Brian Schoeneman; Assistant Vice Presidents Todd Brdak, Amancio Crespo, Ray Henderson and Michael Russo; and Port Agent Mario Torrey.

Additionally, the SIU was fully represented this year by the following members: Chief Mate **Lindsey Austin**; Recertified Bosuns **Billy Hill, Juan Ruiz-Manaiza, Redentor Borja, Ryan Scott, Roy Madrio and Kelly Doyle**; Recertified Stewards **Dylan Faile, Raul Napoles, Roberto Coronado, Aurelio Esperanza, Matthew Conyac, and George Egbert**. This marked the first time a large number of rank-and-file members joined the officials in the meetings, providing their unique perspectives as working mariners during the discussions.

"I'm grateful to represent the working seafarer and the union at our nation's capital," said Austin. "Our union works diligently on political activities to protect our jobs now, and to secure our jobs for the future American seafarers. During Sail-In, we got the opportunity to speak with state representatives on important topics like the Tanker Security Program, Maritime Security Program, Food for Peace, the SHIPS for America Act and the Jones Act."

The meetings concluded with a reception for participants and guests, which this year included Senator Mark Kelly (D-Arizona), and Representatives Salud Carbajal (D-California), John Garamendi (D-California) and Rick Larsen (D-Washington). During the reception, Sen. Kelly and Rep. Garamendi were present to accept the USA Maritime Leadership Award, which was awarded to the five cosponsors of the SHIPS for America Act (Kelly, Garamendi, Senator Todd Young (R-Indiana), Congressman Trent Kelly (R-Mississippi) and National Security Advisor Mike Waltz).

[Additional photos on Pages 4-6](#)



Pictured with Congressman Mike Ezell (R-Mississippi) (seated): SIU President David Heindel (second from left), Chris Johnsen, Gary Carpentier, Macy Blakely and David Wood.



Pictured with a staffer of Senator Todd Young (R-Indiana): SIU Executive Vice-President Augustin Tellez (left), Jonathan Kaskin, Nicole Greenway, Monica Malone and Mike Surgalski.



Congressman John Garamendi (D-California) (right) accepting his USA Maritime Leadership Award, presented by SIU Political and Legislative Director Brian Schoeneman.



Pictured with a staffer of Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-Washington): SIU Vice President Nick Marrone (third from left), MTD Executive Secretary-Treasurer Brittanie Potter (left), Jason Silve, Erin Gantt and Will Walgren.

Seafarers Bring Crucial Perspectives to D.C.

This year's SIU group at the Maritime Congressional Sail-In featured a record number of rank-and-file Seafarers, including six bosuns and six stewards from the combined recertification class that wrapped up April 7.

The photos on this page were taken at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. The quotes were collected subsequent to the Sail-In. Members were asked for their impressions of the event.



Ryan Scott
Recertified Bosun

I enjoyed the experience of the whole Congressional Sail-In. I enjoyed talking with the members and their staffs about our industry, and informing them on all the programs we would like them to support: from MSP, TSP, CSP, Cargo Preference, and Food for Peace (PL-480). It was great to explore the halls of Congress and how crazy it can be there at times.



Billy Hill
Recertified Bosun

I had a good experience. My group had six different meetings, and I spoke in every one of them. It was a little overwhelming at first, but we learned a lot. One thing that stood out was how we can all work together; even if the other people (in a given group) aren't SIU, we're all part of the maritime industry.



Roberto Coronado
Recertified Steward

It was a great learning experience for me. Participating in the Sail-in helped me realize how important what we do in the maritime industry is. We should be promoting the industry and legislation that will ensure our job security, because of how important the maritime industry is to our nation's security. Participating in the Sail-in also allowed me to see firsthand how hard our union officials work and how much they do to support us.



Dylan Faile
Recertified Steward

I enjoyed my Sail-In experience. It was a great opportunity to see what we learned in our recertification class about the intricacies of the maritime industry in action. I mainly have experience with the MSP fleet, and I spoke in all five of the meetings our group attended. It gave me a chance to share real-life experience I've gained through working in maritime with legislative members who only had experience with think tanks, and I think they appreciated my point of view.



Juan Ruiz-Manaiza
Recertified Bosun

It was a great experience. I was proud to be part of it. I'll remember being able to express my thoughts – the staffs we met with were very helpful and were absolutely interested in what I had to say.



Redentor Borja
Recertified Bosun

My experience at the Sail-In was really amazing. It made me realize that we have our own people who represent our union in the nation's capital and who work hard to create more job opportunities to keep us strong.



Matthew Conyac
Recertified Steward

I actually spoke up and talked to some of the representatives and enjoyed it. It was nice to bring a face to the discussion as an actual sailor and not just a lobbyist. I was able to talk about the importance of funding for mariner jobs as well as discuss how we are America's Fourth Arm of Defense.



Raul Napoles
Recertified Steward

Our team leader was really good. She (Brenda Otterson) took the lead in the conversations with the congress members, representatives, and legislative staff since she knew the political side of things, but I did get to talk in all of the meetings and introduce myself as a merchant mariner who has worked in the steward department for 25 years. I think what I learned in my recertification class came in handy.



Roy Madrio
Recertified Bosun

We now have a better idea of how to promote our industry. I met with one senator; at first it was a little scary, but it was exciting. I learned a lot. It's important to be active with grassroots politics.



Kelly Doyle
Recertified Bosun

It was fantastic. The trip up to Capitol Hill was phenomenal. It was beyond my expectations. The meetings went well. Overall, it was a fantastic experience, learning what goes on behind the scenes.



Aurelio Esperanza
Recertified Steward

It was a really good experience. I got to go along with the officials to meet with senators and talk about the Jones Act, the Maritime Security Program, and the Tanker Security Program. I was also able to hear about a lot of things that are going on with the industry.



George Egbert
Recertified Steward

I learned so much. It was the first time in my life I have ever met with those people and it was a really great experience.

2025 Congressional Sail-In



Pictured with a staffer of Congresswoman Julia Brownley (D-California): SIU Vice President George Tricker (center), Patrick Gillette, Matt Henning and Lars Turner.



Pictured after a meeting with staffers of Congressman Donald Norcross (D-New Jersey): SIU Vice President Joseph Soresi (center), Steve Wines, Brody Garland, Marilyn Levi and Trish Skoglund.



Pictured with a staffer of Congresswoman Julie Johnson (D-Texas): SIU Vice President Dean Corgey (second from left), Recertified Bosun Billy Hill (third from left), Matt Woodruff, Leo Bonser, Tyler Heffernan and Allan Post.



Pictured with staffers of Congressman Daniel Webster (R-Florida): SIU Trustee Tony Naccarato (third from right), Brenda Otterson and SIU Recertified Stewards Raul Napoles (second from right) and Roberto Coronado (right).



Pictured with Congressman Andrew Garbarino (R-New York) (third from right): SIU Vice President Joe Vincenzo (third from left), Brian Foy, Sean Murphy, Andrew Rabuse and Joel Whitehead.



Pictured after a meeting with staffers of Senator Markwayne Mullin (R-Oklahoma): SIU Asst. Vice President Todd Brdak (second from right), Jim Weakley, Former Seafarer Chris Edyvean, Brendan O'Connor and Mary Sabuda.



Pictured with Congressman John Garamendi (D-California) (center): SIU Asst. Vice President Ray Henderson (right), Recertified Bosun Kelly Doyle (left), Charlie Papavizas, Alex Butler, Sean Moroney and Melaney Velleca.



Pictured after a meeting with staffers of Congressman Eli Crane (R-Arizona): SIU Asst. Vice President Michael Russo (center), Jeff Vogel, Gary Gilbert, Patrick McCaffery and Jeff Richards.

2025 Congressional Sail-In



Pictured before a meeting with Congressman Ralph Norman (R-South Carolina): SIU Asst. Vice President Amancio Crespo (left), Recertified Bosun Redentor Borja (second from right), Caitlyn Tierney, Capt. Aaron Arabski and Jonathan Doucot.



Pictured after a meeting with a staffer of Congressman Vince Fong (R-California): SIU Port Agent Mario Torrey (second from right), Andy Mueller, Jared Henry, JP Marcantonio and James Tobin.



Pictured with a staffer of Senator Gary Peters (D-Michigan): Chief Mate Lindsey Austin (second from left), Erick Siahaan, Melissa Dorre, Anthony Poplawski and Dan Twohig.



Pictured before a meeting with Congresswoman Chelli Pingree (D-Maine): Transportation Institute VP Sara Fuentes (center), Paul "Chip" Jaenichen, Craig Johnson, Tom Larkin and Elle Stuart.



Pictured with a staffer of Senator Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii): Recertified Steward Aurelio Esperanza (second from right), Roland "Rex" Rexha, Dave Carroll, Ryan Pereyda and Marissa Strawbridge.



Pictured before a meeting with a staffer of Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (D-Florida): Recertified Bosun Ryan Scott (second from left), Mark Vlaun, Willie Barrere and Braddock Parks.



Pictured with a staffer of Congressman Darin LaHood (R-Illinois): Recertified Bosun Juan Ruiz-Manaiza (right), Recertified Steward Dylan Faile (second from left), Jim Sartucci, Elizabeth Mack, Bill Hanson and William Thornton.



Pictured during a meeting with a staffer of Congressman Don Bacon (R-Nebraska): Recertified Steward Matthew Conyac (second from right), Bryant Gardner, Chris Barber, Joseph Schwartzstein and Christain Spain.

Vandegrift, Galbiso are SIU's Newest VPs

The union's executive board has unanimously approved recent personnel recommendations from SIU President David Heindel to fill a handful of positions.

These openings resulted (directly or indirectly) from rank-and-file membership approval of constitutional amendments that were part of the most recent SIU election.

Pat Vandegrift and Hazel Galbiso are the union's newest vice presidents, while Ray Henderson, Warren Asp, and Todd Brdak were promoted to assistant vice president. Vandegrift had been serving as an assistant vice president and as acting vice president of the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education (PHC), located in Piney Point, Maryland. The others all were working as port agents.

Three other assistant vice presidents – Amancio Crespo, Chris Westbrook, and Michael Russo – will retain those primary job titles while shifting to other areas of responsibility.

The constitutional amendments created the two new vice president slots along with corresponding assistant vice president positions.

In a letter to the aforementioned officials plus the others who were elected or re-elected (balloting concluded at the end of last year) and to union staff members, Heindel wrote in part,

“These appointments reflect our ongoing devotion to progress, unity, and the bright future of the SIU.... Moving forward, I am confident that under our shared leadership, and with the continued support of our great membership, the SIU will thrive and evolve, meeting future challenges while upholding the proud traditions that define us. Thank you for your tireless efforts, your vision, and your unwavering commitment to our members and our principles.”

Vandegrift, a native of southern Maryland, served in the U.S. Navy from 1987-1992, then completed the PHC's trainee program in 1993. He sailed in the deck department, most recently as a bosun, before becoming the trainee commandant.

