



ARC Honor Joins SIU Fleet



Seafarers are sailing aboard the newly reflagged *ARC Honor*, which has enrolled in the U.S. Maritime Security Program. Operated by TOTE for American Roll-On Roll-Off Carrier, the vessel formerly was named the *Tulane*. Pictured from left to right in the group photo are (standing) Oiler Shagaryah Adams, OS Ningning Li, Steward/Baker Clark Williams, AMO members Gage Reamy, Dean Lynch, Zach Krissoff and Jim Delgado, Oiler Kwesi Andohkrow, and Bosun Kenneth Loria Zuniga. In the front row, also from left: Chief Cook Rudy Oliva, Oiler Reinaldo Fostanes, AMO members Ryan Ferschke and John Gall, SA Diana Perez, AMO members Chad McDuffie and Eric Fresh, and AB Martin Josephson. *Page 4.* (Ship photo by David Potter)



SIU President Testifies on Red Sea Shipping



SIU President David Heindel is pictured at a recent House hearing on security issues pertaining to commercial shipping in the Red Sea. He testified on behalf of several maritime labor organizations and was joined by three other panelists. Heindel emphasized the ongoing importance of protecting mariners, and he reiterated the unwavering commitment of the U.S. Merchant Marine. *Page 3.*

Bipartisan Backing in D.C.



David Heindel

Newer members of the SIU may not know that our headquarters operations weren't always based in Maryland. For a little longer than half of the organization's existence, the SIU was headquartered in New York, starting with our founding in 1938.

We relocated to the Washington, D.C. area in 1982, and it wasn't because of relatively cheap real estate. The move had everything to do with putting ourselves in the best possible position to advocate both for the union and for the U.S. Merchant Marine as a whole.

Whether you're an old salt, a new member or somewhere in between in your maritime career, you undoubtedly know that our industry is heavily

regulated. To the point where you'd probably have a hard time naming a federal agency that doesn't have at least a secondary maritime connection.

Other industries face a similar landscape, and that's why so many unions and trade associations and other advocacy groups have offices in and around the nation's capital. State and local politics are vital in their own rights, but a lot of our biggest-picture work happens at the federal level. When you read and hear about the Jones Act, the Maritime Security Program, cargo preference, the Tanker Security Program, the Export-Import Bank and other initiatives that promote a strong American-flag fleet, those usually depend on backing from Congress and the administration.

With all of that in mind, I welcomed the recent opportunity to testify in Congress about the ongoing safety concerns involving commercial shipping in the Red Sea and nearby areas. Throughout the course of that hearing in late January, it was obvious that there is strong bipartisan support for our industry – the kind of well-informed backing that we'll need in order to fully revitalize the U.S. Merchant Marine.

Similarly, a week after that hearing, U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-Wisconsin), who chairs the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, wrote to the commanding officer of the U.S. Transportation Command and to the head of the U.S. Maritime Administration to promote detailed dialogue – and action – related to our nation's sealift capabilities. I believe that this kind of engagement can only benefit American maritime.

Without grassroots political action, our industry would disappear. That's why I appreciate your support of SPAD, the SIU's voluntary political action fund. It's why we're returning to Capitol Hill next month for the annual Maritime Congressional Sail-In, a day-long event that promotes mariners, U.S.-flag operators, and pro-maritime laws and programs. And it's why we're coming up on 42 years in our current home base in Camp Springs. For better or worse, politics is the name of the game. That's how we promote our industry and protect your jobs, and we'll never stop. But Washington isn't all-encompassing, and grassroots means all of us – we can't succeed on this front without you spreading the word back home.

Union, Yes!

The latest report on union membership from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reinforces what we in the labor movement have long known. Union members typically enjoy higher wages and better benefits than their unrepresented counterparts in the workforce.

Other reports and studies over the years have concluded that union members generally are more productive than non-union workers, and that union shops have less turnover. This makes sense, because when workers know they've got a true voice on the job, and when they have the security of a union contract, they are bound to be invested in their day-to-day tasks and responsibilities. I think people outside the labor movement also overlook the reciprocal, three-way accountability that comes with union membership. This involves the employer, the union, and the rank-and-file members. Our success is interdependent.

I was pleased to read about an overall increase in union membership this past year and I'm optimistic about our movement's opportunities to capitalize on the pro-worker, pro-union sentiments across the country.

Congrats and Best Wishes

Last but not least, I extend a warm welcome to Willie Barrere in his new role as National President of the Seafarers-affiliated American Maritime Officers (AMO). The SIU is already working well with Willie, who was elected by his union's executive board to complete the term of Paul Doell. We are very familiar with Willie and are confident that he'll be a steady hand at the wheel.

As you may know, Paul recently retired after nearly a decade as president. Like so many of us from his era, Paul devoted his entire working life to maritime labor – he began his AMO career in 1972. He did a great job and we wish him all the best in retirement.

Union Membership Grows, Though Obstacles Impact Density

Newly released data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) found an overall increase in union membership across the country in 2023 along with a very slight drop in member density.

Published on Jan. 23, the annual report also concluded that union members, on average, earn more money than workers who do not have union representation – upwards of \$9,000 per year.

The report shows that overall union membership grew by 139,000 in 2023. Union membership in the private sector increased by 191,000 members, with a majority of new members under the age of 45.

According to the BLS, "The union membership rate – the percent of wage and salary workers who were members of unions – was 10.0 percent in 2023, little changed from the previous year."

Responding to the report, the AFL-CIO (to which the SIU is affiliated) pointed out that although more than 70% of Americans polled in a recent survey approve of unions and 59% support unionization in their own workplaces, American workers face obstacles from

several angles that prevent density numbers from increasing along with approval rates.

Union-busting is just one of many challenges workers face as they organize their workplaces, according to both the federation and the Economic Policy Institute (EPI). The latter organization noted, "At its core, the decline (in union density) reflects an intentional political effort to suppress workers' wage growth and shift income to profits and executive salaries by stripping away the most important leverage that workers have – the right to bargain collectively."

Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su addressed the legislative challenges that must be dealt with in order to facilitate unionization for interested employees in both sectors. She stated, "We know there is a tremendous amount of work still to be done. Unions have been under attack for decades, with union-busting laws being passed in states across the country. But multiple states in recent years have rolled back some of these so-called 'right-to-work' laws, recognizing the damage they can do to worker organizing. We also know that current federal law allows union-busting to stifle workers exercising their rights, which is why the Biden-Harris administration continues to support passage of the Protecting the Right to Organize Act."

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said, "Although union density remained flat in 2023, that doesn't reflect the surging momentum that working people have carried into this year. Waves of workers across industries and geography are joining unions despite vicious union-busting campaigns by large corporations. Polling data shows that 71% of Americans support unions, the highest level in nearly 60 years, with 88% of young people showing support for unions. And as the BLS numbers show, the union difference in wages remains strong, driving increased interest among workers to have a voice on the job.

"Every worker who wants to join a union should be able to without facing intimidation and harassment from their employer," Shuler continued. "Corporations spend more than \$400 million per year on union-busting consultants to stop worker organizing, and corporate leaders like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos – themselves hoarding billions of dollars – have made it their mission in life to stop their own employees from having a voice at the workplace."

Shuler concluded, "The labor movement is more focused and committed than ever on ensuring that every worker who wants a union has a fair shot at joining one. Organizing is happening at a rate not seen in generations, and new federal investments by the Biden administration in emerging sectors of the economy creates more opportunity for workers to attain good union jobs."

Among the data from the BLS report:

- The union membership rate of public-sector workers (32.5 percent) continued to be more than five times higher than the rate of private-sector workers (6.0 percent).
- The highest unionization rates were among workers in education, training, and library occupations (32.7 percent) and protective service occupations (31.9 percent).
- Men continued to have a higher union membership rate (10.5 percent) than women (9.5 percent).
- Black workers remained more likely to be union members than White, Asian, or Hispanic workers.
- Non-union workers had median weekly earnings that were 86 percent of earnings for workers who were union members (\$1,090 versus \$1,263).
- Among states, Hawaii and New York had the highest union membership rates (24.1 percent and 20.6 percent, respectively), while South Carolina and North Carolina had the lowest (2.3 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively).

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House Hearing Examines Red Sea Threat

Testifying at a U.S. House of Representatives hearing on the volatility of Red Sea shipping, SIU President David Heindel underscored the U.S. Merchant Marine’s commitment to delivering the goods while also calling for continued safeguards that protect all mariners transiting the area.

Heindel spoke on behalf of several maritime labor organizations Jan. 30 in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation. Three others joined him on the panel: Mediterranean Shipping Company Executive Vice President of Maritime Policy and Government Affairs Bud Darr; I.R. Consilium CEO Dr. Ian Ralby; and National Retail Federation Vice President of Supply Chain and Customs Policy Jonathan Gold.

Heindel testified for the SIU and also the American Maritime Officers; International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots; Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association; Maritime Trades Department; and Transportation Trades Department.

“The United States Merchant Marine is proud of our record over the last quarter of a millennium,” Heindel stated in his formal testimony. “We have operated side-by-side with the United States military in virtually every conflict in the history of the United States. We provide the materiel and supplies to the warfighter and they, in turn, have protected our vessels and crews as we sail into harm’s way. While the current situation involves the Houthi rebels in Yemen, we may well face in the future more sophisticated adversaries. The experience we are gaining now has demonstrated to the U.S. citizen mariners who are in harm’s way that U.S. naval and other military personnel stand with them and will continue to do so.”

He added, “Working together again has strengthened the bond between the U.S. Merchant Marine and the military, and we hope our success will deter our adversaries from taking unwise action against American shipping. The efforts taken so far to protect our vessels in the region have demonstrated the United States is committed to protecting its shipping and keeping the sea lanes open, and we hope this will incentivize other carriers to put their vessels under the U.S.-flag and use American citizen mariners, as has happened in past conflicts. Our members aboard ship and our organizations ashore are committed to working with Congress, the Administration,

and the Armed Forces to continue doing what has been our traditional mission – to deliver the goods, in peace and in war, as we have since 1775.”

Moreover, he emphasized that the U.S.-flag industry’s “biggest need right now is secure communications, whether this is in the form of specialized equipment, naval liaisons embedded on board our ships, or additional American civilian mariners with proper clearances and certificates on board having direct communications between our ships and combat ships in the area.”

“Congress must find new and innovative ways to bolster the U.S. Merchant Marine.” – U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-California)

Subcommittee Chairman Daniel Webster (R-Florida) set the stage for the hearing in his opening statement, which included the following: “The Red Sea is critical as a shipping corridor for global maritime commerce connecting Europe and Asia and Suez Canal, representing nearly 20 percent of container traffic and a significant portion of oil and liquefied natural gas shipments.

Since October, Houthis, an Iranian backed separatist group based in Yemen, have sought to disrupt global commerce by significantly increasing attacks against military and civilian vessels transiting the Red Sea. To date, dozens of vessels have been targeted either through hijacking, attempted hijacking, or missile or drone strikes, putting ships and their crews at risk.”

Ranking Member Salud Carbajal (D-California) opened with a tribute to U.S. mariners. He said that the current risks at sea are, in some ways, “business as usual for American mariners. Through every emergency conflict and war, the United States Merchant Marine has shown up,” Carbajal stated. “They bravely sailed during World War II when ships were being sunk daily by torpedoes, (with) many lives lost. They delivered military supplies to our troops during the Gulf War, when foreign mariners and foreign companies refused. They routinely sail hospital ships to disaster-stricken regions. Currently, American mariners are showing their bravery and dedication by sailing through the Red Sea to deliver military cargo and humanitarian aid

to the region. Congress must find new and innovative ways to bolster the U.S. Merchant Marine.”

Darr was the first panelist to speak. He described the challenge in the Red Sea as “an unprecedented series of attacks by non-state actors upon commercial shipping. There have certainly been attacks in the past, either by states that were well-organized, and there have been attacks by non-state actors such as Somali piracy some time ago, which seems unfortunately to be reemerging now. But as non-state actors go, the level of sophistication of the targeting, the weaponry, and the boldness is absolutely unprecedented, and they have in fact taken control of a vital sea lane which is essential not only for U.S. economic interest, but for trade to flow more broadly throughout the world.”

Ralby, who later answered numerous inquiries during the hearing’s question-and-answer segment, explained some of the complexities in the region.

“Even if the Israel-Gaza situation ended today with a complete resolution that was mutually agreeable to all parties involved, the Houthis would continue to attack shipping,” he said. “One-hundred percent of the ballistic missile capabilities of the Houthis could be taken out, and the Houthis would still attack shipping.... Since the 19th of November, the Houthis have seized on a convenient narrative that played into something that they wanted. They have opportunistically taken advantage of the Palestinian situation and made it a cause that aligned with their own interests, albeit hypocritically so. If we look at that hypocrisy, the Houthis have, over the last 10 years, killed more Muslim Arabs than Israel has in 75 years of its existence. The Houthis do not care about the Palestinian cause, except insofar as it furthers them.”

Gold noted, “While the volume of U.S. trade through the Suez Canal is small, the disruption impacts are being felt far and wide. The biggest challenges for retailers are the additional volatility, cost uncertainty, and overall risk to the supply chain. Retailers are being forced to readjust their supply chains to ensure product delivery.”

The hearing lasted approximately two hours and included questions from a dozen or so lawmakers. Full video and PDF copies of the formal testimony are available on the SIU website and on the subcommittee site.



U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-California)



SIU President David Heindel testifies in the House.



U.S. Rep. Daniel Webster (R-Florida)

SIU Welcomes New Jobs as ARC Honor Flags In

SIU members are sailing aboard the newest addition to the American Roll-On Roll-Off Carrier (ARC) fleet: the *ARC Honor*.

Operated by Seafarers-contracted TOTE, the *ARC Honor* – formerly the *M/V Tulane* – was reflagged to American registry and renamed on Feb. 2 in the port of Incheon, Korea, with U.S. Coast Guard personnel on hand. It is the ninth roll-on/roll-off (Ro-Ro) vessel in ARC's American-flag fleet, and is enrolled in the U.S. Maritime Security Program (MSP).

Bosun **Kenneth Loria Zuniga**, speaking as the *ARC Honor* prepared to depart on its first voyage from South Korea to the United States, said, "Everything is going well. We have a good crew and everyone seems happy. The ship is in good condition. Like any other vessel, there is work to do, but it's good."

The bosun described the re-flagging event as "very low-key," and he also complimented the professionalism of the ship's captain and officers, who are represented by the Seafarers-affiliated AMO.

In a news release, ARC said the new addition "will be among the most capable and militarily useful vessels in the U.S.-flag commercial fleet, able to carry tracked and wheeled vehicles, helicopters, and other high and heavy project cargoes. The vessel is 754 feet long with a 21-foot-high main deck and a stern ramp rated for cargo weighing up to 320 MT."

The ship was built in 2012 in South Korea.

SIU President David Heindel stated, "The leadership team at ARC once again is demonstrating its commitment to our industry, to our mariners, and to our nation by bringing this vessel under the Stars and Stripes. The SIU has been with ARC from the beginning, and we're excited about providing the crew for the *ARC Honor*."



The newest addition to the Maritime Security Program fleet is pictured (above and below) in South Korea shortly after being renamed and reflagged under the Stars and Stripes.

AMO National President Willie Barrere said, "The Maritime Security Program and the participating U.S. mariners and ships are crucial elements of our U.S. sealift strategy, our national defense, and commerce. AMO proudly joins our industry partners in welcoming the *ARC Honor* to our U.S.-flag fleet."

ARC President and CEO Eric Ebeling noted, "This tremendously capable and flexible U.S.-flag ship is crewed by American merchant mariners and now operates in ARC's global network supporting America's national defense and economic security through trade."

"Congratulations to American Roll-On Roll-Off Carrier on bringing a new vessel into the U.S.-flag fleet!" said U.S. Maritime Administrator Ann Phillips. "As a new addition to the Maritime Security Program, this ship and her crew of U.S. credentialed mariners will support our nation's economic security and provide sealift capacity for our Armed Forces operating around the world."

The first SIU members to sail aboard the *ARC Honor* included Bosun **Loria Zuniga**, ABs **Alexis Dowdell**, **Martin Josephson** and **Carl Piercy**, OSs **Ningning Li** and **Lacorie Ray**, Oilers **Shagaryah Adams**, **Kwesi Andohkwo** and **Reinaldo Fostanes**, Steward/Baker **Clark Williams**, Chief Cook **Rudy Oliva**, and SA **Diana Perez**.

Created in 1996 via the enactment of the Maritime Security Act, the MSP fortified the military's sealift capability in times of war or emergency by providing



the Department of Defense access to dozens of U.S.-flag, U.S.-crewed commercial vessels (currently there are 60 ships in the MSP fleet). As repeatedly pointed out by program supporters, the capability provided by the MSP comes at a significantly lower cost to taxpayers than creating a permanent fleet of reserve government vessels to match it. The MSP also does not jeopardize the country's readiness by depending on foreign-flag vessels, foreign crews and foreign shipping companies.

Moreover, as a testament to the program's tremendous value, it has enjoyed military support as well as exceptional bipartisan backing since its inception.



Pictured next to the ship are (from left) OS Lacorie Ray, AB Alexis Dowdell, and AB Carl Piercy.

Tentative Agreement Reached with Bay-Houston



In September 2023, Seabulk Towing sold its U.S. harbor towing operations and assets, and Bay-Houston Towing acquired the eight tugs in service in Texas and Louisiana as part of the sale. In late January, Bay-Houston signed an agreement with the SIU to resume operation of those tugs under a newly negotiated contract. According to SIU Gulf Coast Vice President Dean Corgay, "This contract represents a smooth transition in the sale of Seabulk to Bay-Houston, and includes significant pay increases and continuation of the excellent benefits and work rules contained in the old Seabulk Contract." In the photo above, left, from left to right: Vice President of Bay-Houston Steve Huttman, SIU AVP Michael Russo, Owner of Bay-Houston Philip Kuebler, SIU Gulf Coast Vice President Dean Corgay, Chief Engineer and Engine Delegate Richard Johnson and Captain Josh Rodriguez, who served as the Wheelhouse Delegate. The remaining photo shows members completing paperwork aboard a vessel.



Freedom Star Facilitates Practical Training

Hands-on training has always been a staple of numerous courses at the SIU-affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland, dating to its founding in 1967.

For nearly the past eight years, one of the most visible tools that's utilized for practical instruction at the school is the *Freedom Star*, a training ship based at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education (PHC). Built in Florida in 1981, the ship underwent a major refurbishment and conversion in 2012 upon being transferred from NASA to the U.S. Maritime Administration. Four years later, the agency assigned it to the PHC, where it routinely is used for both entry-level instruction (as part of the apprentice program) and in upgrading courses.

"Having a live platform to train on makes our already-stellar program second to none," a PHC spokesperson stated.

The *Freedom Star* is 176 feet long and 37 feet wide. According to its Operation and Familiarization Manual, the molded-steel ship can accommodate a crew of 50 for 12-hour day voyages and a crew of 36 for three-day overnight deployments. The ship is powered by two main diesel engines "providing a total of 2,900 horsepower turning two seven-foot propellers with controllable pitch. Maneuverability is enhanced with a water jet stern thruster and bow thruster of conventional propeller/tunnel design. The ship's cruising speed is 12 knots, with a range of 6,900 nautical miles..."

