



Auxiliary Meritorious Service Medal

Auxiliary Meritorious Service Medal Award – 2020

The Auxiliary Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) is awarded to Auxiliarists who have contributed exceptional meritorious service to the Coast Guard and/or Auxiliary. Auxiliarists who serve in any capacity within the Auxiliary are eligible. The Auxiliary MSM may be awarded by any Flag officer. The meritorious performance of duty must have enhanced Auxiliary goals.

This performance must clearly be of a nature much higher than that normally expected, and which has a significant positive effect on the ability of the Coast Guard and/or the Auxiliary to complete its missions and goals. For this award, the key words are outstanding and meritorious service worthy of special recognition, which contributes significantly to fulfillment of Auxiliary goals at the local level.

This Year's Recipients are:

COMO Gus Formato as Deputy National Commodore, Recreational Boating Safety and Atlantic Area (East)

COMO Linda Merryman as Deputy National Commodore, Information Technology and Planning

COMO Wally Smith as Deputy National Commodore, Response and Prevention, and Pacific Area

COMO Randy Ventress as Deputy National Commodore, Mission Support and Atlantic Area (West)

COMO Doug Cream as Assistant National Commodore, Chief Counsel

COMO Peter Jensen as Assistant National Commodore, FORCECOM

COMO Robert Laurer as Director, Public Education

COMO David Porter as Assistant National Commodore, Diversity

**** CITATIONS FOLLOW ****

COMO Fred Gates as Assistant National Commodore, Planning and Performance from November 2019 to October 2020 in response to a sudden and unexpected vacancy in that office

COMO Bob Shafer as Assistant National Commodore, Recreational Boating

COMO Don Zinner as Assistant National Commodore, Response and Prevention

Rick Saunders as Director, Response

Bruce Kelton as Deputy Chief Counsel

Kevin Redden as Deputy Director, Performance Measurement from November 2018 to October 2019, and Director from October 2019 to October 2020

Bruce Johnson as Division Chief, Youth Programs

Terry Barth as Executive Assistant to the National Commodore

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A SECOND)**

TO

COMMODORE AGOSTINO FORMATO

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore FORMATO is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Deputy National Commodore, Recreational Boating Safety and Atlantic Area (East) from November 2018 to October 2020. He was responsible for smooth and effective management of three national directorates, five regions, and 80 national staff positions that administered the Auxiliary's support to the Coast Guard's recreational boating safety mission. His superb organizational skills were instrumental to achieving 100 percent Coast Guard operational command participation in the Auxiliary's service-wide gap analysis that identified diverse opportunities for Coast Guard units to bridge resource shortfalls with Auxiliary assets. He expanded the Auxiliary Life Jacket Wear Observation program to 20 states and oversaw successful Auxiliary-Sea Scout Youth Development program testing and subsequent roll-out across all five Auxiliary regions in his Area. As a direct result of his inspirational leadership, Atlantic Area (East) Auxiliarists delivered over 2.7 million hours of operational and administrative support to Coast Guard missions, over 161,900 vessel examinations and marine dealer visits, more than 20,900 hours of public education, and over 215 lives and \$12.7 million in property saved. Commodore FORMATO'S dedication and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A FOURTH)**

TO

COMMODORE LINDA M. MERRYMAN

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore MERRYMAN is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Deputy National Commodore, Information Technology and Planning from November 2018 to October 2020. Applying exceptional programmatic insight and managerial skill, she supervised two Assistant National Commodores, four national directorates, and over 110 national staff positions that administered the Auxiliary's support to Coast Guard mission performance monitoring and information management. She oversaw Auxiliary support of the Coast Guard's \$11.4 million multi-year AUXDATA modernization project, superbly guiding her team to system delivery ahead of schedule and on budget despite multiple challenges including the lengthy 2019 federal government shutdown and the unprecedented impacts of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. She ensured national information technology staff adeptly handled more than 5,500 help desk tickets, maintained over 40 mission-critical information systems, and quickly resolved diverse cyber and system interface issues. She worked closely with the National Commodore to create the 2018-2024 National Strategic Plan and developed a comprehensive tracking and reporting system that kept national leadership abreast of organizational progress. Commodore MERRYMAN'S dedication and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A SECOND)**

