



# SEAFARERS LOG

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

## USTRANSCOM Salutes Seafarers, School

As part of a visit to the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education earlier this year, Gen. Randall Reed (USAF), commanding officer of the U.S. Transportation Command, presented certificates of appreciation to four people who stood as representatives of the union and the school. Pictured during one of those presentations are (from left) SIU VP George Tricker, President David Heindel, Bosun William Lima, Gen. Reed, Exec. VP Augie Tellez, and Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski. *Page 20 (back page).*



## Newest NSMV Delivered

The National Security Multi-Mission Vessel *State of Maine* on March 30 formally was delivered to Maine Maritime Academy during a ceremony in Portland. The SIU will provide unlicensed manpower when the ship is activated. Speakers at the event included (inset, bottom right) U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy and (inset, top right) former Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao. *Page 3.*



## Remaining at the Ready



David Heindel

While the cease-fire in the Middle East that was announced April 7 seems potentially promising, many of the details have yet to be finalized as of this writing. Regardless of how it plays out – and on whatever timeline – the SIU will remain in regular contact with not just our crews in the Persian Gulf but all SIU crews around the world, and with others who can help ensure their safety.

Throughout Operation Epic Fury, there have been public reports noting that a few U.S.-flag ships are basically stuck near the danger zone. That's not necessarily because they're at risk of attack, but rather because they'd be asking for trouble by attempting to relocate. We've been in touch with our

members on the vessels in question, and I applaud their can-do spirit. They have repeatedly indicated they view the recent challenges as part of their patriotic duty.

On that note, I reiterate my message from last month that the SIU remains ready to uphold our responsibility as part of America's fourth arm of defense. Whether we are called to support our military brothers and sisters today or next month or next year, we'll be there.

For any of our newer members and also the apprentices at our affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland, Operation Epic Fury is a reminder that we are always one communication away from mobilizing to support our troops. This is who we are, and it's what we've always done.

As the ceasefire negotiations continue at press time, we'll stay on top of things and we'll be ready to do whatever it takes both to protect our people and to deliver the goods if needed.

## Thanking General Reed

I could probably fill several pages without running out of ways to thank General Randall Reed for his March 9 visit to the Paul Hall Center and for his powerful testimony during a recent congressional hearing.

We were cutting it a little close last month with our LOG deadline, but I'm hopeful you saw the front-page photos of the General's tour of the school. This month, we're honored to share coverage of his presenting certificates of appreciation to union and school personnel. For the record, that wasn't something we asked for – but it's something I'll always remember and appreciate.

Later in March, the General testified on Capitol Hill about the crucial need for a strong U.S. sealift capability. While I realize it's not unprecedented for the commanding officer of the U.S. Transportation Command to speak supportively of the U.S. Merchant Marine, I found General Reed's comments exceptionally perceptive and inclusive. He very clearly values the public-private partnerships that underpin our industry's functionality as the fourth arm of defense.

We are grateful to work with him and look forward to continuing this outstanding collaboration.

## Jones Act Waiver

I don't have much to add to our public statements about the recent Jones Act waiver, except perhaps to say that I now believe there are not two, but three certainties in this life: death, taxes, and the Jones Act erroneously being treated as a scapegoat for almost anything involving water or fuel.

From my experience, in many if not most cases, Jones Act waivers are more about optics than results. The current one hasn't helped lower the price at the pump in the U.S., and we are working to help ensure it isn't extended.

One thing that's worth repeating: Our industry has never objected to a Jones Act waiver when a legitimate need existed. We want what's best for our nation at all times. But, whether the Jones Act's critics are trying to be opportunistic or if they're merely misinformed, the bottom line is that this law has served the United States well for more than a century. It remains vital to national, economic and homeland security, and we will stand up for it always.

## Financial Committee Approves 2025 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 2025. The Seafarers were elected by their peers during the union's April membership 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 2025 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 Recertified Steward **Emanuel Spain** (chairman), Chief Cook **Marilou Toledo**, Recertified Steward **Adele George**, AB **Ryan Heimberger**, Recertified Steward **Glenn Williams**, Recertified Steward **Cayetano Toledo**, and Recertified Steward **Exxl Ronquillo**.

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.

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.



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 Seafarers Adele George, Marilou Toledo, Glenn Williams and Exxl Ronquillo, SIU Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski, and Seafarers Ryan Heimberger, Cayetano Toledo, and Emanuel Spain (chairman).

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# Industry Pushes Back Against Jones Act Waiver

The SIU in mid-March teamed up with several other maritime labor organizations in publicly objecting to the Trump administration's issuance of a 60-day Jones Act waiver.

In a joint statement, the SIU and the other groups noted we are "deeply concerned about the administration's broad Jones Act waiver, which undermines our national security, weakens military readiness, and hands critical maritime work to foreign vessel operators. Jones Act waivers are intended to meet a strict legal standard and are traditionally granted only in narrow, clearly defined national security emergencies where U.S.-flag capacity is unavailable. Maritime labor has supported narrowly tailored Jones Act waivers in the past when they were obviously justified in the national interest, but this sweeping action does not meet that standard."

The joint statement added, "To be clear, this decision will not provide meaningful relief at the gas pump. It has been plainly shown that the primary driver of gasoline prices remains the global cost of crude oil, and multiple analyses demonstrate that domestic shipping accounts for less than one cent per gallon. Any marginal savings will not reach consumers but will instead reward foreign shipping interests at the expense of American workers."

Teaming up with the SIU for the statement, issued March 18, were the American Maritime Officers; American Radio Association; International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots; Marine Firemen's

Union; Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association; Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Sailors' Union of the Pacific; and the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO.

The AFL-CIO also weighed in against the waiver. AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler stated, "As American maritime workers risk their lives in the Middle East and around the world, it is deeply concerning that the Trump administration would open U.S. waterways to nonunion foreign competitors. This unnecessary and ineffective waiver is a giveaway to foreign shipping interests, dressed up as relief for America's families at the pump."

"Domestic shipping costs less than 1 cent per gallon of gas," she continued. "This waiver will do nothing to fix the squeeze working families are feeling when they fill up their tank while handing good union jobs to foreign corporate competitors."

Prior to the waiver, which was issued in the wake of increasing energy costs attributable to the war in Iran, the SIU posted a statement noting the union "respects the administration's efforts to provide economic relief to U.S. consumers. We do not believe that a Jones Act waiver will make a difference regarding gasoline prices. A brand new, comprehensive report from Navigistics Consulting concludes that a Jones Act waiver would not appreciably reduce the price of gas at the pump – and that any benefit 'would almost certainly flow to new entrants to the market (e.g., commodity traders).' The report further notes that

the Jones Act's effect on gas prices amounts to much less than a penny per gallon. This is consistent with past findings.

"Again, we are not questioning the intent of what very clearly is a pro-maritime administration," the SIU's standalone statement continued. "However, oceangoing Jones Act ships are involved in a small percentage of the total U.S. gasoline market. And, as additionally pointed out in the report, '... in the highly unlikely scenario where the gasoline traders passed all of their savings onto consumers, the total impact would be a reduction in the U.S. average gasoline price of about \$0.0027 per gallon....'"

A Reuters report on April 6 (nearly three weeks after the waiver's issuance) pointed out that it "has so far had little impact on American oil supply, according to trade data and analysts who noted that U.S. refiners and shippers are earning more profits sending fuel overseas. Last month, Trump waived Jones Act limitations for 60 days starting March 17, hoping the move would help tame the surge in fuel prices caused by the Iran war by increasing shipments from the U.S. Gulf Coast to other coastal markets in the country."

"So far, however, shipping data shows the move has not boosted U.S. oil flows between domestic ports. Instead, U.S. fuel exports hit a record high last month, as refiners shipped more fuel from the U.S. Gulf Coast to Asia and Europe, and even reversed traditional flows to export from the U.S. East Coast to Europe."

# Multi-Mission Vessel Delivered

U.S. maritime proponents on March 30 celebrated the newest addition to the country's National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) fleet, the *State of Maine*, during a formal delivery ceremony at the Ocean Gateway terminal in Portland.

Built for Maine Maritime Academy by Hanwha Philly Shipyard (a union facility), the *State of Maine* primarily will serve as a training ship, but also will be available for humanitarian and security missions. The SIU will provide unlicensed manpower whenever an NSMV is activated; the union also crewed up the first three such vessels for sea trials.

Seafarers-contracted TOTE is the vessel construction manager for the NSMV program.

Speakers at the gathering included (among several others) U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy, U.S. Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), and Former Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao, the vessel's godmother.

"A strong merchant marine means a strong America," Duffy stated. "By equipping Maine Maritime Academy with a state-of-the-art vessel to train future merchant mariners, we are fulfilling President Trump's promise to restore America's maritime dominance. Today we aren't just delivering a vessel – we are charting a course toward a more resilient and successful America."

Chao described the delivery as "a significant milestone in strengthening America's maritime future. This state-of-the-art training vessel will provide cadets ... with hands-on, real-world experience essential to developing the next generation of U.S. Merchant Mariners. The *State of Maine* will enhance our nation's readiness to respond to humanitarian crises and disaster relief operations, representing a critical investment in those who will carry forward the proud tradition of the U.S. Merchant Marine."

"This new ship will help provide rigorous instruction and crucial maritime training ... for decades to come," said Collins. "We have arrived at this

glorious day after a long voyage that was not without its treacherous shoals. In 2019, as Chair of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, I worked hard to secure \$300 million for this ship. Brokering the agreement between the House and the Senate for that appropriations bill was a challenging task that required months of negotiation and advocacy."

Maine Maritime Academy President Craig Johnson said, "As our first purpose-built training ship, the *State of Maine* will provide world-class learning experiences for cadets pursuing unlimited tonnage licenses. It's a gamechanger for our mission and a powerful reflection of what's possible through strong partnerships and shared vision."

The 525-foot ship features two full-sized, fully operational bridges and engine rooms. Additionally, the NSMV features modern medical facilities, a helipad, and capacity for 1,000 people, providing critical sealift and storage for disaster relief and humanitarian missions.

"Today's ceremony celebrating *State of Maine* is a moment of pride for everyone at Hanwha Philly Shipyard and our partners," said David Kim, the yard's CEO. "Seeing this vessel now ... ready for use by the next generation of maritime students is a testament to the talent, dedication, and teamwork of our workforce. The *State of Maine* will carry forward the mission of training future maritime leaders and represents another step in our commitment to innovation, excellence, and building a lasting legacy in U.S. shipbuilding."

Also weighing in on the milestone (and reflecting bipartisan support for American maritime) were U.S. Reps. John Rutherford (R-Florida), Joe Courtney (D-Connecticut), and Mario Díaz-Balart (R-Florida).

"The successful delivery of the *State of Maine* ... is a great example of what disciplined execution of shipbuilding looks like," Rutherford said. "When the federal government works with experienced vessel construction managers, like Jacksonville's



Pictured at the ceremony are (foreground, from left) The Hon. Elaine L. Chao, U.S. Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), Maine Maritime Academy President Craig Johnson, and U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy. (Photo courtesy Sen. Collins's office)

own TOTE Services, we see greater accountability taken and more effective risk management in action, which provides an acquisition model that can be used and replicated by our federal government for other noncombatant vessels in the future, especially where cost control, schedule discipline, and mission requirements must be balanced."

Courtney, Ranking Member of the House Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, called the delivery "a continuation of efficient and on-time construction at the Philly shipyard. The rapid production cadence of the massive ships is an example of the success of the vessel construction manager model, which originated in Congress with the advice and support of American shipbuilders. The delivery of the *State of Maine* is tangible proof that 'Made in America' shipbuilding can succeed."