PHC instructors conduct segments of many classes – across all three shipboard departments – on the *Freedom Star*. Those courses include (among others) Able Seafarer-Deck, Advanced Firefighting, Junior Engineer, Marine Reefer Tech, Chief Steward, Galley Operations, and more, plus apprentice training.

More information about PHC courses is available online at www.seafarers.org



With one exception (the ship photo above), all of the snapshots on this page were taken during a December training mission that originated in Piney Point, Maryland – home of the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education. The vessel photo is slightly older but shows the *Freedom Star* in its customary dockside spot.



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SIU-CR-2-12-24



March & April Membership Meetings	
Piney Point	Monday: March 4, April 8
Algonac	Friday: March 8, April 12
Baltimore	Thursday: March 7, April 11
Guam	Thursday: March 21, April 25
Honolulu	Friday: March 15, April 19
Houston	Monday: March 11, April 15
Jacksonville	Thursday: March 7, April 11
Joliet	Thursday: March 14, April 18
Mobile	Wednesday: March 13, April 17
New Orleans	Tuesday: March 12, April 16
Jersey City	Tuesday: March 5, April 9
Norfolk	Friday: March 8, April 12
Oakland	Thursday: March 14, April 18
Philadelphia	Wednesday: March 6, April 10
Port Everglades	Thursday: March 14, April 18
San Juan	Thursday: March 7, April 11
St. Louis	Friday: March 15, April 19
Tacoma	Friday: March 22, April 26
Wilmington	Monday: March 18, April 22
Each port's meeting starts at 10:30 a.m.	

	Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea									
"Total Registered" and "Total Shipped" data is cumulative from January 13 - February 14, 2024. "Registered on the Beach" data is as of February 15, 2024.										
Port	Total Registered All Groups			Total Shipped All Groups			Trip Reliefs	Registered on Beach All Groups		
	A	B	C	A	B	C		A	B	C
Deck Department										
Algonac	31	10	3	6	0	0	2	34	12	3
Anchorage	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	2
Baltimore	2	3	1	1	3	0	1	6	2	0
Fort Lauderdale	15	9	2	18	14	1	11	22	13	4
Guam	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	0	1
Harvey	7	4	3	4	3	1	1	13	5	4
Honolulu	5	4	0	3	2	0	2	10	5	0
Houston	30	19	9	23	18	3	11	47	28	10
Jacksonville	17	33	5	25	23	3	12	32	44	9
Jersey City	24	6	4	19	5	2	9	27	14	8
Joliet	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	1
Mobile	3	2	3	4	2	3	2	10	5	1
Norfolk	24	14	8	18	12	2	9	24	17	10
Oakland	8	3	0	8	2	0	3	8	2	0
Philadelphia	3	3	0	1	1	0	1	3	3	0
Piney Point	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Puerto Rico	7	5	1	9	3	0	1	10	5	4
Tacoma	16	6	2	8	1	1	5	28	7	5
St. Louis	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0
Wilmington	17	9	2	20	4	1	10	44	12	3
TOTAL	216	133	46	171	99	21	83	325	175	65
Engine Department										
Algonac	5	1	1	1	0	0	0	5	1	1
Anchorage	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baltimore	1	1	2	2	1	2	0	2	2	0
Fort Lauderdale	11	3	2	8	4	1	4	14	4	2
Guam	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	1
Harvey	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0
Honolulu	6	3	2	3	1	0	0	11	5	3
Houston	7	13	3	10	9	3	9	9	17	2
Jacksonville	16	20	3	17	12	4	8	24	22	5
Jersey City	12	4	0	8	1	1	3	14	3	0
Joliet	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	0
Mobile	3	0	0	4	2	0	2	5	0	2
Norfolk	11	6	5	11	7	4	4	21	8	11
Oakland	6	0	0	3	1	0	2	10	3	0
Philadelphia	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	0
Piney Point	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Puerto Rico	4	0	0	4	1	0	1	4	1	1
Tacoma	9	7	2	12	5	0	3	13	8	2
St. Louis	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1
Wilmington	10	2	1	7	0	1	3	12	5	4
TOTAL	107	65	25	92	48	19	42	154	85	35
Steward Department										
Algonac	6	0	0	3	0	0	1	6	0	0
Anchorage	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	3	0
Baltimore	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Fort Lauderdale	6	2	0	6	3	1	3	12	5	1
Guam	4	2	1	0	1	0	0	4	2	1
Harvey	5	1	1	3	1	1	2	4	3	0
Honolulu	6	1	0	4	1	0	1	6	3	0
Houston	10	4	3	11	7	0	5	24	4	7
Jacksonville	9	17	4	21	8	1	7	26	22	6
Jersey City	8	3	0	3	4	0	2	15	2	1
Joliet	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Mobile	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	3	5	1
Norfolk	12	17	3	12	14	1	6	22	15	5
Oakland	14	1	2	4	3	1	1	22	5	2
Philadelphia	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	0
Piney Point	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	0
Puerto Rico	4	9	0	5	4	1	4	5	10	0
Tacoma	7	2	2	3	2	1	1	13	4	3
St. Louis	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Wilmington	15	5	2	14	6	0	6	39	8	2
TOTAL	115	73	23	94	57	11	42	209	96	31
Entry Department										
Algonac	0	6	17	0	4	4	0	2	11	23
Anchorage	0	3	1	0	1	2	1	0	3	0
Baltimore	0	2	3	0	2	3	0	0	0	4
Fort Lauderdale	1	6	16	0	5	10	2	1	7	17
Guam	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Harvey	1	4	2	1	1	1	1	2	4	3
Honolulu	0	3	3	0	3	2	0	1	5	6
Houston	3	18	28	4	16	6	4	4	26	42
Jacksonville	1	34	46	0	22	22	3	2	56	120
Jersey City	2	14	10	1	10	6	2	4	20	26
Joliet	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Mobile	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	5
Norfolk	0	10	20	1	8	19	3	1	18	33
Oakland	0	3	4	0	1	3	1	0	12	12
Philadelphia	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Piney Point	0	6	8	0	3	7	7	0	4	5
Puerto Rico	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1
Tacoma	2	5	10	1	6	2	0	3	11	15
St. Louis	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Wilmington	3	13	15	0	7	8	4	3	12	16
TOTAL	14	130	193	8	90	97	28	25	193	333
GRAND TOTAL	452	401	287	365	294	148	195	713	549	464

Former Seafarer Cooks Up Sauce, Success

Houston-based “Chef Machete” has famous clients and award-winning restaurants – but to the SIU, he’s known as **Chief Cook Trinidad Gonzalez**, who sailed from 2013-2019, primarily on tugs in the Gulf of Mexico.

“The Seafarers International Union made me the man I am today,” said Gonzalez. “All the organizational skills and the experience of managing a crew – in fact, I organize and structure my kitchens to this day like I learned from sailing.”

Like many mariners, Gonzalez comes from a seafaring family. “Both of my brothers, my father and my grandfather were all mariners,” he said. “That’s what we were raised for, you know. After I moved out, I went to Cali, did my own thing, and then in 2013 I decided it was time to see the world. I was waiting and waiting for jobs out on the West Coast, but then I moved to Houston and got a job on a tug right away. It was all [good] from there!”

He was preceded in the SIU by his father, pensioner **Angel Gonzalez**, who also sailed as a harbor pilot for many years after finishing his career with the union, and by his older brothers: AB **William Mallow**, who sailed with the SIU until 2003, and AB **Juan Gonzalez**, who is currently a tugboat captain with SIU-contracted G&H Towing.

Throughout his sailing career, Trinidad knew his true passion was cooking. “I always wanted to be a cook,” he stated. “Growing up, my thoughts always kept going back to eventually being a chef. I was sailing for Crowley, and on the weekends, I would sell tacos out of my taco truck, and that’s how it started. It really started to take off, and I knew I had a good thing going at that point.”

Now the owner of three Gordo Niños locations in the Houston area, Chef Machete serves up Tex-Mex alongside his secret sauce, a purple-in-color dipping sauce with a taste similar to a savory ranch that he calls “Lean Sauce.”

He said, “I actually started working on the sauce when I was still sailing; on the weekends I’d make a new batch, and take it back to my guys Monday morning. Ten months later, I finally perfected my sauce. After that, I knew I had to come ashore and start up a restaurant.”

He added, “My main clientele now is local Houston rappers, athletes, and politicians. Everybody’s got to eat, and they like what I make, so it’s easy like that. I’ve served 50 Cent, E-40, George Strait.... They keep coming back, too.”

SIU Patrolman J.B. Niday, who works out of the Houston hiring hall and is a longtime friend of Gonzalez, said, “It is an amazing feeling to see our SIU brother become so successful. His purple sauce is the most creatively delicious thing I have ever tried.”

Through it all, Gonzalez remembers his time sailing fondly, saying, “I would recommend everyone join the Seafarers. I have friends that I talked into it, and some of them are captains and pilots by now. All the skills I learned, I have put to good use making my culinary dreams come true.”



Chef Machete tops all his offerings with his signature purple sauce.



Rapper 50 Cent (left) poses for a photo with Chef Trinidad Gonzalez.



The *Seafarers LOG* office sampled the signature sauce, and found the ranch-like sauce to be both delicious and hard to describe.



Internet celebrities Druski (right) and Johnny Shipes (left) stopped by to sample Chef Gonzalez’s (center) sauce.



Country legend George Strait (left) poses for a photo with Chef Gonzalez (right).



