



# U.S. COAST GUARD



## Homeland Security

### Flag Voice 190

#### Quick Links

#### Human Resources Home

#### Be a Part of the Coast Guard:

- »»Military Careers
- »»Civilian Opportunities
- »»Learn about the Reserve
- »»Coast Guard Academy

#### Biography of the Assistant Commandant for Human Resources

- »»Flag Voice

#### Future Force

### COAST GUARD MUTUAL ASSISTANCE - PULLING TOGETHER!

As we come to the time of year when we once again ask for your support of Coast Guard Mutual Assistance (CGMA), it is appropriate to remind everyone of the valuable services CGMA provides to shipmates and coworkers as well as the Coast Guard itself.

CGMA is truly the Coast Guard's own assistance society. Originally established in 1924, it has a long history of providing financial aid to the Coast Guard family. Frequently, there is no other place for our members to turn. Since confidentiality is a tenant of CGMA, many are not aware of the critical "safety net" CGMA provides our people each year or the scope of assistance provided.

#### Coast Guard People Helping Coast Guard People:

Did you know that on a typical day, your CGMA provides over \$26,000 of assistance to 28 members of the CG family? Or, that on average, 1 in 6 active duty members, 1 in 22 civilian employees and 1 in 25 Reservists received some type of loan or grant assistance from CGMA in 2002.

Last year alone, close to 7,000 loans and grants were provided totaling in excess of \$6.5 million. Over the past 5 years, CGMA provided almost \$30 million in loans, almost \$1.8 million in personal grants, over \$1.9 million in Supplemental Education Grants, and almost \$1.5 million in regular Education Grants.

The mission of CGMA is to promote financial stability and general well being within the Coast Guard community through interest free loans, grants, and confidential financial counseling, with an objective of financial stability in families. Education assistance includes the popular Supplemental Education Grant (SEG) and the Federal Stafford/ PLUS Loan Origination Fee Refund.

Along with providing a vital financial "safety net" for families and individuals, CGMA fosters high morale, encourages a sense of loyalty and minimizes the impact of financial crises on members' ability to perform their duties and pursue a successful Coast Guard career.

#### A Matter for Concern:

Unfortunately, there is sometimes a lack of understanding about the need for continued and sustained support to CGMA. Consider these trends:

The total assistance provided has climbed from about \$4M to a high of \$7.5M in just ten years.

Our outstanding loan balance more than doubled from \$2M to more than \$5M in the same ten years.

CGMA's entire net worth turns over about every 20 months, far exceeding the turnover rate of its sister military assistance societies.

Yet, Campaign contributions fell off last year to \$1.23 million from \$1.25 million in 2001. The number of members of Team Coast Guard that contributed to CGMA also fell off even though all components of our workforce grew.

### **Pulling Together to Ensure Success:**

To meet the continued challenge, CGMA depends on the active participation of people throughout the Coast Guard community. That includes the diligent efforts of over 400 CGMA Regional Directors, Representatives and Assistants Representatives Coast Guard-wide in conducting the day-to-day business of providing assistance to individuals and families in need. It also includes the support of a small staff at CGMA Headquarters, working hard to ensure that systems are in place and running smoothly so that contributions are used effectively and efficiently.

But ultimately, CGMA's success rests on generous contributions from men and women throughout the Coast Guard family. Without your faithful contributions, CGMA would be unable to meet the needs that continue to arise from year to year. Let's all "pull together" to make sure CGMA continues to be a vital force for good within the Coast Guard community.

### **How to give:**

CGMA makes its formal appeal only once a year during the period 1 March through 30 April.

Please be on the lookout for your CGMA key worker and give generously during this campaign season, using the contribution forms they provide. Contributions may be made by allotment, check or money order (payable to "CGMA"), or by credit card. Contributions are always welcome. If you miss your key worker, you can still contribute. Forms and directions are available on the CGMA Web site at [www.cgmahq.org](http://www.cgmahq.org).

For more information about CGMA or for assistance contact the nearest CGMA Representative, visit the CGMA Web site or call CGMA Headquarters at 1-800-881-2462 or 202-439-6621.

If you have any suggestions on how we can improve the campaign or eliminate any misperceptions some members may have concerning CGMA, please let us know. I sincerely appreciate your continued interest and support!

**Through CGMA we can continue a proud tradition of Coast Guard People Helping Coast Guard People.**

Regards,

*RADM Kenneth T. Venuto*  
Ken Venuto

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