Díaz-Balart, House Appropriations Committee Vice Chair and Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security, the Department of State, and Related Programs (NSRP), said, "I'm proud to have played a key role, alongside Senator Susan Collins, in securing vital federal funding to support the U.S. maritime industry and train future mariners through federal-state partnerships like the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel program.... It's critical that aging vessels are replaced responsibly and efficiently so future generations of maritime workers, including students, are properly trained and equipped with the skills needed for national readiness. The NSMV program is essential to maintaining a high standard in government shipbuilding by delivering modern vessels faster, more efficiently, and at a lower cost. It plays an important role in advancing U.S. national security."



The new vessel arrives in Portland, Maine.

# SIU Members at the Ready Amid Iranian Tension

*Editor's note: This article was written and updated during a period in early April that included a temporary ceasefire announcement along with conflicting reports about the Strait of Hormuz. For the latest updates, please visit [seafarers.org](http://seafarers.org)*

Maintaining a flawless record of answering the call in both peace and war, the SIU and the maritime community have been prepared to serve as the fourth arm of defense during the recent military actions in the Strait of Hormuz. As of this writing, the vital global shipping route has been essentially closed to normal traffic, and its near-term future was unclear.

At least a sliver of optimism emerged in early April when a temporary ceasefire between Iran and Israel and the U.S. was announced, to be followed by in-person negotiations. Responding specifically to that news, International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) General Secretary Stephen Cotton stated, "For the thousands of seafarers of many nationalities caught in the middle of this crisis, the announcement of negotiations brings hope that there will be real and immediate relief. That hope must now be translated into safe, orderly and guaranteed transit through the Strait." (The SIU is an ITF affiliate.) He added the commercial vessels should never "be considered targets."

While the road to peace is not yet paved, resuming normal marine traffic is a necessary first step towards stability in the region.

"However, a temporary ceasefire is not enough; it must be the start of a permanent de-escalation," said Cotton. "We call on all parties to make this ceasefire permanent and to uphold their responsibilities under international law to protect civilian shipping and the seafarers who keep it moving."

While a large-scale mobilization of the U.S.-flag fleet has not occurred during this period, a handful of SIU-crewed vessels remain within the region. The union has been in touch with those SIU crews throughout Operation Epic Fury. As previously reported, and consistent with precedent, the SIU has secured extra compensation for Seafarers who sail into high-risk waters.

According to news reports, as of mid-March 2026, upwards of 20 merchant vessels had been hit or attacked in the Strait of Hormuz and the surrounding areas. Those attacks by Iranian forces caused multiple casualties (eight mariners or more were killed). Ships that were hit included tankers, containerships and bulk carriers along with one tugboat.

Simon Spacey, chairman of the International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC), said, "The world's dependence on maritime trade and in particular on the seafarers that keep that trade moving smoothly

has never been clearer than it is now, as the impact that this war is having on the global economy starts to fully reveal itself. There are many reasons for, and justifications given, in times of such conflict – but what is unacceptable is that once again innocent seafarers find themselves trapped inside an area of conflict not of their making where they face genuine danger. "We therefore call on everyone, everywhere to recognize the very real danger our seafarers are facing and to do whatever can be done to protect and support them," he continued. "On a positive note, we know that our seafarers are a tough and hardy bunch and that responsible employers are working around the clock with our trade union partners to ensure that seafarers receive every protection and, where possible, compliance with the repatriation rights we offer them. But right now, the reality is that this is an extremely dangerous environment..."

Pundits have speculated that even after a permanent end to the hostilities is reached, the hardship for mariners will not end quickly. An estimated 20 percent of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) supplies are shipped through the Strait of Hormuz, and the closure has created a backup reminiscent of the delays caused by the grounding of the *MV Ever Given* in the Suez Canal in 2021. In that instance, more than 200,000 mariners were left to sit and wait as traffic slowly resumed upon reopening.

## National Maritime Center Offers Guidance on Medical Certificates

The U.S. Coast Guard's National Maritime Center (NMC) on April 1 began issuing medical certificates via email. A week later, the agency provided the following updated guidance:

### e-Medical Certificate Guidance: Delivery, e-Signing, and Troubleshooting Common Issues

#### What's New

- New medical certificates that do not include a medical waiver will now be delivered electronically via e-mail.

- Certificates are issued as a standard **8.5-inch x 11-inch (letter size) PDF documents**.

- Certificates must be signed to be valid. It is also recommended that mariners print and maintain a signed certificate for their use. When printed, it will be a standard **8.5-inch x 11-inch document**.

- Certificates with medical waivers will continue to be mailed.

- New medical certificates include a QR code as a built-in security feature. Once the code is scanned, users will be directed to our credential verification tool to confirm validity of the certificate.

- **Reminder!** If you want your medical certificate delivered by e-mail, make sure you provide a valid e-mail address with your 719 K or K/E, otherwise your certificate will be mailed in accordance with standard procedures.

### How to e-Sign Your Medical Certificate (Mobile Phone)

With the right electronic signature app, you can digitally sign your certificate on a mobile device (iPhone or Android) easily, legally, and securely. Several free electronic signature services exist that offer legally binding e-signatures for documents. Examples include OpenSign (unlimited free), SignWell (limited free docs), DigiSigner, and Adobe Acrobat Fill & Sign.

#### Troubleshooting & Important Notes



**IMPORTANT:** Allow time for e-mail delivery and check your spam/junk folder before contacting the NMC's Customer Service Center.

- **Did not receive the e-mail?** Check your spam/junk folder.

- **Missing attachments?** Firewalls may block PDFs – try a personal device/e-mail.

- **Cannot open file?** Try using a PDF app like Adobe Acrobat Reader.

**NOTE:** Some organizational e-mail systems may block attachments. Accessing from a personal device may resolve the issue.

United States Coast Guard		
Medical Certificate		
Seafarer Name: <b>MERCHANTMARINER, BILL A</b>		
Sex: <b>Female</b>	Nationality: <b>ALA</b>	DOB: <b>01- JAN -2000</b>
STCW Exp Date: <b>18- MAR -2028</b>	National Exp Date: <b>18- MAR -2031</b>	Pilot Exp Date: <b>18- MAR -2031</b>
		
Patrick A. Drayer, CAPT, USCG OFFICER IN CHARGE, MARINE INSPECTION		
SEAFARER SIGNATURE		
CN: 00496699		Ref Num: 7223318
^ Do Not Detach ^		
* Mariner is free from any medical condition likely to be aggravated by service at sea or to render the seafarer unfit for such service or to endanger the health of other persons on board.		
* Date of Examination:		18- MAR -2026
* Last Color Vision Test Date:		--
* Hearing IAW STCW A-I/9:		Y
* Visual Acuity IAW STCW A-I/9:		Y
* Color Vision IAW STCW A-I/9:		Y
* Fit for Look-out duties:		Y
* Unaided Hearing Satisfactory:		Y
* Identification Checked at Examination:		Y
* Limitations/Restrictions:		Y
1 ) I acknowledge & will comply with waiver conditions		
CN: 00496699	CG-4610A (Rev. 05/12)	Ref Num: 7223318

Sample certificate

# House Hearing Reinforces Maritime's Vital Importance

American mariners and U.S.-flag ships remain indispensable to national, economic and homeland security.

That was a main takeaway from a March 18 hearing in the U.S. House of Representatives featuring testimony from U.S. Gen. Randall Reed (USAF), commanding officer of the U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM), and from Maritime Administrator Stephen Carmel.

Titled "Posture and Readiness of the Mobility Enterprise - TRANSCOM and MARAD," the hearing was conducted by the Subcommittee on Readiness and the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, both parts of the Committee on Armed Services.

U.S. Rep. Trent Kelly (R-Mississippi), chairman of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, said in his opening remarks, "It's only getting harder to move and sustain our equipment and our people across these vast distances. However, this mobility is the foundation of our ability to project peace through strength. This challenge will require both organic and commercial logistics capabilities."

"Within the Seapower jurisdiction, the subcommittee continues our strong support for the Tanker Security Program as well as the Maritime Security Program. The FY25 NDAA strengthened these programs, and we stand by to provide any additional statutory changes that assure our access to critical sealift capacity for liquid and dry cargos on U.S.-flagged and U.S.-crewed commercial vessels."

Kelly added that much work remains to revitalize the industry as a whole, and that "recapitalizing our organic sealift fleet through a new-build sealift program remains a top priority for both subcommittees. Used, foreign-built ships are fine as a short-term bridge solution, but not in the long term."

***"The U.S. Merchant Marine is the cornerstone of the U.S. economy, facilitating critical cargo movements for millions of Americans.... Our partnership with the commercial sealift industry and labor unions is critical to mobilizing strategic sealift capacity during times of crisis."***  
- Gen. Randall Reed

U.S. Rep. Jack Bergman (R-Michigan), chairman of the Subcommittee on Readiness, stated, "We are in the midst of a readiness crisis. There is an urgent need to recapitalize our rapidly aging strategic sealift and tanker fleet, especially as China's shipbuilding capacity dwarfs our own."

Reed pointed out that with more than 85 percent "of U.S. combat power residing in the continental United States, our ability to project that force, rapidly, at scale, is what transforms latent military strength into credible deterrence."

The general noted that TRANSCOM "is responsible for the deployment, sustainment, and redeployment of forces across the full range of military operations."

The agency during the last four years, working with MARAD and the Navy, "purchased seven sealift vessels, adding more than 1.5 million square feet, the equivalent of approximately 24 American football fields of cargo-loading capacity to the Ready Reserve Force (RRF)."

Reed explained how U.S. sealift capacity is deployed, and discussed various military and congressional efforts pertaining to new construction and vessel acquisitions.

Specifically addressing commercial sealift, Reed said, "Our partnership with the commercial sealift industry and labor unions is critical to mobilizing strategic sealift capacity during times of crisis. Congressional action and the support of the American

people are strengthening the maritime industrial base and the U.S.-flag fleet."

The general detailed how programs like the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement and several other programs benefit the nation. He added, "The U.S. Merchant Marine is the cornerstone of the U.S. economy, facilitating critical cargo movements for millions of Americans. Congress recognizes this vital workforce faces challenges - including competition from lower-cost, foreign-flagged ships that has reduced the number of U.S.-flag vessels in international trade and the pool of qualified mariners available to crew sealift vessels in an emergency. Strategic sealift is an essential component of the National Defense Strategy, providing the afloat mobility capability to project and sustain combat power globally. The U.S.'s national sealift objective is to ensure sufficient military and civil maritime resources will be available to meet defense deployment, and essential economic requirements in support of the National Security Strategy. To meet this requirement, the Department depends on a combination of government and commercially owned vessels, all of which rely on a limited pool of civilian merchant crews to activate, operate, and sustain...."

"As leading U.S. maritime labor unions state, addressing this workforce challenge is a national security imperative," he continued. "The fundamental principle in maritime is: more cargo means more U.S.-flag ships, and more U.S.-flag ships means more U.S. mariners, a virtuous cycle that strengthens both our commercial industry and national defense posture.... The U.S. Merchant Marine, while often operating out of the public eye, remains an indispensable asset to the nation. Their continued strength and viability are key to both our economic prosperity and national security in an often-unpredictable world."

Carmel began his testimony with data underscoring the urgency of revitalizing U.S. shipbuilding, including the fact that the nation "has not built a commercial ship for sale into the global market since October 1960. For nearly three-quarters of a century we have operated outside the international shipbuilding ecosystem. This is not a cyclical downturn; it is structural disengagement."