Grilled Mahi Tacos, covered in the signature sauce.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



ON THE RECRUITING TRAIL – Chief Cook Yoaquin Gonzalez (far left) pitches in during a career fair in Canovanas, Puerto Rico, where he helped spread the word about the SIU and its affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education. This event focused on members of the Army Reserve and the National Guard.



CAREER PROGRESS – The SIU and its affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland, have a long history of facilitating career progress for members – from entry-level to licensed positions. Embodiment that standard is hawsepiper Third Assistant Engineer Lisa Harewood-Francis (second from right), pictured at the February membership meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with (from right) SIU President David Heindel, SIU VP Gulf Coast Dean Corgie, and FOWT Jeremie Francis, Lisa's husband. Lisa joined the SIU 24 years ago, earned her license six years ago, and currently sails as a member of the Seafarers-affiliated AMO.



WELCOME ASHORE IN LAUDERDALE – Recertified Steward Abraham Martinez (left), pictured at the hall with SIU Asst. VP Kris Hopkins, began sailing with the SIU in 1989. He's shown picking up his first pension check.



CLASSMATES CATCH UP – Reminiscing at the hall in Mobile, Alabama, are retired Recertified Bosun Ray Waiters (left) and SIU Exec. VP Augie Tellez. They went through the AB course together in Piney Point in 1977.



ABOARD EL COQUI – Pausing for a snapshot on the Intrepid ship are (from left) Electrician Edwin Velez, Safety Director Ricky Rivera, and Bosun Juan Negron. The vessel sails in the Jones Act trade between Jacksonville and Puerto Rico, which is vital for the island and for the U.S. Merchant Marine.



ABOARD ARC INTEGRITY – Jacksonville Safety Director Adam Bucalo submitted these photos from a weekend servicing of the TOTE ship. Spirits are high aboard the vessel, in part because of a new contract featuring unprecedented wage gains, he reported. Those pictured include AB Ryan Henderson (at the gangway) and (from left in the group photo) Bosun Kyren Ancrum, Paul Hall Center Apprentice Antoine Kozel, AB Anthony Green, Chief Cook Tomas Bernardez-Martinez, and Steward/Baker Kristina Jones.



At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



BOOKS GALORE IN JACKSONVILLE – Taking the oath at the January membership meeting are (from right to left) STOS Christopher Stevens, STOS Michael Jones, GUDE DeContee Saypoh, OS Cedric Armstrong, SA Toinette Williams, OMU Denard Williams, and Chief Cook Maurice Henry. Williams and Henry received their respective A-seniority books, while the other Seafarers attained B-seniority. SIU Port Agent Ashley Nelson is at left.



SENATE CANDIDATE BACKS MARITIME – SIU VP Gulf Coast Dean Corgey (left) chats with U.S. Rep. Colin Allred (D-Texas) at the Texas AFL-CIO COPE Convention in Austin in late January. Allred, a strong supporter of the Jones Act, is running for U.S. Senate.



ABOARD MATSONIA – Pictured from left on the Matson ship are (above, right) Safety Director Gordon Godel and Recertified Steward Nee Tran, along with (remaining photo) Chief Cook Jeffrey Phillips and ACU Nasser Hasson.



WELCOME ASHORE IN TACOMA – GUDE Nestor Montano receives his first pension check at the hall. He started sailing with the SIU in 1998. SIU Port Agent Warren Asp is at right.



ABOARD PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT – Meeting aboard the APL vessel on the West Coast are (from left) Chief Cook Bernardo Celi, Safety Director Gordon Godel, Chief Cook Perry Asuncion, ACU Nathalie Norie and Steward/Baker Brian Kluth.

OJT FOR APPRENTICES – Pictured aboard the TOTE-operated car carrier Patriot in Baltimore are (from left) Paul Hall Center Apprentice Brenda Gonzalez Potash, SIU Port Agent John Hoskins, and Paul Hall Center Apprentice Marshall Whitcraft.



MILESTONE IN GARDEN STATE – Brother Debbie Garcia (left) receives his A-seniority book. He sails as an AB and is pictured at the Jersey City hall with SIU Patrolman Osvaldo Ramos.

At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



REINFORCING MARITIME SUPPORT – During the recent Virginia AFL-CIO Legislative Conference in Richmond, SIU Port Agent Mario Torrey and Patrolman Josh Rawls met with the governor and state delegates to shore up backing for the U.S. Merchant Marine and for workers' rights. Pictured from left in photo above, left are Torrey, Delegate Phil Hernandez, and Rawls. From left in the other photo are Delegate Jeion Ward, Rawls and Torrey.



REGISTERED AND READY – Seafarer Raul “Tito” Morales (left) is ready to ship out as a bosun. He’s pictured at the San Juan hall with SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo.



PROMOTING SIU CAREERS – Pictured at a career fair in San Antonio for military veterans are (from left) Safety Director Kevin Sykes and Patrolman Kelly Krick.



WELCOME ASHORE IN HOUSTON

– Capt. Wes Bertrand (left) picks up his first pension check at the hiring hall. He’s pictured with SIU Asst. VP Mike Russo; the two Seafarers sailed together on the Sea Reliance (Intrepid). Bertrand started sailing with the union in 1986.



ARTISTIC TOUCH – NY Waterway Shop Steward George Schumpp (left) and Senior Deckhand Modesto Penton decorate their ferry to brighten the mood for passengers. Thanks to SIU Port Agent Ray Henderson for the photo.



AT NORFOLK HALL – In photo above, right, identical twin sisters Kimberly Vargas (left) and Kim Smith are excited to soon sail aboard the same vessel for the first time. And they’ll be in the same department, too – Kimberly is a chief cook, Kim a chief steward. In photo above, left, Chief Cook Garry Brandon displays his newly obtained A-seniority book, while GUDE Jaquan Jones (remaining photo) receives his full B-book at the January membership meeting.



ABOARD PERLA DEL CARIBE – Meeting aboard the TOTE ship in Puerto Rico are (from left) Recertified Bosun Victor Nunez, Safety Director Ricky Rivera and Electrician Randy Slue.

David Heindel, President
 Augustin Tellez, Executive Vice President
 Tom Orzechowski, Secretary-Treasurer
 George Tricker, Vice President Contracts
 Dean Corgey, Vice President Gulf Coast
 Nicholas J. Marrone, Vice President West Coast
 Joseph T. Soresi, Vice President Atlantic Coast
 Nicholas Celona, Vice President Government Services
 Bryan Powell,
 Vice President Lakes and Inland Waters

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Inquiring Seafarer

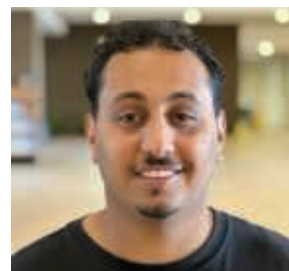
This month's question was answered by upgraders at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland.

Question: What are some things you like about the school?



Yunlay Bridges
Chief Cook

I've been away from it for a while, but I appreciate the opportunity to come back and feel like I never left. It's state-of-the-art. The things that they have done over the last 10 years – it just really blew my mind to see how much things have changed and yet it's still the same in some ways.



Yahia Yahia
AB

The school offers a great education, free lodging and food. It provides everything I need to continue my career. I've been here twice.



Michael Kanga
Bosun

It's great. Come to Piney Point and get everything you need. I love the school. Think about it: You have a free school, free meals, free hotel. If you want to eventually be a captain, if you want to be a chief engineer, come down and get an education. This is the place to start.



Ricky Sencida
Chief Steward

It's definitely very educational. I feel lucky to be here; this is my fourth time (taking classes). I'm thankful they have a school like this.



Rondell Richardson
Chief Steward

The school teaches you responsibility. It teaches you how to be out on your own, especially as a young man or young woman coming up. It's different from the outside world – when you come here, it's more peaceful and there's more togetherness.



Tony Pragosa
Chief Steward

It's a pretty decent campus and there are a lot of things to do around here. The instructors are phenomenal – they're great to work with.



Mildrid Seck
OS

The training is really interesting. Basically, you learn everything here, including how to live on your own and how to communicate with others and work in groups.

Pic from the Past



Seafarers gather for a union meeting in 1974 aboard the *Seatrain Carolina*.

Welcome Ashore!

We pay tribute to our brothers and sisters of the SIU who have recently retired. THANK YOU for a job well done and we wish you fair winds and following seas.

DEEP SEA

RIGOBERTO BEATA

Brother Rigoberto Beata, 69, signed on with the union in 2002 when he sailed on the *Allegiance*. He shipped in the engine department and upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Beata most recently sailed aboard the *Stena Polaris*. He resides in Los Angeles.



CARMELO DELA CRUZ

Brother Carmelo Dela Cruz, 66, started his career with the Seafarers International Union in 1990 when he sailed aboard the *Independence*. He upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and shipped in the steward department. Brother Dela Cruz last worked on the *Maunawili* and lives in Las Vegas.



ROMULO GUTIERREZ

Brother Romulo Gutierrez, 62, joined the SIU in 1997. He first shipped on the *USNS Capella* and sailed in the deck department. Brother Gutierrez upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. He last sailed on the *Overseas Texas City* and makes his home in Houston.



ABRAHAM MARTINEZ ROCHEZ

Brother Abraham Martinez Rochez, 67, joined the union in 1989, initially sailing aboard the *Independence*. A steward department member, he upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Martinez Rochez most recently sailed on the *Magnolia State*. He lives in Lauderdale Lakes, Florida.



RANDY MCKENZIE

Brother Randy McKenzie, 65, joined the union in 1981 when he sailed aboard the *Leo*. He worked primarily in the engine department and upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center. Brother McKenzie last shipped on the *Calvin P. Titus* and makes his home in Drums, Pennsylvania.



