

2019 Unit Adoption Award Winners

The following winners have been identified (nine awardees):

- Very Large: National Capital, Honolulu
- Large: New York, Bremerton/Olympic Peninsula
- Medium: Denver, Broward County
- Small: New Mexico, Greater Chattanooga
- Very Small: Panama City/Bay County



2019 Sea Service Unit Adoption Excellence Award Winners

[Awarded in 2020]

Extra Large Council Winners

Honolulu Council (2nd Award)

The Honolulu Council is in a major Fleet Concentration Area, in which it is impractical to adopt all sea service units in the area. But Honolulu still adopts two namesake ships (USS HAWAII and USS CHUNG-HOON), plus ten youth groups, a Marine Battalion, and eight large shore commands. As such, they hosted or supported many events that were open to all sea service unit members and/or families in the area, including:

- Donating 150 tickets to the Aloha Bowl to Navy Region Hawaii (CNRH) to distribute to deserving Sailors and their families, as well as a large cash award to a CNRH-identified Spouse of the Year, AND having them announced/recognized during the game.
- Hosting the Aloha Academy, which is a weekly event to educate incoming PCS sea service members and their spouse on topics such as OCONUS TRICARE, ocean safety, housing/VA home loans, vehicle ownership, plus Navy League involvement and sponsorship.
- Providing homecoming refreshments for all returning deployed ships, as well as dinner for the duty section on day of return, plus receptions and/or "Picnics on the Beach" for visiting warships.
- Supporting, with financial and "elbow grease" assistance, local service balls, as well as attending them in force.
- Donating complete Thanksgiving dinners to junior sea service families, plus providing financial assistance in various junior enlisted hardship situations to augment Navy Relief Society support.
- Providing food and/or refreshments for multiple sea service unit ad hoc events such as command picnics/cook-offs, awards ceremonies, graduations, pre-deployment nights, children's holiday parties, spouse events, military youth events, and for open events put-on by the Family Services Center.
- Hosting dedicated awards luncheons at which stand-out sailors from groups of commands were honored.
- Sitting as active members on the local Military Youth Advisory Council in support of all local military dependents, as well as local sea service youth groups.

National Capital Council (1st Award)

The National Capital Council directly supports 27 sea service units, including eleven ships, eight youth groups, and eight large shore commands, some of which are service headquarters. They provided significant funding of their sponsored youth groups to support a variety of activities, such as physical fitness, team building, leadership development, community volunteering, and recognition of units' outstanding members.

For their adopted ships, all in distant homeports, the council funded each unit's Family Readiness Group to support a variety of activities, such as golf, trampoline park, bowling, snowboarding/skiing, and go-cart outings, as well as family holiday parties. They also made purchases of shipboard durable items for the crews to enjoy, such as grilling equipment, audio/visual equipment, athletic gear, leadership library books, and fishing rods, as well as some DirectTV subscriptions for use by the in-port duty sections.

The National Capital Council systematically recognized outstanding Sailors, Marines, Coasties, Cadets, Midshipmen, and/or graduates of their supported units with awards and, in some cases, cash awards. They also helped their adopted units by sponsoring some of the unit's own outreach activities, such as the Navy Band's Young Artist Solo Competition, various DC-area service balls (Navy, Coast Guard, etc.), public awards ceremonies such as the Ombudsmen of the Year Luncheon, and Navy Band concerts.

The council provided strong support to their adopted USGC Headquarters throughout the year, including, during the government shutdown in which USCG active duty personnel did not receive paychecks, donating over \$6,000 to the Cards for Coasties program to help provide urgent financial assistance to junior Coasties and their families.

Large Council Winners

New York Council (1st Award)

In addition to support of local youth groups, including the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and USS NEW YORK homeported in Mayport, Fla., the New York Council provided substantial support to the extensive Coast Guard presence in the service's most active waterway system. The council supported the USCG Sector New York and several subordinate units in the area, who all endured financial hardship during the 2019 extended government shutdown.

In addition to their normal recurring support events (EPOY/EPOQ awards, etc.), the New York Council stocked and helped staff a food pantry on base during the shutdown and provided show-of-support a luncheon for 50 active duty members. The council also helped publicize the dedication of the Coasties, who were identified as "essential workers," and were even cited in a story on their local Fox affiliate, WNYW Channel 5/27. Finally, they held a breakfast in honor of the visiting training barque, USCGC Eagle, and sponsored the Coast Guard Art Program Acceptance Ceremony and Opening Reception.

