

# The Leadership News

A quarterly newsletter on leadership issues in the Coast Guard • Summer/Fall 2009 • Issue 39

## Fit or Fail?

Coast Guard adopts BMI criteria, pg. 6

Plus:  
USCG First Diversity Round Table \* Advancement Day



Office of Leadership and  
Professional Development  
(CG-133)

### Staff

Office Chief  
CAPT Cameron Naron

Assistant to Office Chief  
Tina Barnes

Deputy Office Chief  
Alice Fleming

Officer Leadership Development  
LCDR Charlotte Pittman

Editor/Marketing Analyst  
Veronique Freeman

Funds Manager  
CWO4 Jorge Cortes

CWO Professional Development  
CWO2 Johnny Garcia

Enlisted PME Program Manager  
HSCS Catherine Seybold

Leadership Awards/ECL Program  
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Mentoring Program/ULDP Pro-  
gram Manager  
Michael Maher

Leadership "C" Schools Manager  
Darlene Murphy

"C" Schools Funds Manager  
Annette Ambrosio

## On the cover

SAN DIEGO -- Members of the Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team complete a physical fitness test comprised of running, swimming, pushups, pullups and situps. U.S. Coast Guard by PA1 Anastasia Devlin.



This publication is *yours!* We seek articles on leadership issues and best practices. Please contact Veronique.Freeman@uscg.mil or 202-475-5514 for more info and details

The Leadership News is published quarterly. Contents are unofficial and not authority for action. Views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Homeland Security or the Coast Guard.

# Editor's View

Greetings! I am both excited and honored to come aboard and support the Office of Leadership and Professional Development (CG-133) as the new editor for *The Leadership News*. When I think of leader, I think of someone who operates on a daily basis 'by example'. Through effective communication and a core understanding of integrity, respect, and understanding others, they are able to guide most any mission, vision, or dream.

This and every edition of *The Leadership News* is filled to the brim with stories, perspectives, history, and news that fall in line with the true meaning of leadership and professional development. We hope that all of the Department of Homeland Security can benefit from the stories this publication provides at every level.

To learn more about professional development opportunities for our workforce be sure to visit: [www.uscg.mil/leadership](http://www.uscg.mil/leadership). Come, learn, teach--grow. -Veronique Freeman



## WELCOME

On 01 MAY 09, the Office of Leadership and Professional Development (CG-133) welcomed our new Office Chief, **CAPT Cameron Naron**, and said farewell to our outgoing Office Chief, CAPT William Milne. We are happy that we will have the opportunity to continue working with CAPT Milne in his new assignment as Commanding Officer of Training Center Yorktown.

CAPT Naron joins us from his previous Coast Guard Headquarters assignment in the Office of Law Enforcement (CG-531). He graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy in 1988 and has spent over 11 years of his 21 year Coast Guard career in afloat assignments. He has served as Executive Officer of USCGC CUSHING (WPB 1321) and USCGC CAMPBELL (WMEC 909) and as Commanding Officer of USCGC KEY BISCAYNE (WPB 1339) and USCGC CONFIDENCE (WMEC 619).

In his past staff assignments CAPT Naron served as Legislative Fellow on the staff of Senator Daniel Inouye, of Hawaii; as the National Security Cutter Sponsor Representative within the Office of Cutter Forces; as Director of Policy and Programs for the DHS Under Secretary of Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection; and as the Seventeenth District Command Center Senior Controller. He also previously served as the Eighth District Assistant Director of Boating Safety; as Coast Guard Liaison and Maritime Advisor to the DHS Assistant Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis; and he served TAD for two months in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina.

CAPT Naron is a native of Portland, Oregon and currently lives in Montclair, Virginia with his wife and three children.



# A Day in the Rating Program

**LCDR Darcie Cunningham**  
**Logistics Department Head**  
**Commanding Officer, Military Personnel**  
**Sector Northern New England**

Upon my arrival to the Sector, I considered ways of connecting with my crew – in a way that I could not only gain an appreciation for their daily efforts to sustain operational readiness, but to also SHOW them how much I value those efforts. My concept evolved into a “Day in the Rating” program. My guidelines to the crew included:

- Spend a full day working with each of Logistics’ seven ratings, being there strictly in a training capacity.
- Emphasize I was NOT evaluating their

performance. My experience would help me to articulate to Senior Leadership the challenges everyone faces with respect to their daily duties; gain a better appreciation for what everyone does; and be more informed with respect to each rating’s responsibilities when it comes to approving enlisted marks.

- At the Petty Officers’ disposal for the entire day, help with whatever they need.
- Days at the disposal of a Petty Officer, I would be officially ‘out of the office’, so that I can focus completely on the rating.
- Follow every day with a summary of what I learned and send to the entire Department.

Example Summary:

*Good afternoon everyone!*

*Spent today working with our Electricians Mates (EMs) here and got great exposure to several facets of what they do... EMs, as you would naturally suspect, do hazardous work - and I didn't realize how difficult just getting through EM A-school would entail: the mathematics - advanced calculus, electrical theory, etc. This in itself would scare me off! And looking at an electrical schematic is probably the most confusing sketch I've had to read yet...*

*EMs are great at juggling all the normal maintenance while being responsive to CASREPs and any other systems emergencies...they consistently stress safety and working in pairs (I got busted a few times for misusing a ladder, touching a circuit breaker panel incorrectly,*

*and even putting light bulbs in a proximity too close to the heater! ). They were tough!! I was a lousy EM3 today...and are all very knowledgeable in what they do...I was very impressed!*

This experience afforded me an incredible education on the tireless efforts each member here executes on a daily basis. I've gotten to know the crew on a more personal level and learned of career aspirations, challenges and true dedication. Receiving feedback such as, “In my 30 years as an enlisted member, I've never seen an officer willing to take the time to really learn what the crew does”, was a proven testament that this was a valuable endeavor. Although I dedicated entire days to this, the camaraderie and understanding I obtained more than outweighed the benefits of keeping up with my inbox.