TO

COMMODORE WALLACE A. SMITH, JR.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore SMITH is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Deputy National Commodore, Response and Prevention, and Pacific Area from November 2018 to October 2020. He was responsible for smooth and effective management of four national directorates, five regions, and 100 national staff positions that administered the Auxiliary's support to Coast Guard operations. Demonstrating remarkable emergency management and operational expertise, he coordinated robust Auxiliary support of Coast Guard responses to Hurricanes FLORENCE and DORIAN as well as the California wildfires. He significantly enhanced Auxiliary operational readiness by shepherding development of many new training tools including an Incident Management Auxiliary Coordination Cell Deployment Guide, Team Coordination Training Refresher Course, and annual aviation, surface operations, and telecommunications workshops. As a direct result of his inspirational leadership, Pacific Area Auxiliarists delivered over 831,900 hours of operational and administrative support to Coast Guard missions, over 47,100 vessel examinations and marine dealer visits, more than 26,700 hours of public education, and over 195 lives and \$31.9 million in property saved. Commodore SMITH's dedication and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

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TO

COMMODORE EDWARD R. VENTRESS, SR.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore VENTRESS is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Deputy National Commodore, Mission Support and Atlantic Area (West) from November 2018 to October 2020. He was responsible for smooth and effective management of three national directorates, six regions, and 195 national staff positions that administered the Auxiliary's support to Coast Guard workforce development. He significantly expanded Auxiliary augmentation of active duty programs including provision of 31 Auxiliary chaplains, 24 Auxiliary healthcare professionals to Coast Guard clinics and medical treatment facilities, 545 Auxiliary Food Service Specialists to Coast Guard galleys and dining facilities, and Auxiliary assistance to 23 Coast Guard Recruiting Offices. Applying superb insight, he oversaw development of innovative web tools that yielded a 20 percent increase in recruiting and over 25,000 site visits by first-year enrollees. As a direct result of his inspirational leadership, Atlantic Area (West) Auxiliarists delivered over 1.2 million hours of operational and administrative support to Coast Guard missions, over 64,400 vessel examinations and marine dealer visits, more than 6,900 hours of public education, and over 250 lives and \$7.1 million in property saved. Commodore VENTRESS' dedication and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A FIFTH)**

TO

COMMODORE DOUGLAS S. CREAM

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore CREAM is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Assistant National Commodore, Chief Counsel from November 2018 to October 2020. Applying astute foresight, keen legal expertise, and mastery of laws and regulations, he consistently delivered invaluable legal advice and counsel to the National Commodore, National Executive Committee, Coast Guard Judge Advocate General and staff, as well as to the leaders of the 16 Auxiliary regions. He crafted dozens of incisive leadership and policy statements issued to all Auxiliarists. His detailed policy explanations and interpretations during the 35-day federal government shutdown in 2019 proved instrumental to authorizing Auxiliary engagement in virtually all Coast Guard mission support activities during those extraordinary circumstances. His facilitation of the Coast Guard's unprecedented determination that properly trained Auxiliary physicians could be assigned to duty as Aviation Medical Officers and Flight Surgeons yielded a remarkably new and valuable line of Auxiliary support. He crafted the Memorandum of Agreement between the Auxiliary and Sea Scouts that launched the Auxiliary-Sea Scout Youth Development program which significantly broadened Coast Guard and Auxiliary recruiting opportunities. Commodore CREAM's dedication and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
TO
COMMODORE PETER K. JENSEN
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY**