NESTOR MONTANO

Brother Nestor Montano, 68, started sailing with the SIU in 1998. He sailed in all three departments and first shipped on the *Gus W. Darnell*. Brother Montano upgraded often at the Piney Point school. He concluded his career on the *Overseas Boston* and resides in Tacoma, Washington.



GAVINO OCTAVIANO

Brother Gavino Octaviano, 65, joined the Seafarers in 1991, initially sailing on the *Rover*. Brother Octaviano was a member of the deck department and also worked on shore gangs. He upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center and was last employed with American Service Technology Inc. Brother Octaviano lives in Daly City, California.



RICKY PETTAWAY

Brother Ricky Pettaway, 61, became a member of the union in 1991. He shipped in the engine department and first sailed on the *Sealift Indian Ocean*. Brother Pettaway upgraded at the Piney Point school on several occasions. He most recently sailed on the *USNS Capella* and settled in Mobile, Alabama.

TIMOTHY PILLSWORTH

Brother Timothy Pillsworth, 69, donned the SIU colors in 1978, sailing first aboard the *Inger*. He sailed in both the deck and engine departments and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Pillsworth most recently worked at Watco. He is a resident of Kingston, New York.



MARIO RAMIREZ

Brother Mario Ramirez, 65, joined the union in 2008. A steward department member, he initially shipped on the *Atlantic*. Brother Ramirez upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He concluded his career aboard the *Seakay Sky* and lives in Houston.



PETER SCHUETZ

Brother Peter Schuetz, 57, became a member of the union in 1989 when he sailed on the *Independence*. Brother Schuetz worked in the steward department and upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center. He most recently shipped on the *Manulani* and resides in Honolulu.



DARYL SPICER

Brother Daryl Spicer, 66, signed on with the SIU in 1993. He first sailed aboard the *Independence* and worked in all three departments. Brother Spicer upgraded often at the Piney Point school. He last sailed aboard the *Overseas Cascade* and is a resident of Santa Anna, Texas.



MERCURIO TALICTIC

Brother Mercurio Talictic, 65, joined the Seafarers in 2003 and first sailed aboard the *Calvin P. Titus*. He upgraded at the Paul Hall Center in 2004 and sailed in the deck department. Brother Talictic's final vessel was the *Maersk Detroit*. He makes his home in Sugarland, Texas.



JOSEPH WILLIAMS

Brother Joseph Williams, 57, started his career with the union in 1992, initially sailing aboard the *Westward Venture*. A deck department member, he upgraded on several occasions at the Piney Point school. Brother Williams most recently shipped on the *USNS Curtiss*. He lives in Kenner, Louisiana.



GREAT LAKES

JEFFERY DAVIS

Brother Jeffery Davis, 71, became an SIU member in 1977. He first shipped on the *Columbia* and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Davis sailed in both the deck and engine departments. He concluded his career with Great Lakes Towing and settled in Trenton, Michigan.



RESAT DILER

Brother Resat Diler, 64, signed on with the SIU in 2003. He initially shipped aboard the *Presque Isle* and was a deck department member. Brother Diler upgraded at the Piney Point school multiple occasions. He most recently sailed on the *Burns Harbor* and resides in Largo, Florida.



INLAND

JOHN BILICH

Brother John Bilich, 64, joined the Seafarers International Union in 1979. A deck department member, he was first employed by Crescent Towing and Salvage. Brother Bilich upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He last sailed on the *Rocketship* and makes his home in Fountain Inn, South Carolina.



JAMES HOFFMAN

Brother James Hoffman, 62, donned the SIU colors in 1991. He sailed in the deck department and initially worked on the *John Paul Bobo*. Brother Hoffman upgraded on numerous occasions at the Piney Point school. He last shipped on the *Liberty Island* and resides in Lynn Haven, Florida.



MARTIN MERAVY

Brother Martin Meravy, 62, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1990 when he shipped with McAllister Towing of Virginia. He worked in both the deck and engine departments and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Meravy was last employed by Allied Transportation. He lives in Chesapeake, Virginia.



Final Departures

In solemn remembrance, we honor the legacies of these union members who have crossed the final bar. May they rest in peace.

DEEP SEA

FERNANDO ABUAN

Pensioner Fernando Abuan, 67, passed away December 11. He signed on with the Seafarers International Union in 2007 when he sailed aboard the *Baldomero Lopez*. A steward department member, Brother Abuan last shipped on the *John Paul Bobo* in 2016. He became a pensioner in 2023 and settled in Woodland, California.



ALBERT CAULDER

Pensioner Albert Caulder, 75, passed away December 20. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 1978. Brother Caulder first shipped with Interocean American Shipping and sailed in the deck department. His final vessel was the *Delaware Trader*. Brother Caulder became a pensioner in 2010 and made his home in Rocky Face, Georgia.



SALEH SALEH

Pensioner Saleh Saleh, 88, passed away December 10. A deck department member, he signed on with the SIU in 1970. Brother Saleh first worked on the *John P. Reiss*. He last shipped aboard the *Liberty Belle* in 1992. Brother Saleh went on pension in 2000 and made his home in Dearborn, Michigan.



MICHAEL ALGHAFEILI

Pensioner Michael Alghafeili, 75, died December 18. He started shipping with the union in 1981, initially working on the *Transcolumbia*. Brother Alghafeili worked in both the deck and engine departments. He concluded his career aboard the *Cape Washington* before retiring in 2016. Brother Alghafeili was a Baltimore resident.



SALVATORE CICIULLA

Pensioner Salvatore Ciciulla, 81, died December 28. Sailing first with Crowley Towing and Transportation, he donned the SIU colors in 1979. Brother Ciciulla worked in the deck department and spent most of his career in the deep sea division. He last shipped on the *Pride* before going on pension in 2007. Brother Ciciulla resided in Scoglitti, Italy.



JAMES STETTER

Pensioner James Stetter, 80, died November 24. He became a member of the Seafarers International Union in 2001. Brother Stetter first sailed aboard the *Indiana Harbor*. He was a deck department member and last shipped on the *St. Clair*. Brother Stetter, who also sailed in the deep sea division, went on pension in 2015 and lived in Calumet, Michigan.



ILARIA AMAYA

Pensioner Iliara Amaya, 69, passed away January 6. She joined the SIU in 1998 when she sailed on the *Gem State*. Sister Amaya was a member of the steward department and last shipped on the *Maersk Virginia* in 2010. She became a pensioner in 2019 and made her home in Miami.



JOHN GEHRING

Pensioner John Gehring, 82, passed away December 30. He signed on with the Seafarers in 1987. A steward department member, he first shipped on the *USNS Silas Bent*. Brother Gehring last sailed on the *Calvin P. Titus*. He became a retiree in 2007 and settled in Ronan, Montana.



JIMMY WHITING

Pensioner Jimmy Whiting, 75, passed away December 9. Brother Whiting embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1992, initially sailing on the *Independence*. He worked in the deck department. Brother Whiting's final vessel was the *Matson Tacoma*. He began collecting his pension in 2013 and resided in Las Vegas.



JOSEPH ARCH

Pensioner Joseph Arch, 79, died December 31. He began his career with the Seafarers in 1960. Brother Arch first shipped on the *Losmar* and was a member of the engine department. He last sailed aboard the *Chemical Explorer*, before retiring in 2002. Brother Arch resided in Denham Springs, Louisiana.



FREDERICK HAYSTON

Pensioner Frederick Hayston, 65, died December 5. He embarked on his career with the SIU in 2002, initially sailing aboard the *USNS Dahl*. Brother Hayston worked in the deck department and concluded his career aboard the *Texas Enterprise* in 2016. He began collecting his pension in 2023 and lived in Miramar, Florida.



GREAT LAKES

DWIGHT SELL

Pensioner Dwight Sell, 92, died January 5. He joined the Seafarers in 1973 and first worked on the *J.A.W. Iglehart*. Brother Sell sailed in the steward department. He became a pensioner in 1997 after concluding his career on the *Paul H. Townsend*. Brother Sell made his home in Alpena, Michigan.



LLOYD BETHEA

Pensioner Lloyd Bethea, 78, passed away November 15. He donned the SIU colors in 2001 and first shipped on the *Lykes Explorer*. A member of the engine department, Brother Bethea concluded his career aboard the *Benavidez* in 2015. He became a pensioner the following year and settled in Frederick, Maryland.

CLARENCE LOFTON

Pensioner Clarence Lofton, 88, passed away December 27. He joined the union in 1965 and first shipped aboard the *Del Valle*. Brother Lofton worked in the deck department. He last sailed aboard the *Humacao* before becoming a pensioner in 1996. Brother Lofton was a resident of Chickasaw, Alabama.

CARL NEAL

Pensioner Carl Neal, 80, died December 12. He joined the Seafarers International Union in 1964. Brother Neal first shipped on a Seatrain Lines vessel. He sailed in both the deck and engine departments and last sailed aboard the *Belofin Kestrel*. Brother Neal retired in 2014 and called Buffalo, Texas, home.



MOHAMED SHARIFF

Pensioner Mohamed Shariff, 91, passed away December 31. He donned the SIU colors in 1964 and initially sailed aboard the *Reiss Brothers*. Brother Shariff shipped in the steward department and last sailed aboard the *Global Sentinel*. He retired in 1996 and resided in Dearborn, Michigan.



ROBERT WILLIAMSON

Pensioner Robert Williamson, 87, died December 15. Brother Williamson signed on with the SIU in 1961. He sailed with Great Lakes Towing for almost his entire career and became a pensioner in 1998. Brother Williamson lived in Delavan, Wisconsin.