Since then, he has served both the school and the union in wide-ranging capacities. Vandegrift's jobs have included those of patrolman, safety director, instructor, port agent, and assistant vice president. He also has represented the SIU on International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) committees, among other work.

Raised on the Northshore of Oahu, Galbiso sailed in the steward department for 15 years before coming ashore in 2004 to work for the SIU-affiliated Seafarers Entertainment and Allied Trades Union (SEATU). She soon added SIU patrolwoman and dispatcher to her job titles. She has been the Honolulu port agent since 2011.

Beyond her direct work with the SIU, Galbiso is the secretary-treasurer of the Hawaii Ports Maritime Council, part of the Maritime Trades Department; is an executive board member of the Hawaii State AFL-CIO; and is a committee member of the state federation's Labor Community Services Committee, among other activities.

Henderson served in the U.S. Coast Guard from 1989-1995, then completed the PHC's apprentice program in 1996. He joined the SIU in Brooklyn, New York (“where I was yelled at by the great Bobby Selzer (late SIU port agent) for the first time”) and sailed in the deck department.

Henderson became a recertified bosun in April 2007. After eventually sailing to every continent, he came ashore to work for the union in 2015, most recently as the port agent in Jersey City, New Jersey. He also serves on the New York City Central Labor Council and on a New York-based maritime security committee.

Brdak has worked for the SIU for a quarter-century, starting in 1996 as a representative based in Algonac, Michigan. He became safety director in 2000, then began serving as port agent in 2006. His duties have included negotiating and enforcing SIU contracts, handling grievances, and representing the union with various organizations including the Michigan AFL-CIO, the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO, the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force, the Southeast Michigan Area Maritime Security Committee, and the Michigan Maritime Trades Port Council.

Brdak graduated with a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University. Prior to commencing his SIU career, he served as a staff representative for U.S. Rep. David Bonior (D-Michigan).

Asp joined the SIU in Honolulu in 2002. He sailed for nine years, both as an AB and as a bosun. In early 2004, he was part of the inaugural crew that reflagged the *Pride of Aloha* in Puerto Rico and brought it to the Hawaiian Islands. After three years with NCL America, he was among the first Seafarers to sail aboard the *Hawaii Superferry*.

He later sailed on oil tankers and eventually came ashore as a safety director in Honolulu in 2011. Asp in 2014 relocated to Tacoma, Washington, to work as a patrolman. He became port agent in 2019. Since early 2023, he has been a trustee on the South Puget Sound Port Council.



SIU VP Hazel Galbiso



SIU VP Pat Vandegrift

Bipartisan Legislation Introduced to Restore Collective Bargaining Rights for Federal Workers

U.S. Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pennsylvania) and Jared Golden (D-Maine) on April 1 joined together to introduce the Protect America's Workforce Act, bipartisan legislation aimed at restoring collective bargaining rights for unionized federal employees.

The legislation would reverse the executive order titled “Exclusions from Federal Labor-Management Relations Programs,” which aimed to eliminate collective bargaining rights across multiple federal agencies. Specifically, the order targeted employees in the Departments of Defense, State, Veterans Affairs, Justice, and Energy, as well as certain employees in the Departments of Homeland Security, Treasury, Health and Human Services, Interior, and Agriculture. In total, the order impacted roughly 67% of the federal workforce, according to independent reports.

“Improving government efficiency is essential – but sweeping exclusions from collective bargaining are a blunt instrument that risk weakening the very stability and performance we aim to strengthen,” Fitzpatrick said. “The Protect America's Workforce Act restores a balanced, targeted approach – protecting bargaining rights where they pose no threat to national security and reinforcing their proven role in supporting morale, accountability, and effective governance. We can defend our national security

without silencing those who serve it. Efficiency and fairness are not mutually exclusive, and this legislation ensures we uphold both.”

Golden stated, “In his order, President Trump said that federal workers' rights are incompatible with national security. He is wrong. Union workers make America stronger every single day, including more than 6,000 federal workers in Maine. Throughout our history, unions have ensured workers got their fair share of this nation's prosperity. Unions built our middle class, and are key to strengthening its future. We cannot have a government that undermines workers' rights.”

Reacting to the executive order, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said, “Donald Trump is trying to end collective bargaining for hundreds of thousands of federal workers, silencing their voices and ripping up their contracts. This order would strike a blow to every American's fundamental right of freedom of speech and association. More than 70 percent of Americans and nearly nine in 10 young people support unions; no one voted to attack the freedom to organize with our co-workers for a better life. We commend the leadership of Reps. Jared Golden and Brian Fitzpatrick for using Congress' power to reverse this executive order. The labor movement is 100 percent behind this bill and we call on every member of Congress, Democrat and Republican, to take a stand

in support of our fundamental rights by backing this critical legislation.”

In addition to the AFL-CIO, the Protect America's Workforce Act has the support of numerous unions representing federal employees, including the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU), the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), according to a joint news release from Golden and Fitzpatrick.

Federal workers already face limitations in some of their labor rights. Unlike their counterparts in the private sector, they are prohibited by law from bargaining over wages, benefits, or job classifications, and are barred from striking. Their collective bargaining rights are restricted to matters related to working conditions. Notably, approximately one-third of unionized federal employees are U.S. military veterans.

The congressmen concluded, “The Protect America's Workforce Act reaffirms a core principle: a government that serves the people must also respect the rights of those who serve within it.”

'Something Different' Becomes Worthwhile Second Career for MacDonald

Editor's note: This article by SIU member Diane MacDonald is the first in an occasional series spotlighting female mariners. Our aim is to increase awareness about maritime career opportunities, and in particular to underscore the fact that the U.S. Merchant Marine is a viable path for women and men alike. The questions that are included in the article were asked by LOG staff. MacDonald started sailing with the SIU in 2018. She has sailed as an SA, third cook, and chief cook.



SIU member Diane MacDonald enjoys some time ashore in Japan.

For most of my career, I've worked in the food and beverage industry, including a position with a campus dining company managing union staff for 20 years. I always admired the union's benefit package and compensation and, in many cases, the protection the members received.

After my parents passed away, I wanted to do something different. I was now free to explore options without any worries of leaving them behind. I took a job with NCL America and was sent for the week-long training at the Paul Hall Center in Piney Point, Maryland. It was there I became aware of the possibility of working as a union member on merchant ships, but didn't know much else about it.

As luck would have it, I sprained my ankle just prior to joining the *Pride of America*. While it was healing, I applied and was accepted to a 12-week program exclusively for the steward department being offered in Piney Point at the time.

For the past six years, I have upgraded multiple times, have traveled all over the world, enjoyed monetary success, a flexible work schedule, multiple benefits through insurance, built a retirement portfolio, and received various discounts (the latter through Union Plus). Instead of working 12 months a year with three weeks off, I now work seven months a year with five months off while being compensated the same as I was prior to joining the SIU. Not only that, I've also accumulated a significant amount of money in retirement fund investments over the past six years, and that's in addition to becoming vested in both the Seafarers Pension Plan and the Seafarers Money Purchase Pension Plan.

The maritime industry has afforded me the experience to get a taste of different cultures, engaging with people from different walks of life, see the world, experience the awesome nature of the sea and be part of a brother/sisterhood while making an honest wage.

Question: Globally, this is an overwhelmingly male industry. Only about two percent of the world's mariners are female, although upwards of 15 percent of the applicants to the Paul Hall Center's apprentice program are women. Did this discourage you at all from entering the industry?

It did not deter me. I already had vast experience in an industry where at times it was male-dominated. It didn't matter who was at the helm so to speak. I would take my orders from my boss, whether it was male or female.

Question: In your experience, are female SIU members treated properly by their colleagues aboard ship? Are they treated as equals?

I have never had an issue with SASH. At times, I think female mariners may be held to a higher standard than some of their male shipmates, and that's possibly attributable to the fact that there are fewer of us on the vessels.

Question: What advice would you give to a female who's considering entering the industry?

I would highly recommend anyone become a merchant mariner and enjoy a safe, fun, fascinating and unique adventure of a seafaring lifestyle. If you join the SIU, take advantage of the Seafarers 401(k) and Roth plans with Empower (the fund manager).

SIU Supports ITF Efforts Promoting Women at Sea

As a show of solidarity and support for the SIU's own population of our sister Seafarers as well as those across the globe, union representatives attended a group Zoom call hosted by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) on March 7, preceding International Women's Day (March 8). They discussed the state of affairs for seafaring women, the invisible barriers and challenges they face, and what steps companies, unions and the greater shipping industry can take to make maritime careers more attractive to other women who may have an interest in sailing.

SIU participants included Jersey City Representative Jordan Esopa, Media Coordinator Lauren Liles, and Oakland Patrolwoman Kathy Chester.

The ITF, to which the SIU is affiliated, launched their Women at Sea network back in February, but the federation and its affiliates heavily promoted their outreach in March to coincide with Women's History Month. This effort, which includes the creation of a new section of their website as well as newly minted groups and programming made to connect women seafarers from various backgrounds, is meant to honor women working in the maritime industry, and to make sure their rights are protected.

"I know personally, to further my involvement, I joined several national organizations for women and am truly impressed with network and support [the ITF has] offered," said Liles. "Seeing this expand to a global network with the launch of the ITF's Women at Sea website, with not only the resources it offers, but the issues they seek to highlight, is a wonderful and exciting thing to be a part of and bear witness as it develops."

Additionally, the federation hopes to encourage other women to join the fold with the assurance that they can have successful careers in what has historically been a male-dominated industry. Careers at sea are still skew heavily male, with only 2% of seafarers worldwide being women, according to statistics shared by the ITF.

"As a member of our recruiting team, I've always been appreciative that the SIU's numbers surrounding women are higher than global industry standard and our ever-present goal to increase, not only this,

but the overall diversity of our candidates, drives our efforts," said Liles. Indeed, the percentage of new female seafarers attending apprenticeship classes through the SIU's affiliated school in southern Maryland has trended upward, to about 15% over the past year.

ITF Maritime Coordinator Jacqueline Smith chaired the Zoom call, which consisted of speakers from various organizations within the shipping industry. Among those addressing the meeting were Lydia Ferrad (International Maritime Organization representative to the ITF), Eliza Chomi (who sails as a chief engineer), Lena Dyring (Norwegian Seafarers Union, Chair of the ITF Cruise Ship Task Force), Amalie Grevsen (Marine Culture Lead, Maersk), Lorena de Silva (ITF Seafarers' Section Committee Women's representative), Arsenio Dominguez (International Maritime Organization Secretary General), and Sarah Lovell (Technical Content Development Manager, International Chamber of Shipping).

Some of the call focused on promoting new endeavors meant to encourage the existing population of female seafarers to get connected and discuss retention and recruitment efforts, while another portion focused on discussing current issues that affect women at sea.