Those enlisted members I worked with trained me with a sense of pride in knowing more than “the boss” in their specialty; bringing our two worlds to a more level playing field with the “elimination of intimidation”. Showing you're willing to roll your sleeves up to experience their world of work takes senior managers into a realm that communicates we're all here with one common goal – to serve with Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty.

**Leadership competencies addressed:** *Self Awareness & Learning; Aligning Values; Influencing Others*



## Team Building!!!

Leadership and Professional Development-LPD “Special Forces”, Team **CG-133**, headed out for a team building outing to a Nationals vs. Astros game on May 4th! Team Building is a process that builds and develops shared goals, interdependence, trust and commitment, and accountability among team members and designed to improve team members problem-solving skills.





The Most Profound Words  
You'll Hear on the First Day of Your Advancement

**A former Commanding Officer's thoughts on the meaning of the advancement certificate**

*YORKTOWN, Va. - Graduates of the Coast Guard Intelligence Specialist "A" School class await their advancement to Intelligence Specialist 3rd Class at their graduation ceremony at Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown, Va., This class was the first to graduate from "A" school in the new Intelligence Specialist rate.*

**LCDR Mike DaPonte**  
**Chief of the Contingency Planning**  
**and Force Readiness Division**  
**Sector Baltimore**

I'll be the first to admit, the first few times I stood before my commanding officer as my Advancement Certificate was read, I did not pay much attention to what was being said. I was likely daydreaming about all the things I could do with my pay raise or the prestige my new collar devices should bring me. As far as I was concerned, my number was finally up on the enlisted personnel advancement announcement message and I was getting what was due to me. It was not until I had the opportunity to read the certificate as a commanding officer, in front of all hands and an anxiously awaiting shipmate that I began to realize just how important and eloquent the Advancement Certificate really is. The Advancement Certificate is packed with tradition and nostalgia that begs our attention.

The Advancement Certificate is not unique to the Coast Guard; the same script is used by the other Armed Forces and their reserve components. The words we hear are the same words heard by all the petty officers and non-commissioned officers of our sister services that went before us. Think about that connection to our past – Coast Guard heroes like Douglas Munro and Bernie Webber had the same words read to them. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines of the Greatest Generation heard them. Maybe you joined the service to follow in the footsteps of one of your parents, or a distant relative... they heard the same words. These lines have been recited for decades, on board Navy and Coast Guard ships, in combat zones, and military installations around the world. Talk about honor!

*"To all who shall see these presents..."*

The very first words of the advancement certificate tell you that something special is coming. We don't talk like that on a daily basis. Hoply Yeaton's commissioning certificate had a variation of that line.

*"Know Ye, that reposing special trust and confidence in the fidelity and abilities of ...I do appoint (him or her) a...in the United States Coast Guard to rank as such from the first day of (year)".*

These are perhaps the most important words you will hear on the day of your advancement. The certificate is signed by the commanding officer and it is read as if he or she is speaking. What this sentence is saying is, "because I have special trust and confidence in your fidelity and abilities, I'm going to advance you to the next higher pay grade." We're not talking just any old trust. It's a "special trust." Webster's Dictionary defines fidelity as "strict observance of promises, duties, etc.; loyalty; adherence to fact or detail". So your commanding officer has confidence that you will continue to live up to your oath of enlistment, Coast Guard Regulations, and all the other policies and procedures that define our Service. You proved yourself devoted to your duty.

If it takes time to earn someone's plain old regular trust, it must take even longer to earn someone's special trust. That level of trust takes more time to gain and, understandably, very little time to lose. You earn it by doing your job and doing it consistently well – over time. Compromise that trust and you'll find yourself on the wrong side of the green tablecloth and making an unexpected trip to the tailor shop.

*"This appointee will therefore carefully and diligently discharge the duties of the grade to which appointed by doing and performing all manner of things thereunto pertaining."*

Your commanding officer is now charging you to maintain this special trust and confidence. Know your rating, pay attention to what you do, and do it well.

*"And I do strictly charge and require all personnel of lesser grade to render obedience to appropriate orders".*

There is a reason why advancement ceremonies are performed in front of all hands. This line puts everyone on notice that you have the authority to give orders to subordinates, and expect those orders to be carried out. The certificate is read by someone with authority, who sets expectations: "from this point on, this person before me has my authority to give orders and if you are junior, I expect you to do what you are told to do." Never let your power go to your head. The orders you give must be consistent with your pay grade, the good order and discipline of the unit and be necessary for mission execution.

This appointee is to observe and follow such orders and directions as may be given from time to time by Superiors acting according to the rules and articles governing the discipline of the Armed Forces of the United States of America. Just as you should expect subordinates to carry out your lawful orders, you are always expected to carry out the orders that are handed down to you. All good leaders have to remain good followers.

