

NAVY LEAGUE NEWS

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

March 2025



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Navy League Members and Friends,

As we welcome the month of March, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who attended our February dinner meeting. We were honored to host **Lieutenant Justin Dadlani, USCG**, Commanding Officer of **USCG Station Fort**

Lauderdale. His insights into the Coast Guard's vital role in protecting our waterways and ensuring maritime security were enlightening and inspiring. His leadership and dedication to service exemplify the values we hold dear in the Navy League.

Looking ahead, I am pleased to announce that our guest speaker for our **March 19th Dinner Meeting at the Lauderdale Yacht Club** will be **Ensign Mesha S. Wallace, USN, Chaplain Candidate Program Officer**. Ensign Wallace brings a unique and inspiring perspective to military service, combining her passion for ministry with a commitment to supporting the men and women of our armed forces. A native of Jamaica, raised in Fort Lauderdale, she has dedicated herself to education, leadership, and spiritual guidance. Currently pursuing her **Master of Divinity in Youth and Family Ministry**, she represents the next generation of military chaplains who will provide moral and spiritual support to those who serve.

The role of a chaplain in the Navy is one of immense importance—offering guidance, comfort, and strength to our sailors and their families during both triumphs and trials. We look forward to hearing Ensign Wallace's journey and learning more about the impact chaplains have in the fleet.

As always, I encourage you to join us in fellowship, stay engaged, and continue supporting our mission to honor and assist those who serve in the sea services. Your presence and participation are what make our Navy League council strong.

I look forward to seeing you on March 19th!

Sincerely,
Abiud "Abi" Montes

President, Fort Lauderdale Council
Navy League of the United States



In This Issue...

March Dinner Meeting.....	Page	2
Membership.....	Page	2
Birthdays.....	Page	2
A Day at the Races.....	Page	3
Florida Region Meeting.....	Page	4
Update USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109).....	Page	4
February Dinner Meeting.....	Page	5
View From The Bridge.....	Page	6-7
Sea Cadets by the Numbers.....	Page	8
Buy-A-Brick.....	Page	9-10
Sea Cadet Building Campaign.....	Page	11
April Dinner Meeting.....	Page	12
Social Calendar.....	Page	13
Honoring Leadership and Excellence.....	Page	14
Gary Pirtle Realtor.....	Page	14
American Hero & United Realty.....	Page	15
Community Affiliates.....	Page	16

GUEST SPEAKER AT OUR MARCH 19TH DINNER MEETING ENS MESHA S. WALLACE, USN CCPO

Ensign Mesha S. Wallace is a native of Jamaica, West Indies, and grew up in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She earned a Bachelor of Science from Grand Canyon University and holds a Masters in Educational Leadership. She is currently pursuing a Master of Divinity in Youth and Family Ministry from Liberty University, which is expected in 2025. She is ordained and endorsed by the Pentecostal Church of God.

Ensign Wallace was commissioned as a United States Chaplain Candidate in January 2024 and graduated from Naval Chaplain School in the winter of 2024.



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

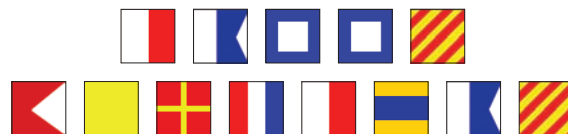
To join and maintain membership in a Navy League council, an individual must be a member in good standing with the Navy League of the United States. It is incumbent upon the member to maintain current national membership.

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>

NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL MARCH BIRTHDAYS



Lynn Atkinson Drucker	3/4	Marilyn Gari	3/17	Gary Pirtle	3/24
Jeffrey Schram	3/11	Joan Kovac	3/18	Michael Ryan	3/25
Bob Hogg	3/15	Peter Apol	3/19	Dennis Neutze	3/30



The Navy League of the United States
Fort Lauderdale Council
Invites you to join us for

Navy League Day at the Races Saturday, March 8th, 12:00 noon



Ten Palms Restaurant
**GULFSTREAM
PARK**

901 S. Federal Highway,
Hallandale Beach, FL 33009

Enjoy a day at the beautiful Gulfstream Park racetrack with your friends!

Racing Package Includes:

- Sumptuous Buffet Luncheon at scenic trackside Ten Palms Restaurant
- Air-conditioned trackside reserved seating for the afternoon
- One (1) complimentary glass of red or white wine per person
- Daily race day program for each attendee
- One (1) \$2.00 betting voucher per person
- \$60 per person

**Please
RSVP by
March
5th**

RSVP & Pay Online: FtLNavyLeague.org/RaceDay

Please detach and return with your check made payable to:
NLUS Fort Lauderdale Council

Lynn Atkinson, 845 S. Southlake Drive, Hollywood, FL 33019
954-325-9102 lynn@druckermail.com

Name: _____ # attending _____ \$60 per person

NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES FLORIDA REGION MEETING

The Annual Navy League Florida Region Meeting was hosted here in Fort Lauderdale on February 21 & 22. The meeting was led by Florida Region President, Andy Mohler. This was a great opportunity for Council representatives to get together and share ideas for recruitment, fundraising, legislative affairs, event planning, youth group support and more. Abiud Montes and Lynn Atkinson represented the Fort Lauderdale Council. Navy League CEO, Mike Stevens attended along with representatives from Broward County, Central Florida, Key West, Palm Beach, Tampa Bay, and Sarasota Manatee Councils. Ed Callahan, Sea Cadets Southeast Area Commander, was on hand to speak about the Navy League's support for the Sea Cadets in our region. The Navy League National Convention will be in Jacksonville June 4-7, 2025. Registration is scheduled to open in mid-March.



UPDATE ON COUNCIL'S ADOPTED SHIP USS JASON DUNHAM (DDG 109) By Council Vice President Aaron Bresnahan

The USS *Jason Dunham* (DDG-109) is currently underway with Destroyer Squadron 28, which is deployed with the USS *Harry S. Truman* Carrier Strike Group 8. The *Truman* Strike group is currently operating in the Eastern Mediterranean.

USS *Jason Dunham* is a US Navy Arleigh Burke-class (Flight IIA) Aegis guided missile destroyer. The vessel is named after US Marine Corps corporal Jason Dunham, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for service in the Iraq War. The USS *Dunham* was built by the Bath Iron Works shipyard in Bath, Maine. The destroyer was christened by Corporal Dunham's mother, Debra Dunham, the ship's sponsor, and launched on 1 August 2009. *Jason Dunham* was commissioned on 13 November 2010. The Navy League – Fort Lauderdale Council adopted the vessel after its commissioning, and it is currently homeported in Mayport, Florida.

Jason Dunham was commissioned in Port Everglades on 13 November 2010.



FEBRUARY DINNER MEETING

FEBRUARY 12, 2025

LAUDERDALE YACHT CLUB

The guest speaker at our February dinner meeting was LT Eric Dadlani, Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale. His presentation was both interesting and insightful, offering an inside look into a recent rescue mission flawlessly executed by the Fort Lauderdale crew. Beginning with a distress call and, in this case, ending with a successful rescue. It served as a reminder of the danger our Coast Guard members face every day. They all deserve our admiration and gratitude. The meeting was well-attended with approximately 90 guests including several members of the Coast Guard, Navy, Fort Lauderdale Sea Cadets, Fort Lauderdale High School NJROTC, and Navy League members from Fort Lauderdale and Broward County Councils. Our next dinner meeting will be on March 19th, 6:00 pm at the Lauderdale Yacht Club.





United States Naval Sea Cadets Corps

FORT LAUDERDALE DIVISION & TRAINING SHIP RADFORD

Sponsored by the Fort Lauderdale Council of the Nay 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

February was an active month for our Sea Cadets. On February 8th, we had a drill at Sea Cadet Headquarters with a special presentation about careers in the submarine force from retired navy submariner STS1(SS) Thomas O, Burgess, USN (Ret.). It was a captivating presentation, and the Cadets had many questions about careers in "The Silent Service." Hopefully, the presentation inspired some future submariners.

On February 15th, Cadets trained at USCG Station Fort Lauderdale. They learned about firefighting, marksmanship, rescue-line heaving, and stretcher race. It was an educational day with great camaraderie and teamwork.



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

On February 19th, our Sea Cadets attended our Council Dinner Meeting at the Lauderdale Yacht Club to present the colors, mingle with council members and active-duty military guests, enjoy a delicious dinner, and learn about the inspiring career of speaker LT Justin Dadlani, USCG, Commanding Officer of USCG Station Fort Lauderdale.

On February 22nd, all Cadets were “on deck” in their dress uniforms for our Annual Personnel Inspection, performed by Sea Cadets Regional Director LTJG Kevin Grams. We had excellent attendance, and the unit passed “with flying colors.” It was a fun and educational month for our division.





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/>

Ask us
about
custom
logos



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)

Yes, I would like to reserve a permanent commemorative brick for the Mary N. Porter Sea Cadet Training Center.

4" x 8" - \$100/\$105*

Indicate below how you want your 4 x 8-inch brick engraved. One character (letter, number, punctuation mark or space) PER SPACE *additional \$5 charge for engraved symbols

← Symbol → ← 21 characters per line or 18 characters with symbol/clipart →

8" x 8" - \$225/\$230*

Indicate below how you want your 8 x 8-inch brick engraved. One character (letter, number, punctuation mark or space) PER SPACE *additional \$5 charge for engraved symbols

← Symbol → ← 21 characters per line or 18 characters with symbol/clipart →

In addition to the text above, I would like to include an **engraved symbol** from the BricksRUs symbol gallery: _____
 * Please add \$5 for engraved symbols <https://www.brickrus.com/products/symbols/>

Total Amount Enclosed: _____

Donated by: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____



Please return this 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)