INLAND

WALLACE ASHWOOD

Pensioner Wallace Ashwood, 70, passed away December 31. He began sailing with the Seafarers in 1986. An engine department member, Brother Ashwood was employed with Moran Towing of Texas for most of his career. He went on pension in 2009 and called West Columbia, Texas, home.



CARL COUSIN

Pensioner Carl Cousin, 64, died December 1. He embarked on his career with the union in 2006 and shipped in the deck department. Brother Cousin worked with Westbank Riverboat Services until 2010. He became a pensioner in 2023 and resided in Gretna, Louisiana.

GARY DAVIS

Pensioner Gary Davis, 69, passed away January 3. He joined the SIU in 1977, initially sailing with Hvide Marine. Brother Davis worked in both the deck and engine departments. He was last employed with G&H Towing before retiring in 2020. Brother Davis made his home in Groves, Texas.



JOHN MACKEY

Pensioner John Mackey, 77, died January 12. In 2008, he became a member of the Seafarers International Union. Brother Mackey was a deck department member and sailed with OSG Ship Management for his entire career. He became a pensioner in 2016 and lived in Kingman, Arizona.



BOBBY MALONE

Pensioner Bobby Malone, 63, has passed away. He began sailing with the SIU in 1981 when he was employed with Dravo Basic Materials. Brother Malone worked in the deck department. He was last employed with Martin Marietta in 1996. Brother Malone started collecting his pension in 2022 and called Poplarville, Mississippi, home.

JOHN NIDAY

Pensioner John Niday, 72, died November 13. A deck department member, he joined the union in 1973. Brother Niday was employed with G&H Towing for most of his SIU career. He became a pensioner in 2017 and resided in Port Isabel, Texas.



MARVIN PAGE

Pensioner Marvin Page, 81, passed away December 15. He donned the union colors in 1967. Brother Page shipped in the deck department and worked with Mariner Towing for the duration of his career. He retired in 2013 and was a resident of Tampa, Florida.

JUAN RAMOS

Pensioner Juan Ramos, 89, died December 4. He became a member of the Seafarers International Union in 1977, initially working for Crowley Puerto Rico Services. Brother Ramos was a deck department member. He retired in 1996 after concluding his career with Crowley Towing and Transportation. Brother Ramos lived in Catano, Puerto Rico.



RAYMOND RUSHON

Pensioner Raymond Rushon, 88, passed away December 15. A deck department member, he began sailing with the SIU in 1996. Brother Rushon was employed by Crowley for his entire career. He began collecting his pension in 2001 and made his home in Havertown, Pennsylvania.



NMU

ANTONIO AFONSO

Pensioner Antonio Afonso, 91, died October 28. An engine department member, Brother Afonso last shipped on the *Mormac Sun*. He became a pensioner in 1989 and lived in Porto, Portugal.

DONALD COLLINS

Pensioner Donald Collins, 90, passed away October 30. Brother Collins worked in the deck department and began sailing in 1966. He last sailed aboard the *Chesapeake* before becoming a pensioner in 1986. Brother Collins called Whistler, Alabama, home.



JAMES COWARD

Pensioner James Coward, 85, died December 8. Brother Coward sailed as a deck department member. He last sailed aboard the *American Marketer* and began collecting his pension in 1993. Brother Coward made his home in Brooklyn, New York.

EDWARD FERNANDEZ

Pensioner Edward Fernandez, 86, passed away November 29. Brother Fernandez started sailing in 1969, initially aboard the *Amoco Illinois*. He worked in the deck department and last shipped aboard the *Chemical Pioneer*. Brother Fernandez became a pensioner in 1992 and settled in Elmwood Park, New Jersey.



FLOYD GROVES

Pensioner Floyd Groves, 90, died November 6. Brother Groves worked in the deck department. He retired in 1999 after concluding his career aboard the *Iowa Trader*. Brother Groves resided in the Cayman Islands.

JAMES HYDES

Pensioner James Hyde, 89, passed away October 26. Brother Hyde began sailing in 1967. He first sailed aboard the *Evergreen State* and worked in the engine department. Brother Hyde's final vessel was the *Texaco Minnesota*. He went on pension in 1989 and made his home in the Cayman Islands.



KENNARD JACKLEY

Pensioner Kennard Jackley, 83, passed away November 29. He began sailing in 1966 and first shipped on the *Point Barrow*. Brother Jackley sailed in the engine department. He concluded his career aboard the *Genevieve Lykes* and retired in 1995. Brother Jackley resided in Slidell, Louisiana.



BRUCE KEENE

Pensioner Bruce Keene, 86, died December 26. Brother Keene was last employed by Boston Fuel Company. He became a pensioner in 2002 and lived in South Portland, Maine.

JOYCE MARKS

Pensioner Joyce Marks, 81, passed away November 11. Brother Marks sailed in the engine department and last shipped on the *Marine Duval*. He went on pension in 1994 and settled in Port Arthur, Texas.

LIONEL MCMASTER

Pensioner Lionel McMaster, 98, died November 28. Brother McMaster first sailed in 1944. He shipped in the deck department, initially aboard the *Joshua Chamberlain*. Brother McMaster last sailed aboard the *Mormac Cape* and began collecting his pension in 1970. He was a resident of Brooklyn, New York.

WILLIAM SANTIAGO

Pensioner William Santiago, 100, passed away November 18. Brother Santiago started sailing in 1945. He worked in the steward department, initially aboard the *Coaldale Victory*. He last shipped aboard the *Constitution*. Brother Santiago became a pensioner in 1969 and settled in Puerto Rico.



LEONARD TCHORZ

Pensioner Leonard Tchorz, 95, died October 20. Brother Tchorz worked in the engine department. He retired in 1997 after concluding his career with Woods Hole Shipping. Brother Tchorz resided in Fairhaven, Massachusetts.

ANGEL TORRES

Pensioner Angel Torres, 81, passed away November 15. He began sailing in 1957, initially aboard the *Coal Miner*. Brother Torres sailed in the engine department. He concluded his career aboard the *Kenai* and retired in 1986. Brother Torres was a Houston resident.



Digest of Shipboard Union Meetings

The Seafarers LOG attempts to print as many digests of union shipboard minutes as possible. On occasion, because of space limitations, some will be omitted. Ships' minutes first are reviewed by the union's contract department. Those issues requiring attention or resolution are addressed by the union upon receipt of the ships' minutes. The minutes are then forwarded to the Seafarers LOG for publication.

MAERSK KENSGINGTON (Maersk Line, Limited), November 5 – Chairman **Carlos Gibbons**, Secretary **Husain Nagi Ali**, Educational Director **Juan Rochez**. Crew still waiting for improved Wi-Fi service as well as smart TVs in every room. Chairman advised members to check the *Seafarers LOG* or the SIU website for updates about benefits as well as other important information. Grill in galley in working condition thanks to the engineers. Educational director reminded crew to upgrade at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education to secure better jobs and better pay. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members requested 30 for 30 vacation, new mattresses, new towels and new linens.

MAERSK ATLANTA (Maersk Line, Limited) November 26 – Chairman **Roy Madrio**, Secretary **Glenn Williams**, Educational Director **Jing Hui Huang**. Chairman thanked everyone for a job well done and reiterated the importance of shipboard safety. Payoff scheduled for following day. Secretary asked members to place dirty laundry on their decks before getting off ship. Educational director encouraged crew to upgrade at the Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested better pillows and

blankets and for every room to have mounted brackets for TVs. Members would like overtime hours to be credited towards pension pay. Next port: Charleston, South Carolina.

GARDEN STATE (Crowley), December 23 – Chairman **Carlos Arauz**, Educational Director **Alexander Capellan Almonte**. Chairman reminded crew to check documents and to upgrade at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Ship house clean and sanitary. Members are pleased with new Starlink Wi-Fi service. Crew thanked steward department for a job well done.

TORM TIMOTHY (Eco Tankers Crew Management), December 23 – Chairman **Louis Ferrigno**, Secretary **Keesha Holloway**. Crew reviewed procedures for sorting and disposing of trash. Members were reminded to place appropriate items in designated bins. Crew plans to discuss personal and mess hall refrigerators with captain. Night lunch to be moved into crew mess. Bosun made plans to figure out why TVs are not working. Members were thanked for keeping smoking lounge clean. Dryer needs to be installed, but still waiting on hotwork approval. Weight tower to be in-

stalled/secured to deck once ship is sailing. Members discussed stores order, slop chest and new ideas for menu items. Chief cook needs fan. Chairman said crew did a great job with reflag.

ALASKAN NAVIGATOR (Alaska Tanker Company), January 3 – Chairman **Adel Ahmed**, Secretary **Albert Sison**, Educational Director **Aljohn Fernandez**, Deck Delegate **Nathaniel Rivera**, Engine Delegate **Ali Mohamed**, Steward Delegate **Nasr Almusab**. Ship received new espresso machine, new refrigerator and new treadmill. Crew held a moment of silence for the passing of SIU President Emeritus Mike Sacco and send their condolences to his family. Chairman discussed various topics including increases in vision care and new prescription benefit to aid weight loss. He talked about balance billing and urged crew to take precautions when communicating on board to ensure safety and security of ship. Vote of thanks given to steward department for excellent food, especially during the holidays. Secretary reminded everyone of the importance of union meetings and members having the ability to voice their concerns. He reminded crew to keep mess halls clean and to take care of the appliances and equipment provided by the company. No

beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew would like unlimited Wi-Fi and 25 for 30 vacation days. Members motioned to increase steward assistant wage to match entry level positions in deck and engine departments. Crew asked that cleaning grease trap duties for the DEU be written in the contract as penalty time. Next port: Cherry Point, North Carolina.