"I think Women at Sea is an incredible resource for women working in maritime," said the SIU's Esopa. "The 'network' page is a great way to connect women in the industry and build a sense of community for our sisters feeling isolated while they are away at work."

The female mariners on the panel shared a combination of their own personal experiences sailing along with resources and advice for other women who work in maritime roles.

Esopa found the personal stories from female seafarers most impactful. "There is certainly a unique set of challenges female seafarers face not only working in a male-dominated industry but also working in an industry that by its nature is quite isolating," she said.

Chomi mentioned that some of the challenges discussed during the meeting mirror those faced by women in other professions.

Ferrad shared that she would prefer that her shipmates see her for her role and competence rather than be treated differently or held to different standards simply for being a woman.

Other speakers throughout the duration of the call echoed Ferrad's sentiment that further regulations and training are needed to ensure a safer workplace for her fellow female seafarers, along with more enforcement.

"More colleagues and superiors need training to help people go through filing report processes for bullying, harassment etc.," said Grevsen.

In the foreign-flag fleet, current practices aimed at combatting harassment, according to people on the call, commonly consist of companies ignoring complaints or simply signing off on reports made about improper behavior, without taking any further action.

Other suggestions made during the call included ships carrying personal protective equipment specifically tailored to women (such as masks and boots), and more shipboard accommodations such as women's restrooms and the provision of sanitary materials.

IMO Secretary Dominguez agreed that "outdated attitudes" toward women who sail need to change, and that companies should encourage individuals to speak up and take appropriate action when concerns arise.

Participants also mentioned the difficulties involved in enforcing a standard of inclusion for women in an industry that spans many countries and cultural differences. "Empowerment of women needs to come from the country first," said Chomi.

Chomi spoke about addressing the fear of reporting instances of bullying/harassment, saying that women who might be apprehensive to make a report should instead see it as an act of courage. She expressed that many women are deterred from reporting harassment for fear of judgment or mistreatment after the fact.

She recognized it'll take patience and persistence to boost the shipboard culture worldwide, but that the industry should push for "small wins over time" until the maritime sector becomes more equitable. Chomi emphasized that companies with inclusive workplaces attract better talent, too.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



ABOARD AMERICAN ENERGY – SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo and Safety Director Ricky Rivera meet with Seafarers aboard the Crowley LNG carrier the vessel's first call at Guayanilla, Puerto Rico. Crespo is second from left, between two officers. Also pictured (from left, starting fourth from left) are Chief Cook Carlos Colon, Rivera, Recertified Steward Edwin Bonefont, (in front) SA Nadia Forester, Bosun Raul Colon, AB Victor Cortes, and QEE Edwin Velez.



ABOARD ATB PRIDE – Pictured from left aboard the Fairwater vessel are Capt. Patrick Ciulla and Chief Engineer Eric Vieira.



MOMENTOUS OCCASION – Chief Cook Bernard Nieves (right) receives his A-seniority book. He's pictured at the March membership meeting in Oakland, California, with SIU VP West Coast Nick Marrone.



WELCOME ABOARD – Seafarer Eric Valdez (left) receives his full book from SIU Assistant VP Ray Henderson in New York.



WELCOME ASHORE IN HAWAII – Chief Cook Henry Wright (left) picks up his first pension check at the Honolulu hall. He sailed with the SIU for 35 years, most recently aboard the *George III* (Sunrise Operations). Congratulating him is SIU VP Hazel Galbiso.



ABOARD BRITTIN – Pictured aboard the Pasha vessel are (front) Chief Cook Jolanta Jankowski, (from left) Recertified Steward Erwin Renon, Bosun Francis Miller, GUDE Jacek Biela, ABM Xavier Brown, and QEDW Karl Morrow.



WELCOME ASHORE IN TEXAS – Bosun George Godiciu (center) is pictured at the Houston hall as he wraps up an SIU career that spanned almost 30 years. Joining him are (from left) Patrolmen J.B. Niday and Kirk Pegan, Port Agent Joe Zavala, and Patrolman Kelly Krick.



BOOKS GALORE IN MICHIGAN – Pictured at the hiring hall, from left to right, starting with photo at far left: OS Nassim Alkassemi receives his B book from Safety Director Jason Brown; AB Ali Ghalib gets his A book from Port Representative Rachel Tuttle; AB Amar Algahmee receives his B book from Brown; SA Khaled Ali obtains his B book; and Chief Cook Dee Anne Merriman receives her A-seniority book.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



BOOKS OBTAINED IN HOUSTON – Pictured at the hiring hall, starting with photo at far left: ABM Henry Bermudez (right) receives his A-seniority book. He's pictured with SIU Patrolman Kelly Krick. The remaining members pictured received their respective full B books. Standing from left in the three-person photo are Krick, GUDE Arvin Ampit, and SIU Patrolman Kirk Pegan. The remaining photos include AB Sotero Ruel Cabahug (white shirt, with Pegan), and OMU Khamsin Alkhag (jacket, with Krick).



CONFERRING IN DC – Safety Director Kevin Sykes (right) represented the SIU during a recent, well-attended American Association of Port Authorities gathering in the nation's capital. He's pictured with (from left) James Dumont, director of grants for Crowley, and Capt. Jeff Flumingan, director of the Office of Maritime and Intermodal Outreach for the Maritime Administration.



ABOARD MV JOHN STEVENS – The Easter spirit is evident aboard the SIU-crewed NY Waterway vessel. Pictured from left are Senior Deckhands Nestor Martinez, Modesto Penton and Geraldo Torres, Capt. Tim Bryan, and Deckhand David Reeves.



ABOARD MAUNAWILI – Pictured from left aboard the Matson ship are Steward/Baker Roberto Coronado, Chief Cook Reno Duque, and ACU Roberto Firme.



AS SEEN IN PACIFIC NORTHWEST – AB Chris Linsley snapped this photo of the TOTE-operated *North Star*.



ABOARD PERLA DEL CARIBE – Many thanks to C/M Doug Voss for this snapshot of (from left) GUDE Raenell Brewster and Electrician Chris Bryant aboard the TOTE vessel, which usually sails between Jacksonville and Puerto Rico. Voss commended the Seafarers for their hard work.



WELCOME ASHORE IN ALABAMA – Longtime Seafarer Kevin Samuels (right), pictured at the Mobile hall with SIU Port Agent Jimmy White, recently called it a career after sailing with the SIU for 38 years, most recently as a chief engineer aboard the *Rocketship*.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



ABOARD PRESIDENT GRANT – Pictured from left aboard the APL vessel are Steward/Baker Rommel Reston, Chief Cook Algje Mayfield, and ACU David Simon.



AT THE SAN JUAN HALL – Chief Cook Reinaldo Rivera (left) receives his full B book. He's pictured with Safety Director Ricky Rivera.



ABOARD SEABULK PRIDE – Photo was taken on Ash Wednesday aboard the Eco Tankers vessel. Pictured from left are QMED Dennis Malaran, Fr. Sinclair Oubre (Stella Maris Chaplain, Diocese of Beaumont, and also a Seafarer), Pumpman Manolito Garcia, and AB Rommel Dela Vega.



RETIREE OUTREACH – Sailors Snug Harbor Executive Director Jay Brooks (standing third from left) recently stopped by the Norfolk hall to explain his organization's services. Pictured at the gathering are (standing, from left) retirees Clay Brown and Michael Pooler, Brooks, SIU Port Agent Mario Torrey, retirees John Cooper, Jose Guzman, (front, also from left) James Corprew, and Frank Washington.



MILESTONE IN FLORIDA – Chief Cook Simone Smith (left) receives her A-seniority book in Jacksonville. Congratulating her is SIU Port Agent Ashley Nelson.



FULL BOOK IN NORFOLK – AB Terrill Tyler (right) receives his book at the hall in Virginia. He's pictured with SIU Patrolman Josh Rawls.



ABOARD SUNSHINE STATE – These photos are from a recent servicing of the Intrepid ship in the Pacific Northwest. Pictured from left in the galley are SA Tonessa Adams, Chief Cook Shawnda Hall, and Steward/Baker David Johnson. Bosun Augusto Barbareno is in the solo pic.



ABOARD USNS CURTISS – This photo was taken during a mid-March servicing of the Intrepid vessel in the Pacific Northwest. Pictured from left are GVA Mosa Kassem, Safety Director Danielle Woodward, and GUDE Jeavis Harris.



ABOARD USNS WATKINS – Pictured from left aboard the Patriot ship are Chief Storekeeper Lloyd Walton, Chief Cook Shafreda Thigpen, Steward/Baker William Moran, SA Salvatore Gotti, and SIU Guam Port Agent Victor Sahagon.



ABOARD TAINO – Pictured from left in the larger group photo from the Intrepid vessel are Relief Steward Esperanza Crespo, ABW Garrett Williams, SA Kajuan Gamble, Recertified Bosun Donley Johnson, ABM Reisa Martinez, Chief Cook Derick Morales, and Recertified Steward Rafael Cardenas. Pictured in the remaining photo (also from left) are SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo, Electrician Carlos Parrilla, SREC Cardenas, and Esperanza Crespo.





Recertified Seafarers Credit Union, School

Pictured at the Paul Hall Center shortly after graduation are (from left) Seafarers George Egbert, Raul Napoles, Roy Madrio, Redentor Borja, (front) Ryan Scott, Juan Ruiz-Manaiza, Billy Hill, Dylan Faile, Matthew Conyac, (back) Roberto Coronado, Aurelio Esperanza, and Kelly Doyle.

Twelve SIU members recently completed a combined recertification class at the union-affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland – and they had plenty of good things to say about their career choice.

Six bosuns and six stewards graduated April 7, following two weeks of blended and department-specific training. They met with a number of instructors, union officials and staff, and with other personnel from the Paul Hall Center throughout the course.

Earning status as recertified members were Bosuns **Billy Hill, Juan Ruiz-Manaiza, Redentor Borja, Ryan Scott, Roy Madrio and Kelly Doyle**, along with Stewards **Dylan Faile, Raul Napoles, Roberto Coronado, Aurelio Esperanza, Matthew Conyac, and George Egbert**.

As reported elsewhere in this edition, all 12 Seafarers stuck around for the annual Maritime Congressional Sail-In the following day in Washington, D.C.

Following are highlights from the graduation speeches, in the order they occurred at the April membership meeting in Piney Point.

Billy Hill

Hill noted he began his maritime journey as a member of Class 681 in Piney Point in March 2006. A fifth-generation Seafarer, he sailed with his father for a couple of years – a period he described as “the best time in my career so far.”

“The SIU has been great to me and my family,” Hill stated. “What other job can you work when you want to, have great benefits and make six figures?”