He pointed out that the international U.S.-flag fleet has dwindled to around 80 vessels.

"The fleet survives largely through government stipends rather than commercial competitiveness," Carmel said. "The U.S.-flag fleet carries less than two percent of international commerce and not one molecule of energy in international trade. That has all been outsourced, often to actors of unknown origin or allegiance. Maintaining the status quo puts at risk American maritime self-reliance and presents significant economic and national security vulnerabilities. MARAD is considering actions to promote the use of U.S.-built, flagged, and manned ships that participate in international trade."

He said the agency will continue its efforts to ensure the RRF "can reliably execute large-scale surge sealift under realistic operating conditions."

Looking at the bigger picture, Carmel said, "The United States did not arrive at this point because of a single failed program or insufficient subsidy. We arrived here because maritime capability



Gen. Randall Reed  
Commander, TRANSCOM

- shipbuilding, repair, logistics, and undersea cable laying and repair - was outsourced piece by piece, placing the nation's maritime system at risk. As the president noted in his executive order on Restoring America's Maritime Dominance, 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. This administration recognizes the urgency to address risks in the nation's maritime capabilities and has proposed in the Maritime Action Plan specific actions that should be taken to mitigate those risks...."

He urged Congress to pursue "rebuilding a functioning maritime system capable of competing globally. Absent that, Congress may soon be having hearings not about how to gain maritime dominance, but how to live without it, forever beholden to peer competitors."

After listing some other challenges faced by the industry and how MARAD is, or will, tackle them, Carmel declared, "The foundation of any effort to rebuild our maritime power must rest on access to cargo. Every conversation, whether it is shipbuilding, ship repair, or fleet renewal must start and end with cargo. Expanding government cargo preference programs cannot be the sole means to ensure sufficient amounts of cargo are available to U.S.-flag vessels. While they are critical, especially right now, they cannot be the foundation of our future fleet. There is simply not enough of it. And there never will be. The U.S. is the greatest trading nation on earth and that trade is what needs to be focused on. We must design programs that ensure the U.S. has an equitable share of carrying our nation's commerce as a foundation for our fleet every bit as much as we insist on U.S. made steel or semi-conductors. They are all elements of national power and should all be treated equally as such."

"That said, the U.S.-flag international maritime trade industry as it currently exists is sustained by the Maritime Security Program (MSP) and Tanker Security Program (TSP)," he continued. "As previously noted, both programs suffer from insufficient government cargo. Not only is there not enough to build an increased fleet on, but there is also not enough to sustain the fleet we have now. This is critically important for the Tanker Security Program. Despite authorization to increase the fleet to 20 tankers, I am concerned about expanding the program unless there is sufficient cargo to support that number. The ironic thing is there is sufficient commercial cargo that could be made available to support a tanker fleet of that size, or larger, and at no cost to the taxpayer. Solutions are all around us with the proper programmatic support. We just need to act."

Carmel concluded his introductory remarks by addressing manpower.

"Workforce development must be a central aspect of any effort to rebuild our maritime dominance," he said. "This spans all segments of our industry, from mariners to dockworkers to shipyard people. Investment in our workforce is crucial. We must ensure our labor force is the most well-educated, productive and engaged in the global industry."

"Another saying in our industry is that no matter what fancy technology you put on a ship, the ship will not run unless her crew wants her to. That saying applies across all segments of our industry. American maritime labor led the world once before, and our task is to make sure they do so again."



Stephen Carmel  
Maritime Administrator



U.S. Rep. Jack Bergman  
R-Michigan



U.S. Rep. Trent Kelly  
R-Mississippi

# CBD Use and the Hidden Risk for Mariners

*Editor's note: This article was written by Chris Lee-man, director of the Seafarers Addiction Rehabilitation Center (SARC).*

Cannabidiol (CBD) products have become increasingly popular and are now widely available in pharmacies, gas stations, health stores, and online marketplaces. CBD is commonly marketed as a natural remedy for anxiety, sleep disturbance, chronic pain, and inflammation. Many physicians and other healthcare providers now recommend CBD as a perceived safer alternative to opioids, benzodiazepines, or other controlled medications. While this recommendation may be reasonable in general medical practice, it does not align with federal transportation and maritime regulations, creating significant risk for mariners working in safety-sensitive positions.

CBD itself is a non-intoxicating compound derived from the cannabis plant and does not produce the euphoric effects associated with marijuana. Importantly, CBD is not the substance targeted in standard drug testing programs. The risk lies in how CBD products are manufactured, labeled, and regulated. Many CBD products—especially those labeled “full spectrum” or “broad spectrum”—contain trace amounts of

THC, the psychoactive compound in cannabis. Drug tests do not screen for CBD; they detect THC metabolites. Even small, repeated exposure to THC can accumulate in the body and result in a positive drug test.

For mariners subject to U.S. Coast Guard and Department of Transportation (DOT) drug testing requirements, intent is irrelevant. A positive THC test is treated as a violation regardless of how the substance entered the body. A physician's recommendation, written note, or verbal assurance does not override federal transportation rules. Medical Review Officers are prohibited from excusing a positive result based on CBD use, product mislabeling, or lack of impairment.

This creates a dangerous disconnect. Many healthcare providers operate under general clinical guidelines and may not be fully aware of the strict zero-tolerance framework governing safety-sensitive transportation roles. What may be clinically acceptable in a primary care or mental health setting can directly conflict with maritime compliance requirements and place mariners at significant professional risk.

The risk is compounded by the lack of consistent regulation in the CBD industry. Independent testing has repeatedly shown that CBD products are often mislabeled, sometimes containing higher levels of THC than advertised or detectable THC despite being marketed as “THC-free.” Even CBD isolate products cannot be considered completely risk-free due to cross-contamination and quality control issues.

For mariners, the consequences of a positive drug test can be severe and long-lasting. These may include removal from duty, suspension or revocation of credentials, mandatory Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) evaluation, treatment requirements, and extended time away from work.

The safest and most responsible course of action for mariners is to avoid CBD products entirely. When managing anxiety, sleep problems, or chronic pain, mariners should seek alternatives that do not carry drug-testing risk, such as evidence-based therapy, non-controlled medications, and non-pharmacological interventions.

CBD may be legal and widely accepted, but under transportation regulations, it does not fly. For mariners, the risk is simply too high.

## New Area Labor Federation Launched in U.S. Virgin Islands



At a pivotal moment for working people in the U.S. Virgin Islands, labor unions representing employees throughout the territory – including the SIU-affiliated United Industrial Workers (UIW) – have come together to launch the U.S. Virgin Islands Area Labor Federation. This coalition is aimed at mobilizing workers, building broad alliances with grassroots and community organizations, and ensuring that the upcoming election cycle delivers real results for working families.

The newly formed federation, which represents approximately 4,000 workers, brings together a diverse coalition of unions representing educators, law enforcement, industrial workers, maritime workers, and public employees, including the UIW, the Machinists, Teachers, Steelworkers and others.

The federation was established following a joint strategy meeting where union leaders conducted a comprehensive assessment of current challenges facing workers and outlined a unified path forward. During the inaugural meeting, participating unions identified several urgent issues impacting workers across the territory, including widespread contract delays, workforce shortages, and unsafe working conditions.

The new organization's executive board pledged to mobilize members and work tirelessly to ensure that “working families are at the center of every major decision affecting our islands.”

“This will not be business as usual,” said U.S. Virgin Islands Area Labor Federation Executive Board President Carver Farrow. “Working people are coming together to build real power and to elect leaders who will fight for better wages, safer workplaces, and a stronger future for our Territory.”

## Union, School Stand with AMMV

The SIU and its affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education (PHC) proudly supported this year's American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) convention, which took place March 27-30 near Baltimore. Pictured from left in the posed photo are AMMV President Capt. Darin Huggins, SIU VP Pat Vandegrift, AMMV President Emeritus Capt. Dru DiMattia, and PHC Director of Education Wayne Johnson Jr. The PHC provided a color guard for the gathering. The weekend also included a tour of the nearby vessel *John W. Brown*, one of two remaining Liberty ships still sailing. This was the 38th AMMV convention; it was hosted by the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies, the primary training center for members of the International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots. The event's theme: Preserving Our Legacy, Charting Our Future. (Vessel photo courtesy Project Liberty Ship)



# At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



**ABOARD PRESIDENT ADAMS** – These recent photos were taken on the West Coast, aboard (and next to) APL's *President John Quincy Adams*. From left in the group shot are Chief Cook Allan Acasio, ACU Nasser Alarqban, Steward/Baker Ricky Sencida, and Safety Director John Sunga.



**TAKING THE OATH IN VIRGINIA** – AB Alexis Walker (right) receives her full book. She's pictured outside the Norfolk hall with SIU Patrolwoman Kianta Lee.



**ABOARD OVERSEAS CHINOOK** – From left, GUDE Ashley Cole, SIU Patrolman Anthony Jacobson, and Chief Cook James St. Amand meet aboard the Overseas Ship Management vessel.



**MILESTONE ABOARD SHIP** – Electrician Alberto Alvarez (second from left in front) receives his A-seniority book. He's pictured on the LNG carrier *American Energy* (Intrepid) in Guayanilla, Puerto Rico. From left are Chief Cook Simone Smith, ABM Victor Cortes, QEE Alberto Alvarez, Safety Director Ricky Rivera, Recertified Bosun Ion Irimia, and Steward/Baker Jacob Parrilla. The *American Energy* reliably serves Puerto Rico as part of the Jones Act trade.



**ABOARD CAPE RACE** – Gathered aboard the Keystone ship in Norfolk, Virginia, are (from left) GUDE Desmond Church, Oiler Korrey Green, Wiper Jonathan Walker, Steward/Baker William Storey, GUDE Jamele Gibson, AB Jalen Jones, GVA Raekwon Smith, and SA Keshawn Butler.



**UNION SUPPORT** – Fresh off the tanker *Washington* (Fairwater), ABM Carlo Gentile stops by the Wilmington, California, hall in part to make a Maritime Defense League (MDL) donation. He's holding a SPAD poster created from a painting by the late Bill Brower.



**ABOARD CHARYBDIS** – Pictured clockwise from left aboard the Atlas/Aramark vessel are Seafarer Sharina Weaver, Recertified Bosun Lovell Smith, MDR Jason Griffin, SA Krystal Mosley, SIU Asst. VP Michael Russo, AB Dominique Johnson, and SIU Port Agent Joshua Rawls. Earlier this year, the wind turbine installation vessel put into place the first 14.7 megawatt wind turbine generator for the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project.



**SPREADING THE WORD** – Enthusiastically recruiting for the union and its affiliated Paul Hall Center are SIU Port Agents James Bast (left) and Kelly Krick, pictured at the Calvert Career and Technology Academy in Prince Frederick, Maryland.



**ABOARD CAPT. DAVID LYON** – Generator head replacement takes place aboard the Sealift ship. Pictured from left are 1E John Nelson, 3E Lazaro Rivera Rodriguez, and OMI Nathan Bryant.



**ABOARD MARINER** – Pumpman Dennis Blake (left) and Bosun German Nunez are shown aboard the Eco-Tankers vessel.

# At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



**BACKING HISPANIC HERITAGE FOUNDATION** – SIU personnel and others from the U.S. maritime industry proudly supported this year’s Hispanic Heritage Foundation National Youth Award winners in San Juan on March 23. The decades-old event has recognized thousands of high school students from all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D.C., for their achievements in the classroom, community, and focus on various career paths. Honorees receive a one-time grant for college or support of a community-service effort. Pictured at the gathering are (from left) Joan Puig Serbia of Crowley, Transportation Institute VP Sara Fuentes, Ana Medellin of TOTE, SIU Admin. Asst. Maria Gomez and SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo, and Eduardo Pagan of TOTE.