MAERSK KINLOSS (Maersk Line, Limited), January 13 – Chairman **Rufino Giray**, Secretary **Caesar Mercado**, Educational Director **Ti-jani Rashid**, Deck Delegate **Stephen Belden**, Engine Delegate **Christopher Eason**. Chairman announced payoff in Newark, New Jersey, on January 16. Secretary reviewed ship fund balance. Educational director recommended members upgrade at the union-affiliated school in Piney Point, Maryland. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested a printer for ship library as well as new vacuums and bigger refrigerators for each room. Members discussed hazard pay and asked for health benefit increases and for vacation pay to increase to 20 for 30. Crew thanked steward department for good meals during the whole trip.

Know Your Rights

FINANCIAL REPORTS. The Constitution of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters makes specific provision for safeguarding the membership's money and union finances. The constitution requires a detailed audit by certified public accountants every year, which is to be submitted to the membership by the secretary-treasurer. A yearly finance committee of rank-and-file members, elected by the membership, each year examines the finances of the union and reports fully their findings and recommendations. The annual financial committee will be elected during the April 8 headquarters membership meeting to review the 2023 records. Members of this committee may make dissenting reports, specific recommendations and separate findings.

TRUST FUNDS. All trust funds of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District are administered in accordance with the provisions of various trust fund agreements. All these agreements specify that the trustees in charge of these funds shall equally consist of union and management representatives and their alternates. All expenditures and disbursements of trust funds are made only upon approval by a majority of the trustees. All trust fund financial records are available at the headquarters of the various trust funds.

SHIPPING RIGHTS. A member's shipping rights and seniority are protected exclusively by contracts between the union and the employers. Members should get to know their shipping rights. Copies of these contracts are posted and available in all union halls. If members believe there have been violations of their shipping or seniority rights as contained in

the contracts between the union and the employers, they should notify the Seafarers Appeals Board by certified mail, return receipt requested. The proper address for this is:

George Tricker, Chairman
Seafarers Appeals Board
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Full copies of contracts as referred to are available to members at all times, either by writing directly to the union or to the Seafarers Appeals Board.

CONTRACTS. Copies of all SIU contracts are available in all SIU halls. These contracts specify the wages and conditions under which an SIU member works and lives aboard a ship or boat. Members should know their contract rights, as well as their obligations, such as filing for overtime (OT) on the proper sheets and in the proper manner. If, at any time, a member believes that an SIU patrolman or other union official fails to protect their contractual rights properly, he or she should contact the nearest SIU port agent.

EDITORIAL POLICY — THE SEAFARERS LOG. The *Seafarers LOG* traditionally has refrained from publishing any article serving the political purposes of any individual in the union, officer or member. It also has refrained from publishing articles deemed harmful to the union or its collective membership. This established policy has been reaffirmed by membership action at the September 1960 meetings in all constitutional ports. The responsibility for *Seafarers LOG* policy is vested in an editorial board which consists of the executive board of the union. The executive board may delegate, from among its ranks, one individual to carry out this responsibility.

PAYMENT OF MONIES. No monies are to be paid to anyone in any official capacity in the SIU unless an official union receipt is given for same. Under no circumstances should any member pay any money for any reason unless he is given such receipt. In the event anyone attempts to require any such payment be made without supplying a receipt, or if a member is required to make a payment and is given an official receipt, but feels that he or she should not have been required to make such payment, this should immediately be reported to union headquarters.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS. Copies of the SIU Constitution are available in all union halls. All members should obtain copies of this constitution so as to familiarize themselves with its contents. Any time a member feels any other member or officer is attempting to deprive him or her of any constitutional right or obligation by any methods, such as dealing with charges, trials, etc., as well as all other details, the member so affected should immediately notify headquarters.

EQUAL RIGHTS. All members are guaranteed equal rights in employment and as members of the SIU. These rights are clearly set forth in the SIU Constitution and in the contracts which the union has negotiated with the employers. Consequently, no member may be discriminated against because of race, creed, color, sex, national or geographic origin.

If any member feels that he or she is denied the equal rights to which he or she is entitled, the member should notify union headquarters.

SEAFARERS POLITICAL ACTIVITY DONATION (SPAD). SPAD is a separate segregated fund. Its proceeds are used to further its objects and purposes including, but not limited to, furthering the political, social and economic interests of maritime workers, the preservation and furthering of the American merchant marine with improved employment opportunities for seamen and boatmen and the advancement of trade union concepts. In connection with such objects, SPAD supports and contributes to political candidates for elective office. All contributions are voluntary. No contribution may be solicited or received because of force, job discrimination, financial reprisal, or threat of such conduct, or as a condition of membership in the union or of employment. If a contribution is made by reason of the above improper conduct, the member should notify the Seafarers International Union or SPAD by certified mail within 30 days of the contribution for investigation and appropriate action and refund, if involuntary. A member should support SPAD to protect and further his or her economic, political and social interests, and American trade union concepts.

NOTIFYING THE UNION — If at any time a member feels that any of the above rights have been violated, or that he or she has been denied the constitutional right of access to union records or information, the member should immediately notify SIU President David Heindel at headquarters by certified mail, return receipt requested. The address is:

David Heindel, President
Seafarers International Union
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Paul Hall Center Upgrading Course Dates

Printed below are dates for courses scheduled to take place at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. The QR code connects to a web page with the latest course dates (they may differ from what's printed here, though in most cases the only changes are additions that haven't yet made it into the *LOG*). Seafarers are welcome to contact the admissions office with questions about upgrading courses: (301) 899-0657, admissions@seafarers.org



Title of Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
DECK DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES		
Able Seafarer - Deck	May 6 July 8	May 24 July 26
Fast Rescue Boat	August 19	August 23
Adv. Shiphandling	August 26	September 6
Adv. Stability	September 9	September 13
Adv. Meteorology	September 16	September 20
Search and Rescue Mgmt Level	September 23	September 25
ENGINE DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES		
Marine Electrician	April 22	May 24
Adv. Refer Containers	May 6 August 26	May 17 September 6
Machinist	April 29	May 10
Pumpman	April 22	April 26
Welding	April 8 June 3	April 26 June 21
STEWARD DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES		
Certified Chief Cook	April 29 June 10 July 15 August 19 September 23 November 4	May 31 July 12 August 16 September 20 October 25 December 6
ServSafe Management	April 22 June 3 July 8 August 12 September 16	April 26 June 7 July 12 August 16 September 20

Title of Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
STEWARD DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES		
Advanced Galley Ops	June 3 August 26 November 18	June 28 September 20 December 13
Chief Steward	April 22 July 15 October 7	May 17 August 8 November 1
SAFETY/OPEN UPGRADING COURSES		
Basic Training Revalidation	April 5 April 22 April 26 May 6 May 10 May 31	April 5 April 22 April 26 May 6 May 10 May 31
Basic Training/Adv. FF Revalidation	June 3	June 4
Government Vessels	April 22 May 13 June 10 June 24	April 26 May 17 June 14 June 28
Tank Ship Familiarization - DL (PIC)	April 15	April 19
Tank Ship Familiarization - DL	April 22	April 26
Tank Ship Familiarization - LG	April 29	May 3
MSC Storekeeper Basic	August 12	August 30
MSC Supply Configuration Mgmt	September 2	September 13
MSC Ship Clip	September 16	September 27

UPGRADING APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone (Home) _____ (Cell) _____

Date of Birth _____

☐ Deep Sea Member ☐ Lakes Member ☐ Inland Waters Member

If the following information is not filled out completely, your application will not be processed.

Social Security # _____ Book # _____

Seniority _____ Department _____

Home Port _____

E-mail _____

Endorsement(s) or License(s) now held _____

Are you a graduate of the SHLSS/PHC trainee program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, class # and dates attended _____

Have you attended any SHLSS/PHC upgrading courses? ☐ Yes ☐ No

With this application, COPIES of the following must be sent: One hundred and twenty-five (125) days seetime for the previous year, MMC, TWIC, front page of your book including your department and seniority and qualifying sea time for the course if it is Coast Guard tested. Must have a valid SHBP clinic through course date.

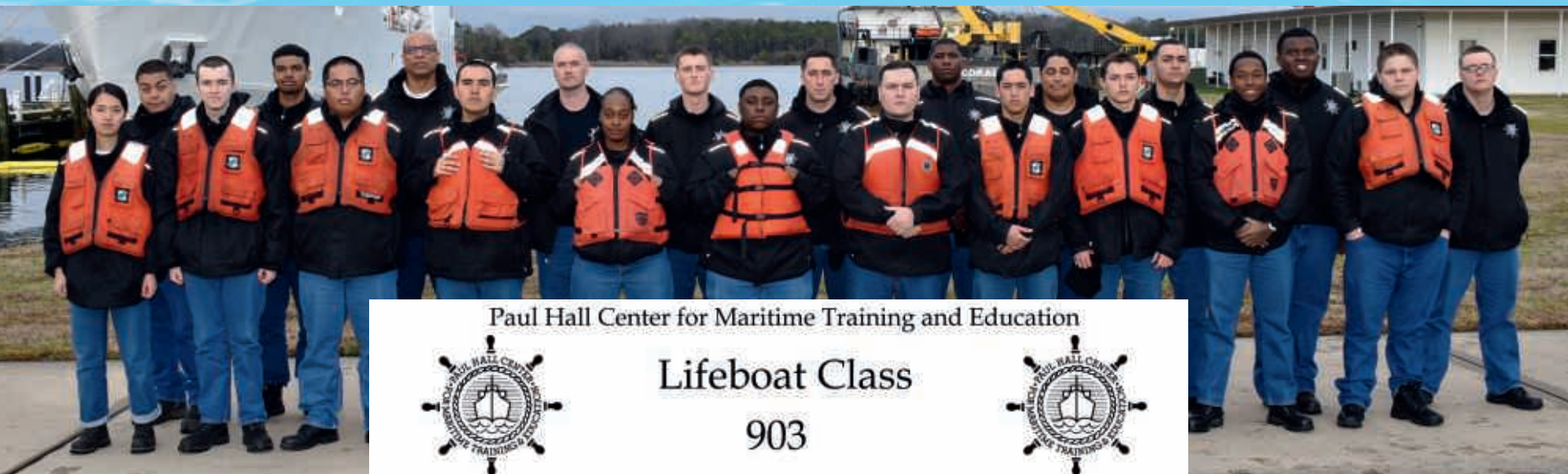
I authorize the Paul Hall Center to release any of the information contained in this application, or any of the supporting documentation that I have or will submit with this application to related organizations, for the purpose of better servicing my needs and helping me to apply for any benefits which might become due to me.