Commodore JENSEN is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Assistant National Commodore, FORCECOM from November 2018 to October 2020. Applying exceptional leadership, he supervised three national directorates, 196 national staff positions, and the day-to-day administration of the Auxiliary's expansive array of programs that supported Coast Guard mission performance, outreach, and readiness. He significantly enhanced Auxiliary augmentation of Coast Guard missions, including provision of 31 Auxiliary chaplains, 24 Auxiliary healthcare professionals, Auxiliary support of 23 Coast Guard Recruiting Offices, and 545 Auxiliary Food Service Specialists who delivered over 27,000 hours of culinary support in 2019. He led the Training Directorate's development of 38 courses for its online Auxiliary Classroom and establishment of a comprehensive five-level leadership training program. Upon short-fused imposition of a new Introduction to Risk Management training mandate, he developed detailed training metrics that accurately monitored progress and motivated timely completion by over 12,000 Auxiliarists. He also innovatively formed Auxiliary public affairs rapid response teams and significantly improved Auxiliary award processing. Commodore JENSEN's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A THIRD)**

TO

COMMODORE ROBERT M. LAURER

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore LAURER is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Director, Public Education from November 2018 to October 2020. Demonstrating exceptional administrative and organizational skill, he led five national divisions and oversaw the day-to-day administration and management of the Auxiliary's expansive array of boating safety education programs. This included constant coordination with the National Executive Committee, the National Board, 16 regional public education program managers, and management of 23 national staff positions. He was the driving force behind improvements in the Auxiliary instructor corps including complete revision of the Instructor Development Course, creation of the comprehensive 2020 Instructor workshop, and establishment of the Commodore Dan Maxim Award to recognize excellence in education among the best Auxiliary instructors. Astutely aware of the public's need for new instructional courses, he spearheaded development of attractive youth educational products including "*Boats 'n Kids*" and "*Kids and Paddlecraft*," both designed for after-school programs, as well as new adult workshops and seminars like "*Introduction to Boating Safety*," "*Waypoints*," and "*Waterfowl Hunting and Boating Safety*." Commodore LAURER's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
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(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A SECOND)**

TO

COMMODORE DAVID G. PORTER

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore PORTER is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Assistant National Commodore, Diversity from November 2018 to October 2020. A consummate and considerate leader, he attentively oversaw the day-to-day administration and management of the Auxiliary's expansive array of diversity and workforce development services. This included constant coordination with the National Executive Committee, the National Board, and 16 Executive Committees and their regional diversity program managers. His ardent promotion of Auxiliary diversity values and objectives yielded an increase of more than 236 nominations for the National Commodore's Three-Star Diversity Award over the previous year. He spearheaded the "Diversity of Mission" concept and created the Auxiliary Jobs Compendium that helped members get involved in Auxiliary programs and qualifications. He creatively added a News and Events Blog to the national diversity website which helped increase site visits by more than 2,600 hits. A supportive and enthusiastic shipmate, he provided invaluable Auxiliary programmatic insight to the Coast Guard Office of Diversity, ensuring inclusion of Auxiliary perspective, considerations, and concerns in its development of diversity and inclusion strategies. Commodore PORTER's dedication and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
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TO

MR. FREDERICK G. SAUNDERS, JR.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Mr. SAUNDERS is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Director, Response from November 2018 to October 2020. He demonstrated exceptional initiative, leadership, and management skill in spearheading many intricate projects while overseeing the day-to-day administration of response operations and programs as well as constant coordination with the National Executive Committee, the National Board, 16 regional operations program managers, and 35 national staff positions. He ensured Auxiliary preparedness to support Coast Guard responses to several major natural disasters including Hurricanes MICHAEL, FLORENCE, and DORIAN. This included ensuring Auxiliary readiness for telecommunications support of COMMCOM and post-event aerial aids-to-navigation and damage assessment missions. He was instrumental to integration of Risk Management training across all Auxiliary operations and developed a Rescue-21 Best Practices Guide and revised Personal Qualification Standards for Telecommunications Operators. His extensive development of detailed Auxiliary facility background information was invaluable to user acceptance testing and evaluation of operational functions of the new AUXDATA II information system. Mr. SAUNDERS' dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
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(SILVER STAR IN LIEU OF A SIXTH)**