*"Given under my hand at... this ...day of... in the year of our Lord"*

There it is. Your commanding officer's John Hancock. Congratulations! You're now advanced with a new set of collar devices. What makes your advancement day so special? Besides the pay raise and feeling a little taller, your advancement marks the fact that you are recognized for having the special trust and confidence of your commanding officer. You worked hard to earn that trust, and the higher you go in the Service, the harder you need to work to keep that special trust and confidence. You are no longer the person you were the day before your advancement. Your commanding officer is insisting on more. You've earned that special trust and confidence - keep it so!

**Leadership Competencies addressed:** Aligning Values, Followership, Personal Conduct.



# Fit 0

**Story by Veronique Freeman  
Headquarters (CG-133)**

On 01 October 2009, the U.S. Coast Guard will implement the adoption of a new Maximum Allowable Weight (MAW) standard based on Body Mass Index (BMI). The Maximum Allowable Body Fat (MABF) percentage standard will be reduced by one percentage point, as well, for all Coast Guard personnel regardless of age or gender. To better understand where we are going with this new BMI standard and why, we must first understand how we got here. The Coast Guard Weight and Body Fat Standards program, since inception (1985, revised in 2004 to emphasize health and physical fitness), has required that *all* military personnel (active duty, reserve, Public Health Service Officers, and Naval Chaplains detailed to Coast Guard) develop a basic fitness plan.

Additionally, military personnel are *not* to exceed their MAW and/or MABF in order to be capable of meeting the organization's operational needs, and be fit for full duty with appearance reflecting credit on self, Coast Guard, and the United States of America. Within the current Weight and Body Fat Standards program, the MAW is measured semi-annually (October and April) and determinations are made using weight, height and frame size. While there are two semi-annual weigh-ins, those attending residential training are also required

to be weighed-in thirty (30) days prior to course convening date (for all other weigh-in requirements refer to COMDTINST M1020.8 (series) for detailed information). Weight determination is pretty simple-step on the scale; however, frame size determination is slightly more complex, measuring height and wrist. Should military personnel exceed their MAW, then determination is made using MABF percentage. Body fat percentage calculations are based on a series of measurements: for men the neck and abdominals; for women the neck, waist and buttocks.

The decision to adopt a MAW standard based on BMI comes as a result of the nation's medical community being unable to agree that wrist measurement can be a good indicator for appropriate health and weight. BMI is recognized by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as one of the premiere methods for assessment of obesity. Your BMI is a number calculated from weight and height. It supplies a dependable screen for weight categories that could lead to health risks and is a good body fat indicator. A BMI of 25 or greater is considered overweight; however the Coast Guard is adopting a BMI standard of 27.5 or greater as a buffer in consideration of weight attributed to muscle mass. Command Master Chief Kevin Isherwood feels it ultimately comes down to body fat, he

states, "If I had my way, we'd weigh no one and measure everyone". According to Master Chief Isherwood, there is no such thing as unhealthy weight. A person can ultimately exceed their MAW but have very little body fat.

So, what does this all mean? Essentially, this means Coast Guard members will continue to be held accountable for the Weight and Body Fat Standard that was set-forth. In doing so, those fearful that they may not make weight should begin taking the necessary steps now toward achieving a healthier lifestyle; and superiors should assist and support where needed as true leaders are expected to. Coast Guard service members are offered a variety of resources to get fit that include, but are not limited to: dietary visits, a health promotion coordinator in every unit, and a health promotion manager in every district. Currently about 82% (roughly 40,684) of the Coast Guard population are within their MAW and 18% (roughly 8,700) have exceeded their MAW; more than half of those (roughly 5,300) also exceeded the MABF percentage (figures as cited by Maintenance and Logistics Command Pacific Health & Safety Division). According to Master Chief Isherwood, "The health risks associated with unhealthy body fat must be considered We (USCG) care, even if you don't".

# r Fail?

*“We want you to change your lifestyle and do the right thing; if not for you, do it for your family”*  
- Master Chief Kevin Isherwood

The Coast Guard does *not* want to send anyone home.

So, if a member doesn't make weight, but is given the resources (dietary consultation, 2 additional weigh-ins, etc.) to do so, then why are members still failing and being sent home? Some feel that standards are just that—standards and must be abided by; while others feel such fitness standards/expectations do not reflect the reality of individual lives, nor do they reflect one's ability toward service contributions. What about a Captain who served 20 years and was never into fitness? Is he now expected to become a fitness guru? What about a service member dealing with a multitude of issues: disrupted home life, finances, and work? Fitness is more than likely the last thing on his/her mind and being discharged as a result of a fitness discrepancy could potentially send them further down an already uneasy path. Alternatively, how about the service member who grew up with an unfit and unhealthy family, who just doesn't know any better because he was never taught?

The answer is clear. The system rules are imbedded and weight standards set-forth. However, those failing these weight expectations due to poor circumstance and/or choices can change. Yes, it will be a chal-

lenge, but it all begins with a clearer understanding of health in general; not just attempting to respond to an action that must be executed, despite how harsh or merciless it may seem. Knowledge is power.

