



WELCOME TO THE COAST GUARD FOUNDATION

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN NEW ORLEANS

HONORING THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE HEARTLAND DISTRICT

FRIDAY ★ MARCH 6, 2026 ★ NEW ORLEANS

**COAST GUARD FOUNDATION
SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN NEW ORLEANS**

PROGRAM FOR THE EVENING

COCKTAIL RECEPTION

WELCOME

NATIONAL ANTHEM

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Tom Allegretti
*Chairman
Coast Guard Foundation*

2026 HONOREE

Merritt Lane
*CEO
Canal Barge Company*

DINNER

**2026 COAST GUARD FOUNDATION
AWARD PRESENTATION**

USCGC YELLOWFIN

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Susan Ludwig
*President
Coast Guard Foundation*

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

MCPOCG Heath Jones, USCG (Ret.)

SERVICE MEDLEY

Victory 6

DESSERT & DANCING RECEPTION

DINNER COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CHAIR

Nicki Candies and Cherrie Felder

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sandra Armstrong
MCPOCG Charles "Skip" Bowen,
USCG (Ret.)
Naresh Copeland
Skye Durant
MCPOCG Heath Jones, USCG (Ret.)
RADM John Nadeau, USCG (Ret.)
Clark Todd

COAST GUARD FOUNDATION
SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN NEW ORLEANS

HONOREE

MERRITT LANE
CEO, CANAL BARGE COMPANY

Merritt Lane is President and CEO of Canal Barge Company. He has served as President since 1994 and as a director of that company since 1988. He is actively involved in industry affairs, having served as Chairman of the American Waterways Operators and the Waterways Council, Inc. (the two leading national industry trade associations), and serving as a board member of the National Waterways Foundation, the U.S. Coast Guard Foundation, and the Blue Sky Maritime Coalition.



He also serves on the board of Pontchartrain Materials Company, a privately-owned company based in New Orleans; Illinois Marine Towing, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Canal Barge Company based in Lemont, Illinois; and RH Marvel Holdings, LLC. He formerly served on the Board of Directors of Hibernia Homestead Bancorp, Inc. and the board of International Shipholding Corporation; and currently serves on the Board of Directors for Hancock Whitney Bank, all publicly traded companies.

Prior to joining Canal Barge Mr. Lane worked in the Corporate Finance Division at PaineWebber, Inc. in New York City from 1983 to 1986 as a Financial Analyst and as an Associate in the Real Estate Finance Group. He graduated from the University of Virginia's McIntire School of Commerce in 1983, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree with a concentration in Finance. He currently serves on the board of the McIntire School of Commerce Foundation and is an active alumnus of the school.

Mr. Lane has been active in leadership positions with numerous civic, educational and philanthropic organizations, having served as Board Chair of Isidore Newman School, The Idea Village (a New Orleans area non-profit entrepreneurial development organization), the Baptist Community Ministries Foundation (one of the largest private foundations in Louisiana), and The Bureau of Governmental Research. He currently serves as Board Chair of The Water Institute of the Gulf; on the Executive Committees of both the Business Council of New Orleans & the River Region as well as the National World War II Museum; and on the boards of The Nature Conservancy of Louisiana and Bricolage Academy.

Mr. Lane and his wife Eleanor (Elly) are both natives of New Orleans and have three adult daughters.



2026 EVENTS SCHEDULE

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN FLORIDA

FRIDAY, APRIL 17 | 6:30 PM | MARGARITAVILLE HOLLYWOOD BEACH RESORT, HOLLYWOOD

NY/NJ SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

MONDAY, MAY 4 | 7 AM | SOUTH SHORE GOLF COURSE, STATEN ISLAND

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN SEATTLE

TUESDAY, MAY 12 | 6 PM | SEATTLE MARRIOTT WATERFRONT

WASHINGTON D.C. SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

MONDAY, MAY 18 | 7 AM | ARMY NAVY COUNTRY CLUB, FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL

TUESDAY, JUNE 9 | 6:30 PM | NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM, WASHINGTON, DC

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN HAWAII

FRIDAY, JULY 24 | 5:30 PM | HO'OKUPU CENTER, HONOLULU

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN ALASKA

TUESDAY, AUGUST 11 | 6 PM | THE HOTEL CAPTAIN COOK, ANCHORAGE

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN CALIFORNIA

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 | 6:30 PM | THE QUEEN MARY, LONG BEACH

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN NEW YORK

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 | 6 PM | THE LIGHTHOUSE AT PIER 61, NEW YORK CITY

SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN TEXAS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12 | 6 PM | MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOUSTON

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [COASTGUARDFOUNDATION.ORG/EVENTS](https://coastguardfoundation.org/events)

**COAST GUARD FOUNDATION
SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN NEW ORLEANS**

AWARDEE

USCGC YELLOWFIN

The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter *Yellowfin* are commended for their exceptional professionalism and seamanship in the execution of a life-saving rescue operation on February 13, 2025, approximately 40 miles offshore from Caillou Bay, Louisiana.