COURSE	START DATE	DATE OF COMPLETION
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
LAST VESSEL: _____	Rating: _____	
Date On: _____	Date Off: _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____	

NOTE: Transportation will be paid in accordance with the scheduling letter only if you present original receipts and successfully complete the course. If you have any questions, contact your port agent before departing for Piney Point. Not all classes are reimbursable. Return completed application to: Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education Admissions Office, Email: upgrading@seafarers.org Mail: 45353 St. George's Ave., Piney Point, MD 20674 Fax: 301-994-2189.

The Seafarers Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education is a private, non-profit, equal opportunity institution and admits students, who are otherwise qualified, or any race, nationality or sex. The school complies with applicable laws with regard to admission, access or treatment of students in its programs or activities.

Paul Hall Center Class Photos



APPRENTICE WATER SURVIVAL CLASS #903 – Graduated December 29 (above, in alphabetical order): John Bowen Jr., Raekwon Brooks, Emmanuel Capulong, Tristan Chavers, Adam Ferkula, Walter Figueroa, Jeffrey Frye, Cody Gore, Brandon Haffner, Richard Holland, Justin Hughes, Kaden Ketcham, Joshua Mair, Alexis Martinez, Noah Neal, Lakisha Perry, Daniel Rodríguez-Perez, Taylor Smith, Vensen Suguitan, Michael Sutton, Emma Wang and Conor Westbrook.



ADVANCED GALLEY OPERATIONS – Graduated February 2: Khiry Bivins, Xavier Burgos, Julian De Los Santos, Edward Harnish, Diane MacDonald and Michael Page.



CERTIFIED CHIEF COOK (MODULE 4) – Graduated February 2: Taquisha Breathwaite, Joshua Burnett, Daniel Jackson, Jose Sadaya, Dequan Smith Jr., Francis Solmirano and Myles White.



JUNIOR ENGINEER – Graduated February 2: Loren Arriola, Alexander Boothby, Mark Dennison, Jesse Kleinfelter, Julian Rubbo and Ryan Sotomayor. Instructor Christopher Morgan is at the far left.



RFPEW – Graduated February 2: D'Angelo Brown, Dayshaun Brown, Robert Crain, Javon Norris Jr., Nesta Pafford and Dallas Smith.



RFPNW – Graduated January 26 (above, in alphabetical order): Brandon Brown, Patrick English, Bryn Erck, Lawrence Girard III, Scott Haselbauer, Jacob Isaacs, Nathan Jackson, Jonathan Jeronimo, Jeffrey McGowin Jr., Daquan Moreland, Quincy Nobles, Shaan Oberdieck, Halden Pettit, David Rojas, Ernest Ross Jr., John Scofield and Tyrone Simms.

Paul Hall Center Class Photos



COMBINED BASIC/ADVANCED FIREFIGHTING – Graduated January 26 (above, in alphabetical order): Sukhbir Bains, Joseph Bowen, Mohammed Elazzouzi, Jeffery Griffin, Peter Hotchkiss, Caliph Johnson II, Russell Lempke, Josean Villarrubia, Derek Willis, Seamus Woods, Richard Wright and Damon Zschoche (Not all are pictured).



GOVERNMENT VESSELS – Graduated January 12: Donald Appu, Ragab Ayed, Kemonei Breathwaite, Robert Davis Jr., Van Dixon, Ibrahim Elsayed, Ryan Gallano, Antonio Gonzalez-Esteves, Tyrone Hernandez, Ajit Hettiarachi, Nathaniel Hunter, Twane Joe, Ramadan Karar, Khaled Mohamed, Jesus Ortiz-Rivera, Patricia Ricks, Maeen Saleh, Michael Sanders Jr., Mildrid Seck, Melissa Spies and Maurice Woodhouse (Not all are pictured).



TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (DL) – Graduated January 12: Shane Beall, Joshua Bermudez, Kirk Chambers, Jeffrey Corpstein, Derick Dy, Jon Erichsen, Morgan Hepburn, Kenji Hoffman, Jason Icasas, Ion Irimia, Mark Malicki, Adrian Schubert, Mofeed Shaibi, Alvin Watson and Abdulrazak Yahia.



MEDICAL CARE PROVIDER – Graduated February 2: Sukhbir Bains, Joseph Bowen, Mohammed Elazzouzi, Leonard Garrett, Jeffery Griffin, Crystal Higgs, Caliph Johnson II, Josean Villarrubia, Derek Willis, Seamus Woods and Damon Zschoche (Not all are pictured).



TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (LG) – Graduated January 19: Joshua Bermudez, Zion Bradford, Joseph Burke, Kirk Chambers, Jeffrey Corpstein, Van Dixon, Jon Erichsen, Marlon Gayle, Jose Gonzalez Del Valle, Roy Graham, Octavia Grant, Rasheed Groden, Jeremy Hebda, Morgan Hepburn, Jason Icasas, Ion Irimia, Rami Kassem, Siniya Lee, Mark Malicki, George Mardones, Mofeed Shaibi, Alvin Watson and Lawrence Wright (Not all are pictured).



GOVERNMENT VESSELS – Graduated February 2: Andres Brown, Ana Calma, Benjamin Cone, Frederick Dunmore, Marlon Gayle, Te'angela Grant, Mark Griffin, Morgan Hepburn, Raynard Hoover, Richard Huffman, Jalen Jones, Timothy Jones, Manuel Lulley, Gary Nelson, Luis Pareja Sanchez, Moses Scott IV, Torri Streeks, Tanesha Terrell, Jeremy Thigpen, David Thompson, Alvin Watson and Richard Wright (Not all are pictured).

SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION – ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS, AFL-CIO

SIU Helps Promote Maritime Careers *Industry Event Underscores Jones Act's Value to Puerto Rico*

Careers in the U.S. Merchant Marine are viable and rewarding.

The SIU helped amplify that message Jan. 15-16 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where an industry event involving the multi-mission training ship *Empire State* took place. SIU Assistant Vice President Amancio Crespo and Safety Director Ricky Rivera took part in the gatherings, which included hundreds of local students, cadets from the Maritime College of the State University of New York (SUNY), local officials, shipping company executives and others.

Seafarers-contracted TOTE operates the union-built *Empire State* when it is activated, as was the case for the training voyage to the territory. A company spokesperson noted, "This voyage served as an essential training exercise for the cadets, and its arrival presented an opportunity for prospective students from Puerto Rico to learn about serving in the merchant marine.... The (domestic) maritime industry provides more than 2,000 jobs and contributes more than \$96 million in wages and \$221 million in annual economic output for Puerto Rico alone."

Crespo stated, "We appreciated the chance to promote our affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education to the guests. This was a

massive job fair and conference, with hundreds of high school and college students attending. It went really well."

Event speakers included Puerto Rico Secretary of State Omar Marrero; TOTE Group President and CEO Tim Nolan; TOTE Maritime Puerto Rico Vice President and General Manager Eduardo Pagan; Puerto Rico Ports Authority Executive Director Joel A. Piza Batiz, and others.

Pagan noted, "We welcome to Puerto Rico the *Empire State* and its crew, who are training not only to keep our economy running but are also training to respond to any type of emergency, both in the continental United States and in Puerto Rico. Additionally, we're excited to offer Puerto Rican students the chance to learn" about maritime careers "through an exclusive visit in which they will tour the vessel, delving into the details of its operation, and learning about service in the merchant navy. We hope this visit will be beneficial for them and their future."

Philly Shipyard delivered the *Empire State* in September 2023. The ship is part of the Maritime Administration's National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) program, which the shipyard described as being "designed to provide world-

class training for America's future mariners and to support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions in times of need." Altogether, the program encompasses five new ships, with the last one slated for delivery in 2026.

While the two-day event in Puerto Rico largely focused on maritime careers, some of the discussion centered on the Jones Act, America's freight cabotage law. Often the target of unfair and inaccurate criticism, the Jones Act has protected America's national, economic and homeland security for more than century.

The law is vital to Puerto Rico, according to a recent study by Ernst & Young.

Responding to that examination, Transportation Institute Chairman and President James L. Henry stated, "Jones Act carriers are dedicated to Puerto Rico and help local businesses make goods more affordable and the supply chain more reliable compared to our global competitors. While the entire global supply chain was disrupted during the pandemic, our Jones Act carriers proved to be 27 times more affordable and eight times more reliable than non-Jones Act carriers."



Pictured at the industry event in Puerto Rico are (from left) SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo, TOTE Group President/CEO Tim Nolan, and Safety Director Ricky Rivera.



SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo (foreground) welcomes local students.



Guests climb the gangway for a shipboard tour.



The *Empire State* is part of a new program led by the Maritime Administration – and it was built by union members at Philly Shipyard.



SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo (standing at right) addresses cadets aboard the *Empire State*.