The New York Council also was a major partner in the 2019 New York City Fleet Week, in particular, the Richard W. Scheuing CO/XO Welcome Reception, a CPO and Staff NCO Cruise, the Farewell Cookout, the SUNY Maritime Reception, hosting Fleet members at a NY Mets Game, and the Ships Review Brunch Cruise.

Bremerton/Olympic Peninsula Council (1st Award)

The Bremerton/Olympic Peninsula Council is also in a major Fleet Concentration Area, and conducts many activities in support of all sea service units in the area in addition to

routine support of their adopted units, namesake units (USS WASHINGTON, USS BREMERTON, and USS HENRY M JACKSON), and local youth groups.

Their largest annual events occurred around Armed Forces Day (AFD) and are scheduled around the Bremerton Armed Forces Day Parade, the longest continuously-running AFD parade in the nation. Using donations collected throughout the year, the council hosted a formal AFD Gala the evening of the parade that included senior leadership from 24 different local commands, as well as local, state, and federal VIPs. The top Sea Cadet from their adopted battalion (and their parents) was also recognized/awarded at the Gala. The night before the parade, a festive dinner was held at a traditional Pacific Northwest Native American waterfront venue to honor senior enlisted service members and spouses from various commands...129 and their spouses in 2019. Members of the council who own convertible "show cars" also drove VIPs in the parade.

Due to the proximity of Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, submarines periodically arrive for decommissioning and inactivation, and aircraft carriers arrive for major docking availabilities. The Bremerton/Olympic Peninsula Council hosted receptions for each of the arriving or visiting units, often coordinating with other NLUS councils from a ship's namesake city.

The council also holds monthly luncheons with a senior guest speaker from local commands, at which awards are cyclically presented to adopted unit Sailors, Coasties, or Marines, with a special Coast Guard emphasis in August, Navy emphasis in October, and Marine Corps emphasis in November.

Medium Council Winners

Denver Council (2nd Award)

Although located far inland, the Denver Council adopted two out-of-state afloat warships in addition to numerous local shore-based active duty and youth group units.

For USS COLORADO, the council heavily supported a crewmember namesake visit in May with itinerary development, transportation and event escort. Events included Colorado Rockies Baseball on-field "Hero of the Game" recognition with on-field coverage on the JumboTron, as well as live TV coverage by AT&T Sports Network. They also provided the submarine over \$400 in Colorado professional sports team items for deployed unit spouses' holiday socials. The council provided teak decking from the WWII Battleship, COLORADO (BB 45) that was custom-milled and installed in the submarine's Control Room. In support of the ship's first deployment overseas, the council donated to the crew \$2,600 in international phone debit cards for use overseas during port calls. The ship's activity is also briefed at every council dinner, and carried in a dedicated newsletter column.

Similarly, for USS MESA VERDE, the council supported a crewmember namesake visit to Grand Junction in May with itinerary development, transportation and event escort as

part of that city's Navy Week. Events included Grand Junction Rockies Baseball on-field "Hero of the Game" recognition with on-field coverage on the JumboTron.

In terms of broad-area events, the Denver Council hosted a gratis golf outing at the world-renowned Sanctuary Golf Course with every sea service command in the state of Colorado invited to fill the 50 slots. The event was fully-catered with breakfast, lunch, beverage service and afternoon snacks. At their May dinner, the council honored all Maritime Service Academy appointees (USNA, USCGA, USMMA) and NROTC scholarship recipients from the State of Colorado to include participation by the USNA, USCGA, and USMMA Parents Clubs.

Broward County Council (2nd Award)

The Broward County Council has a very strong adoption program that includes eight ships (three Navy & five Coast Guard), five shore commands, and seven youth groups. The Sailors/Enlisted Persons of the Quarter/Year in all of their adopted commands were recognized for their achievements with certificates of accomplishment and monetary awards. For Coast Guard units during the government shutdown, donations were collected and gas station gift cards were purchased to assist struggling unit members. Youth groups stand-outs were all recognized with Teddy Roosevelt & cash awards, on top of cash donations to the units and funding of ad hoc requests.