The health risks associated with unhealthy weight include, but are not limited to: heart disease and stroke, type two (2) diabetes, gallbladder disease, and even sleep apnea. Did you know 3,500 calories is equal to one (1) lb.? Or that taking in too few calories can also cause you to be overweight? Some simple steps a person can take toward a more fit life include:

- Eat breakfast every morning
- Keep a 'food diary' to better keep track of your caloric intake
- Understand the calories you put in, must also be put out
- Walk at least 45min-1 hour per day
- Attempt to get a group of friends/shipmates together for motivation
- Eat five (5) to six (6) small meals throughout the day; eat many "mini" meals
- Remember baby steps—nothing happens over night

Proper health does not begin and end with weight. Smoking, drinking alcohol, drugs—*all* are contributors to an unhealthy lifestyle.

The last and probably most vital component to definitive fitness and good health is leadership. Leadership of self, and leadership of others. One of the primary leadership competencies is Leading Self: Health and Well-being. A portion of this competency states, "Leaders encourage others to develop personal programs including physical, mental and spiritual well-being". Whether you are an entry, mid-level manager, on up to Executive, the onus is on *you* to ensure that you and all those around you are actively working toward a more healthy and fit lifestyle. The time is near! Come October 1st, will you be ready? Fit or Fail? Failure is not an option; we choose Fit!

#### Resources:

*Office of Health, Safety, and Work-life*

<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/cg11/default.asp>

*Coast Guard Weight Metrics Manual*  
<http://cgweb.mlcpc.uscg.mil/mlcpc/MLCpkma/CoastGuardWeightMetrics.pdf>

*COMDTINST M1020.8 (series)*

[http://cgweb2.comdt.uscg.mil/CGDIRECTIVES/intra\\_cim.html](http://cgweb2.comdt.uscg.mil/CGDIRECTIVES/intra_cim.html)

**Leadership Competencies addressed:** Leading self, Leading others, health & well-being. 

## Q & A Interview by Veronique Freeman Headquarters (CG-133)

**Q** Portia Boggia Davidson, Workforce Policy Advisor to the Commandant (CG-12), assumed her current position in March of 2009. Besides supporting various aspects of diversity workforce policy programs for the Coast Guard, she has served as lead integrator for the development of the Army Posture Statement to Congress. Portia serves on numerous national and international Boards and Committees. Worthy of mention is the International Child Art Foundation, a project involving more than 3 million child artists in over 100 Countries and U.S. States and Territories designed to create hope for a better and safer world. She is a founding member of Cultural Diplomacy, Inc., encouraging partnerships and exchange programs in the arts. She is the recipient of the World Children's Award for 2008. She is the core team advisor on the National Association of Strategic Planners and a consultant for recommending strategic solutions to help solve the auto industry crisis in America. Portia is an active member of the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists Union (over 35 years), and freelances as a professional radio and television advertiser. Portia is married to Mike Davidson, an attorney, and resides in Woodbridge, Virginia. She took a moment with The Leadership News to share her thoughts about the USCG's very first Diversity Roundtable.

### Q1. What was the purpose of bringing this Diversity Roundtable to the Coast Guard?

*This is not just any roundtable. We are bringing leaders from, literally, around the world into one room to discuss Diversity. The primary purpose, other than to gain expert perspective and advice is to better further our vision with respect to Diversity. That vision being to create and maintain a positive culture that is representative of the people we serve and where the differences of all personnel are respected so that all will have the opportunity to achieve their full potential and maximize their contributions to Coast Guard mission.*

### Q2. Why did you choose the leaders you chose to sit on the VIP panel for this roundtable?

*We are going to be learning from the masters. It is difficult to even mention the word diversity without including the name of any one of these distinguished panelist. Each offers extensive expertise, knowledge, and experience when it comes to diversity. The intent of the Championing Leadership Diversity roundtable is to establish a collaboration of these top national leaders in diversity to share information, resources,*

*experiences and insights on the return on investments of diversity initiatives at one table. We are honored to have the opportunity to witness such a fabulous gathering of world recognized diversity leaders such as this. Through my experience in building and initiating relationships, I was able to get on the phone and each and every panelist was thrilled to come and support this Coast Guard initiative.*

### Q3. What results are you expecting to get from this roundtable?

*Ultimately we hope to get best practices, insight, and perspective that can be implemented right here within the Coast Guard. The round table is designed to build positive relationships and garner public support with national decision makers who prioritize diversity and inclusion as a fundamental business imperative to organizational success with an already engaged and active CG senior leadership. It is without doubt these national decision makers we are bringing together are the best of the best; and I anticipate walking away with an abundance of knowledge that can be used immediately.*

### Q4. Do you feel the roundtable was the success you anticipated when we last interviewed?

*Absolutely. Diversity must be embraced by people at all levels. Every employee must share in creating and maintaining an environment of mutual respect. We recognize that each employee's unique expertise, skills, talents, and abilities contribute to the success of our missions. We can maximize the contributions of all employees by heightening our awareness of the valuable role that different cultural backgrounds play in reaching our organizational goals. Each VIP panelist reinforced this perspective today and offered profound insight on how we can begin taking the steps toward sustaining a diverse organizational culture! This round table has put us in a great position as we prepare to host our Diversity Forum in the summer of 2010.*



**Mrs. Portia Boggia Davidson**  
Workforce Policy Advisor to  
the Commandant (CG-12)

# U.S. Coast Guard Hosts First... *Diversity Round Table!*

By Veronique Freeman  
Headquarters (CG-133)

On May 29th, 2009 Rear Admirals Ronald Hewitt and Jody Breckenridge were host to seven (7) distinguished panelists and guests for the “Championing Diversity Leadership” Round Table; the first diversity round table of its kind ever to be held at USCG Headquarters. The panelists in attendance were recognized leaders and chief executives who prioritize diversity and inclusion as a fundamental business imperative to organizational success. The U.S. Coast Guard brought these national leaders together to share their perspectives, best practices, and insights regarding various workforce diversity initiatives. Mr. Curtis Odom, Director of Personnel Management, played a major role as moderator throughout the morning’s imperative discussion about the history, current state, and future of Diversity within the U.S. Coast Guard.