**KUDOS TO GALLEY GANG** – Recertified Bosun Godofredo Milabo submitted this snapshot along with the following note of appreciation: “On behalf of the entire crew of the Marjorie C (Pasha), we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the steward department for the outstanding job they do in providing our daily meals. As we all know, a good meal is one of the most important factors in maintaining the morale of a ship’s crew. While the deck and engine departments work hard every day to keep the vessel operating safely and efficiently, the galley crew works just as hard to ensure that the crew is well-fed and taken care of. . . . They consistently prepare and serve meals three times a day for the entire crew – a task that requires dedication, skill, and hard work. For this, we would like to give special thanks to Chief Steward Maili Wang and Chief Cook Travis Rogers for their commitment and excellent service to the crew. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by everyone on board.” Pictured from left are Electrician Alvin Alcasid, Chief Cook Travis Rogers, Chief Steward Maili Wang, QMED Ryan Manlapit, Recertified Bosun Godofredo Milabo, AB Ed Lopez and AB Zakaria Ahmed.



**WELCOME ABOARD IN PUERTO RICO** – AB Juan Chevalier Heredia (left) obtains his full book. He’s pictured at the San Juan hall with Safety Director Ricky Rivera.



**ABOARD PRESIDENT JOHNSON** – Recertified Steward Kenneth Greenidge (right) and SIU Patrolman Gordon Godel chat aboard the APL ship in Long Beach, California.



**ON THE RECRUITING TRAIL** – SIU Patrolwoman Nirel Escalante (foreground, leaning on table) spreads the word at a Staten Island career expo.



**ABOARD SEABULK PRIDE** – Pictured in the crew lounge of the Eco-Tankers vessel following a monthly union meeting are (from left) AB Arnold Castro, GVA Osnang Ariola, Recertified Bosun Billy Hill Jr., Chief Cook Angel Bernardez, Pumpman Manny Garcia, Wiper David Hebb, GUDE Mohamed Alasfoor, AB Rommel Dela Vega, and ABM Jorge Santos.



**ABOARD PRESIDENT CARTER** – Meeting with Recertified Steward Greg Lynch (center) aboard the APL ship in Honolulu are SIU VP Hazel Galbiso (right) and Safety Director Amber Akana.



**ABOARD OREGON** – These photos were taken aboard the Fairwater tanker in Corpus Christi, Texas. In the four-person pic are (clockwise, from lower left) Oiler Martin Dragon, Patrolman Anthony Jacobson, ABM Dwan Reed, and Chief Cook Keyanna Williams. From left in the second photo are AB Michael Gore, Recertified Bosun Burkley Cooper, Jacobson, Chief Steward Martin Warren, and QMED Starling Priester.



**ABOARD OVERSEAS HOUSTON** – Pictured from left aboard the Overseas Ship Management vessel in Anacortes, Washington, are AB Mark Baclayon, AB Kevin O’Lone, and Bosun Carleous Brown.

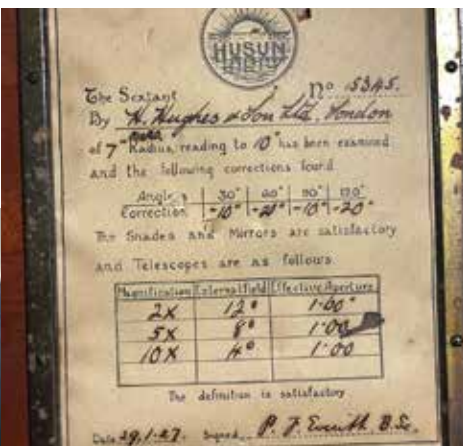
# At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



**FULL BOOKS IN PINEY POINT** – AB Vincent Walker (left in photo above, left) and Oiler Samuel Penn (left in remaining photo) receive their respective B books at the SIU-affiliated school in southern Maryland. SIU Port Agent Kelly Krick is at right in both snapshots.



**WELCOME ASHORE IN HAWAII** – Longtime SIU member Ramon Lirag (left) picks up his first pension check at the hiring hall in Honolulu. He sailed in the engine department for more than 35 years (and continues to sail as a pensioner). Congratulating him is SIU VP Hazel Galbiso.



**HISTORIC DONATION** – Seafarers of a certain vintage may remember Recertified Bosun Rafael “Monte” Pereira, who sailed with the union for more than half a century. Monte retired in 2015 and passed away in 2023, at age 83. Highly regarded by all who knew him, he received the sextant shown in these photos from an uncle who was in the Navy, and who had purchased it in England. Monte’s sister, A.J., recently donated the sextant to the union. She’s second from right in the group photo, taken at the Houston hall with (from left) Patrolman Kirk Pegan, Port Agent J.B. Niday, and SIU Pensioner Paul Wade, a longtime member and friend of Monte’s.



**ABOARD TAINO** – The group photo aboard the Intrepid ship includes Safety Director Ricky Rivera (kneeling) along with Chief Cook Billy Burgos, Recertified Bosun Donley Johnson, ABM Rafael Franco, Oiler Blake Washington, AB Rahsean Lillard, and ABM Christian Perez. Franco also is in the individual snapshot.



**SEAFARERS EVERYWHERE** – Eagle-eyed Houston SIU Patrolman Anthony Jacobson captured this snapshot of three SIU crewed vessels: *Brenton Reef* (Eco-Tankers) in the foreground, *Overseas Cascade* (Overseas Ship Management) passing behind it, and a G&H tug in the middle.



**OVERSEAS TAMPA FRESHENS UP** – Many thanks to vessel master Capt. Todd Closs for these from the Overseas Ship Management vessel, taken at Grand Bahama Shipyard and featuring the SIU crew. Closs described the mariners as “a great group. The positive energy is tangible – I am proud to work with them all, and feel very fortunate to have such a great team aboard.” Pictured from left are QMED/Pumpman Tsawang (Mike) Gyurme, Steward/Baker Gamal Asaad, DEU Shaunteyana Catoe, DEU Dominick Davis, Chief Cook Brittany Harris, GSU Melchor Fombuena, ABM Ronald Wilcox, AB Carlos Aquino, Bosun Charles Ortiz Quinones, (squatting) UA/OS Gustavo Garayua, DEU Angel Aranda Gamboa, ABM Miguel Poe, and AB Jordan Jeffries. Not pictured but also part of the crew: AB Ricardo Valenzuela-Venegas.

## Yamira Colón Del Moral

*Editor's note: This article is part of 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 and boldfaced comments that are included in the article were voiced by a LOG staff member. They have been edited for space considerations. Bosun Yamira Colón Del Moral has been sailing for more than 25 years since starting as a member of lifeboat class 610 at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center in Piney Point in 2000.*

### **LOG: What has your overall experience as a female Seafarer been like?**

**Yamira Colón Del Moral:** It's been a great experience. I've traveled the world. I've met people of all different ethnicities on board the ships, and experiencing every port that I've travelled to has been magnificent. Since we are always travelling by sea, I really appreciate the view. Most people go to places by plane or by car, and travelling on the water is a different view. I take lots of pictures because the way you see the land from the sea is mesmerizing for me. Regarding the work, I like knowing that I'm part of the global movement of merchandise. That's what we are: the merchant marine. We're moving products from one port to another, and whatever we carry from point A is what the people need in point B. In that respect, it's awesome. The only hard part is being at sea when you have family and loved ones at home, but at the same time, you experience the great feeling of, "After I finish my duties, I'm going home to my family for a long period of time." You don't have a nine-to-five job; you have a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week job, so going home at the end of the tour, that's the best feeling ever.

### **Yeah, a lot of people who sail tell me they really enjoy that – even though you spend a long time away while you're working, you still get a substantial amount of time to be home, so it feels balanced. What is a normal day for you like when you are at sea, from a bosun's perspective?**

**Colón Del Moral:** Depending on the ship, usually you do overtime starting at six in the morning, from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. Your normal hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Then, usually you do two hours in the [early evening], sometimes from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Usually you have four hours of overtime, so your typical day most likely is 12 hours, which is 13 really because they also factor in your lunch hour. You have time for coffee and time to take a break but basically it's a 12-hour-day.

The bosun is the supervisor, and they are the person in charge of the ABs (able bodied seamen) who work on deck. They also are responsible for ship maintenance and assigning jobs to ABs. The bosun should be the most experienced seaman on board, because they receive higher pay for their knowledge. You get paid to supervise the other sailors, so you should have an ample knowledge of seamanship. You have to know how to fix everything on board the ship. For example, one particular ship, the *Endurance*, is a car carrier. I'm currently sailing on the *George III* as a dayman because I need the sea time for the LNG endorsement. I'm here today, but, for example, on the *Endurance* in the morning, you have your meeting with the chief mate, who you know asks you how the day before went. You report everything to the chief mate, and he gives you the expectations for the day and lets you know if there are any special jobs or projects to complete. You will discuss what has to be done, and what he or she wants to get done. The chief mate will ask you if it's possible for a job to get done in a certain amount of time, so you are supposed to have to plan. You have to think ahead about who you're going to assign to each job. You have to consider what the job's requirements and risks are. You do the job

safety analysis with the chief mate before you meet with the ABs. After that, you decide who does what.

I like the job to be done properly, safely and efficiently, so you want to give the job to the person who will enjoy it and do the job well, because not everybody will be a good fit for the same job. First you want to find out who likes to do what, like chipping, painting, maintenance, greasing.... Whatever the job is, whoever enjoys doing it the most is the person you want in there because you want them to have pride in their work. If they have pride, the job is going to look better, and they will finish the job. Then you assign them to that job and let them work.

When I assign people to jobs, I ask them if they have questions and if they know what they are going to be doing. I also provide all the tools and safety equipment and make sure the work is completed in safe conditions. My responsibility is the safety of the sailor, so I have to provide a safe work environment and safe tools, and I have to ensure that they know what they're doing. At the same time, I give them the space to do the job, but I'm always supervising, and so when they go on break, I inspect all the jobs. While I'm doing my inspection, if the person is on track and aiming for high quality, I encourage them to continue doing a good job. If I notice that something is lacking, then I will mention it kindly, and I will not criticize. I like to approach things in suggestion mode, because nobody is perfect, but I know everybody always has the capability to do a better job if they are encouraged correctly. So, I like to always encourage people to do their best, and to be their best, and that way everybody, including the chief mate and the captain, will be happy.

When I decided to be a bosun, it's because I wanted to be the best. I want to be the best bosun when it comes to how I treat my shipmates.... I want to do all that I can to teach them and help them to get better. That's something I always strive to accomplish for myself as a supervisor. I always try to encourage people to be their best.

At the end of the day, since you're working for hours, I give them extra breaks here and there. You know, sometimes it's little things like that that make people feel appreciated. I told my guys, I cannot give you more money, that money is set by the [contract]. All I can give you is some time off and some extra breaks. And believe me, when I was a dayman, those extra 10-minute breaks are gold.

### **I'm sure they appreciate that, too.**

**Colón Del Moral:** They definitely do. On the next day, they're smiling and happy to come back. That's the thing – you need the morale to be high, and you need to create a family environment, even though I have couple of strict rules for myself. Being a female on board, you have to watch what you say and how you say it. I will always listen, and then when I'm talking, you listen. It's a mutual respect. I try to keep the talk business-related, but make it familiar, but still business-related. It's not like we're never talking personal business from eight to five, but when we do, we still keep it professional. That's my first goal, and



Exercising a fast rescue boat from the USNS 1st Lt. Harry L. Martin

my second is being truthful. I don't lie, because it just takes so much energy to keep up with a lie, and I have so much on my mind already. I keep it real, keep the drama out, and just remain focused on the job.