With nearly 4,000 days of sea time under his belt, Hill spoke from experience when he told the apprentices at the meeting, “I would say go out, show up early, leave your phones in your room, learn as much as you can. You’re not going to know everything on one ship; it’s going to take some time. Start (participating in) the Seafarers 401K, and your older self will thank your younger self! Stay on top of your documents. Don’t rely on social media for input – always ask your bosun or, when you’re home, call the port and speak to your port agent. They will have the correct answers for you.”

He concluded by thanking SIU President David Heindel and the union’s executive board “for all they have done for the SIU.”

George Egbert

Egbert said he has stuck with the SIU because of job security and the union’s role in supporting national security.

“The fundamental concept here is about safeguarding our nation’s interests, including its citizens, economy and institutions from all internal and external threats,” he said. “We cannot

afford to let foreign-flag ships [compromise] our safety.”

Egbert noted that his SIU career has enabled him “to provide for the financial needs of my family. Additionally, I was able to see the world for free.”

He encouraged his fellow members to upgrade and to support SPAD, the union’s voluntary political action fund.

He concluded, “When you are out there on a ship, you will experience all types of attitudes.

All of us fail somewhere in our life, but for me, my definition of failure is when you quit.

There is an old saying that every cloud has a silver lining. Just keep moving forward, despite having temporary setbacks in life.”

Redentor Borja

In his brief graduation speech, Borja recalled shipping out for the first time in 1993, aboard a cruise ship. “It was a big challenge for me because, at that time, I wasn’t sure where I was heading,” he said. “But the more ships I worked on, as the days and years went by, it made me realize that you are who you work for. I am a Seafarer for the SIU.”

He added, “I just want to thank our Lord Jesus Christ for keeping me safe out there; and the SIU board and staff for creating more jobs and for your dedication to the union.”

Borja also thanked his wife and family for their support, and he encouraged fellow members to support SPAD, “which helps keep our jobs secure.”

Kelly Doyle

After opening with a prayer, Doyle thanked SIU Assistant Vice Presidents Chris Westbrook and Michael Russo for their support.

“I hope that everyone will have a long and profitable career such as the one I have had so far,” he stated. “I also would like to mention everyone I’ve met along the way who passed on and are with us here only in spirit.”

Doyle also thanked the school instructors and staff for making the recertification class worthwhile.

Raul Napoles

Upon joining the union in 1999, Napoles first sailed on a cruise ship. He subsequently worked aboard a wide variety of vessels.

“I would like thank the president of our union, Dave Heindel; Executive Vice President Augustin Tellez; Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski; and Vice President Contracts George Tricker,” he said. “I also want to thank all staff at the school and the union staff for working so hard for all of us. I really appreciate it and I’m so grateful and thankful to all here in the school and at

headquarters. They have given us an opportunity to succeed. These benefits will help us for years to come.

He concluded with an appeal to fellow Seafarers to support SPAD and to stand up for the Jones Act, a vital maritime law.

Roberto Coronado

“This recertification is more than just a title,” Coronado said. “It’s a reminder of the responsibilities I hold, and the trust placed in me to serve my crew and my ship with excellence, leadership, and accountability. It reflects not only my hard work but also the collective support and guidance I’ve received from my union, my mentors, and my fellow mariners along the way.”

He said that on the job, he takes “pride in contributing to the wellbeing of the crew and ensuring that every voyage is a successful one. This recertification inspires me to continue striving for improvement, to uphold the highest standards, and to serve with integrity, both on and off the ship.”

Coronado wrapped up his remarks by thanking the SIU for its “continued commitment to supporting us as merchant mariners. I am proud to be part of this community and look forward to carrying this honor with me as I continue to grow in this role.”

Ryan Scott

Although more than 20 years have passed since Scott first arrived in Piney Point for the apprentice program, “I remember the day like it was yesterday,” he said.

He thanked Tacoma, Washington-based officials SIU Vice President Joe Vincenzo and Assistant Vice President Warren Asp along with the patrolmen and office staff for their efforts.

Scott said he has sailed on many different kinds of vessels, but one thing they have in common is most if not all of the related jobs wouldn’t exist without the Jones Act. “I would like to give a big thanks to the executive board and other union leadership for working so hard to maintain the Jones Act and all the other laws that we have in place that keep our jobs safe,” he said.

Scott emphasized the importance of mentoring the next generation of Seafarers before telling the apprentices, “Put your head down and listen to your supervisors on the ships. Work hard and you will make it.”

He concluded, “The SIU has afforded my wife and myself the life we have today, and I wouldn’t change it for anything in the world.”

Aurelio Esperanza

Recalling his arrival to the U.S. as an immigrant almost 15 years ago, Esperanza said, “I was full of hopes and dreams for a brighter future for

me and my family. I promised myself that I would never give up, no matter how bumpy the road would be to fulfill those dreams.... When I joined the SIU, I knew I was on the right track. I am so grateful that the SIU gave me an opportunity.”

Esperanza said that he found great value in each of his upgrading experiences. “Education is the best investment,” he stated. “The SIU provides us not only a free education and job opportunities to better our lives as mariners, but also protection to keep our industry going. I am encouraging you, my brothers and sisters, to support SPAD.”

Esperanza also thanked his family and shipmates before concluding, “Always treat each other with respect, no matter what position a person is in. Embrace ‘heart work’ – if we put our hearts in what we do, everything will be easy.”

Juan Ruiz-Manaiza

A second-generation Seafarer, Ruiz-Manaiza said he was “raised on SIU wages. I joined the union in 2002 as an OS and I worked my way forward to where I am now.

“I would like to share with you the gratefulness that I feel for being an SIU member,” he continued. “Being an SIU member is the best thing that has happened to me in my life, not

only because I have made a successful career out of it but also because I have had the chance to see and explore the world, all the while making good wages. For this, I am very grateful and thankful to our union leaders.”

Like his classmates, Ruiz-Manaiza stressed the importance of SPAD and the Jones Act.

Addressing the apprentices, he said, “I encourage you to take this opportunity that you have before you to advance in the world and to give your very best to this career – not only for your own gain, but also for the success of our great union.”

Matthew Conyac

“My SIU journey started after several attempts to find a secure career,” Conyac said. “I had several jobs, from bartending to casino supervision, and even completed a college degree after hearing that it would open doors. It didn’t.”

After what he described as “a series of random encounters and events,” he enrolled in the apprentice program (Class 768) and age 43.

“The training I have received over the years has been paramount to achieving the success I have had in the galley,” he said. “You get out of it what you put into it. When starting a sea job at entry level, accept direction from your superiors. As you progress in your career be a mentor and a leader, not just a boss. Take advantage of the classes offered at the school. These classes increase your knowledge and earning potential.”

Conyac also encouraged fellow members to support SPAD, attend union meetings, and if called “to fill a job in case of an unexpected event, take that job. It builds your credibility as someone they can count on.”

He concluded, “The SIU has given me a solid career with health benefits, a pension, and being able to travel the world. I thank the SIU for everything it has given me.”

Roy Madrio

Having previously sailed on foreign-flag ships, Madrio said he deeply appreciates the wages, benefits and working conditions aboard SIU-contracted vessels.

“The difference between my time as a seafarer in the Philippines and the time I’ve spent with

the SIU here was dramatic,” he stated. “The SIU offers flexible times, short contracts, better pay, and much more upward mobility. As a result of that, so many doors in my life opened. Through the SIU, I was able to breathe easy and lift a pressure off me. Thanks to the reliability and dependability I found in the SIU, my family and I bought our first house, our first car, and built a strong foundation for the rest of our lives here in America. Without the SIU, none of this would have been possible.”

Madrio secured his third mate’s license through the program at the Paul Hall Center, and he extolled the benefits of upgrading: “The security and stability you’ll find in the SIU now will continue to stay and grow with you as long as you have your drive and dedication.”

He said that his SIU career enabled him to put his daughter through college and that his son is enrolled as a freshman.

“The security, stability, adaptability, and benefits provided by the SIU have been key reasons for what have kept me sailing with them for so long,” he said.

Dylan Faile

Last to the podium, Faile said that during his decade with the SIU, he has become “proof that the ability to grow and move up in the industry quickly is readily accessible. All it takes is a little tenacity and a few sea days.”

He said that upgrading is vital, and that his career “has afforded me the opportunity to see the world, and experience different cultures that otherwise I may have not been able to do; at this point I’ve been to more countries than states.

“None of this would have been possible without all of the sailors that have come before me that fought to make this union possible, as well as the board that continues to fight for us every day,” he continued. “The last few weeks have been eye-opening, seeing all the different parts that go into making it possible for us to go to sea and continue to provide for our families.”

Faile thanked the executive board, port-level officials, instructors, and “all the people in the background with thankless jobs that we don’t even know about that make our union run as efficiently as it does.”



In the top photo, SIU President David Heindel (second from left) and SIU VP Pat Vandegriff (left) meet with members of the combined recertification class and Paul Hall Center apprentices during a town-hall-style gathering on campus in Piney Point, Maryland. Directly above, the upgraders take turns answering questions.

Ashton Luuloo – Apprentice Seafarer



Rafael Alvarez

Editor's note: Rafael Alvarez recently crossed the North Atlantic on the Maersk Ohio as a correspondent for the Seafarers LOG, and filed this story. The son of a lifetime SIU member who sailed as chief engineer, Alvarez has been a working reporter for nearly 50 years. In his younger days he

sailed as a wiper and ordinary seaman. He can be reached via orlo.leini@gmail.com

Ashton Luuloo – Paul Hall Center Class No. 914 – didn't think they were playing it straight when he applied to a forestry program in search of a career a few years ago. He was raised in Temecula and the curriculum took place in California. Promises were made.

"They offered training, certifications and experience while getting paid," said Luuloo earlier this year, sailing as an apprentice ordinary seaman on the *Maersk Ohio* from Norfolk, Virginia, to Northern Europe. He hoped the Golden State program would pave the way for a career as an electrician.

"I felt it was somewhat deceitful," he said, "because the main priority was to increase manpower for natural disasters like fires and floods."

After six months – sensing that a primary objective of the program was to "get kids off the street" – he quit. The experience made him somewhat wary of the training and benefits the SIU told him he could expect as a United States merchant mariner.

The Luuloo family enjoys gambling, holding reunions in Las Vegas. Always interested in a life at sea, Ashton thought he might find work on a cruise ship dealing blackjack, "wondering what it would be like to be behind the table instead of in front of it."

After thinking it over, he rolled the dice with the SIU and found the odds in his favor.

"They stuck to their word," said Luuloo, single and 27, the average age of apprentices entering the Paul Hall Center last year. "Online, there were so many people who [posted] a positive experience validating the legitimacy of the program."

He chose the deck department, sensing a greater opportunity to get jobs. On the *Maersk Ohio*, his first trip in January to Antwerp, Rotterdam and Bremerhaven and back, he learned the ropes from the bosun, a veteran of several decades, and shipmate **Blake Braye**, an AB with a dozen years at sea.

