

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



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Pacific Tactical Law
Enforcement Team

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1750
23 January 2014

MEMORANDUM

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From: A. H. Gomez, CDR
CG PACTACLET

Reply to W. L. Arritt, LCDR
Attn of: (619) 524-4452

To: COMDT (CG-00B)
Thru: CG LANTAREA (LANT-00)

Subj: 2013 WANDA ALLEN-YEAROUT OMBUDSMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD
NOMINATION

Ref: (a) 2013 Wanda Allen-Yearout Ombudsman of the Year Award Solicitation,
ALCOAST 557/13

1. Mrs. Sonya McGough has my strongest recommendation as the 2013 Wanda Allen-Yearout Ombudsman of the Year Award nominee. She provided essential work-life support, selfless service, and dedication to Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team's (PACTACLET) 126 service members and their families. Mrs. McGough supported families during 19 Combating Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC) deployments in the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean operational theaters and 60 assignment year transfers. Mrs. McGough always demonstrated effective lines of communication, provided timely and relevant support services, and promptly addressed and resolved all work-life concerns for PACTACLET's families.

2. Mrs. McGough demonstrated the highest standards of professionalism and confidentiality for PACTACLET's families. Specifically, she provided exemplary support for a newly reported First Class Petty Officer severely injured during a training evolution and his family. Immediately following his injury, the Petty Officer was hospitalized in an intensive care unit (ICU) for 20 days and was immobile due to an infused halo neck brace for 75 additional days. Moreover, the Petty Officer, his seven-month pregnant wife, and two-year old child had just transferred to San Diego County, California. Without hesitation, Mrs. McGough sprang into action and admirably executed her Ombudsman duties. She immediately contacted the Petty Officer's spouse, addressed her critical family needs, provided support service contact information, and communicated all the family's needs and concerns to PACTACLET's Command Cadre, including daily updates to the Command Senior Chief. Mrs. McGough arranged transportation, meals, lodging, and childcare opportunities so that the Petty Officer's spouse could stay close to her husband in the ICU. The spouse made numerous trips to and from the hospital, a two hour round trip, for a 24 day period impacting the family's finances. Mrs. McGough identified the Coast Guard Law Enforcement Association and other not-for-profit resources to mitigate gasoline, lodging and travel costs. Additionally, she educated and assisted the family in filing for Traumatic Injury Protection (TSGLI), a rider to Service Group Life Insurance which resulted in a \$25,000 benefit received. During and after the Petty Officer's hospitalization, Mrs. McGough developed a meal plan for 40 days allowing home cooked hot meals to be delivered from PACTACLET's active duty members and spouses. The meals ensured healthy nutrition for the Petty Officer's family and allowed the spouse to attend her husband's medical appointments, surgeries, and physical therapy rehabilitation sessions.

ENCLOSURE (5)

Demonstrating true leadership and unwavering devotion to duty, Mrs. McGough volunteered alongside PACTACLET service members for a 24 hour hospital watch rotation, providing *esprit de corps* and emotional support for the family. Mrs. McGough epitomized a positive role model for unit members, families, and all Coast Guard Ombudsmen.

3. Mrs. McGough enhanced communications between the command and its families by identifying unit needs for support services and providing appropriate referral services to address family concerns. She recommended to the command, then coordinated the first "All Hands" meeting for new families and service members that transferred into the unit, during which she answered all questions and concerns family members had regarding PACTACLET's support services. She provided detailed quarterly newsletters and routine informational emails to dependents. The newsletters provided extensive support services and contact information in the greater San Diego area, as well as highlighted sexual assault awareness and volunteer opportunities at a women escaping domestic violence shelter. She highlighted the "Back to School Brigade," a service provided by Operation Homefront to ensure children have required books and school supplies for the upcoming school year. The information she provided on the child care subsidy program, support services programs, and retail military discounts assisted dependent families by providing cost efficient options to shop during austere financial times and aid their personal financial planning and monthly budgets.

4. Mrs. McGough facilitated and promoted a healthy sense of community among Coast Guard members and their families in the San Diego area. She established a strong relationship with the local San Diego United Service Organization (USO), which provided local Coast Guard members the opportunity to meet high profile celebrities including Gary Sinise and others through various sponsored events. She coordinated attendance to San Diego State University athletic events, Padre baseball games, and the National University Holiday Bowl. Mrs. McGough encouraged and promoted unit morale functions by "passing the word" and maximizing dependent participation. Additionally, she was formally recognized and attended the San Diego joint-service Ombudsman Appreciation Ceremony and luncheon.

5. In 2013, Mrs. McGough's high performance and dedication to PACTACLET and the Coast Guard was exceptional. She performed her Ombudsman duties by maintaining the privacy of families, expanded available information on support services, and never expected any special recognition for herself. While PACTACLET members were deployed on Coast Guard, U.S. Navy and Allied assets on the high seas, Mrs. McGough provided critical family service information, support, and programs to aid them during their service members' absence. Selecting her for the 2013 Wanda Allen-Yearout Ombudsman of the Year Award would highlight the accomplishments of a superb command representative while solidifying the emphasis of family within the Coast Guard.

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