Captain Robert Stohlman, round table keynote speaker, presented the Coast Guard Diversity overview and staff mission to panelists. His presentation addressed the overarching need to further build and sustain a superior and equitable workplace environment that embraces respect for all, ensures an inclusive social climate, recognizes the benefits of a diverse workforce and the nexus to operational readiness and mission execution, and attains workforce representational objectives. CAPT Stohlman, stated, “Diversity is a journey-not a destination. It is also a business imperative. The Coast Guard recognizes that it must adapt to changing times and demographic trends to ensure that the Service has the talent and expertise necessary for maximum readiness, sustained operational excellence, and successful mission execution”. Admiral Thad Allen is committed to game-changing action to help ensure that the Coast Guard is seen as an employer of choice for all Americans. 



**From Left to Right:** Policy Advisor-Ms. Portia Davidson, SES Mr. Curtis Odom, RADM Jody Breckenridge, CAPT Robert Stohlman, Panelist-Ms. Maria Morukian, Panelist-Ms. Grace Rivera-Oven, Panelist-Ms. Harriet Mayor Fulbright, Panelist-Ms. Catherine Smith, Panelist-Mr. John Palguta, Panelist-Ms. Lynn Gardner-Hefron, Panelist-Ms. Cristina Caballero, VADM Vivian Crea, RADM Ronald Hewitt

Continued on pg. 10



# “Championing Diversity” USCG Headquarters

*RADM Jody Breckenridge and CAPT Robert Stohlman tune-in on panelists' perspectives on diversity*

The round table panelists were met with a packed house of various Coast Guard senior leaders, flag officers, and SES employees all in attendance to participate the momentous occasion. Panelists exceeded expectations and provided incomparable insight into the world of diversity. After the round table each panelist was asked: **In a few words, tell me, what is your definition of Diversity?**



*“Diversity is the honest reflection of the United States of America”*

**-Harriett Mayor Fulbright**

President of the J. William & Harriet Fulbright Center



*“Diversity is understanding and respecting differences; inclusion is being able to work with differences and make it meaningful”*

**-Lynn Gardner Heffron**

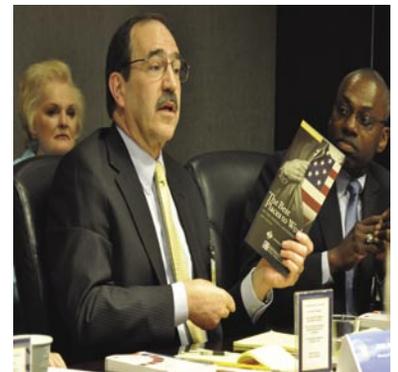
President, Diversity Spectrum Corporation



*“Diversity is the lifeblood of a vital, innovative, and dynamic organization; people from various lifestyles & perspective, coming together for a common goal”*

**-John Palguta**

Vice President for Policy and Research, National Partnerships for Public Service



# Diversity Leadership”

May 29th, 2009



*“Diversity is the fabric of our character as a society”*

**-Grace Rivera-Oven**

Hispanic Television Host, Week in Review



*“Diversity is all of those human characteristics that make us similar and different; as human beings we are more similar than we are different; but the differences matter”*

**-Maria Morukian**

Executive Director, National Multicultural Institute



*“Diversity is the opportunity to make unusual connections”*

**-Catherine Smith**

Vice President, Diversity Best Practices



*“Diversity is about inclusion of culture, language, economics, religion, and thought”*

**-Cristina Caballero**

CEO, Dialogue on Diversity



## The Heroic Exploits of Benjamin Hiller in America's Quasi War with France

*By William H. Thiesen, Ph.D.  
Atlantic Area Historian, United States Coast Guard*

The storm must have been horrific; something like the one depicted in the best selling novel, *The Perfect Storm*. It swept in from the equator, along the Bahamas, and up the Florida coast in September of 1800. Devastating winds and towering waves threatened the American frigate *Insurgent*, recently captured from the French. On board the cutter *Scammel*, the crew jettisoned cannon and anchors in an effort to ride out the hurricane, and on board the cutter *Pickering*, a similar scene of bravery likely played out as Master Commandant Benjamin Hiller and his crew fought to save their ship in those deadly seas.

The storm was broad enough to capture *Pickering* and the other warships even though each was carrying out a separate mission to help prosecute a war. Between 1797 and 1801, the United States and Revolutionary France were embroiled in an undeclared naval war known as the "Quasi War." Angered that the United States remained neutral in its struggle with Great Britain, France issued letters of marque, papers permitting armed privateers to prey on American merchant vessels sailing the high seas. American naval strategists called on the Revenue Cutter Service to help battle the privateers, and the Service's cutters distinguished themselves fighting side-by-side with units of the U.S. Navy.