TO

COMMODORE FREDERICK C. GATES

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore GATES is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Assistant National Commodore, Planning and Performance from November 2019 to October 2020. In response to sudden and unexpected vacancy in that office, he unreservedly stepped up to fill the remainder of the term and manage two national directorates, 40 national staff positions, and the day-to-day administration of the Auxiliary's support of Coast Guard mission performance and strategic planning. He insightfully worked with the Coast Guard Office of C5I Capabilities (CG-761) and Coast Guard Cyber Command to lay the foundation for Coast Guard cyber support by creating a three-tiered Auxiliary Cyber Technician development program. He took immediate, corrective action to get critical Auxiliary enrollment and exit surveys on track and their findings quickly disseminated to Auxiliary regional leaders to pinpoint membership retention challenges. When production of the crucial 2019 "Value of the Auxiliary" report was jeopardized due to lack of qualified staff, he quickly identified and led a course of action that yielded its completion and on-time delivery. He also astutely guided comprehensive programmatic review and improvement of the Auxiliary University Program. Commodore GATES' dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A THIRD)**

TO

COMMODORE ROBERT T. SHAFER

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Commodore SHAFER is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Assistant National Commodore, Recreational Boating from November 2018 to October 2020. Demonstrating exceptional leadership, he supervised three national directorates and 79 national staff positions, and oversaw day-to-day administration of the Auxiliary's expansive array of recreational boating safety programs. His extraordinary attentiveness, initiative, and diplomacy proved invaluable in his negotiations with BoatEd and ultimately led to the Auxiliary's attractive new boating safety course, "*Boat America*," at greatly reduced cost. A consummate emissary and host, he significantly advanced the Auxiliary's international profile by coordinating a remarkably successful visit of Japanese Coast Guard representatives, providing them with Auxiliary unit visits and patrol experiences, and inspiring them to seek the gamut of Auxiliary policy resources needed to create a Japanese Coast Guard Auxiliary. He markedly improved the Auxiliary's paddle craft safety outreach and its engagement with partner organizations including the U.S. Power Squadrons, National Safe Boating Council, American Canoe Association, and National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. Commodore SHAFER's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
TO
COMMODORE DONALD A. ZINNER
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY**

Commodore ZINNER is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Assistant National Commodore, Response and Prevention from November 2018 to October 2020. He exercised vast knowledge and experience adeptly managing four national directorates, over 100 national staff positions, and the day-to-day administration of the Auxiliary's support of Coast Guard operational missions. Applying superb programmatic leadership, he coordinated the first Auxiliary service-wide gap analysis to garner 100 percent participation by Coast Guard operational commands and comprehensively identify new and diverse opportunities for Coast Guard units to bridge resource shortfalls with Auxiliary assets. He provided invaluable facilitation of the Auxiliary's damage assessment patrols, marine safety and medical support, FEMA support, and telecommunications support in response to several major natural disasters including Hurricanes MICHAEL, FLORENCE, and DORIAN. He guided meticulous development and execution of annual TCT Refresher courses, the newly mandated Risk Management training course, all operational workshops, a Chief Qualification Examiner symposium, and a detailed Rescue-21 Standard Operating Procedure guide. Commodore ZINNER's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
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TO