I always tell my guys, if you are doing what I tell you to do, and things get messed up, I've got your back 100% and, you know, some people don't believe it. A perfect example of this: On a particular ship, we're doing some lift overseas, and it's very windy. The crane we're operating doesn't have the option to extend the boom, just going up, down and side to side. This thing doesn't extend. The guy on the dock, which in this case was the mate, has to use the forklift to position the lift under the crane. I will refuse to do a lift unless I'm 100% sure, and if I'm not, then that thing is not going to move.

So, this is a pile of paint, and I told the guys how I wanted to rig the slings and the straps (the straps have the eyes at the at the end, and the slings are the ones with a loop). This particular one has a strap to the palette, and I teach them how to do it. We've been doing this for years, and this is the seventh palette coming up. It was too far away from them, so I call in the radio and I politely say, "Can you please move the palette, and position it under the hook?" The mate had already gone up to the house, so he says, "I have somebody else in the forklift." And I said, "Whoever it is, I need them to move the palette."

The mate stands next to me in front of the control and he tells me I could do it. I say, "Oh, I can't do that, but you're the mate and I'm the bosun. If you want to take the con, I'll give you the con, but I'm not moving the palette until they use the forklift to put the palette under the hood. So he's like, "Oh, you can't do that. Oh, because you're a woman, you cannot do that?" I say, "Here is the control," and I call over the radio, "Everybody on the dock, stand back. The third mate has become bosun, stand back." In three seconds, he brings that hook up, and there was paint all over the dock, in the water, on the ship, everything. The third mate blames the AB dayman....

We go to the captain and tell him what happened.... And of course, the AB didn't get fired and he finally believed me, that I would stick up for him....



Colón Del Moral repairs the protective jacket on the mooring line.



Yamira Colón Del Moral worked with her husband aboard his last ship before retirement, the *Horizon Enterprise*. Because of their schedules, they only had time to eat dinner together, as shown above. When given the opportunity, they went ashore to share a meal.

# In Their Own Words: SIU Women at Sea



Colón Del Moral operates the barge crane aboard the *Green Island*.

When somebody challenges you like, oh, because you're a woman - nah, you cannot take that personally. You have your knowledge and you stand your ground. If something is not safe, it's not safe.

I'm a very safe person, and on that same ship I remember another one of my daymen was afraid of heights. He took me aside and told me, and I said, man you're in big trouble because you're a dayman and for the job we're gonna have for the next couple of weeks, you have to be in the scaffold. I could feel his fear, but I said, "Don't worry, I want to work with you. I'm going to make sure you lose your fear of heights, but only if you feel comfortable. If you trust me to do it, I will help you."

Within three days, this guy is climbing. He was forever thankful to me for that.... Not everybody would do that. Somebody else might have been mocking him or something, but not helping him. Where is the sense in that? I want everybody who sails with me to be at their best, and I want them to leave the ship being even better than when they came on.

**That's a good example of your leadership quality and what it gives to the team. I didn't know as much about what a bosun does from day-to-day, so it also gives me insight into the type of things that you deal with.**

**Colón Del Moral:** I especially wanted to focus on tools, because a tool can break and can hurt you, and as you know I'm all about safety. Two things that are very essential for us, maintenance-wise, are needle guns and the grease gun. I inspect everything before I issue them. I was on a ship and I came into the bosun locker, and the second mate is trying to open the grease gun and change the cartridge. I tell him that the way he's doing it will make the grease spray in your face and it could hurt him. Usually, my voice is nice and calm, but I raised my voice when I told him, and the mate jumped. I told him there is a spring for the pressure where he was trying to release the cartridge on the back of the grease gun, which is where the spring is for the tension. I instructed him to instead retrieve the grease level indicator, and then take the top part of it, not the bottom part and then



Yamira Colón Del Moral stands near Pasha's *George III*.



Colón Del Moral displays a parted line she helped to splice.

change the cartridge and then reconnect the grease gun. You release the grease level indicator, you don't push the grease in. If you push it in, all the grease will go behind the plunger and into the spring. Plus, that grease level indicator is the only way you can certainly know how much grease is inside the greasing gun. And he said, "Oh, I never knew that."

**Do you feel that being a woman at sea offers you any unique opportunities? And if so, what are they?**

**Colón Del Moral:** That's a very good question. I try not to see myself as a woman, in a way, when it comes to the work. Sometimes, especially at the beginning, you have to prove yourself more. You have to work harder, because you are new and you are a woman who is new - but when you have the knowledge, and you show them at the beginning, they leave you alone. They basically say, "Okay, you're part of the gang." You get that seal of approval. You don't need that, though.... I'm a bosun. I have my stamp that I'm certified, and I have my knowledge, and I do my job well. There's no special treatment, since we get paid the same whether we are women or men.

**So, it feels equal, and it sounds like you have the same opportunities as other people. That's great. I've been speaking to a lot of women about this for this series, and they all mention experiencing an era of having to go above and beyond to prove themselves, but they do feel like they receive the same opportunities as the guys that sail with them on the ship, so that's good.**

**Colón Del Moral:** Yes, especially since I come from Puerto Rico and I was the first female in the deck department (on her first ship). At the beginning, it was really hard. But it was easier as I learned more. I'm grateful to many people who helped me, but seamanship-wise, I am very grateful for what I learned from a sailor from Puerto Rico, AB **Juan Ayala**. He passed away many years ago, but I got the opportunity to work with him. In that short time, this gentleman taught me so much about seamanship. One of the greatest things that he and bosun Roy, who was from Alabama, taught me while we were on the *Horizon Challenger* was how to splice wire.... That is knowledge I carry with me on every ship.

A lot of people don't know how to do that, and when I hear them say, "Oh, we, we can't splice wire," I say, "What do you mean you can't splice wire? I know how to splice wire!"

**That's right, you have the hard skills.**

**Colón Del Moral:** Exactly! That's the treasure I have from those two gentlemen. But just like that example, there are other people who have taught me as well. I try to absorb as much information and seamanship knowledge as I can.

**Speaking of safety, do you feel like they do a good job of making sure that you're safe and comfortable when you get on the vessel?**



Handling food stores on the *USNS Charles L. Gilliland*

**Colón Del Moral:** Definitely. There's no doubt about it. I feel very safe on board these ships, and we have the right PPE, which is the most important thing, and it's available for everybody. You have your own room, your own bathroom, so, yeah, I feel very safe. I always have felt safe on all the ships I've sailed on.

**Do you feel that there are any unique challenges you face as a female Seafarer? And if you do feel that way, what are they?**

**Colón Del Moral:** Just the fact that you are a woman in the deck department. They expect you always to be in the galley, and they are surprised when you tell them you're the new bosun. At the beginning, they didn't see a woman as belonging to the engine or the deck department.

Oh, I thought of this particular experience. I was a relief dayman a couple of times, and then I got the opportunity to have a rotary job. Initially, there were no problems whatsoever. The second I have rotary, this is where some kind of jealousy took place. They were like, "Why does she have the job?" The answer is because I was in the union hall when the job was called.

The bosun says, "I know you've been here, but the Chief Mate wants you to splice some new pendants on the mooring wire." Okay, so I just say how many pendants do you want? He wanted three pendants. A pendant is like when you have to splice the line on the wire. It's a piece of mooring line where you splice an eye and get connected to a mooring wire.... I go in there and I started splicing the lines. I start making the first one, the second one, and when I'm doing the third one, here come the captain, the chief mate and the bosun. And I'm very proud. I have a lot of pride in the jobs that I perform, and I try to do the best I can. I have the two pendants already very nice and square, thinking this is going to be as good as if it came from the manufacturer. I'm doing my third one, thinking this was a test. Then I finish the last one and the captain and the others say, "Oh, that's perfect!" The bosun goes in the crew mess and says, "Yamira knows her job, so leave her alone. This is the end of it." That was the first day. You have to show them. But I didn't fight, I didn't argue. If you have the knowledge, just go for it. But I do know that's something they wouldn't have done to a guy, that's the point. But I didn't feel a way about it. It was just more practice for me.

**I have a few more questions. I know sometimes that you might be the only woman that's sailing on a vessel, but do you feel that overall, women mariners are treated well and with respect?**

**Colón Del Moral:** I really hope so. If you read all the stuff that happened with the (academy) cadets, you might think, "Oh, my God, what happened to this industry?" I never experienced anything or witnessed anything like that. The people who I've worked with

*Continued on Page 17*

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## ALGONAC

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

## ANCHORAGE

721 Sesame St., #1C, Anchorage, AK 99503  
(907) 561-4988

## BALTIMORE

2315 Essex St., Baltimore, MD 21224  
(410) 327-4900

## GUAM

Cliffline Office Ctr. Bldg., Suite 103B  
422 West O'Brien Dr., Hagatna, Guam 96910  
(671) 477-1350

## HONOLULU

606 Kalihi St., Honolulu, HI 96819  
(808) 845-5222

## HOUSTON

625 N. York St., Houston, TX 77003  
(713) 659-5152

## JACKSONVILLE

5100 Belfort Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32256  
(904) 281-2622

## JERSEY CITY

104 Broadway, Jersey City, NJ 07306  
(201) 434-6000

## JOLIET

10 East Clinton St., Joliet, IL 60432  
(815) 723-8002

## MOBILE

1640 Dauphin Island Pkwy, Mobile, AL 36605  
(251) 478-0916

## NEW ORLEANS

3911 Lapalco Blvd., Harvey, LA 70058  
(504) 328-7545

## NORFOLK

115 Third Street, Norfolk, VA 23510  
(757) 622-1892

## OAKLAND

1121 7th St., Oakland, CA 94607  
(510) 444-2360

## PHILADELPHIA

2800 S. 20th Street, Building 12B, Suite A  
Philadelphia, PA 19145  
(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 upgraders at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education.

## Question: What are some goals you hope to accomplish this year as an SIU member?



**Julius Douglas**  
SA

I want to travel more... I would also like to get more experience, not even as an SA or a chief cook, but with sailing in general. The people I talked to on the vessel I just got off have been doing this for like 15, 20 years and they have so many different things to say, so many different experiences.



**Adam Bechtold**  
Chief Cook

I'm just trying to pay down my mortgage some, which the SIU makes possible by ensuring we're paid well. I did a big trip in Europe last year, and this year I want to focus on my mortgage. I try to travel outside of sailing when I have some time off for vacation, occasionally, or every other year.



**Chelan Peterson**  
OMU

I plan to keep upgrading, honestly. You know – keep my nose to the grindstone and get my sea days and come here and do all these classes. I'm trying to finish all the engine courses by the end of the year.



**Kamaria LaPread**  
OMU

Currently, I'm trying to pay off school and I'm applying for scholarships for that. I also plan to focus on upgrading.



**Cotisha Long-Green**  
GUDE

Right now, I'm having a house built and I'm continuing to upgrade. Being with the union is helpful because the SIU pays decent money in a decent amount of time, but you also get a length of time off when you're on vacation to be able to get the process done and supervise it yourself rather than trusting somebody else to be there to do it for you.



**Alayla Tilley**  
SA

After I finish the chief cook class I'm in now, my main goal is to take culinary classes in Japan. I want to take culinary classes in other countries to learn how to cook various kinds of cuisine. Oh, and of course, buying a house and car.

## Pic from the Past



Pictured aboard the *ITB Groton* (Westchester Marine) in 1982 are Seafarers Arnaldo Orellana, Jerome Sumlin, and Charley Smith.