The Treasury Department commissioned the Merrill Shipyard of Newburyport, Massachusetts, to build *Pickering* on the plans of

renowned designer Josiah Fox. Named in honor of then Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, the sleek two-masted cutter carried double headsails and double



topsails fitted to each of its raked masts. This spread of canvas provided greater speed and would enable the cutter to catch the highly mobile privateers. Smithsonian maritime historian Howard Chappelle referred to the cutter's sail configuration as a "jackass brig," but contemporaries just called it a brig. *Pickering* also carried fourteen cannon, even though a contemporary rendering shows the brig pierced by ten gun ports per side, and *Pickering's* crew of seventy included a master, mates, able seamen, ordinary seamen, marines and boys.

On board *Pickering*, Benjamin Hiller served two successive ship's masters early in the Quasi War. Revenue Cutter Service Master Jonathan Chapman commanded the brig through the end of 1798 before resigning. In January 1799, at a time when Revenue Cutter Service masters commanded all the Service's cutters, distinguished Navy lieutenant Edward Preble received command of *Pickering* to occupy him temporarily while shipbuilders completed the 40-gun frigate *Essex*, in which

Preble later made his name. Meanwhile, Hiller advanced up the ranks, serving as a Revenue Cutter Service mate through 1798 then receiving a Navy lieutenant's commission in late January 1799 backdated to October 31, 1798. After seeing nearly a year of action under Chapman and Preble, the Revenue Cutter Service transferred control of *Pickering* to the Navy in late May of 1799 and newly commissioned Hiller assumed command a month later. As *Pickering's* skipper, Hiller was highly esteemed by the press, his superiors, and likely his crew. In March 1800, the New England newspapers

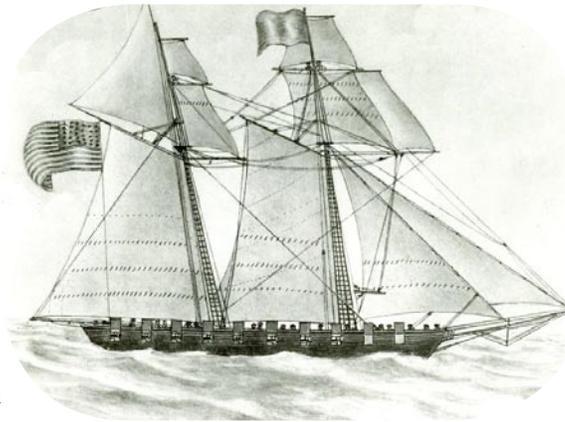
printed the following: "We learn, that complaints are made in the West Indies of our naval commanders lounging at St. Kitts; except Lieut. Hiller, in the *Pickering*, who bears the reputation of an enterprising zealous officer." After *Pickering* returned to port in May, another paper reported, "The greatest praise is due to this enterprising commander, both for his vigilance in protecting the convoys under his care, in scourging the spoliators of our commerce, and in the excellent management and discipline of the ship and crew under his command. The crew without exception of an individual, are all returned in perfect health." A later article claimed that "The activity of her commander is warmly spoken of at the southward—it deserves praise all around the compass." Navy Secretary Benjamin Stoddert was also aware of Hiller's qualities, writing to others "The Commander is an active and enterprising man, and well qualified to do good Service." In portending Hiller's future, Stoddert wrote to him, "The President is sensible of

your merit, and will not be unmindful of it.” By 1800, the merchants of Boston lobbied Secretary Stoddert for a captaincy on behalf of Hiller and later that same year he received a promotion to Master Commandant.

Hiller established quite a reputation. While the Pickering came under navy control in its last year of service, Hiller transferred to that service and most of his crew likely did to profit from prize ships they captured. Between early 1799 and the summer of 1800, Pickering captured between fifteen and twenty privateers and merchant vessels. During Hiller’s command, Pickering captured a French merchant vessel allegedly valued at \$100,000 (in 1799 dollars!) and re-captured at least ten merchant vessels the French took. In addition, Hiller commanded Pickering in the capture of at least five armed privateers, a few of which rivaled the fighting strength of Pickering’s own weapons and crew.

Pickering’s battle with the privateer *l’Egypte Conquise* serves as a testament to the bravery of Hiller and his crew in the face of tremendous odds. In early October 1799, the French sent the most powerful privateer in the West Indies on a mission to capture Pickering. With between fourteen and eighteen nine-and six-pound cannon, and double-manned with between 175 and 250 men, the privateer out-gunned and out-manned Pickering’s defenses of fourteen four-pounders and a crew of less than one hundred. Termed by witnesses as “severe,” the nine-hour duel occurred around October 8th, 1799. It continued for five hours, ceased for an hour and re-commenced for three more hours after which the privateer struck its colors and surrendered. As often happened with

reports from the Caribbean, it took the news a month to travel north and initial reports misrepresented aspects of the battle.