MR. BRUCE J. KELTON

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Mr. KELTON is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Deputy Chief Counsel from November 2018 to October 2020. Exhibiting exceptional professionalism and managerial skill, he supervised three Area Assistant Chief Counsels and oversaw the day-to-day administration and management of the Auxiliary's expansive array of legal and parliamentary services. This included constant coordination with the National Executive Committee, the National Board, and 16 Executive Committees and their regional legal counsels. He provided astute legal advice to the Chief Counsel in many complex and sensitive issues including major disciplinary cases. His expert guidance was invaluable to Auxiliary regions during negotiations with vendors and hoteliers for district conferences and saved the Auxiliary significant financial resources by enabling those regions to avoid financial penalties when cancellations were necessary due to budgetary restraints, federal government shutdown, and the COVID-19 pandemic. His insightful legal recommendations were instrumental to properly resolving complex issues involving intellectual property, contracts, international affairs, liability, personal injury, and property loss. Mr. KELTON's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
TO
MR. KEVIN REDDEN
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY**

Mr. REDDEN is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Deputy Director, Performance Measurement from November 2018 to October 2019, and Director from October 2019 to October 2020. Exercising exceptional leadership and programmatic expertise, he supervised three national divisions and oversaw the day-to-day administration and management of the Auxiliary's expansive array of performance measurement reports. This included constant coordination with the National Executive Committee, the National Board, 16 Executive Committees, and management of 19 national staff positions. He oversaw development of 420 reports covering analytical metrics on Auxiliary units, members, missions and trends. His Auxiliary Core Training Reports provided invaluable unit-by unit and course-by-course tracking of each member's training renewal needs. Demonstrating extraordinary initiative, he led rapid creation of new unit election eligibility reports when the AUXDATA modernization project caused existing reports to become unreliable. He developed an innovative tracking and routing system that facilitated seamless development, tracking, and processing of more than 300 high-quality, solidly formatted Auxiliary awards for the 2020 National Conference. Mr. REDDEN's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
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TO

MR. BRUCE C. JOHNSON

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Mr. JOHNSON is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Division Chief, Youth Programs from November 2018 to October 2020. Demonstrating exceptional leadership, he supervised six national branches, 10 national staff positions, and the day-to-day administration of the Auxiliary's expansive array of youth development programs spearheaded by the ground-breaking Auxiliary-Sea Scout Youth Development (AUXSCOUT) program. As Chairman of the Auxiliary-Sea Scout Work Group, he was instrumental in shaping the Memorandum of Agreement between the Auxiliary and Boy Scouts of America that forged unprecedented bonds between them. Exercising meticulous attention to detail, he led development of comprehensive guidance for a highly successful AUXSCOUT pilot program in two Auxiliary regions. This laid the foundation for development of thorough Standard Operating Procedures and a communication plan that were rolled out nationwide by both organizations. An ardent advocate, he delivered countless program briefings at all organizational levels, tirelessly resolved all queries and concerns, and secured the AUXSCOUT program's successful launch as a new youth training tool with clear recruiting benefits for the Coast Guard and Auxiliary. Mr. JOHNSON's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AUXILIARY MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A SECOND)**

TO

MS. TERESA A. BARTH

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Ms. BARTH is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Executive Assistant to the National Commodore from November 2018 to October 2020. Consistently exhibiting exceptional diplomacy and attention to detail, she ensured that all communications and coordination among the Auxiliary National Executive Committee (NEXCOM), Auxiliary district leaders, and over 195 Auxiliary national staff members were handled promptly and professionally. She adeptly coordinated over 50 NEXCOM video conferences and numerous conference calls, and quickly issued detailed minutes that provided Auxiliary leaders with valuable notes, records, and references. She meticulously maintained an invaluable administrative task list that kept the NEXCOM apprised of required reports, award nomination deadlines, and travel and logistical considerations. Her conscientious planning ensured all Auxiliary National Board meetings remained on track and achieved all objectives. Exercising superb diplomacy and executive administrative skill, she expertly coordinated attendance of dozens of international and other boating safety partners at all Auxiliary national conferences. Her commitment to excellent service profoundly and positively enhanced the Auxiliary's image and reputation. Ms. BARTH's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.