"I work with Blake every day," said Luuloo. "I'm able to ask him for advice or confirmation that I'm doing my job correctly. Teamwork has been a consistent factor in whatever task I'm given. It not only helps the actual ship but the crew I live with. It reminds me of playing sports when I was growing up."

His advice to others just starting out in the deck department: If you're crossing the Atlantic in winter, bring the proper clothes.

"Handling lines on the bow early in the morning is a fast way to find out," he said. "I should have brought a better jacket and insulated work gloves, maybe even a better pair of work pants."

At first a bit nervous that a line might snap, he was assured by the second mate that it was a very rare occurrence and almost certainly wouldn't happen "unless everyone was



Apprentice/OS Ashton Luuloo
(Photo courtesy Macon Street Books)

negligent checking the integrity of the lines" before shoving off.

Now back at Piney Point before his next trip and graduation later this year, Luuloo remembered "getting right into the work" aboard the *Ohio*. "Everything I learned in school was applied the first day," he said. "I realized I had a lot of knowledge but lacked some wisdom. It took about two weeks to get adjusted and settle in."

Some things he learned on the job, like how to tie a variety of knots more secure than the standard "clove hitch," depending on what was being secured. "I watched how the bosun tied knots in specific scenarios so I knew what to do when it was my turn to do a similar task," he stated.

He also learned when to hold his horses: "There were times where I jumped the gun and tried to do things one step ahead. It's better to swallow your pride and ask for help than possibly do it incorrectly. I learned if the bosun didn't tell me to do it, don't do it."

Got a good sea story for The LOG? E-mail Alvarez via orlo.leini@gmail.com

Preventing, Treating Pancreatitis

The pancreas is a 6-inch-long gland in the upper part of the abdomen near the liver and gall bladder. It controls many hormones and is involved in enzyme secretions. It helps to regulate blood sugar with insulin and glucagon. It secretes enzymes that regulate the digestion of food.

Insulin is secreted to lower blood glucose and glucagon is released in order to increase the glucose levels if the blood sugar drops too low.

The enzymes that are released from the pancreas are Lipase to digest fats, Amylase to digest carbohydrates and Chymotrypsin/trypsin for the digestion of proteins.

There are many conditions that can affect the function of the pancreas. One is diabetes and the other is something that can aggravate the tissues of the pancreas-causing Pancreatitis.

Pancreatitis is the inflammation of the pancreatic tissues. This is caused by the early release of pancreatic enzymes for causes that may not be known and those enzymes start to work inside the pancreas instead of being released into the gastrointestinal tract where they should be working on the food for digestion.

Acute pancreatitis is most commonly caused by gallstones or anything that can block the main pancreatic duct. It can also be caused by excessive alcohol intake, a tumor or a cancer, or a possible stricture itself in the bile duct.

This can last for a few days and appear very suddenly. It can also turn into a chronic condition if it happens continuously!

Pancreatitis symptoms will include severe abdominal pain, fever, nausea with vomiting, change in lab values, weakness, skin color changes to a yellow hue, confusion, and many others.

Treatment is important and should be done quickly. Intravenous fluids, medications, clear liquid diet that will slowly advance to a low-fat diet are among the options.

Pain meds are very important to help the patient regain his/her stamina.

Keep your pancreas healthy by maintaining a diet low in fat, keeping your weight down, exercising, taking all meds as directed by your doctor, drinking plenty of water/fluids, limiting alcohol consumption, stop smoking any tobacco products, and schedule regular check-ups with your doctor.



NMC: HOMEPORT NO LONGER AVAILABLE

On April 12, 2025, the U.S. Coast Guard's online public access portal, Homeport, was taken offline permanently. Listed below are the primary mariner credentialing services affected by this change and the alternate methods for service currently available:

- **Merchant Mariner Application Status:** To check on the status of an application for a merchant mariner credential or medical certificate, contact the National Maritime Center (NMC) at 1-888-427-5662, IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or via Live Chat. NMC customer service agents are available M-F, 8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. eastern time zone. The NMC experiences its busiest times around midday. If e-mailing for application status, include 'Status' in the subject line of your e-mail along with the mariner name(s) and mariner reference number(s) in the body of the e-mail. Note, processing times at the NMC will vary based on e-mail volume.

- **Merchant Mariner Credential Verification:** To verify the authenticity of a merchant mariner credential, e-mail IASKNMC@uscg.mil.

To aid in providing a faster response, include 'Credential Verification' in the subject line of your e-mail along with mariner name(s) and mariner reference number(s) in the body of the e-mail. Note, processing times at the NMC will vary based on e-mail volume.

- **Mariner Training and Assessment Data (MTAD):** Course curricula and course certificate modification requests should be sent to NMCCourses@uscg.mil. Note, to prevent delays in mariner applications, course and program completions should be documented through the issuance of completion certificates. Completion certificate format and content should match that approved by the NMC during the approval process. For questions related to Mariner Training and Assessment, contact the NMC at 206-815-6893.

We will provide updates to the status of these services as they are established. Thank you for your patience.

Notice

Important Reminder for Seafarers and Pensioners

Seafarers and SIU pensioners are strongly encouraged to make sure that their beneficiary designations are up to date and accurate. If outdated beneficiary information remains on file, it may result in benefits being paid to one or more individuals no longer intended by the member or pensioner to receive those benefits. Unintended consequences may arise if, for example, a designated beneficiary has passed away, or if a member's or pensioner's marital status has changed.

Seafarers and pensioners can update their designated beneficiaries by contacting the SIU Member Assistance Program (MAP) by phone: 1-(800) 252-4674 Option 2, or by email: map@seafarers.org in order to obtain beneficiary forms.



-  [@SeafarersInternational](https://www.facebook.com/SeafarersInternational)
-  [@SeafarersUnion](https://twitter.com/SeafarersUnion)
-  [@seafarers_international_union](https://www.instagram.com/seafarers_international_union)
-  [facebook.com/MyMaritimeCareer](https://www.facebook.com/MyMaritimeCareer)

May & June Membership Meetings

Piney Point	Monday: May 5, June 2
Algonac	Thursday: May 15, June 12
Baltimore	Thursday: May 8, June 5
Guam	Thursday: May 22, Friday: June 20
Honolulu	Friday: May 16, June 13
Houston	Monday: May 12, June 9
Jacksonville	Thursday: May 8, June 5
Joliet	Thursday: May 15, June 12
Mobile	Wednesday: May 14, June 11
New Orleans	Tuesday: May 13, June 10
Jersey City	Tuesday: May 6, June 3
Norfolk	Friday: May 9, June 6
Oakland	Thursday: May 15, June 12
Philadelphia	Wednesday: May 7, June 4
Port Everglades	Thursday: May 15, June 12
San Juan	Thursday: May 8, June 5
St. Louis	Friday: May 16, June 13
Tacoma	Friday: May 23, June 20
Wilmington	Monday: May 19, June 16

Schedule change due to holiday observance.

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

Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea

"Total Registered" and "Total Shipped" data is cumulative from March 14 - April 15, 2025.
"Registered on the Beach" data is as of April 16, 2025.

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	21	7	4	18	4	3	2	38	11	4
Anchorage	3	1	0	4	0	0	0	4	1	0
Baltimore	4	5	0	2	4	0	4	5	3	0
Fort Lauderdale	24	9	7	12	9	6	11	31	5	6
Guam	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	1	0
Harvey	8	5	3	4	2	1	3	14	9	7
Honolulu	6	2	0	1	1	0	0	11	4	0
Houston	30	19	14	23	13	7	17	53	30	20
Jacksonville	25	28	10	23	18	7	14	48	31	8
Jersey City	19	11	4	18	9	1	14	28	11	5
Joliet	3	5	2	1	2	3	0	6	4	1
Mobile	5	3	5	5	2	6	5	12	4	6
Norfolk	11	11	9	8	8	6	4	23	17	13
Oakland	6	6	1	11	2	2	3	8	5	2
Philadelphia	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	0
Piney Point	2	4	0	2	3	0	1	3	4	0
Puerto Rico	6	5	1	3	3	0	3	10	2	1
St. Louis	3	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	2
Tacoma	16	3	3	17	7	2	11	25	5	2
Wilmington	24	7	5	20	10	2	17	51	10	7
TOTAL	218	134	71	176	98	49	110	376	159	84
Engine Department										
Algonac	6	4	0	9	0	0	0	5	7	2
Anchorage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Baltimore	5	4	0	2	1	0	3	5	3	0
Fort Lauderdale	4	7	4	6	7	3	5	8	6	2
Guam	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
Harvey	1	2	1	2	2	0	3	2	3	2
Honolulu	9	0	0	2	2	0	2	10	0	3
Houston	10	5	6	7	3	2	4	9	10	7
Jacksonville	14	11	4	12	7	3	6	24	22	4
Jersey City	6	8	2	4	5	0	4	10	8	2
Joliet	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0
Mobile	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	1	0
Norfolk	14	12	7	10	6	3	8	16	14	9
Oakland	3	4	4	1	1	1	2	7	5	2
Philadelphia	3	2	0	2	0	0	1	2	1	0
Piney Point	2	1	2	1	2	1	0	2	0	1
Puerto Rico	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	1
St. Louis	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	0
Tacoma	5	4	1	6	3	1	3	8	5	0
Wilmington	9	5	3	7	5	0	3	21	5	9
TOTAL	96	70	35	76	47	15	46	138	95	45
Steward Department										
Algonac	6	0	1	3	1	0	0	9	1	1
Anchorage	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Baltimore	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Fort Lauderdale	7	5	0	1	2	0	2	9	5	1
Guam	0	2	0	1	2	0	1	2	1	0
Harvey	2	7	1	3	2	0	1	3	11	1
Honolulu	4	4	1	8	1	1	3	5	4	0
Houston	18	7	3	10	4	1	4	20	11	5
Jacksonville	22	7	4	25	13	2	8	28	17	8
Jersey City	4	2	2	6	3	1	4	10	2	0
Joliet	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0
Mobile	5	2	0	3	2	0	3	5	1	0
Norfolk	11	7	6	9	8	0	5	21	15	9
Oakland	10	2	2	9	1	0	2	15	2	3
Philadelphia	2	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	1
Piney Point	1	5	2	3	2	2	1	3	3	0
Puerto Rico	4	8	0	1	2	1	2	6	12	1
St. Louis	1	3	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	0
Tacoma	7	1	1	6	1	1	2	13	5	1
Wilmington	20	5	3	21	7	2	11	38	5	8
TOTAL	125	70	26	114	54	11	52	190	99	40
Entry Department										
Algonac	1	5	16	1	4	6	1	2	12	23
Anchorage	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	2	2
Baltimore	0	2	2	0	3	0	1	0	2	3
Fort Lauderdale	1	6	11	1	3	6	1	0	6	9
Guam	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Harvey	0	2	5	1	0	1	0	0	2	5
Honolulu	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	6
Houston	2	15	18	1	4	6	2	4	27	26
Jacksonville	1	31	59	0	16	34	4	2	54	104
Jersey City	1	14	13	0	12	5	2	3	20	33
Joliet	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	1	2
Mobile	0	2	4	0	0	1	0	0	2	3
Norfolk	0	5	23	0	10	16	0	0	9	41
Oakland	0	3	11	0	2	7	2	0	9	17
Philadelphia	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	1
Piney Point	0	1	3	0	0	2	3	0	4	3
Puerto Rico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tacoma	1	5	5	0	3	5	2	5	13	12
Wilmington	1	10	22	1	4	15	4	1	12	30
TOTAL	8	105	198	5	67	110	22	18	177	322
GRAND TOTAL	447	379	330	371	266	185	230	722	530	491