Even some of today’s accepted histories of Pickering claim that Lt. Preble commanded the ship during this capstone achievement despite the fact that Hiller had taken command of Pickering three months before. After the deadly hurricane of September 1800 moved on, only one of the three sailing vessels remained afloat. It was *Scammel*, however, and not Pickering that survived to fight another day. As if in an instant, mountains of water swallowed the frigate *Insurgent* and 400 men without leaving a trace. With the sudden disappearance of Pickering, rumors spread in the papers that the French massacred Hiller and his crew after capturing the island of Curacao. The massacre never happened and by the time newspapers printed this rumor in October, the ship, skipper and crew were missing for a month. A newspaper article printed in December probably provided a more likely account. It noted that a merchant vessel sailing behind the hurricane’s track after the storm passed, reported “a large copper-bottomed brig, with quarter-boards and a range of ports, was seen bottom upwards.” The case of Pickering underscores the obstacles to documenting the early history of the

Revenue Cutter Service. When Pickering went down in that September storm, it took with it many historical documents, including bookkeeping records, letters, logbooks, and memoirs. In addition, the sacking of Washington by the British in the War of 1812 and fires at the Department of Treasury in the early 1800s destroyed much of the archival material that documented this majestic cutter and crew. Only contemporary accounts from newspapers, a few Treasury Department letters that survived destruction, and some navy records can trace Pickering’s distinguished history.

During his day, Master Commandant Benjamin Hiller rose to become an American hero. Had Pickering survived that September hurricane, Hiller could have achieved even greater feats of heroism and joined the pantheon of early American naval figures, such as Decatur, Truxtun, and Preble. Now, over 200 years since the Quasi War, Hiller is a forgotten warrior from a forgotten war. No portrait or rendering commemorates his existence and no obituary or grave stone memorializes his death. Hiller is one of the many unrecognized heroes from the Coast Guard and its predecessor services who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.

### **Leadership Competencies**

**Addressed:** *Leading Others.* This article also falls under the Core Values of devotion to duty and honor.



*Painting of the Cutter Eagle capturing privateer Mahitable; and rendering shows Pickering pierced by ten gun ports per side, even though sources indicated the cutter carried only fourteen cannon. (Coast Guard Historian’s Office)*

## Missing Opportunity???



The Leadership Continuum programs are sequential and progressive, made up of blended learning solutions consisting of individual development, command-delivered training, on-the-job training, Coast Guard E-Learning, and in-residence classroom training. Each program and associated courses are tailored to the developmental needs of specific leadership positions (billets) rather than the more generic requirements for individual pay grades. However, as personnel are also assigned leadership responsibilities based on pay grade, varying levels of leadership proficiency are required of all Coast Guard personnel.

The military and civilian continuums are based on CG-133's leadership framework and focus on the 28 leadership competencies that are linked to career management systems. As a result, blended learning solutions are designed to increase the quality of instruction and learning, and improve performance.  □

Sign-Up NOW for the best program to take you to the your next level!!!  
<http://www.uscg.mil/leadership/training>

### ***From the Field:***

“I attended the Capitol Hill Workshop this week and want to thank and commend you and your staff for getting the USCG involved in such an excellent program. What a refreshing change!

It was not mere training. It was education by top experts on important national strategic issues, the workings of Congress and the Presidency, and the federal budget. A particular highlight was getting to eat lunch with Ralph Nader who gave me a book on Admiral Rickover.

I highly recommend this course for as many O-4's through O-6's as possible. Too many times, we as officers get overly focused on CG processes and internal issues and get myopic. This seminar offered a healthy expansive view of national issues and would serve the officer corps well.

Again, great job and thanks!”

Sincerely,

CDR Brian T. McTague  
 XO, CG YARD



*WASHINGTON, D.C.-Photo of CDR Brian T. McTague with American attorney, author and political activist Ralph Nader*

# Academy Grads



**FORT BLISS, TX.** United States Army Sergeant Major Academy (USASMA) graduates:  
**OSCS David Kolstedt**  
**OSCS Shawn Marchinek**-also received the William G. Bainbridge Chair of Ethics Award.

**KNOXVILLE, TN.** Air National Guard Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (ANGNCOA) graduates:  
**ET1 Shawn W. Swanson**  
**SK1 Leanna J. Beard**  
**ET1 Sean Foster**-was also nominated for the Commandants award



**KNOXVILLE, TN.** Air National Guard Non-Commissioned Officer Academy graduates:  
**PA1 Christopher Evanson**  
**MK1 Joshua Branthoover**-also received the Academic Achievement Award and the Distinguished Graduate Award.  
**BM1 John P. Ragan**-also received the Distinguished Graduate Award and was nominated for the Commandant Award.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to the following students:

**Chief Petty Officer Academy graduates:**  
**Class 156 (67 Students):** Committed to Leadership through Vision and Inspiration  
 Fitness: **Chief Petty Officer Fernando Perez**  
 Altus Tendo: **Chief Petty Officer Laura Freeman**  
 Spirit of the Chief: **Chief Petty Officer Jason Holm**

