



All Hands Messages

Spotlight on Leadership

To the Men and Women of the United States Coast Guard:

This year's Spotlight on Leadership campaign will occur during the month of April. CG-1 has issued an ALCOAST outlining the initiative. To encourage discussions on this important topic, we'll post a series of leadership guest blogs on iCommandant in April. Each will focus on one of the four featured leadership attributes: self-awareness and learning, mentoring, creativity and innovation, and partnering. I encourage all personnel to read these blogs and then discuss (either on-line and/or among your shipmates) how these attributes can be embraced at the unit level. Effective leadership, exercised at all levels of the chain of command, can improve performance and quality of life.

I have frequently talked about the need for each man and woman in the Coast Guard to internalize the Guardian Ethos. We protect, defend and save the maritime public with uncommon dedication on a daily basis. We must turn the Guardian lens on our shipmates with the same level of commitment. I charge command cadre with creating a positive atmosphere, where diversity is valued and utilized to improve mission performance, and each member can reach their full potential. However, this goal cannot be achieved by the actions of a few individuals. Leadership is an all hands evolution. Regardless of your rank, engage your shipmate if you see them struggling personally or professionally. Don't leave them adrift - throw a lifeline just as you would for a mariner in distress.

As the current economic recession creates financial hardships, the continued high op-tempo limits down-time, and the efforts to modernize our organization stress the workforce, we need to look after one another. We are each other's Guardian and together we can reach our goals. There are resources readily available to help individuals deal with personal financial troubles or work-life issues. The key is to engage rather than walk away from problems.

I challenge members of our workforce to set the bar high for your leadership and professional development. Use this campaign as an opportunity to be creative and try something different as you focus on leadership development at the unit level. Above all else, be a Guardian - for yourself, for your shipmates, and for the Nation.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our Coast Guard. Semper Paratus.

Admiral Thad Allen
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard

