

NAVY LEAGUE NEWS

F O R T L A U D E R D A L E C O U N C I L

December 2024



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Navy League Members,

We hope you and your loved ones enjoyed a warm and fulfilling Thanksgiving. As we turn our attention to the holiday season, it is a wonderful time to reflect on our shared values of service, community, and giving back.

This December, we are proud to support the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program once again. Please bring new, unwrapped toys to our next meeting or reach out for drop-off information. Together, we can brighten the holidays for children in need and spread the true spirit of giving that defines the Navy League.

We extend our warmest wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah! May the season bring peace, joy, and cherished moments with family and friends.

A heartfelt thank you to Major Gregory W. Mateo for his inspiring presentation last month. Major Mateo's remarkable service and leadership continue to remind us of the dedication of our military community, and we are grateful for his time and insights.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to announce that our next speaker will be Eric R. Dawicki, a respected leader in the maritime industry. Mr. Dawicki will share his perspectives on key maritime issues and initiatives, promising a thought-provoking and engaging discussion.

Mark your calendars for a special upcoming event in January! We invite you to join us for an Evening in Thailand at the Seven Seas Gala on Saturday, January 25, 2025, at the Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort. This elegant gathering will offer an enchanting experience featuring the rich culture and flavors of Thailand, all while supporting the Navy League's mission. We look forward to celebrating together and making lasting memories.

During this season of giving, let us continue to come together as a community and reflect on the importance of our mission. Thank you for your ongoing dedication and support.

SEMPER FIDELIS: "Always Faithful"
Abiud "Abi" Montes
President
Fort Lauderdale Council
Navy League of the United States



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ELECTION OF THE FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL 2025 OFFICERS

"In accordance with the Fort Lauderdale Council by-laws, the Council shall elect and install the 2025 Officers at the December 18th dinner meeting. Any group consisting of fifteen (15) or more voting members may nominate a candidate for any of the elective offices." Please contact the nominating committee chair, Elaine Hogg, at 954.857.3574 or emhogg9999@gmail.com if you're interested in serving as an officer next year. The following is the slate of Council Officers nominated to serve for 2025.

President: **Abiud Montes**
First Vice President: **Gary Pirtle**
Second Vice President: **Barbara Kelleher**
Third Vice President: **Aaron Bresnahan**
Treasurer: **Diana Molina**
Secretary: **Elaine Nasta**

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to our new active duty service members who have joined the Fort Lauderdale Council. Each of them brings talents and stories that enhance our membership roster. We hope they'll attend our dinner meetings and events throughout the year.

Gifard Alexis, USMC
Keldon Back, USCG
Richard Byars, USCG
Patrick Caiaccio, USCG
Christopher Caputo, USN
Felix Cedeno, USCG
Heather Clark, USCG

Brendon Clements, USN
Dante Deshauteurs, USCG
Ashley Glover, USN
Eric Glover, USN
Ivenley Gourdet, USMC
Xavier Kenney, USMC
Brennan Leung, USCG

Canyon Mahaffey, USMC
Jack Marquand, USCG
Anthony Martinez, USCG
Earl McClelland, USCG
Cheyenne Solis Headlam, USCG
Jodi Stoiber, USCG
Stephanie Thomas, USCG
Ariayanna Val, USCG

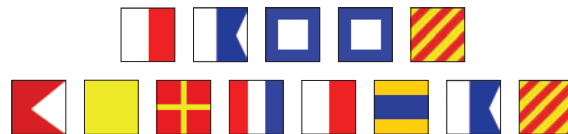
To join and maintain membership in a Navy League council, an individual must be a member in good standing with the Navy League of the United States. It is incumbent upon the member to maintain current national membership.

From page 2-10 of the Navy League of the United States Operations Manual revised November 6, 2021:

"II.D.6. A council may establish local dues or membership fees as it may deem to be appropriate but such dues or fees must be in addition to, not in lieu of, the national dues."

Join the Navy League:
[FtlNavyLeague.org/JoinUs](https://ftlnavyleague.org/JoinUs)
<https://ftlnavyleague.org/joinus>

LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



Emily Dorsette	12/20	James McStravick	12/3
Ernie Gorwood	12/25	Jorge Ocon	12/29
Maria Hernandez	12/10	Daniel Urrutia, Sr.	12/4
Jon Kotler	12/16		

DECEMBER 18TH HOLIDAY DINNER MEETING

GUEST SPEAKER

MR. ERIC R. DAWICKI, MPA

PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF NORTHEAST MARITIME INSTITUTE

Mr. Eric R. Dawicki, MPA has served as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Northeast Maritime Institute since 1995. He also currently serves as the Commonwealth of Dominica International Maritime Registry President and CEO. He has served in both the United States Coast Guard Reserve and the United States Merchant Marine. He attended Arkansas State University and The American University.



During his tenure at Northeast Maritime Institute, Mr. Dawicki has been responsible for overseeing its growth from an exam preparation facility to a full-service Maritime Education and Training Institution, providing quality education to mariners at all levels. He created a vision and follow through for NMI to become the first private maritime college in the United States and has recently developed the concept and architecture the most comprehensive online learning management system in the world for mariners to receive compliance training for the International Convention on Standards of Training and Certification for Watchkeepers and Seafarer's (STCW).

Mr. Dawicki has advised numerous shipping companies, government agencies and industry associations on regulatory trends and compliance programs. Mr. Dawicki is regarded as a leader of industry and has also participated on numerous delegations at IMO Committee meetings and subcommittee meetings annually since 1996. He continues to serve as the lead delegate on Government delegations to the United Nations' International Maritime Organization (IMO).

As President of the Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Registry, a full-service International Ship Registry, Mr. Dawicki is responsible for overseeing all vessel-related services, including technical, statutory, inspection, registration, corporate and manning certification services. This includes the implementation of international regulatory and legal instruments as they apply to each vessel, its crew and its owners and operators.

Mr. Dawicki has been a member of the Board of Governors and an Executive Governor for the IMO's World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden and served as the Chairman of the 30 year Feasibility Study on behalf of the International Maritime Organization. Mr. Dawicki also sits on the Board of Trustees for the United States Coast Guard Foundation as a "Lifetime Trustee" or Emeritus Trustee. He previously served on the Board of Directors for the American Sail Training Association and was Co-Chairman of the Board. He was also an Executive Committee Member of the Board of Directors for the International Maritime Lecturers Association through 2001, a World Maritime University industry association. Mr. Dawicki also served a full tenure as a member of the United States Maritime Security Advisory Committee post 9/11 under both the Bush and Obama Administrations.



**Please bring an unwrapped new toy for our Holiday
Toys For Tots Drive**

Evening in Thailand

at the Seven Seas Gala

Saturday, January 25, 2025

Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort



RSVP @ www.FtLNavyLeague.org/Gala-2025

HONORING BROTHERHOOD AND LEGACY – DESERT STORM 34-YEAR REUNION

SAVE THE DATE FOR A CELEBRATION OF HISTORY AND HEROES!



On Saturday, January 11, 2025, the Desert Storm veterans will reunite for a milestone event—the 34-Year Reunion of the TOW Company, 8th Tank Battalion, 4th Marine Division. Held at the Miami Military Museum, 12460 SW 152nd Street, Miami, Florida 33177, this occasion offers a chance for military members, past and present, to honor their shared history, relive cherished memories, and celebrate the enduring bond of brotherhood forged in service.

A Time to Reflect and Reconnect

The Desert Storm 34-Year Reunion is not just a gathering; it is a heartfelt tribute to the brave men and women who served in Operation Desert Storm, one of the defining military operations of the Gulf War. For the TOW Company—an Anti-Tank Company of Marines who played a critical role in the conflict—this reunion reminds them of their courage and sacrifice in the face of adversity.

The reunion will occur at the Miami Military Museum, a fitting venue that pays homage to the nation’s military heritage. This event is open to all civilians and military personnel. It will allow individuals from various backgrounds and eras of service to unite and celebrate their contributions to our nation’s defense.

What to Expect

The event promises to be an unforgettable experience filled with camaraderie, storytelling, and reflection. Attendees will:

- Reconnect with fellow Marines and veterans of the TOW Company.
- Share stories from their days of service, commemorating their shared experiences during Desert Storm.
- Explore the exhibits at the Miami Military Museum, which highlight the legacy of U.S. military history.
- Build connections with veterans from other military branches who share the same dedication to service and sacrifice.

Why It Matters

As time passes, events like the Desert Storm 34-Year Reunion serve as vital reminders of the sacrifices made by those who stood in defense of freedom. The reunion allows veterans to renew their bonds of friendship, support one another, and inspire the next generation of service members.

For those who served in the TOW Company, this event is more than a gathering—it is a celebration of resilience, leadership, and the unbreakable spirit of the Marine Corps. It’s also a chance to honor the legacy of the brave men and women who answered the call of duty during one of the most pivotal moments in recent history.



Mark Your Calendar

Whether you’re a veteran of the TOW Company or another branch of the military, you won’t want to miss this meaningful event. Join us as we honor the heroes of Desert Storm and celebrate their extraordinary contributions to our nation.

Details at a Glance:

- Event: Desert Storm 34-Year Reunion
- Date: Saturday, January 11, 2025 @ 1100
- Location: Miami Military Museum 12460 SW 152nd Street Miami, Florida 33177
- Audience: Open to all civilians and military personnel from all branches

Let’s come together to celebrate history, service, and brotherhood. Semper Paratus!





COAST GUARD HOLIDAY PARTY

Friday, December 13, 2024

Sponsored by:
Broward County Navy League Council
Broward Navy Days
Fort Lauderdale Navy League Council

HONORS AND WELCOMES
ALL LOCAL COAST GUARD UNITS and
GUEST

THE QUARTERDECK RESTAURANT
1035 SE 17TH STREET
FORT LAUDERDALE
LOCATED JUST NORTH OF 17TH STREET
(East of SE 10th Ave.)

Festivities begin 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM or ???

Please RSVP your Attendance on or before
December 9th by e-mailing browardnavyleague@gmail.com or
calling Shelley at 954-224-3687

NOVEMBER 20TH DINNER MEETING

We had a great turnout for our November dinner meeting at the Lauderdale Yacht Club. Our guest speaker was Major Gregory Mateo, USMC, Commanding Officer of Fort Lauderdale Marine Recruiting Station; a 2012 graduate of the United States Naval Academy. The Major spoke of his reasons for pursuing an appointment to the Academy and for his Marine Corps service selection. He is an extremely humble young Marine officer with a most impressive career. In his current position, he commands one of the most successful Marine recruiting districts in the country. He captured the attention of the guests the moment he stepped up to the podium. We also celebrated the 249th birthday of the Marine Corps with a special cake and traditional cake cutting ceremony.



Major Mateo with Abi Montes



Marine Corps 249 Years Cake Ceremony



President Abi Montes, Major Mateo, George Lundy, Tatiana Jones, USCG



Major Mateo USMC



United States Naval Sea Cadets Corps

FORT LAUDERDALE DIVISION & TRAINING SHIP RADFORD

Sponsored by the Fort Lauderdale Council of the Navy League of the United States

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 21101, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33335-1101

Headquarters: 300 S.W. 25th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315



LTJG Rosa Ryan, USNSCC
Commanding Officer

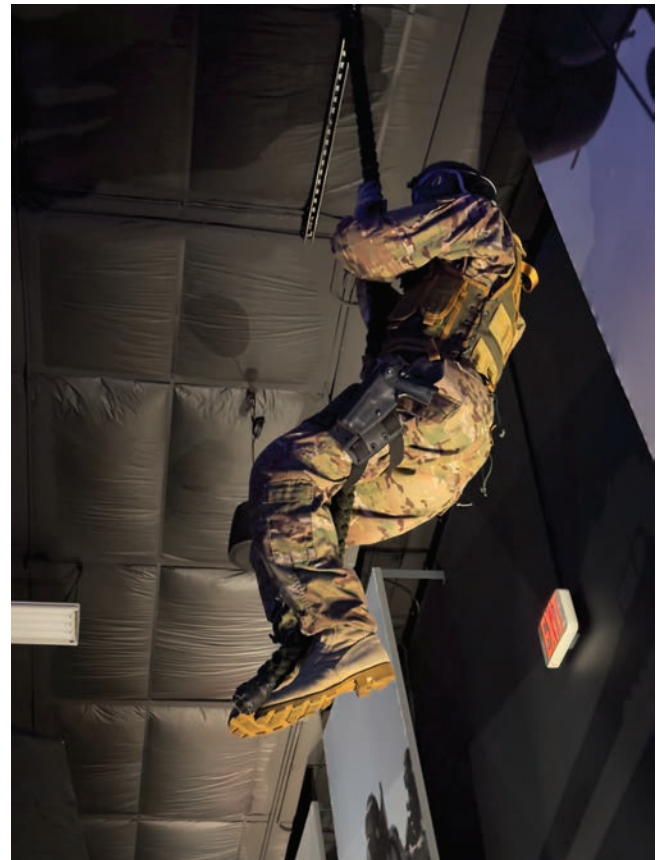
A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Fort Lauderdale Division

The Fort Lauderdale Division Sea Cadets had a very active month in November. We had a field trip by bus to the Navy Seal Muster in Fort Pierce. The Cadets participated with other Sea Cadet Divisions to present the 50 State Flags for this event. The Cadets enjoyed touring the Navy Seal Museum and watching the demonstration of Special Forces combat operations. The Holiday Party at headquarters will be on Saturday, December 7th, when we will pin the 3rd Chief Petty



A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE continued

Officer, which is a great accomplishment for our unit. On December 14th, the Sea Cadets and Staff plan to take the Archer, our 40 ft. Bayliner, in the Winterfest Boat Parade. Cadets will also participate in “Wreaths Across America” at the Pompano Cemetery. Cadets will have liberty for the Christmas and New Year’s holiday





SEA CADETS BY THE NUMBERS

380+ TOTAL UNITS
IN 47 STATES,
Guam, & Puerto Rico

11,000+
CADETS SERVED ANNUALLY
AGES 10-18

3,000+ VOLUNTEERS FROM ACROSS THE NATION SPEND OVER 238,000 HOURS VOLUNTEERING EACH YEAR.



TRAINING



UNIT



REGIONAL

Our volunteers hail from diverse backgrounds. Many of our volunteers are active duty, reserve, or retired servicemembers. Over 360 of our volunteers are serving active duty and reserve in the U.S. Military. Our volunteers serve in a variety of areas including in their local units, during advanced trainings, and for their regional staff.



36% OF CADETS REPRESENT ETHNIC MINORITIES

23% OF CADETS COME FROM INNER CITY COMMUNITIES

23% OF CADETS ARE FEMALE

IN A TYPICAL YEAR:
1,000 CADETS FINISH HIGH SCHOOL AND GRADUATE FROM THE USNSCC

These remarkable young men and women often choose to serve in the military, attend universities and trade schools, or serve their local communities through frontline careers.



Cadets make great decisions about their futures
IN A TYPICAL YEAR:

U.S. NAVY

- 250 Enlist in the U.S. Navy*
- 130 Matriculate to the United States Naval Academy**
- 100+ Are Accepted to Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC)*

*Source: NRC Analytics 2010-2018
**Source: USNA OIR 2010-2018

OTHER***

- 150 Enlist in other military branches
- 30 Matriculate to other service academies
- 30 Accepted to other ROTC programs
- 300+ Attend 2-4 year universities

***Source: Graduating Cadet Surveys 2015-2019

360+ MILITARY VOLUNTEERS
INCLUDING 230+ ACTIVE AND RESERVE
VOLUNTEERS FROM THE U.S. NAVY

ACCORDING TO THE U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY:
10% - 12%
OF EACH INCOMING CLASS OF MIDSHIPMEN
ARE FORMER U.S. NAVAL SEA CADETS.

While cadets are not required to join the military after graduation:
OVER 650 FORMER CADETS CHOOSE TO SERVE THEIR COUNTRY EVERY YEAR.
500 of these cadets choose to serve in the United States Navy



EACH SEA CADET SAVES THE U.S. NAVY \$14,000

IN RECRUITING & LIFE-CYCLE COSTS
-Former CNO Gary Roughead

Cadets who achieve the rank of E-3 as Sea Cadets are eligible to graduate U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard recruit training as an:

E-3 / SEAMAN

This encourages cadets to both join the U.S. Navy and remain in service longer while reducing life-cycle training costs per sailor.



U.S. NAVAL
SEA CADET CORPS
www.seacadets.org

The following statistics represent typical annual data from the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps.

U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Spruance Division Buy-a-Brick Fundraiser



Architect's rendering of 300 SW 25th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale – North elevation

The **Navy League of the United States, Fort Lauderdale Council** invites you to become a permanent part of the new **Mary N. Porter Sea Cadet Training Center** by purchasing a commemorative brick; an easy way to leave a lasting family legacy.

Your custom brick could be engraved with your family name, a cadet or former cadet's name and year of graduation, your business name, your organization name, or you could choose to engrave a brick in honor of someone special, a veteran, or in memory of a loved one.

**Engraved symbols are an additional \$5. Choose from the symbol gallery:*

<https://www.bricksrus.com/products/symbols/>



Engraved bricks are available in two sizes:
4 x 8 = \$100/\$105* donation
8 x 8 = \$225/\$230* donation

Use the online ordering system at: www.bricksrus.com/donorsite/seacadets

or

Please **complete and mail the attached order form** with your check made payable to:

NLUS-FLC (Navy League of the U.S. Fort Lauderdale Council)

PO Box 350625, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33335-0625



(All donations are tax-deductible)



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE MARY N. PORTER SEA CADET TRAINING CENTER

BUILDING LEADERS BEGINS WITH YOU.