David Heindel, President

Augustin Tellez, Executive Vice President

Tom Orzechowski, Secretary-Treasurer

George Tricker, Vice President Contracts

Dean Corgey, Vice President Gulf Coast

Nicholas J. Marrone, Vice President West Coast

Joseph T. Soresi, Vice President Atlantic Coast

Joe Vincenzo, Vice President

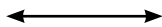
Government Services

Bryan Powell,

Vice President Lakes and Inland Waters

Pat Vandegrift, Vice President

Hazel Galbisio, Vice President



HEADQUARTERS

5201 Capital Gateway Drive
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ALGONAC

520 St. Clair River Dr., Algonac, MI 48001
(810) 794-4988

ANCHORAGE

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(907) 561-4988

BALTIMORE

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JOLIET

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(815) 723-8002

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NORFOLK

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(757) 622-1892

OAKLAND

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(510) 444-2360

PHILADELPHIA

2604 S. 4 St., Philadelphia, PA 19148
(215) 336-3818

PINEY POINT

45353 St. George's Avenue, Piney Point, MD
20674
(301) 994-0010

PORT EVERGLADES

1221 S. Andrews Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316
(954) 522-7984

SAN JUAN

659 Hill Side St., Summit Hills
San Juan, PR 00920
(787) 721-4033

ST. LOUIS/ALTON

4581 Gravois Ave., St. Louis, MO 63116
(314) 752-6500

TACOMA

3411 South Union Ave., Tacoma, WA 98409
(253) 272-7774

WILMINGTON

510 N. Broad Ave., Wilmington, CA 90744
(310) 549-4000

Inquiring Seafarer

This month's question was answered by members at the hiring hall in Norfolk, Virginia. Some of the responses incorporate answers to a follow-up question or two.

Question: What are some things you like about your career?



Navonte Pritchard
SA

Traveling. Seeing different things, getting out of your state that you've been in for years. It's just seeing things that most people won't see in their lifetime. Rota, Spain, was one of my favorite stops. The beach was nice.



Larry Mann
Bosun/AB

It's not about the money with me, it's just the shipping life, period. All I know is sailing, and my passion is to move forward and advance. The career is a blessing from God, to be honest.



Jalen Jones
OS

Traveling, making money, taking care of my family, seeing different things, and working with different people. I also enjoy learning new things. I've been sailing for two years.



Rasha Warthem
SA

I enjoy getting to meet new people from different walks of life, and just the brotherhood of the union. I enjoy traveling to different places and experiencing different cultures. The flexibility, too.



Aaron Moore
Oiler

Traveling, seeing the world, learning different things about the vessels. Those are the biggest things. I've been sailing for three years. The ongoing learning experience keeps me coming back.



Nadiyah Jackson
QMED

I like the fact that I get to work for a period of time, and then when I'm home, I'm with family and don't have to worry about a nine-to-five. I like learning new things about how the ship works.

Pic from the Past



This 1984 snapshot taken aboard the *Cove Liberty* (Cove Shipping Company) includes SIU members Floyd Acord, Patrick Amo, Jerry Westphal, Sal Lagare, and Errol Nicholson.

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

Laura Deebach

Sister Laura Deebach, 69, started sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 1982 when she shipped on the *Independence*. Sister Deebach worked in the steward department and upgraded on several occasions at the union-affiliated Piney Point school. She most recently shipped aboard the *Vision* and settled in Blaine, Washington.



Regina Ewing

Sister Regina Ewing, 64, joined the union in 1986, initially sailing aboard an OMI vessel. She worked in the deck department and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. Sister Ewing concluded her career on the *Washington Express* and resides in Hialeah, Florida.



Orlando Guzman

Brother Orlando Guzman, 66, donned the SIU colors in 2001. He shipped in the engine department and upgraded at the Piney Point school multiple occasions. Brother Guzman's first vessel was the *Denali*; his last, the *Mohegan*. He makes his home in Long Beach, California.



Andrew Peprah

Brother Andrew Peprah, 65, joined the union in 2000, initially sailing aboard the *USNS Watson*. He upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center and shipped as an engine department member. Brother Peprah most recently sailed aboard the *USNS Fred W Stockham*. He resides in the Bronx, New York.



Juberto Perez

Brother Juberto Perez, 65, became a member of the union in 2009 when he sailed aboard the *Maersk Michigan*. A deck department member, he upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Perez concluded his career aboard the *West Virginia*. He lives in Elmhurst, New York.



John Rizzo

Brother John Rizzo, 67, signed on with the SIU in 1977. He first sailed aboard the *Bayamon*, and worked in the engine department. Brother Rizzo upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He last shipped on the *John Paul Bobo* and makes his home in Staten Island, New York.

Dorray Saberon

Sister Dorray Saberon, 65, joined the Seafarers International Union in 1984, initially working on the *Charger*. A steward department member, she upgraded on numerous occasions at the Piney Point school. Sister Saberon last sailed aboard the *Pacific Reliance*. She resides in Port Monmouth, New Jersey.



Sacarias Suazo

Brother Sacarias Suazo, 65, embarked on his SIU career in 1999 when he shipped on the *USNS Antares*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Suazo's final vessel was the *Maersk Denver*. He makes his home in the Bronx, New York.



Henry Wright

Brother Henry Wright, 66, joined the union in 1989. He sailed in the steward department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on several occasions. Brother Wright first sailed on the *Independence*. He most recently shipped on the *George III* and settled in Honolulu.



GREAT LAKES

Archie Lahti

Brother Archie Lahti, 65, joined the union in 1978, initially sailing aboard the *Frank Denton*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center in 1981. Brother Lahti last sailed on the *Indiana Harbor*. He makes his home in Maple, Wisconsin.

INLAND

Jason Bryan

Brother Jason Bryan, 56, began sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 1995. He worked in the deck department and shipped with Crescent Towing and Salvage for the majority of his career. Brother Bryan is a resident of Metairie, Louisiana.



Gary Burke

Brother Gary Burke, 62, joined the SIU in 1987. A deck department member, he upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Burke was employed with Crowley Towing and Transportation for the duration of his career. He resides in Long Beach, California.



Barry Croffitt

Brother Barry Croffitt, 62, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1998 when he sailed on the *Delta Queen*. He worked in the deck department. Brother Croffitt concluded his career with American West Steamboat Company. He lives in Lawrenceville, Georgia.

Stephen Gray

Brother Stephen Gray, 68, started sailing with the SIU in 2005. He was an engine department member and upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school in 2011. Brother Gray was employed with Allied Transportation for his entire career. He makes his home in Smithfield, Virginia.



Kenneth Hudgins

Brother Kenneth Hudgins, 64, started sailing with the Seafarers in 1979. He shipped in both the deck and engine departments and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Hudgins was first employed by Virginia Pilot Corporation. He last worked with Moran Towing of Maryland and settled in Gates, North Carolina.

Toby Jones

Brother Toby Jones, 62, joined the union in 1980. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Jones was employed by Crescent Towing and Salvage for the duration of his career. He lives in Abita Springs, Louisiana.

Phillip May

Brother Phillip May, 65, began sailing with the SIU in 2008. A deck department member, he sailed with G&H Towing for the duration of his career. Brother May lives in Canyon Lake, Texas.

Joseph Mesyna

Brother Joseph Mesyna, 64, donned the union colors in 2009 when he sailed aboard the *Pride*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Mesyna's final vessel was the *Innovation*. He resides in Dan-ielson, Connecticut.



Kevin Samuels

Brother Kevin Samuels, 58, joined the Seafarers in 1986. He worked in the engine department and initially sailed aboard an OMI vessel. Brother Samuels upgraded at the Piney Point school on several occasions. He most recently sailed on the *Rocketship* and resides in Mobile, Alabama.



Albert Shelton

Brother Albert Shelton, 62, donned the SIU colors in 1993 when he worked with Higma Barge Lines. He sailed in the deck department and remained with the same company for the duration of his career. Brother Shelton calls Leesville, Louisiana, home.



Oneil Theriot

Brother Oneil Theriot, 62, joined the union in 1994. He was an engine department member and worked for Westboat Riverboat Services for the duration of his career. Brother Theriot makes his home in Chauvin, Louisiana.



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

DAVID DINGMAN

Brother David Dingman, 53, died January 24. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 1992, initially sailing aboard the *Independence*. Brother Dingman was a steward department member. He most recently sailed on the *Ohio* and called Sparks, Nevada, home.



JOHN ELLIOTT

Pensioner John Elliott, 98, passed away January 27. He became a member of the SIU in 1945 when he worked with Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal Railroad. Brother Elliott sailed in the deck department. He last shipped aboard the *Transindiana* and became a pensioner in 1994. Brother Elliott made his home in Neponsit, New York.



ANGEL FIGUEROA

Pensioner Angel Figueroa, 80, died January 29. He began his career with the Seafarers in 1994, initially sailing aboard the *Nedloyd Holland*. Brother Figueroa sailed in both the deck and engine departments. He last sailed on the *Horizon Challenger* before retiring in 2011. Brother Figueroa lived in Long Beach, California.



RUTLAND GALE

Pensioner Rutland Gale, 80, has passed away. He signed on with the Seafarers International Union in 2004 when he sailed aboard the *Green Dale*. Brother Gale worked in the engine department and most recently sailed aboard the *Endurance*. He went on pension in 2015 and resided in Miami.



KENNETH GILSON

Pensioner Kenneth Gilson, 70, died January 27. He joined the SIU in 1978 and first shipped on the *Aleutian Developer*. Brother Gilson sailed in the deck department and last shipped on the *Liberty Sun*. He became a pensioner in 2019 and made his home in Jackson, Mississippi.

CARSON JORDAN

Pensioner Carson Jordan, 74, passed away February 6. He began his career with the Seafarers in 1972, initially working on the *Bradford Island*. Brother Jordan was a deck department member and concluded his career aboard the *Green Bay*. He began collecting his pension in 2010 and resided in Jacksonville, Florida.



RENATO MIGUEL

Pensioner Renato Miguel, 80, died January 28. He donned the SIU colors in 1979. A deck department member, Brother Miguel first shipped on the *Charleston*. He last sailed aboard the *Atlantic* and became a pensioner in 2009. Brother Miguel lived in Jersey City, New Jersey.