But the council was also active with area-wide events. They hosted an Annual Easter Egg Hunt and BBQ picnic open to all local Coast Guard units' families at no cost that included an egg hunt, a bounce house, face painting, and prizes for each child, and a free BBQ lunch for all. They also held an Annual Coast Guard Holiday Party open to all local Coast Guard unit members and their spouses at no cost. Finally, during Port Everglades Fleet Week, the council hosted a full dinner reception for all junior officers on visiting Navy and Coast Guard ships.

Small Council Winners

New Mexico Council (2nd Award)

Sitting at the northern edge of the Chihuahuan Desert, the New Mexico Council provided robust support to their two namesake submarines, USS SANTA FE and USS NEW MEXICO, 5,000 and 2,000 miles away, respectively. New Mexico also sponsored 26 sea service youth groups throughout the state, as well as units in Western Texas they picked-up from the former El Paso Council.

While several members of council traveled to Pearl Harbor to attend the USS SANTA FE Change of Command Ceremony and provided New Mexican cuisine and famous New Mexico Piñon Coffee to the reception, much of their support for both submarines was "virtual" even in 2019.

For example, for USS NEW MEXICO, they helped decorate the bulkheads of the ship's Crew's Mess with custom-sized photos of life around New Mexico and along historic Route 66. The submarine sent panel doors from the bulkheads back to the State during

a major maintenance availability and the council returned them to the ship with the photos permanently affixed.

The council coordinated with a teacher at Los Alamos Middle School in Los Alamos, NM who has two STEM classes that have themselves adopted USS NEW MEXICO. These two classes also put together a packet of letters for the crew, a wooden plaque showing numerous points of interest around New Mexico, and a stuffed bear mascot for the crew.

To help tell USS NEW MEXICO's story in its namesake state, the New Mexico Council established a long-term display at the Albuquerque Sunport (international airport) that includes a three-foot model of the ship, posters, and photos.

And now, sending New Mexico Piñon Coffee to the crews of both submarines has also become a recurring tradition coveted by the crew!

Greater Chattanooga Council (2nd Award)

The Greater Chattanooga Council again focused adoption efforts on their namesake submarine, USS TENNESSEE stationed in Kings Bay, Ga., as well as two shore commands, a Coast Guard Cutter, and two youth groups. This year, a large contingent of council members headed to Kings Bay to tour the ship, host a dinner for the ship's some of the leadership, crew and spouses from both crews, and present the ship with submarine-related reading material, some signed by the author. Crew members who attended the dinner were also given council challenge coins. After the tour, they presented the ship with a wooden Tennessee-shaped "Chattanooga" plaque to display in Crew's Mess.

Their hosting of the local 2019 Navy Ball was also remarkable in that the Ball saw record attendance (increased 70% from 2018) thanks to enhanced fund-raising efforts, and was still able to provide many high-quality door prizes.

Very Small Council Winner

Panama City/Bay County Council (1st Award)

The Panama City/Bay County Council is among our smallest councils, but packs a disproportionately huge punch in their support of the Navy's "Diving Capital of the World," six youth groups, and the Project Office Detachment for the Coast Guard's newest HERITAGE Class Offshore Patrol Cutter being built at a local commercial shipyard.

The council's extensive support activities open to all Navy and Coast Guard commands in the area, such as the Navy Ball they hosted outright, or the annual Sailor/Enlisted Person of the Year banquet, consistently enjoyed thorough media coverage that clearly depicted our mission in a positive light. Council members served on, or partnered with, numerous local military advocacy/support organizations and played a key role in charitable activities such as providing Thanksgiving meal for sea service unit members who could not go home for the holiday, STEM summer programs for 8th-10th grade

students, and providing relief (cash grants) to enlisted sea service members affected by Hurricane Michael (recipient names provided by the local Red Cross). The council alone provided a total of \$18,000 in cash grants, half of which was provided in early 2019.

In addition to routine support for their youth groups (Teddy Roosevelt Awards, support of parades, drills and awards ceremonies, guest speaker and/or drill inspector, etc.), the council came to the rescue of two of their units whose uniforms were stored in a building damaged by Hurricane Michael and weren't able to be recovered for some time. They made an ad hoc donation to the unit to help them replace the damaged uniforms.