**Navy Senior Enlisted Academy graduates:**  
**MCPO Frank Burgess**  
**SCPO Colleen McCarthy**  
**SCPO George Lopez**

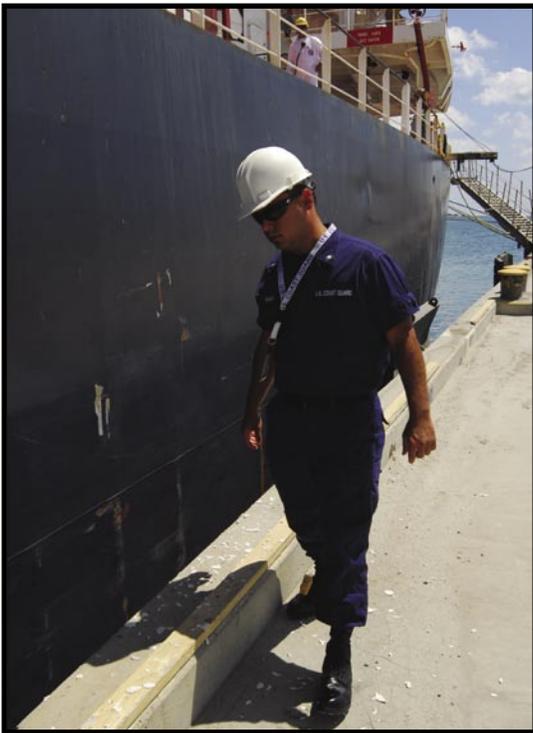
**Air Force Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy graduates:**  
**CPO Keith Moore**      **CPO Floyd Paver**  
**CPO Daniel Perkins**      **CPO Justin Sperber**  
**CPO Michael O'Brien**      **CPO John Tribfelner**  
**CPO Michael Brandt**      **CPO Michael Collis**  
**CPO Kevin Eldridge**      **CPO Jorin Dworshak**  
**CPO Travis Park**      **CPO Kevin Jackson**  
**CPO David McDonald**  
**CPO Thomas Palmeira**  
**CPO Christopher Schulte**

# Coast Guard Member earns John L. Levitow Award

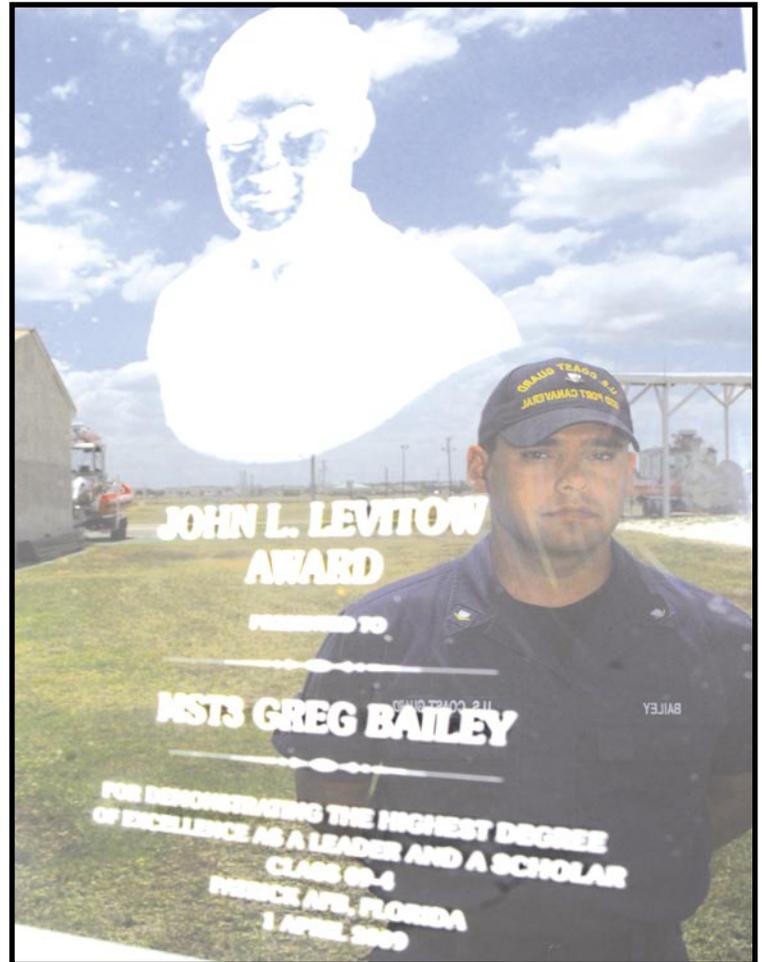
By Petty Officer Michael Hulme  
Padet Jacksonville

Petty Officer 3rd Class Gregory Bailey, from Baton Rouge, La., recently graduated from the Airman Leadership School at Patrick Air Force Base in Satellite Beach, Fla., and was honored with the coveted John L. Levitow Award. Bailey is a marine science technician at Coast Guard Station Port Canaveral, Fla., where he serves as a vital part of Marine Safety Detachment Port Canaveral.

Bailey earned the John L. Levitow Award, which is the school's top prize. Bailey bested 12 other students to achieve the award. The award is presented to the student demonstrating outstanding leadership and scholastic qualities. Award selection is based on overall performance evaluation, academic ranking, and peer and staff ratings. Winning the award is a highlight for anyone attending.



**(Leadership Competencies Addressed:** Self Awareness & Learning, Influencing Others, Leading the Coast Guard, Followership, Partnering )



SATELLITE BEACH, FL-- Petty Officer 3rd Class Greg Bailey with John L. Levitow award which was presented to him at Patrick Air Force. Bailey was award the Levitow award for his superb leadership skills at the Airman Leadership School.(U.S. Coast Guard Photo/ Petty Officer Michael Hulme)

“Being a leader means being a good follower as well,” Bailey said. “It was a great opportunity for me to attend this class and I have used what I learned everyday at work and at home”. “When I look for a good leader, I look for people who understand the team concept,” said Capt. Paul Thomas commander, Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville, Fla. “People who are good leaders don’t just lead in their rate; they are leaders in every aspect. That is the Coast Guard.”

“Bailey’s hard work has paid off for him. He is a classic success story,” said Master Chief Brayman, command master chief at Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville. 