A capital campaign to fund the construction of the Mary N. Porter Sea Cadet Training Center

- Yes, I want to support the Capital Campaign to build a new Sea Cadet Training Center in Fort Lauderdale. My gift will enable the Navy League of the U.S. to provide a home for excellent youth programs that foster leadership, academic skills and civic responsibility.
- Please contact me about naming opportunities at the new Mary N. Porter Sea Cadet Training Center.



I would like to make a one-time tax-deductible contribution in the amount of:

- \$100
- \$500
- \$1,000
- \$5,000
- \$10,000
- \$25,000
- \$50,000
- Other \$

Make check payable to the Navy League of the United States - Fort Lauderdale Council.

Fill out the form below if you are paying with a credit card. *Contributions are tax deductible as provided by law.*

Credit Card Visa MasterCard American Express

Card # _____

Exp. Date _____ Security Code _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Signature _____

I would like to make the following pledge:

Name (as you would like to be recognized) _____

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

\$ _____ is enclosed.

Total amount of \$ _____ to be paid as follows:

Amount \$ _____ on (date) _____

Amount \$ _____ on (date) _____

Amount \$ _____ on (date) _____

Amount \$ _____ on (date) _____

NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES - FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL

P.O. Box 350625 | Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33335-0625 | 954.522.8995 | seacadetbuilding@gmail.com
www.FTLNavyLeague.org | www.FTLSeaCadets.org

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Navy League of the United States Fort Lauderdale Council

Social Calendar 2024 - 2025

Friday, December 13, 2024, Coast Guard Holiday Party, 6:00 PM

Quarterdeck Restaurant, Fort Lauderdale

RSVP: browardnavyleague@gmail.com, Shelley: 954-224-3687

Wednesday, December 18, 2024, 6:00 PM, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Holiday Celebration & Toys for Tots Campaign

Guest Speaker: Mr. Eric R. Dawicki, President & CEO, Northeast Maritime Institute

Saturday, January 25, 2025, Seven Seas Gala, Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach

Guest of Honor: TBD

Wednesday, February 12, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: LT Justin B. Dadlani, USCG, Commanding Officer,
Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale

Saturday, March 8, Navy League Day at the Races, Gulfstream Park

Wednesday, March 19, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: LT Brendan Clements, USN, NTAG Miami, USNA Graduate

Wednesday, April 23, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: Damian Valdez, Account Executive, New Business Sales,
Florida Panthers

Wednesday, May 14, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: TBD

Wednesday, September 17, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Annual Sea Cadet Night

Wednesday, October 15, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: TBD

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: TBD

Wednesday, December 16, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club

Guest Speaker: TBD

DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM VETERANS: AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

If you or someone you know served in Operation Desert Storm, this is a unique opportunity to join a groundbreaking study that could have a profound impact on your future and the benefits available to veterans. The Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine at Nova Southeastern University is conducting a Gulf War Illness (GWI) Registry recruitment to study and better understand the long-term effects of Gulf War service. Participation is completely voluntary, but your involvement could lead to critical advancements in research and improved VA benefits for veterans like you. Why Participate? - Contribute to Groundbreaking Research: Help researchers uncover valuable insights about Gulf War Illness, which can directly impact treatments and support systems for veterans. - Empower Veteran Communities: By sharing your experience, you play a crucial role in ensuring the voices of Desert Storm veterans are heard and acted upon. - Potential Future Benefits: Research findings could influence policy changes and improvements in VA services, benefiting you and your fellow veterans. This is a free and straightforward study designed to honor the sacrifices you've made and provide tools for a better future. If you're ready to contribute to a brighter tomorrow for veterans, click the link below to learn more and register: [Register Now](<https://gwictic.info/registerAbi>). Together, let's ensure no Gulf War veteran is left behind.

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Contact me today!
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday, January 8 3:30 PM EDT
Join Zoom Meeting:
Meeting ID: 835 3219 1823
Passcode: GoNavy

**FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL
2024 OFFICERS**

President – Abiud Montes
1st Vice President – Gary Pirtle
2nd Vice President – Barbara Kelleher
3rd Vice President – Aaron Bresnahan
Treasurer – Diana Molina
Secretary – Elaine Nasta

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, December 18, 2024
6-7 PM Cocktails • 7-9 PM Dinner Buffet
LAUDERDALE YACHT CLUB
1725 SE 12th Street
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33316

Guest Speaker

MR. ERIC R. DAWICKI, MPA
President and Chief Executive Officer of
Northeast Maritime Institute

Guests \$55 per person

RSVP Required! Limited Seating!

No later than noon, Friday prior to the meeting.

Call 954-522-8995 or Online at www.ftlnavyleague.org/events

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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