# Notice

## Important Reminders About Prescription Drug Coverage for Pensioners

If you are eligible for medical benefits from the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan when you retire, you will also be eligible for prescription coverage. If you are 65 or older, the Plan provides this coverage through a Medicare Part D prescription drug program administered by Retiree RxCare. However, the Plan does not provide prescription drug benefits to a pensioner's spouse or dependents.

**You do not have to pay a premium for your prescription coverage if you are over 65.** The Plan's prescription coverage is comparable to the standard Medicare prescription drug coverage and is considered Creditable Coverage. **If you enroll in another Medicare Part D prescription drug program, you will lose your prescription coverage from SHBP, and you will not be permitted to re-enroll in the future.** Due to Medicare rules, **you will also lose your prescription coverage if you enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan that offers prescription coverage.**

If you decide to purchase a separate plan to supplement the Plan's vision, dental or hearing coverage, **make sure it is an ancillary plan** that only provides those benefits, and **not** a Medicare Advantage Plan.

For more information, contact:

SHBP Claims Department  
45353 St. Georges Avenue  
Piney Point, MD 20674  
Phone: (800) 252-4674 (Option 3)  
Fax: (301) 994-0116  
Email: [claimsdept@seafarers.org](mailto:claimsdept@seafarers.org)



## May & June Membership Meetings

Piney Point	Monday: May 4, June 8
Algonac	Thursday: May 14, June 18
Baltimore	Thursday: May 7, June 11
Guam	Thursday: May 21, June 25
Honolulu	Friday: May 15, <b>Monday: June 22</b>
Houston	Monday: May 11, June 15
Jacksonville	Thursday: May 7, June 11
Joliet	Thursday: May 14, June 18
Mobile	Wednesday: May 13, June 17
New Orleans	Tuesday: May 12, June 16
Jersey City	Tuesday: May 5, June 9
Norfolk	Friday: May 8, June 12
Oakland	Thursday: May 14, June 18
Philadelphia	Wednesday: May 6, June 10
Port Everglades	Thursday: May 14, June 18
San Juan	Thursday: May 7, June 11
St. Louis	Friday: May 15, <b>Monday: June 22</b>
Tacoma	Friday: May 22, June 26
Wilmington	Monday: May 18, June 22

Meeting date changes due to holidays

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 9, 2026 - April 9, 2026.  
"Registered on the Beach" data is as of April 10, 2026.

Port	Total Registered All Groups			Total Shipped All Groups			Trip Reliefs	Registered on Beach All Groups		
	A	B	C	A	B	C		A	B	C
<b>Deck Department</b>										
Algonac	21	9	3	31	5	0	4	28	17	4
Anchorage	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	4	1	0
Baltimore	4	8	3	2	5	1	1	4	5	1
Fort Lauderdale	12	10	9	14	10	4	8	21	13	10
Guam	2	0	0	3	2	1	0	2	1	0
Harvey	6	5	8	4	5	0	2	8	8	10
Honolulu	2	2	1	2	2	0	0	5	5	3
Houston	24	18	11	16	18	10	18	58	26	20
Jacksonville	36	23	14	34	27	4	18	42	42	24
Jersey City	20	11	4	14	6	0	6	32	11	7
Joliet	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	4	2
Mobile	6	8	8	5	4	1	0	13	8	6
Norfolk	26	13	9	23	12	5	10	29	17	8
Oakland	6	3	1	5	2	0	3	12	5	1
Philadelphia	5	4	0	2	0	1	1	7	4	1
Piney Point	2	3	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	0
Puerto Rico	6	3	2	1	5	0	3	8	6	1
St. Louis	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	0
Tacoma	14	6	3	16	7	2	7	30	10	4
Wilmington	24	10	4	21	10	1	9	51	15	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Engine Department</b>										
Algonac	3	4	2	6	3	1	3	4	3	0
Anchorage	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0
Baltimore	4	3	1	5	3	0	1	2	1	2
Fort Lauderdale	6	5	0	6	7	0	6	9	10	0
Guam	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1
Harvey	4	2	1	1	1	0	0	5	5	2
Honolulu	6	1	1	3	2	1	2	7	3	3
Houston	7	6	5	5	2	3	4	7	15	7
Jacksonville	22	11	5	13	20	2	9	37	15	7
Jersey City	7	5	1	8	4	1	4	9	7	1
Joliet	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	0
Mobile	4	2	2	3	1	0	1	6	2	2
Norfolk	14	11	9	11	9	4	10	17	14	5
Oakland	1	6	3	1	3	1	1	5	4	4
Philadelphia	3	1	0	3	1	0	1	3	0	0
Piney Point	3	7	1	1	3	1	1	2	5	1
Puerto Rico	3	1	0	2	1	0	2	6	2	0
St. Louis	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0
Tacoma	10	3	1	10	3	0	4	12	3	1
Wilmington	16	6	3	9	4	1	1	20	8	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Steward Department</b>										
Algonac	6	1	0	6	0	0	2	5	1	0
Anchorage	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	4	0
Baltimore	0	3	2	0	3	1	2	1	2	1
Fort Lauderdale	4	4	1	7	3	1	4	6	6	2
Guam	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	3	3	0
Harvey	1	2	1	0	2	0	1	4	3	1
Honolulu	5	2	2	7	0	1	3	8	2	1
Houston	6	10	2	8	5	0	6	12	18	3
Jacksonville	17	22	3	13	15	1	10	34	31	3
Jersey City	10	11	1	2	4	1	2	13	8	1
Joliet	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	0
Mobile	4	0	0	2	1	0	0	6	0	0
Norfolk	17	7	3	9	4	2	5	21	12	4
Oakland	12	1	0	10	0	0	0	16	2	1
Philadelphia	3	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	3	1
Piney Point	8	3	0	2	2	0	2	9	4	1
Puerto Rico	6	4	1	4	4	1	2	6	6	2
St. Louis	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0
Tacoma	4	3	0	3	3	0	0	10	3	0
Wilmington	22	5	3	17	6	1	9	27	4	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Entry Department</b>										
Algonac	1	1	20	2	4	6	0	1	5	24
Anchorage	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Baltimore	0	8	0	0	6	0	2	0	4	1
Fort Lauderdale	3	4	5	0	8	5	1	3	5	11
Guam	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Harvey	0	2	4	0	1	3	1	0	4	6
Honolulu	0	1	4	0	0	3	0	0	1	6
Houston	1	16	17	1	8	6	6	3	30	17
Jacksonville	1	24	47	0	27	28	6	2	34	62
Jersey City	0	10	5	0	5	3	1	0	23	19
Joliet	0	3	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	4
Mobile	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
Norfolk	0	7	36	0	8	23	3	1	16	48
Oakland	0	8	8	0	5	1	1	0	11	14
Philadelphia	0	2	3	0	1	2	0	0	1	3
Piney Point	0	4	3	0	3	2	1	0	1	2
Puerto Rico	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tacoma	5	5	5	1	5	3	0	4	6	7
Wilmington	1	10	19	0	5	12	1	1	15	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>260</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>435</b>

# 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.

**INDEPENDENCE** (Eco-Tankers), February 7 – Chairman Lorenzo Tifre, Secretary **Ahmed Sennain**, Educational Director **Josue Iglesia**, Steward Delegate **Simone Smith**. Crew requested modification to Wi-Fi availability. Secretary urged members to stay ahead of documents and noted the lack of attendance at meetings. Deck delegate reported plans for routine deck maintenance in preparation for shipyard. Members talked about penalty pay for burning trash. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Steward delegate discussed maintenance schedule. Crew requested various benefit increases, improved shipboard climate control, and healthier food options.

**HORIZON KODIAK** (Horizon Lines), February 25 – Chairman **Darryl Smith**, Secretary **Antoinette Amato**, Educational Director **David Watkins**, Engine Delegate **Terry Taylor**, Steward Delegate **Paisami Gay**. Chairman reminded members that A-seniority books coming out of retirement can take rotary jobs until June 30. Educational director encouraged crew to upgrade at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland, and to look into the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan Scholarship program. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Secretary thanked SIU's collective bargaining efforts and praised Seafarers Plans Administrator Margaret Bowen for

her steadfast guidance throughout the years. Crew requested changes in vacation check eligibility and procedures and asked to increase vacation days. Next port: Tacoma, Washington.

**MAERSK CHICAGO** (Maersk Line, Limited), March 1 – Chairman **Mario Ordonez**, Secretary **Joseph Kudjoe**, Deck Delegate **John Mbelwa**, Engine Delegate **Jeffery Bull**, Steward Delegate **Tkeyah Elliot**. Crew reviewed requests for new towels, pillowcases and gaming console. Chairman is working on buying requested items. Secretary advised members to upgrade at the union-affiliated Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew would like increases in shoe allowance, vacation and food budget as well as compensation when not getting reliefs. Members requested a new vacuum cleaner and coffee machine.

**ANCHORAGE** (Horizon Lines), March 3 – Chairman **Shawn Strand**, Secretary **Joseph Gallo**, Educational Director **Jason Powell**, Deck Delegate **Terrence Carmody**, Engine Delegate **Ahmed Al-Saqqaf**, Steward Delegate **Christopher Hopkins**. Chairman announced next payoff at sea. Safey award given to ship for more than 2,500 days injury-free. Secretary thanked crew for being good shipmates. Educational director reminded members to monitor documents and upgrade at the Piney Point school. Satellite TV to be repaired and

paid for by treasury fund. Members requested increases in vacation and pension.

**MAERSK PITTSBURGH** (Maersk Line, Limited), March 8 – Chairman **Roy Madrio**, Secretary **Alan Squier**, Educational Director **Shawn Smith**, Deck Delegate **Waleed Mohsin**, Engine Delegate **Louis Valencia**, Steward Delegate **Mark Keller**. New mattresses and pillows needed. Secretary asked for clarifications about tour of duty and extra meal money. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew asked for 25 for 30 vacation and online option for paperwork submissions. Steward and wiper need new TVs.

**ALLIANCE ST. LOUIS** (Maersk Line, Limited) March 13 – Chairman **Hermenegildo Cordova Arriola**, Secretary **Maurice Henry Jr.**, Educational Director **Johnny Matthews**, Deck Delegate **Roger Dillinger**. New TVs, linens, rugs and chairs need to be ordered. Disputes over overtime cuts reported. Members asked to increase food budget and reported difficulty with getting into classes. Crew discussed issues with cleaning supplies and concerns about giving up overtime hours due to ship budget.

**JEAN ANNE** (Pasha), March 15 – Chairman **Noel Camacho**, Secretary **Samuel Sinclair**, Educational Director **Joseph Letang**, Deck Delegate **Samuel Lampshire**, Engine Delegate **Pedro Rivera**

**Hernandez**, Steward Delegate **Richard Dolan**. Chairman reminded crew of QR code posted in lounge linking to vacation plan as well as the importance of safety. Members discussed concerns over Jones Act waiver and tours of duty requirements for permanent members. Secretary suggested flexibility with eligibility requirements for tours of duty to give members exceptions for days missed due to bad weather. Educational director advised crew to upgrade at the Paul Hall Center. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members would like physicals to be required annually, raises in pay, increased pension benefits, and for the retirement age to be lowered. Crew requested new galley equipment. New chairs for mess hall have been ordered.