ROBERT O'CONNELL

Brother Robert O'Connell, 56, passed away December 16. He embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1991 when he sailed aboard the *Cape Mendocino*. Brother O'Connell was a deck department member. He most recently shipped on the *State of Maine* and resided in Cookeville, Tennessee.



MIKHAIL PINCHEVSKIY

Pensioner Mikhail Pinchevskiy, 73, died November 7. He became a member of the SIU in 2000. Brother Pinchevskiy initially sailed aboard the *Global Mariner*. He worked in the deck department and concluded his career aboard the *Resolve*. Brother Pinchevskiy went on pension in 2020 and settled in Hallandale Beach, Florida.



TREVOR ROBERTSON

Brother Trevor Robertson, 85, has passed away. He signed on with the Seafarers International Union in 1961 when he worked with Texas City Refining. Brother Robertson sailed in the deck department and concluded his career working with the union as a patrolman. He made his home in Berkley, California.



ANTJUAN WEBB JR.

Brother Antjuan Webb Jr., 20, has passed away. He joined the union in 2023 and initially shipped on the *Stena Immaculate*. Brother Webb sailed in the deck department and most recently sailed aboard the *American Freedom*. He was a resident of Rodeo, California.



GREAT LAKES

DAVID BECK

Brother David Beck, 71, passed away December 6. He began his career with the SIU in 1971 when he sailed on the *Kinsman Independent*. Brother Beck worked in the deck department and last sailed aboard the *Walter J. McCarthy*. He called Fort McCoy, Florida, home.



SALEH NAGI

Pensioner Saleh Nagi, 86, died January 7. He joined the SIU in 1966 when he sailed on the *Bob-Lo Island*. Brother Nagi primarily sailed in the deck department and concluded his career aboard the *Charles E. Wilson*. He began collecting his pension in 2003 and resided in Dearborn, Michigan.



DEMETRIOS PITSAS

Pensioner Demetrios Pitsas, 91, passed away January 28. He embarked on his career with the union in 1967. A deck department member, Brother Pitsas worked with Great Lakes Towing for most of his career. He retired in 1995 and lived in Munster, Indiana.

INLAND

MARK BUTLER

Brother Mark Butler, 66, died October 30. He started sailing with the SIU in 1991 when he worked on the *Dynachem*. Brother Butler was a member of the deck department. He was most recently employed with Crowley Towing and Transportation and resided in Beaumont, Texas.



JOSEPH RIGGS

Pensioner Joseph Riggs, 72, passed away February 1. He signed on with the Seafarers in 1989. Brother Riggs was a deck department member. He was employed with Crescent Towing and Salvage for the duration of his career. Brother Riggs became a pensioner in 2017 and made his home in Statesboro, Georgia.



NMU

SILAS JEFFERSON

Pensioner Silas Jefferson, 78, has passed away. Brother Jefferson was a steward department member. He last sailed aboard the *Mormacsun* before going on pension in 2001. Brother Jefferson was a resident of Lake Jackson, Texas.

DAISY JOSEPH

Sister Daisy Joseph, 99, passed away January 27. Sister Joseph worked in the steward department. She last sailed aboard the *Green Cove* and became a pensioner in 1996. Sister Joseph called Mineral, Virginia, home.



JUAN PADILLA

Pensioner Juan Padilla, 94, died January 23. Brother Padilla started sailing in 1964. He sailed in all three departments. Brother Padilla became a pensioner in 1992 after concluding his career aboard the *Marjorie Lykes*. He was a New Orleans resident.



CHESTER STOVALL

Pensioner Chester Stovall, 86, passed away January 16. Brother Stovall worked in both the deck and engine departments. He last sailed aboard the *Santa Adela* and retired in 1993. Brother Stovall made his home in Philadelphia.

GEORGE WRET

Pensioner George Wret, 95, died February 5. Brother Wret sailed in the deck department and last worked on the *Marine Chemist*. He became a pensioner in 1999 and settled in Los Angeles.

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.

MAERSK HARTFORD (Maersk Line, Limited), January 24 – Chairman **Godocel Pascua**, Secretary **William Fortner**, Deck Delegate **Harold Borden**, Steward Delegate **Aaron Searcy**. Chairman reviewed sign-off procedures. Members discussed the importance of holding union shipboard meetings to not only address any beefs but also for general union education. Steward delegate suggested increasing contractual rate for extra meals to reflect increase in inflation. Members asked about overtime policies. According to contract, no overtime work shall be done without the approval of department head. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested additional Wi-Fi routers to be installed on each deck for stronger internet signal. Next port: Newark, New Jersey.

GEORGE III (Sunrise Operations, LLC), January 27 – Chairman **Gerardo Arroyo**, Secretary **Najeeb Ginah**, Educational Director **Thomas Flynn**, Deck Delegate **Junior Augustin**, Steward Delegate **Rachael Zavala**. Chairman thanked crew for their hard work. Secretary reminded members to renew merchant mariner credentials at least six weeks ahead of expiration. Educational director encouraged members to upgrade at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested 20 for 30 vacation days.

BRENTON REEF (Eco-Tankers Crew Management, LLC), February 2 – Chairman **Kelly Doyle**, Secretary **Francisco Madsen**, Educational Director **Daryl Morris**, Deck Delegate **Alton Glapion**, Engine Delegate **Jorge Lawrence**, Steward Delegate **Lamarai Jones**. Chairman thanked steward department for a job well done. Educational director urged crew to take advantage of the upgrading opportunities at the SIU-affiliated Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. For future contract negotiations, members discussed potential requests for boot allowances, missing-man pay, penalty pay for handling and burning trash, and compensation for working through meal hours.

EMPIRE STATE (Intrepid Personnel & Provisioning), February 2 – Chairman **Abdulkarim Mohamed**, Secretary **Jose Outeiral Rodriguez**, Educational Director **Oscar Garcia**, Deck Delegate **Angel Nunez**, Engine Delegate **Mark Richardson**, Steward Delegate **Mohamed Noman**. Members reported difficulties getting reliefs, especially ABs. Crew would like the union to consider the upcoming contract as an opportunity to address unresolved issues, including paid holidays and additional vacation days. Any items needed that are not already on board can be requested through ship secretary. Educational director reminded crew to check documents and to upgrade at the Paul Hall Center. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members reviewed the president's column in the LOG and noted how good con-

tracts help retain and recruit members. Bosun asked crew to unplug electrical items when not in use including TVs, laptops, etc. Crew morale has been very high since the installation of Starlink Wi-Fi.

MAERSK CHICAGO (Maersk Line, Limited), February 9 – Chairman **Mario Ordonez**, Secretary **James McLeod**, Deck Delegate **Eddie Thomas**, Steward Delegate **Carl Royster**. Chairman announced pay-off schedule. Educational director advised crew to upgrade at the Paul Hall Center. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members would like increases in vacation time and to lower sea time requirements for retirement. Crew requested new TVs for rooms.

MAERSK PITTSBURGH (Maersk Line, Limited), February 16 – Chairman **Koksal Demir**, Secretary **Ali Matari**, Educational Director **Jing Hui Huang**, Deck Delegate **Waleed Mohsin**. Bosun thanked crew for a safe voyage and commended steward department for providing good food and keeping ship clean. Secretary reminded members to leave clean rooms for onboarding crew. Educational director recommended that members upgrade their skills at the Piney Point school and gave instructions for inquiring about sea time and using the SIU website. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Vote of thanks was given to deck and engine departments. Members requested increases in pension and vacation benefits and for physicals

to be required only once per year. Washing machine in need of repair. Next port: Charleston, South Carolina.

HORIZON KODIAK (Horizon Lines, LLC), February 22 – Chairman **Darryl Smith**, Secretary **Antoinette Amato**, Educational Director **Jason Powell**. Crew reviewed old business including \$250 shoe allowance, sea time limits for retirees and union dues increase. Medical certificates and TWIC can be renewed through email. Chairman announced payoff schedule and encouraged crew to donate to SPAD (Seafarers Political Activities Donation), the union's voluntary political action fund. Educational director talked about serving on the SIU tallying committee and reported that it was a very secure process. He mentioned the option for Piney Point to submit discharges for members. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew asked for new toasters in mess hall and crew lounge. Coffee maker in crew lounge in need of repair and new faucet handle needed on ADM. Members would like increases in pension compensation, 20 for 30 vacation and for vacation checks to be collected at 45 days or make all relief jobs 60 days. Crew asked for clarification on time-off procedures and requested upgraded Wi-Fi. Vote of thanks was given to steward department for a job well done. Next port: Tacoma, Washington.

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

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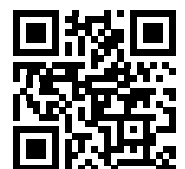


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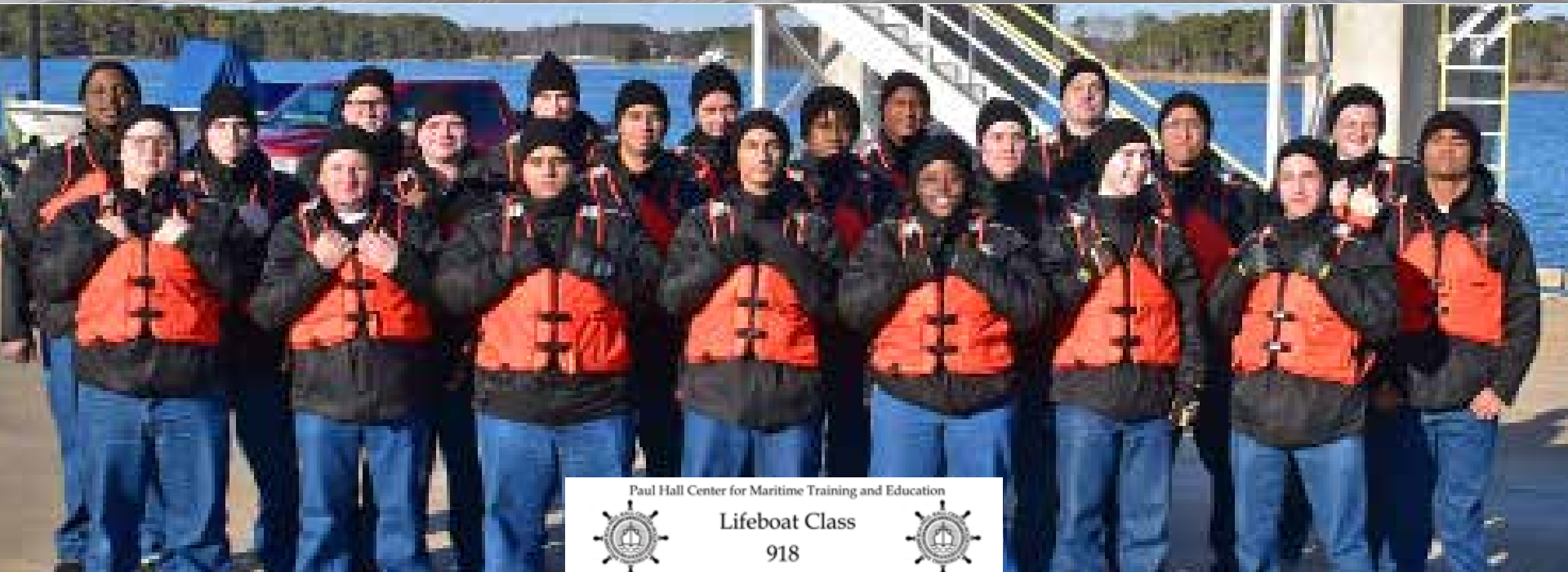


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Paul Hall Center Class Photos



Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education
Lifeboat Class
 918

APPRENTICE WATER SURVIVAL CLASS #918 – Recently graduating: Redhwn Abdullah, Micah Acosta, Raheem Ali, Sean Baldwin, Curt Burgoyne, Shauni Franklin, Emmanuel Grant, William Harrison, David Henneken, Darren Joseph, Jesse Kireyev, Robert Kitchen III, Michael Klingelhoets, Evan Koslofsky, Dennis Krevey Jr., Christopher Leasure, Stephen Pagan Laureano, Alejandro Rivera Martinez, Hayden Scott, Monique Smith and Jacob Watson.



RFPEW – Graduated March 7: Jevon Hill, Dereon Ivory, Nicholas Livingston, Adarius Simpson, Escrovan Tisdale-Anderson and Ronnie Ward Jr.



RFPNW – Graduated March 14: Anneliza Brown, Kyra Buggs, Brian Downey, Arthur Kinsman and Trevon McCauley. Instructor Michael Coulbourne is at the far right.



GOVERNMENT VESSELS – Graduated March 14: Fuad Ali, Sincere Davenport, Dominick Davis, Ralpheal Evans, Travis Flippin, Devan Gadson, Daniel Gonzalez Jr., Kemar Grant, Harry Hurlley, Reon James, Tomeria Kendrick, Karen Lira, Eric Nieves Jr., Lamillian Phillips, James Regan Jr., Demetrius Soto, Ishay Thomas, Trey Traughber, Noah Welch and Timothy Wheeler.



MARINE REFRIGERATION – Graduated March 14: Micah Champion, Danielle Gore, Eric Hondel, Damon Johnson, Justin Johnson, Sherman Kennon Jr., Zion Lyons, Tracy Mitchell Jr., Tyson Richardson and Sean Wilson.



WELDING – Graduated March 14: Jacob Devers, Peter Espinosa, Jose Gari, Alexis Martinez, Wilson Montero Centeno, Matthew Quinones and Emma Wang. Instructor Chris Raley is at left.



GOVERNMENT VESSELS (UPGRADERS) – Graduated March 21: Karen Allen, Alexander Bennett, Eddy Chevalier Cesar, Michael Collins, Juan David, Elhadji Diop, Brian Downey, Nykelle Gisbert, Raequan Grier, Kimonta Hall, Marcos Rochez Mena, Delanoe Trent, Chadon Williams and Jessica Williams.

Paul Hall Center Class Photos



TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION – Graduated March 28: Cooper Allred, Dean Blake Jr., Andrew Cook, Jason Deeb, Floyd Dixon III, Ian Elder, Enrique Fernandez Martinez, Nicholas Gammon, Daniel Jones II, Conor Kennedy, Jack Knoll, Zachary Knox, Carlos Laureano Bonet, Boubacar Mbaye, Shandria McClain, Courtland Montejo, Seth Norris, Joseph Prather and Ayinde Richards.



SERVE SAFE MANAGEMENT – Graduated March 21, from left to right: Eric Nieves Jr. and Karen Lira.



RFPNW – Graduated March 28: Redhwon Abdullah, Raheem Ali, David Henneken, Darren Joseph, Robert Kitchen III, Evan Koslofsky, Dennis Kreyer Jr., Christopher Leasure, Stephen Pagan Laureano, Alejandro Rivera Martinez, Hayden Scott and Jacob Watson.



RFPNW (UPGRADERS) – Graduated March 28, left to right: Jacob Kemper and Ian Trefry.



ADV. GALLEY OPS – Graduated March 28: Julian Abreu, Jonte Crenshaw, Deon Greenidge, Destany Howard, Myles White and Joel Williams.



GALLEY OPS (UPGRADERS) – Graduated March 7: Simone Cid, Nykelle Gisbert, Marquis Hill and Yolanda Oliver.



RFPEW (UPGRADERS) – Graduated March 7, left to right: Nasir Harrell and Aaron Quainoo.

SEAFARERS LOG

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

Executive Order Aims to Boost U.S. Maritime

Editor's note: The White House on April 9 issued an executive order titled "Restoring America's Maritime Dominance." Excerpts from the order follow; the QR code is linked to the full directive.

Several key components of the order are consistent with the SHIPS for America Act, which is expected to be reintroduced in Congress this month. The order largely focuses on shipbuilding but also addresses shipboard manpower and other topics.

Section 1. Purpose. The commercial shipbuilding capacity and maritime workforce of the United States has been weakened by decades of Government neglect, leading to the decline of a once strong industrial base while simultaneously empowering our adversaries and eroding United States national security. Both our allies and our strategic competitors produce ships for a fraction of the cost needed in the United States. Recent data shows that the United States constructs less than one percent of commercial ships globally, while the People's Republic of China (PRC) is responsible for producing approximately half.

Rectifying these issues requires a comprehensive approach that includes securing consistent, predictable, and durable Federal funding, making United States-flagged and built vessels commercially competitive in international commerce, rebuilding America's maritime manufacturing capabilities (the Maritime Industrial Base), and expanding and strengthening the recruitment, training, and retention of the relevant workforce.

Sec. 2. Policy. It is the policy of the United States to revitalize and rebuild domestic maritime industries and workforce to promote national security and economic prosperity.

Sec. 3. Maritime Action Plan. (a) Within 210 days of the date of this order, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA), in coordination with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the United States Trade Representative (USTR), and the heads of executive departments and agencies (agencies) the APNSA deems appropriate, shall submit a Maritime Action Plan (MAP) to the President, through the APNSA and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB Director) to achieve the policy set forth in this order.

Sec. 4. Ensure the Security and Resilience of the Maritime Industrial Base. Within 180 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of Defense,

in coordination with the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall provide to the APNSA and the OMB Director for inclusion in the MAP an assessment of options both for the use of available authorities and resources, such as Defense Production Act Title III authorities, and for the use of private capital to the maximum extent possible to invest in and expand the Maritime Industrial Base including, but not limited to, investment and expansion of commercial and defense shipbuilding capabilities, component supply chains, ship repair and marine transportation capabilities, port infrastructure, and the adjacent workforce. The Secretary of Defense shall pursue using the Office of Strategic Capital loan program to improve the shipbuilding industrial base.

Sec. 6. Enforce Collection of Harbor Maintenance Fee and Other Charges. In order to prevent cargo carriers from circumventing the Harbor Maintenance Fee (HMF) on imported goods through the practice of making their cargo into the United States through land borders, and to ensure the collection of other charges as applicable, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall take all necessary steps, including proposing new legislation, as permitted by law to:

(a) require all foreign-origin cargo arriving by vessel to clear the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) entry process at a United States port of entry for security and collection of all applicable duties, customs, taxes, fees, interest, and other charges; and

(b) ensure any foreign-origin cargo first arriving by vessel to North America clearing the CBP process at an inland location from the country of land transit (Canada or Mexico) is assessed applicable customs, duties, taxes, fees (including the HMF), interest, and other charges plus a 10 percent service fee for additional costs to the CBP, so long as the cargo being

shipped into the United States is not substantially transformed from its condition at the time of arrival into the country of land transit (with the discretion for such decisions to be determined by CBP).

Sec. 8. Reduce Dependence on Adversaries through Allies and Partners. Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, shall recommend to the APNSA and the OMB Director for inclusion in the MAP all available incentives to help shipbuilders domiciled in allied nations partner to undertake capital investment in the United States to help strengthen the shipbuilding capacity of the United States.

Sec. 9. Launch a Maritime Security Trust Fund. In conjunction with the formulation of the President's Budget, the OMB Director shall, in coordination with the Secretary of Transportation, develop a legislative proposal, which shall be described in detail in the MAP, to establish a Maritime Security Trust Fund that can serve as a reliable funding source to deliver consistent support for MAP programs. This proposal shall consider how new or existing tariff revenue, fines, fees, or tax revenue could further the goal of establishing a more reliable, dedicated funding source for programs support by the MAP.

Sec. 10. Shipbuilding Financial Incentives Program. In conjunction with the formulation of the President's Budget and consistent with the findings of the report required under section 12 of this order, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a legislative proposal to the APNSA and the OMB Director, which shall be described in detail in the MAP, that establishes a financial incentives program with broad flexibility to incentivize private investment in the construction of commercial components, parts, and vessels; capital improvements to commercial vessel shipyards; capital improvements to commercial vessel repair facilities and

drydocks through grants; and Federal Credit Reform Act-compliant loans and loan guarantees. Such proposal may augment or replace existing programs with similar purpose including the Small Shipyard Grant Program and the Federal Ship Financing (Title XI) Program.

Sec. 12. Report on Maritime Industry Needs. Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and the heads of other agencies as appropriate, shall deliver a report to the OMB Director and APNSA for inclusion in the MAP that inventories Federal programs that could be used to sustain and grow the supply of and demand for the United States maritime industry.

Sec. 13. Expand Mariner Training and Education. Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Education, and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall deliver a report to the President through the APNSA for inclusion in the MAP with recommendations to address workforce challenges in the maritime sector through maritime educational institutions and workforce transitions.

Sec. 17. Increase the Fleet of Commercial Vessels Trading Internationally under the flag of the United States. Within 180 days of the date of this order, in conjunction with the formulation of the President's Budget and consistent with the findings of the report required under section 12 of this section, the Secretary of Transportation shall in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, deliver a legislative proposal to the APNSA and OMB Director for inclusion in the MAP that:

(a) is designed to ensure that adequate cubed footage and gross tonnage of United States-flagged commercial vessels can be called upon in times of crisis, while limiting the likelihood of Government waste;

(b) provides incentives that will:

(i) grow the fleet of United States built, crewed, and flagged vessels that serve as readily deployable assets for national security purposes; and

(ii) increase the participation of United States commercial vessels in international trade; and

(c) enhances existing subsidies to include coverage of certain construction or modification costs in a manner designed to enhance incentives for the commercial shipping industry to operate militarily useful ships that trade internationally under the flag of the United States.



The above QR code links to the full text of the Executive Order.