THE NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES, FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL WAS FOUNDED IN 1959 AND HAS BEEN DESIGNATED BY THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE AS A 501(c)(3) CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION, FEI#59-1412425. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL FREE WITHIN THE STATE: 1-800-435-7352. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE OF FLORIDA



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

THE NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES - FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL, FOUNDED IN 1959, IS RECOGNIZED BY THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE AS A 501 (c)(3) CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL FREE WITHIN THE STATE, 800-435-7352. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

GUEST SPEAKER AT OUR APRIL 16TH DINNER MEETING LIEUTENANT COMMANDER STEPH WOOD U.S. COAST GUARD

Lieutenant Commander Wood currently serves as the Executive Officer for Civil Engineering Unit (CEU) Miami. She is responsible for overseeing shore infrastructure depot-level maintenance throughout Coast Guard District 7 and District 8.

Prior to reporting to CEU Miami, she was a Program Reviewer in the Office of Budget and Programs (CG-821) at Coast Guard Headquarters and responsible for formulation and defense of the \$900M annual Human Resources, Medical, and Coast Guard Academy budget.

LCDR Wood previously served as Base National Capital Region (NCR) Facilities Engineer where she oversaw delivery of maintenance and logistics services throughout a 1.2M square foot facility for more than 4,000 Coast Guard employees. Her other assignments include, CEU Miami Strategic Operations Product Line Branch Chief, Base Miami Beach Facilities Engineer, and Student Engineer onboard Coast Guard Cutter SHERMAN, Alameda California.

Her awards include two Meritorious Service Medals, three Coast Guard Commendation Medals, two Coast Guard Achievement Medals, and various service, unit, and team awards. She earned her Professional Engineer License in 2019.

A native of Homosassa, Florida, she graduated from the Coast Guard Academy with a Bachelor of Science in Civil and Environmental Engineering in 2009. She also holds a Master of Science from Cornell University in Civil and Environmental Engineering.

LCDR Wood lives in Hollywood, Florida, with her husband, CDR Travis Gagnon (Executive Officer, Air Station Miami), and their three dogs Gabe, Kismet, and Smidge. She enjoys yoga and running in her free time.





Navy League of the United States Fort Lauderdale Council

Social Calendar 2025

Saturday, March 8, 12:00 PM, Navy League Day at the Races, Gulfstream Park

Wednesday, March 19, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club
Guest Speaker: ENS Meshia S. Wallace, USN, Chaplain, NTAG

Wednesday, April 23, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club
Guest Speaker: LCDR Steph Wood, USCG, Executive Officer,
Civil Engineering Unit (CEU), Miami

Wednesday, May 14, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club
Guest Speaker: Guest Speaker: Damian Valdez, Account Executive,
New Business Sales, Florida Panthers

Sunday, June 1, 2025, Sea Cadet Awards Banquet, Club 19, Pembroke Lakes

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: CAPT Willie L. Carmichael, Chief of Staff, USCG District 7

Wednesday, December 16, 2025, Dinner Meeting, Lauderdale Yacht Club
Guest Speaker: TBD

HONORING LEADERSHIP AND EXCELLENCE AT THE SEVEN SEAS GALA



Lynn Atkinson, VADM Davids, Abiud Montes

We were truly honored to have Vice Admiral Davids, Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy, as our esteemed guest speaker at the Navy League Fort Lauderdale Council Seven Seas Gala. Her inspiring words, leadership, and dedication to shaping the future of our Navy and Marine Corps officers left a lasting impact on everyone in attendance. Vice Admiral Davids' distinguished career and unwavering commitment to service embody the very values we celebrate—honor, courage, and commitment. Her speech reminded us of the importance of mentorship, resilience, and the enduring spirit of those who serve. A heartfelt thank you to Vice Admiral Davids for joining us and sharing her wisdom. Your leadership continues to inspire the next generation of naval officers and all of us who support them. #SevenSeasGala #NavalAcademy #Leadership #HonorCourageCommitment #NavyLeague

Sincerely,
 Abiud "Abi" Montes
 President, Fort Lauderdale Council
 Navy League of the United States



Gary Pirtle Realtor
 Website: WWW.GARYPIRTLE.COM
 Facebook: Gary Pirtle Realtor
 Cell: 954-658-7128
gary.pirtle@floridamoves.com



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 3:30 PM EDT
 Join Zoom Meeting:
 Meeting ID: 899 9626 3102
 Passcode: GoNavy

FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL 2025 OFFICERS

President – Abiud Montes
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 2nd Vice President – Barbara Kelleher
 3rd Vice President – Aaron Bresnahan
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FORT LAUDERDALE COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter Apol
 Lynn Atkinson
 Jim Black
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 Alan Stotsky

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, March 19, 2025
 6-7 PM Cocktails • 7-9 PM Dinner Buffet
LAUDERDALE YACHT CLUB
 1725 SE 12th Street
 Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33316

Guest Speaker

ENS MESHA S. WALLACE, USN CCPO

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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