**GEORGE III** (Sunrise Operations, LLC), March 19 – Chairman **Kissinfor Taylor**, Secretary **Michael Ingram**, Educational Director **Thomas Flynn**, Deck Delegate **Yamira Colon Del Moral**, Engine Delegate **Wilshire Cortez**, Steward Delegate **Kirk Fisher**. Chairman reported bad weather and high lead in water pipes. Members were advised to drink bottled water. Secretary reminded members to pay dues and stay current on all documentation. Educational director encouraged crew to upgrade their skills at the Paul Hall Center and to send out for medical certificates and mariner credentials early. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members would like vacation to be increased to 25 for 30.

## Know Your Rights

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

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

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

receipt requested. The proper address for this is:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Welcome Ashore!

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

## DEEP SEA

### KAREN ALLEN

Sister Karen Allen, 70, joined the union in 2005, initially sailing aboard the *Meteor*. She worked in all three departments and upgraded at the Piney Point school on several occasions. Sister Allen most recently shipped on the *Bernard F. Fisher* and lives in Anacortes, Washington.



### SALEH ALSHAWESH

Brother Saleh Alshawesh, 66, started sailing with the SIU in 2011 and first worked on the *Matej Kocak*. He shipped in the steward department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Alshawesh concluded his career aboard the *Maersk Detroit*. He resides in Chesapeake, Virginia.



### JAMES ARMER

Brother James Armer, 72, became a member of the union in 2003 when he sailed aboard the *USNS Algol*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Armer concluded his career aboard the *Endurance*. He makes his home in Dayton, Texas.



### ROBERT DENNIS

Brother Robert Dennis, 69, embarked on his career with the SIU in 1979 when he sailed on the *Virgo*. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Dennis last sailed aboard the *Baltimore* and lives in Aransas Pass, Texas.



### MARK DEPALMA

Brother Mark DePalma, 65, signed on with the union in 1990. He initially sailed aboard the *Liberty Star* and worked in the deck department. Brother DePalma upgraded on multiple occasions at the Piney Point school. He last shipped on the *Cape Jacob* and is a resident of Neptune Beach, Florida.



### OSCAR GOMEZ

Brother Oscar Gomez, 67, started sailing with the SIU in 2001. He first shipped on the *Chesapeake Bay* and worked in the steward department. Brother Gomez upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions and concluded his career aboard the *Maersk Atlanta*. He makes his home in Forest Hills, New York.



### JAMES GREGORY

Brother James Gregory, 65, began his career with the Seafarers International Union in 1980. A deck department member, he first sailed aboard the *El Paso Howard Boyd*. Brother Gregory upgraded at the Piney Point school on several occasions. He last shipped on the *Gemini* and is a resident of Glennie, Michigan.



### JOHN HALE

Brother John Hale, 65, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1992 when he sailed aboard the *USNS Algol*. He upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions and worked in the steward department. Brother Hale's final vessel was the *American Liberty*. He calls Harvey, Louisiana, home.



### DARRELL HURTS

Brother Darrell Hurts, 65, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1980 and first worked aboard the *Point Julie*. He upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and shipped in the engine department. Brother Hurts concluded his career on the *Spirit*. He makes his home in Oakland, California.

### GREGORY JENKINS

Brother Gregory Jenkins, 61, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1988. He was a deck department member and first shipped with Bay Tankers Inc. Brother Jenkins upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center on several occasions. He last sailed on the *Seakay Sky* and lives in New Orleans.



### KENNETH KELLY

Brother Kenneth Kelly, 65, joined the union in 1991 and first sailed aboard the *USNS Lynch*. He was a member of the steward department and upgraded often at the Piney Point school. Brother Kelly last shipped on the *Ocean Grand* and resides in Philadelphia.



### DANIEL LOVELY

Brother Daniel Lovely, 65, donned the SIU colors in 2004 when he sailed aboard the *Overseas Washington*. He upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center and worked in the deck department. Brother Lovely concluded his career aboard the *Horizon Anchorage*. He lives in Shelton, Washington.



### PATROCINIO MAGLINTE

Brother Patrocinio Maglinte, 68, became an SIU member in 2005. He was an engine department member and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Piney Point school. Brother Maglinte's first vessel was the *Liberty Glory*; his last, the *Florida*. He makes his home in Delano, California.



### ISMAEL MANLEY

Brother Ismael Manley, 61, started sailing with the union in 1990, initially working aboard the *Independence*. He sailed in the engine department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Manley concluded his career aboard the *Alaskan Explorer*. He lives in Houston.



### DAVID MERIDA

Brother David Merida, 65, joined the union in 1982. He first shipped on the *Libra* and sailed in the engine department. Brother Merida upgraded at the union-affiliated Piney Point school on several occasions and last sailed aboard the *USNS Bellatrix*. He resides in Metairie, Louisiana.



### JAMES PIERCE

Brother James Pierce, 60, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1996. He first sailed aboard the *USNS Wyman* and worked in the deck department. Brother Pierce upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He most recently sailed aboard the *Howard Lorenzen* and makes his home in Cuthbert, Georgia.



### CHARLES POMRANING

Brother Charles Pomraning, 65, signed on with the SIU in 1982 when he sailed on the *Caguas*. He shipped in the engine department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Pomraning's final vessel was the *Motivator*. He resides in Gerrardstown, West Virginia.



### ROBERT WHITE

Brother Robert White, 60, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1996. A deck department member, he first sailed aboard the *USNS Loyal*. Brother White upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center. He most recently sailed aboard the *Cape Wrath* and settled in Norfolk, Virginia.



## INLAND

### THOMAS DICKERSON

Brother Thomas Dickerson, 58, signed on with the union in 1990. An engine department member, he sailed with Crescent Towing and Salvage for the duration of his career. Brother Dickerson resides in Franklinton, Louisiana.



### GREGORY DODDS

Brother Gregory Dodds, 71, donned the SIU colors in 2002. He was a deck department member and first worked with Crowley Towing. Brother Dodds upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He concluded his career with Crowley Puerto Rico Services and settled in Jacksonville, Florida.



### RUSSELL GIBSON

Brother Russell Gibson, 64, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1998. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center in 2001. Brother Gibson worked with G&H Towing for the duration of his career. He lives in League City, Texas.



# 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

### MARCELO ALICEA

Brother Marcelo Alicea, 54, passed away January 6. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 2003. A steward department member, Brother Alicea first sailed aboard the *Atlantic Guardian*. He most recently shipped aboard the *Maersk Durban* and resided in Brooklyn, New York.



### JOHNSON ASHUN

Brother Johnson Ashun, 61, died January 29. Sailing first aboard the *Horizon Consumer*, he became a member of the SIU in 2003. Brother Ashun shipped in the steward department. He last sailed on the *Janet Marie* and called Upland, California, home.



### JOHN BODDEN

Pensioner John Bodden, 76, passed away February 11. He began his career with the Seafarers in 1996, initially sailing with Moran Towing of Texas. Brother Bodden worked in the engine department. He last sailed on the *Seakay Spirit* before going on pension in 2018. Brother Bodden was a resident of Miami Gardens, Florida.



### CARMELO BONAFONT

Pensioner Carmelo Bonafont, 88, died February 5. Signing on with the SIU in 1961, he first shipped on the *Alcoa Pegasus*. Brother Bonafont worked in both the deck and engine departments. He last sailed with NPR Inc., and became a pensioner in 1997. Brother Bonafont lived in Yabucoa, Puerto Rico.



### CHARLES FRANKS

Pensioner Charles Franks, 68, passed away January 16. He embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1991, initially sailing aboard the *Ranger*. Brother Franks sailed in the deck department and concluded his career aboard the *Ohio*. He lived in Mobile, Alabama.



### SANDY KILLIAN

Pensioner Sandy Killian, 68, died January 20. He donned the SIU colors in 1978. A deck department member, Brother Killian first shipped on the *Philadelphia*. He concluded his career aboard the *Horizon Kodiak* and became a pensioner in 2022. Brother Killian made his home in Tacoma, Washington.



### NIEVES NUNEZ

Pensioner Nieves Nunez, 68, passed away November 1. He became a member of the SIU in 1991. Brother Nunez initially sailed aboard the *Independence*. He worked in all three departments and last shipped aboard the *Maersk Iowa*. Brother Nunez began collecting his pension in 2022 and resided in the Bronx, New York.

## JAMES OLING

Pensioner James Oling, 73, died January 7. He donned the SIU colors in 1999, initially sailing aboard the *John Paul Bobo*. Brother Oling was an engine department member and concluded his career aboard the *Burns Harbor*. He went on pension in 2017 and made his home in Oak Forest, Illinois.



## JOHN PENROSE

Pensioner John Penrose, 75, passed away March 3. He signed on with the union in 1975, initially working with Rye Marine Corporation. Brother Penrose was an engine department member. He last sailed aboard the *Freedom* before retiring in 2016. Brother Penrose resided in Plant City, Florida.



## FLOYD SELIX

Brother Floyd Selix, 95, passed away February 23. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 1952 and first sailed aboard the *Seathunder*. Brother Selix sailed in the deck department and also worked on shore gangs. He became a pensioner in 1995 and resided in Grants Pass, Oregon.



## CRAIG WALKER

Brother Craig Walker, 30, died September 26. Sailing first aboard the *Washington Express*, he donned the SIU colors in 2021. Brother Walker worked in both the steward and deck departments. He most recently shipped on the *Seakay Sky* and was a resident of Jacksonville, Florida.



## DON MICHAEL WHITE

Pensioner Don Michael White, 75, died February 22. He became a member of the union in 1978 when he sailed aboard the *Manhattan*. Brother White worked in the deck department. He last sailed aboard the *Lightning* before going on pension in 2014. Brother White lived in Sacramento, California.



## GREAT LAKES

### JAMES WERDA

Pensioner James Werda, 87, died February 18. He joined the union in 1961 and first worked with American Steamship. Brother Werda was a member of the deck department. He last sailed aboard the *Alpena* and retired in 2004. Brother Werda called Alpena, Michigan, home.



## INLAND

### TOMMY DAVIS

Pensioner Tommy Davis, 72, passed away January 28. He signed on with the SIU in 1970 when he sailed aboard the *Steel Navigator*. Brother Davis was a deck department member. He concluded his career aboard the *Dodge Island* before becoming a pensioner in 2015. Brother Davis lived in Pascagoula, Mississippi.



### SHERWOOD FOSTER

Pensioner Sherwood Foster, 79, died January 20. He embarked on his career with the union in 1969. A deck department member, Brother Foster worked with Allied Transportation for most of his career. He began collecting his pension in 2010 and resided in Bracey, Virginia.



## NMU

### HANNAH CLEMONS

Pensioner Hannah Clemons, 94, passed away January 19. Sister Clemons worked in the steward department. She last sailed aboard the *Howell Lykes*, and went on pension in 1996. Sister Clemons was a resident of Mobile, Alabama.

### BEN DRISS

Pensioner Ben Driss, 92, passed away January 28. Brother Driss last sailed aboard the *Export Patriot*. He became a pensioner in 1995 and was a resident of Silver Spring, Maryland.



### OSCAR MUNOZ

Pensioner Oscar Munoz, 78, died January 30. Brother Munoz worked in the deck department. He last shipped on the *Allison Lykes* and began collecting his pension in 2002. Brother Munoz lived in Kenner, Louisiana.

### EDMUNDO MUSTILLO

Pensioner Edmundo Mustillo, 84, passed away December 26. Brother Mustillo was a member of the deck department. He last sailed aboard the *Maersk Vermont*, and retired in 2003. Brother Mustillo made his home in North Bergen, New Jersey.



### JUAN RODRIGUEZ

Pensioner Juan Rodriguez, 81, passed away February 8. Brother Rodriguez worked in the deck department and last shipped on the *Edgar Queeny*. He became a pensioner in 1999 and settled in Sabana Hoyos, Puerto Rico.