At approximately 08:30 a.m., the Coast Guard's Heartland District Command Center received a satellite distress alert transmitted by the Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) of the fishing vessel *Anthony*. The vessel was caught in deteriorating sea conditions driven by an advancing cold front, leaving three mariners fighting for their lives in the open waters of the Gulf.

With no time to spare, watch standers immediately broadcast an urgent marine information broadcast and diverted the Coast Guard Cutter *Yellowfin* to the scene at best possible speed. A Coast Guard Aviation Training Center Mobile HC-144B Ocean Sentry airplane also diverted locating a life raft in the vicinity of the partially submerged and wave-battered fishing vessel.

As the *Yellowfin* closed on the scene, the crew could see the situation was perilous. The fishing vessel lay wallowing in the swells, pummeled by the seas, its hull barely visible above the water's surface.

The three surviving fishermen, cold and exhausted, had made it into their life raft but had been exposed to the harsh elements of the open Gulf for several hours. One survivor appeared frantically waving his arms.



Under challenging conditions, with heavy seas making an approach difficult, the crew of the *Yellowfin* came alongside the life raft with precision and calm professionalism. The crew's training, discipline, and readiness were evident in every action taken — from the careful maneuvering of the cutter to the recovery of each survivor from the raft.

All three fishermen were brought aboard the *Yellowfin* without injury and were transported safely to shore.

The actions of the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter *Yellowfin* on February 13, 2025, are an inspiration to all who wear the uniform of the United States Coast Guard.

COAST GUARD FOUNDATION SALUTE TO THE U.S. COAST GUARD IN NEW ORLEANS

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TowWorks
Veterans United Home Loans

MEET SOME OF OUR

HEARTLAND DISTRICT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



I EMMA PIPPIN
DAPHNE, ALABAMA

SOPHOMORE, University of South Alabama, Radiologic Sciences

COAST GUARD PARENT:
Petty Officer 1st Class
Jeremy Pippin

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: A career in radiation therapy

“I am incredibly honored and grateful to be selected as a recipient of the Coast Guard Foundation Hubbard Broadcasting scholarship. Thank you for investing in my future and supporting my educational journey. Your support motivates me to work even harder and carry forward the values of service, dedication, and resilience in both my professional and personal life.”



I AUSTIN JACKSON
MADISONVILLE, LOUISIANA

SOPHOMORE, Mississippi State University, Mechanical Engineering

COAST GUARD PARENT:
Retired Coast Guard veteran
Christopher Jackson

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE:
Design cars for Ford or Chevrolet

“As a child of a veteran and a teacher, this scholarship is helping minimize student loans and keep me out of debt. This will help me on my journey to becoming a mechanical engineer.”



I CASSIDY SEGELKEN
LEAGUE CITY, TEXAS

COAST GUARD PARENT:
Retired Coast Guard veteran
William Segelken

SENIOR, Sam Houston State University, Criminal Justice and Psychology

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: A career with Child Protective Services and The Department of Family and Protective Services

“Thank you so much for the opportunity to be a Red Stripe Scholarship recipient! This scholarship will help me complete my last year at Sam Houston State University to earn two bachelor’s degrees in criminal justice and psychology. Thank you for helping make my life and career goals possible, starting with my education!”



I JOSEPH FRANZ
HOUMA, LOUISIANA

SOPHOMORE, Baylor University, Mechanical Engineering

COAST GUARD PARENT:
Captain Jason Franz

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: Serve in the Air Force as a Test Pilot

“In the short term, this will help me achieve a mechanical engineering degree and long term, will be critical to my aspirations of becoming an Air Force test pilot.”



I JESSIE DLABAJ
HIXSON, TENNESSEE

SENIOR, Clemson University, Mechanical Engineering

COAST GUARD PARENT:
Chief Petty Officer Nathan Dlabaj

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: A position with an infrastructure consulting and engineering firm

“I am incredibly honored to have been chosen as a Coast Guard Foundation Buttrick Scholarship recipient! This is my fourth year receiving this scholarship, and it has had a tremendous impact on my education. When I began college, my main goal was to graduate debt-free. I’m so proud to say that I’m on track to achieve that goal and this scholarship is a major reason why.”



COAST GUARD FOUNDATION SUPPORT FOR THE COAST GUARD

YOUR IMPACT IN 2025

In 2025, the Coast Guard Foundation supported Coast Guard members and families across a range of areas, from emergency and tragedy assistance to education, professional development, and morale and wellness programs.

■ EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION

Education remained a cornerstone of the Foundation's work. In 2025, \$925,000 in scholarships were awarded to 255 Coast Guard dependent children, with individual awards ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000. Funding supported students pursuing college degrees as well as technical and trade school pathways, reducing financial stress and allowing students to focus on academic and career goals.

Children of Fallen Heroes received additional, sustained support. Eleven surviving children were awarded Fallen Heroes scholarships and booster grants, ensuring access to enrichment opportunities such as after-school and summer programs, and scholarships that cover 100% of tuition and expenses for college and trade school at the institution of their choice.

At the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, the Foundation supported academic and athletic programs, waterfront activities, and a fueling station for student-athletes. Partnerships with Academy leadership also enabled projects that reinforced leadership development and the service's core values. Through the generosity of a Coast Guard Foundation donor, a capable power boat was donated to support cadet maritime training and sailing programs.

The Foundation invested in professional growth across the service. Workforce development programs provided classes and materials to 349 Coast Guard members pursuing captains' licenses and professional credentials, supporting both mission readiness and transitions to civilian careers. An additional 133 grants helped members offset the cost of off-duty education.

223 spouses received \$1,000 and \$2,000 grants to pursue higher education, professional development, and earn professional certifications; these investments strengthened household stability and expanded long-term career opportunities.

The Foundation also supported Coast Guard K9 teams, funding care for working service dogs and specialized training for handlers, recognizing the operational importance of these teams and the unique bond they share.

■ BUILDING MORALE AND WELLNESS

To support Coast Guard families, the Foundation awarded more than \$416,000 in youth enrichment grants to 921 Coast Guard children, helping fund summer camps and access to technology for online learning and enrichment. These opportunities promoted confidence, skill-building, and social connection during the summer break.

Across the service, the Foundation invested more than \$1.4 million in 247 national morale and wellness projects, supporting physical and mental health for members stationed at sea and in remote locations. Community-building events such as Coast Guard Day celebrations and holiday gatherings strengthened unit cohesion and family support networks.

The Foundation also played a key role in celebrating service milestones. Partnerships with local commissioning committees helped bring the commissioning ceremonies of four new fast response cutters to fruition. Each cutter received a grant to establish a morale

account, and additional funding supported morale projects across the fast response cutter fleet.

In partnership with the Coast Guard Chaplain's office, the Foundation supported a national effort to strengthen relationships and resilience across the service. In 2025, the Foundation funded 58 chaplain-led programs that reached more than 7,100 Coast Guard members and family members that created meaningful moments of connection, reflection, and support at units around the country. From suicide prevention training and marriage enrichment to unit-based resiliency experiences and spiritual fitness events, these programs met people where they serve and live.

■ SUPPORT DURING TIMES OF CRISIS AND LOSS

As natural disasters affected Coast Guard communities across the country, the Foundation provided \$40,000 in emergency relief to 17 Coast Guard members and their families whose homes were damaged or destroyed by flooding and wildfires. Disasters included a glacial dam burst in Juneau, flooding in the Pacific Northwest, and wildfires in California.

The Foundation provided tragedy assistance to 21 Coast Guard families following the death of a Coast Guard member or immediate family member. Members who were critically injured or managing chronic illness also received financial support to aid in recovery, and long-term assistance continued for families of Fallen Heroes to honor their service and sacrifice.

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Photo by: Cpt. Justin Brummel, M/V Don Boling



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Honoree **Merritt Lane**, CEO, Canal Barge Company



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COAST GUARD FOUNDATION



For more than 55 years, the Coast Guard Foundation has been a vital partner of the U.S. Coast Guard, assisting the service and its members through the toughest challenges confronting our heroes and their families.

The Foundation's work strengthens the entire community. Through close collaboration with Coast Guard leadership, our investments support families, bolster unit morale, honor the Coast Guard's service, and more.

Since our founding in 1969, we've provided more than \$122 million in services to Coast Guard members and their families. The Coast Guard Foundation ensures Coast Guard members are always ready, and their families are taken care of while their loved ones serve our country.

Thanks to our generous partners, the Coast Guard Foundation has:

- Funded \$54 million in education initiatives, helping thousands within the Coast Guard community — members, spouses, and children — achieve their dreams of higher education
- Awarded more than 20,450 grants to Coast Guard members for college tuition or professional training, enhancing their duties and setting them up for success after their service ends
- Invested \$32 million in fitness and wellness services for Coast Guard members' physical and mental health
- Provided \$6.2 million in direct support for families who have suffered the tragic loss of a loved one or needed critical support during natural disasters and emergencies

The brave members of the Coast Guard sacrifice so much to serve our nation. The Coast Guard Foundation is committed to providing them and their families the resources they need to build resilience throughout their lives when it's needed most.

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