### THEODORE RYWELSKI

Pensioner Theodore Rywelski, 79, died January 14. Brother Rywelski sailed in the engine department. He concluded his career aboard the *Cape Douglas* and began collecting his pension in 2011. Brother Rywelski lived in North Charleston, South Carolina.



# Paul Hall Center Upgrading Course Dates

Printed below are dates for courses scheduled to take place at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. The QR code connects to a web page with the latest course dates (they may differ from what's printed here, though in most cases the only changes are additions that haven't yet made it into the LOG). Seafarers are welcome to contact the admissions office with questions about upgrading courses: (301) 899-0657, [admissions@seafarers.org](mailto:admissions@seafarers.org)

Latest Course Dates



Title of Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
<b>DECK DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES</b>		
Able Seafarer - Deck	June 8	June 26
RFPNW	June 29 August 3	July 17 August 21
Water Survival	June 8	June 19
<b>ENGINE DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES</b>		
Boiler Technician (FOWT)	July 6 August 24	July 31 September 18
Marine Electrician	August 3	September 4
Marine Refrigeration Tech.	June 22	July 31
Adv. Refrig. Cont. Maint. (ARCM)	June 1 September 14	June 12 September 25
Machinist	August 10	August 28
Pumpman	August 31	September 4
Welding	June 1 July 27	June 19 August 14

<b>STEWARD DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES</b>		
Certified Chief Cook	June 22 August 31 November 9	August 28 November 6 January 15, 2027
Galley Operations	June 1 August 24 September 21	June 26 September 18 October 16
Chief Steward	September 14 December 7	October 9 January 1, 2027
Adv. Galley Operations	June 22 July 20 August 17	July 17 August 14 September 11
<b>OPEN/SAFETY UPGRADING COURSES</b>		
Basic Training Revalidation	June 15 July 10 August 10 August 14	June 15 July 10 August 10 August 14
Tanker Ship Fam. - DL	September 21	September 25
Tanker Ship Fam. - LG	September 14	September 18
Basic Training/Adv. FF Reval.	June 1 August 17 November 2	June 2 August 18 November 3

## Notice

## Upgrading Class Registration Now Available Online

Recently, the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education has unveiled a new option for mariners looking to continue improving and upgrading their skills: The class registration form is now online. Simply fill out the form with your information, check which classes you are interested in, and hit Submit. This will make the course registration process faster, more modern and easier than ever for members to use.



Please visit [www.seafarers.org/upgrading-application](http://www.seafarers.org/upgrading-application), or scan the QR code at right.

### In Their Own Words: SIU Women at Sea

*Continued from Page 11*

have been mostly very professional. It's sad to read about a fellow female sailor who has been through that unnecessary experience, because it's hard. As I'm reading through these different experiences that these women have encountered, I'm shocked.

We all deserve to work in a respectful environment. We take sexual harassment (SASH) training



Colón Del Moral poses in front signage in Piney Point. She urges everyone to "always upgrade at the Paul Hall Center."

every week, and every month we have a safety meeting. Every month, they bring us a reminder. Right now, all the posters on the ships are focused on sexual harassment. I would also like to see additional reminders about safety processes and procedures as reminders, too. Like the right position to lift a box, and other reminders to help people from getting hurt while carrying out their duties on the ship.

**Would you encourage other women to follow in your footsteps as a Seafarer. Why?**

**Colón Del Moral:** Definitely. I don't know how you guys do it, but I also really would love to do recruiting with you.

**What are some of your remaining career goals?**

**Colón Del Moral:** My goal is to become a recertified bosun. And I also want to continue encouraging other people. This job has allowed me to have economic independence, because the money is awesome. It is an opportunity to meet a lot of people, to travel the world, to educate yourself. I was always going back to Piney Point to educate myself so I could keep improving my skills and going up in the ranks. I would definitely encourage more women to join our industry.

**What's one thing that you would like to share with any women who may be interested or on the fence about starting a career in sailing?**

**Colón Del Moral:** Build a thick skin. Don't let anything get to you emotionally. People may criticize you, challenge you, or say things to hurt you. Just build a thick skin around you and focus on what you want, your goal. If you want to become a bosun, or a mate, or whatever you want to become in this industry, just focus on that and work on that. Educate yourself. Keep reading, keep learning. Don't let anybody stop you from doing what you want to do.

**This was amazing. That was my last question, unless there's anything else you want to add,**

**Colón Del Moral:** Yes, I want to thank my wonderful husband for his support and encouragement. He's an SIU pensioner. His name is Gary Cardillo. He's an old timer, and he's so, so knowledgeable. He sailed for 45 years.

**Did you guys ever sail together?**

**Colón Del Moral:** Yes, I wanted to sail with him on his last ship before retirement. His last ship was the *Horizon Enterprise*. That was awesome.

# Paul Hall Center Class Photos



**APPRENTICE WATER SURVIVAL CLASS #931** – Recently graduated: Samuel Alvarado, Jordan Beaty, Elias Carrier, Tariq Graham, Sanita Hayes, Elijah Haynes, Darin Holmes, Justin Landreneau, Alec Lumpkins, Tyler Murray, Michal Spryszynski, Matthew Swift, Noel Vindua, Jordan Vonchampion, Michaelangelo Vonchampion, Tereton Washington and Joseph Wilde.



**UA TO ABLE SEAFARER - DECK** – Above (not all are pictured): Hunter Abshire, Terrell Coleman, Garrett Giella, Jamari Gissentanner, Preston Harris, Alexander Holmes, Darren Joseph, Evan Koslofsky, Dennis Krevey Jr., Anthony Marchanti, Langston Mejia-Johnson, Andy Phouminh, Maurice Roberts Jr., Joshua Robinson, Walter Stockwell, Carl Trice, Daniel Valentine, Jacob Watson and Anton Zakoverya.



**MARINE REFRIGERATION TECH** – Graduated recently (not all are pictured): Rohmy Butler, Elhassene Elkori, Brandon Fore, Alonzo Sanz, Teon Shelton, Randy Slue, Jessica Valentin, Alexia Villaescusa, Harry Whitney IV and Ivan Kondakov.



**MACHINIST** – Graduated March 13: Jose Alicea-Sanchez, David Argo Jr., Charles Bishop, Randy Corey, Albert Dulig, Christian Fredrick, Anias Stanford, Oscar Vencer III and Michael Zabielski. Instructor Patrick Coppola is at the far right.



**GALLEY OPS** – Graduated March 13: Tonisha Barbre, Joseph Burke, Ahmed Moosa and Brandon Watts.



**GOVERNMENT VESSELS** – Graduated February 27 (not all are pictured): Alharath Ahmed, Harlan Alonzo, Maximo Bencosme, Jason Bentz, Ashanty Castillo, Rio Cuellar, Marcus Dalton, Ryan Hatch, Deshante Jackson, Erris Jackson, Rontrez Loyd, Isaac Nugen, Jasmine Pascal, Shamar Rhoden, Mary Rochez, Robert Seals III, Renita Walker, Shakisha West, Kevari Wright and Thomas Huynh.

# Paul Hall Center Class Photos



**TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (DL)** – Graduated recently: Ranease Berry, Keyshawn Bone, Jessica Edondson, Bailey Hilkey, Frank Lang, Joshua Laverdure, Marco Leguizamo, Claire Nelson, David Oliver, Alex Phillips, Evan Plyler, Jesuhan Polanco Rivera, Ajay Ray, Conner Sommerfield, Derrick Ward, Jaylen Williams and Jake Zamora.



**GALLEY OPS** – Graduated April 3 (not all are pictured): Kenneth Bailey Jr., Grace Hilgendorf-Sanchez, Mark Morante, Schehera Poole, Shaakira Scott and Shantel Sykes.



**RFPEW** – Graduated recently: Nicholas Allbritton, Simeon Dailey, Kenneth Gale, Ian Higgs, Patrick O'Malley, Jeremiah Pope, Demetria Rhue, Rory Smith and Ricardo Vasquez. Instructor Jaime Nunez is at the far right.



**CHIEF STEWARD** – Graduated recently: Maximo Bencosme, Roche Bonita, Gilma David, Agnes Gamboa, Antonio Holmes, David Johnson Jr. and Murray Stahler.



**GOVERNMENT VESSELS (UPGRADERS)** – Graduated recently: Edna Bakhos, Pauline Crespo Guillen, Kristopher Guthrie, Rudy Lopez and Jiovanny Soto.



**RFPNW** – Graduated recently: Morgan Boekhout, Kevin Castillo, Thomas Felton, Christopher Lazo, Ryan McKinnon, Abraham Quintus, Julius Rogers, Hadi Selim, Dakota Snow, Joseph Vermeulen and Tevin White.

# SEAFARERS LOG

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

## U.S. Transportation Command Thanks Personnel from SIU, Paul Hall Center

It's certainly not an everyday occurrence to host a four-star general, so it already was a big deal when the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education (PHC) welcomed U.S. Gen. Randall Reed (USAF) and others from the U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) for a March 9 tour of the Piney Point, Maryland, campus.

Making the experience even more memorable, Gen. Reed presented certificates of appreciation from the agency to four individuals who served as a cross section of both the union and the school. They are Bosun **William Lima**, Capt. **Peter Luhn**, PHC Apprentice **Kelton Greene**, and Executive Chef **Robert "RJ" Johnson**.

Lima, still an active Seafarer, sailed on the *Cape Ray* in 2014 when the vessel removed chemical weapons from Syria. Luhn sailed with the SIU for a dozen years and now works as the captain of the PHC-based training vessel *Freedom Star*. Greene, a Marine Corps veteran, is the chief bosun of his apprentice class. Johnson, a Navy veteran who also sailed with the SIU, heads the PHC's culinary program.

"We were all a little nervous but the general put us at ease," Lima said. "He joked with us and calmed us down. He still remembered the chemical-weapons mission on the *Cape Ray*, and thanked me for it."

Luhn said Reed "showed that he was interested in everyone at the school and what they do here. He just made you feel at ease to be around."

Greene stated, "It was a great experience. The general was professional and he definitely takes control of the room. I found the whole thing very interesting and worthwhile."

Johnson described the interaction as "a highlight of my career. It was kind of a full-circle moment for me. Meaning, I was a student here at the school and now am the executive chef, in charge of the very program that I graduated from."

"At the same time, I am a U.S. Navy veteran, and while in the SIU, I worked on TRANSCOM ships (via the Military Sealift Command)," Johnson added. "Meeting and talking with Gen. Reed gave me pride as a veteran and an SIU member. I found him very easy to have a conversation with. We spoke about his passion for cooking; he genuinely wanted to know about our culinary program."

Headquartered at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, TRANSCOM is self-described as "a unified, functional combatant command which provides support to the 10 other U.S. combatant commands, the military services, defense agencies and other government organizations." The Military Sealift Command is one of those organizations under TRANSCOM's supervision.



PHC Apprentice Kelton Greene, Gen. Randall Reed



Bosun William Lima, Gen. Randall Reed



SIU President David Heindel (right) welcomes Gen. Reed (left) and others from the U.S. Transportation Command to the Paul Hall Center.



Pictured from left are SIU VP George Tricker, SIU President David Heindel, Capt. Peter Luhn, Gen. Randall Reed, SIU Exec. VP Augie Tellez, and SIU Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski.



Executive Chef Robert "RJ" Johnson (displaying certificate) described meeting Gen. Randall Reed (third from right) as a career highlight. Pictured with them in Piney Point, Maryland, are SIU officials (from left) VP George Tricker, President David Heindel, Exec. VP Augie Tellez, and Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski.