



2021 Sea Service Unit Adoption Excellence Award Winners

[Awarded in 2022]

Very Large Council Winner

Honolulu Council (4th Consecutive Award)

The Honolulu Council is in a major Fleet Concentration Area, in which it is impractical to adopt *all* sea service units in the area. But Honolulu still adopts two namesake ships (USS HAWAII and USS CHUNG-HOON), plus ten youth groups, a Marine Battalion, and seven large shore commands. They hosted, co-hosted, or supported many events that were open to all sea service unit members and/or families in the area, including:

- Hosting an area-wide Ombudsman Appreciation Dinner honoring these dedicated volunteers from all major commands on the island.
- Hosting the Annual Navy League Sea Services Awards for 32 recipients, who were recognized at a dinner presentation at the Pacific Fleet Museum and presented with Certificate of Recognition and a Navy League coin. Rear Adm. Timothy J. Kott, Navy Region, Hawaii, presided at the event.
- Opening their doors to any local service-related social/support/benevolent clubs and organizations that need a space to meet or work, often providing free refreshments. These would include Chief Petty Officer Associations, First Class Petty Officer Associations, Family Readiness Groups (Navy), Spouses' Clubs (Coast Guard), Commissioning Committees, etc.
- Providing homecoming refreshments for all returning deployed ships, as well as dinner for the duty section on day of return. As mentioned above, the council's spaces often served as a pre-homecoming work area, staging, and/or gathering location for families and family groups.
- Providing welcomes on the pier, receptions and/or "Picnics on the Beach" for visiting warships. In 2021, that included the British Royal Navy's HMS TAMAR (P233), who, after getting extended in port, was treated by the council to a Pizza & Movie Night on the ship's fantail, as well as some traditional American Thanksgiving dinners.
- Assembling and delivering "Sailor Deployment Bags" to various afloat units preparing for deployment.
- Showing significant leadership in, and engagement with, the Wounded Warriors unit at the Marine Corps Air Station, Kaneohe. Also played a major role in assisting a local Marine who became homeless with three children get back on their feet.
- Providing food and/or refreshments for multiple sea service unit ad hoc events such as command picnics/cook-offs, awards ceremonies, graduations, pre-deployment nights, children's holiday parties, spouse events, military youth events, and for open events.
- Supporting other NLUS councils ending representatives to the island to visit their adopted units.

- Hosting dedicated awards luncheons at which stand-out sailors from groups of commands were honored.

In addition to their normal recurring support events (Sailor/Enlisted Person/Marine of the Quarter/Year awards, etc.), the council provided financial support to the various family groups in support of special events, such as holiday parties and new arrival receptions. The also supported the Apprenticeship Program at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard by recognizing the top apprentice as the George S. B. Walters awardee with a \$350 check and a plaque.

The council also provided funding to their youth groups for uniforms, as well as refreshments at unit events, and arranging for their youth groups to tour various warships in the port and participate in many ceremonies, parades and other public events.

Large Council Winners

Bremerton/Olympic Peninsula Council (3rd Consecutive Award)

The Bremerton/Olympic Peninsula Council is also in a major Fleet Concentration Area, and conducts many activities in support of all sea service units in the area in addition to routine support of their adopted namesake units (USS WASHINGTON, USS HENRY M JACKSON, and USS BREMERTON), four local shore commands, and six youth groups, including one overseas.

The council funded and hosted a full weekend of events for crew past and present of USS BREMERTON upon its formal decommissioning attended by over 130 people, which included 52 current crew, 48 former crew members (including the commissioning Commanding Officer), eight local military and civilian guests, and 22 Council Members. Also offered were special recognition and gifts to Plankowners (commemorative plaques), as well as the five former/current Commanding Officers in attendance.

The council adopted a local Coast Guard Cutter in March 2020, but could not hold a formal ceremony or engage in direct support until this year. The council finally held an adoption ceremony in July 2021 and awarded eagle statuettes to Enlisted Persons of the Quarter (EPOQ). The council funded the Peninsula Coast Guard Spouses' Club for their kids' Halloween and Christmas Parties. Additional EPOQ awards were presented in November, and the council provided New Year's Eve paraphernalia (hats, horns, banners, fluted glasses, etc.) and 72 cans of energy drink to the ship as it departed on deployment.

The council continued remote support of USS WASHINGTON on the East Coast in 2021, providing eagle statuettes to the SOY, JSOY & BJOY, as well as four special departmental awards with iconic Pacific Northwest themed names. Care packages were sent to the crew prior to their 2021 deployment to enjoy during Halfway Night and on holidays at sea. Also provided funding for a "Spouses' Halfway Night" party held ashore the same night as the crew celebrated theirs at sea. A Captain's Log from the ship's commanding officer was also periodically published in the council's newsletter, and the Commanding Officer was the guest speaker at a virtual luncheon early in the year.

Similar engagement happened with the two crews of a local namesake, USS HENRY M JACKSON (SSBN 730). The councils supported the ship's "730 Day" (July 30th) picnic by purchasing and serving deserts to the Blue Crew and families, as well as awarding eagle statuettes the SOY, JSOY & BJOY, plus, similar to USS WASHINGTON, four special departmental awards with iconic Henry "Scoop" Jackson-themed names. Later in the year, the council provided similar awards to the Gold Crew at their Holiday Party, as well as supporting the Family Readiness Group's Halloween Party and Holiday Cookie Exchange/Social.

For all their adopted units, the council funded the unit's FRGs or Spouses' Clubs (Coast Guard) in support of their family holiday activities, and provided goodies for Christmas duty sections to include treats, energy drinks, and iconic Pacific Northwest delicacies.

In terms of area-wide or non-adopted support, the council hosted receptions for two submarines arriving at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard for decommissioning. At various monthly luncheons, the council awarded 12 SOYs, JSOYs and/or BJOYs from unadopted units. The council facilitated the formal presentation of iconic University of Maine memorabilia to USS MAINE from the university. Because no namesake council has adopted the ship, the council voted to formally adopt MAINE in 2022. The council sent holiday cards to all their adopted and sponsored units, as well as facilitating the delivery of over 350 individual holiday cards to Sailors on adopted and other local afloat warships.

New York [City] Council (2nd Award)

In addition to support of local youth groups, including the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and USS NEW YORK, homeported in Mayport, Fla., the New York Council provided substantial support to the extensive Coast Guard presence in that service's most active waterway system. The council supported the USCG Sector New York and several subordinate units in the area.

In addition to their normal recurring support events (Sailor/Enlisted Person/Marine of the Quarter/Year awards, etc.), the council provided financial support to the various family groups in support of special events, such as holiday parties and new arrival receptions, and included gift cards for all participants in a virtual trivia contest for the Super Bowl and a Holiday Virtual Scavenger Hunt.

The council supported a crew contingent from USS NEW YORK to honor the 20th anniversary of 9/11 by arranging for them to lay a wreath at the 9/11 Boatlift 20th Anniversary Tribute event in honor of 9/11 victims. The council also provided transportation for them during their visit.

As with many councils, the New York Council this year caught-up on formal adoption ceremonies that had been deferred due to the pandemic in past years. They held an annual Anniversary Dinner and hosted leadership from all of their adopted/sponsored units to the event free of charge. Several adopted/sponsored units also received tickets to five Premier Lacrosse League games played on Long Island.

Each sponsored JROTC (Navy and Marine Corps) units received, in addition to multiple Teddy Roosevelt Awards, several substantial graduation stipends to be used for follow-on education. Cadets also attended the council's Anniversary Dinner and marched in the city's Veterans Day Parade carrying the council's banner. The council hosted a sponsored youth group 9/11 essay contest judged by Council members; winning cadets were awarded gift cards and certificates.

Sponsored ROTC units were also provided one or more swords to award to their top graduates. For the State University of New York Maritime College, the council funds an annual Navy ROTC Preparatory Program scholarship to cover the first-year tuition for a midshipman who is an outstanding member of the ROTC program, but missed qualifying for an ROTC scholarship. This helps deserving recipients stay the course, and most of them ultimately qualify for the full ROTC scholarship in their second year.

Starting in 2020 and running through the first half of 2021, the council ran an online portal, www.takecomfortnewyork.org, to connect the unit members and their families to local nonprofit, pandemic-related resources.

Medium Council Winners

Broward County Council (4th Consecutive Award)

The Broward County Council has a very strong adoption program that includes eight ships (three Navy—two in Norfolk-- and five Coast Guard), five shore commands, and seven youth groups, including five units in the Miami area to fill the gap left by the struggling Miami Council.

In spite of the pandemic, the Sailors/Enlisted Persons of the Quarter/Year in most of their adopted commands were recognized for their achievements with certificates of accomplishment and monetary awards. School supplies were also donated to unit members' children, as well as funding for FRG events during the pandemic lockdown.

Youth group stand-outs were all recognized with Teddy Roosevelt and cash awards, on top of cash donations to the units and funding of ad hoc requests.

Contra Costa Council (1st Award)

The Contra Costa Council also has a strong adoption program that includes two Coast Guard Cutters, an aviation squadron, two youth groups, and eight shore commands reflective of the strong Coast Guard presence in the San Francisco Bay Area.

In addition to providing all their adopted/sponsored units with various recurring awards (Sailor/Enlisted Person/Marine of the Quarter/Year awards, etc.), *the council coordinated with their local Congressional Representative's Office to also include a Congressional Certificate with each award.* As allowed by pandemic constraints, the awards were presented at formal ceremonies or events hosted by the council such as BBQs or

luncheons to maximize engagement, and sometimes included gift cards provided by members or local businesses.

In addition to Sea Cadet support, the council provided financial support to the Boy's Team Charity, an organization dedicated to developing an altruistic spirit in young men through active participation of parents and sons in philanthropic projects in their communities.

The council also provided financial support to various adopted unit MWR or spouses' groups for family events, as well as participating, along with several other Pacific Central Region Councils, in the 2021 Coast Guard Day on Alameda Island. The region hosted tables for a book give-away and holiday craft supplies.

In support of a local Marine Reserve unit, the council made a substantial Toys for Tots donation, attended the command's Change of Command, and contributed to and attended the Marine Corps Ball. They created and hosted a Recreational Hike Program on Mount Diablo that saw 30 Marines participate in this challenging event.

Finally, the councils supported the commissioning of USS OAKLAND (LCS 24) with participation on the commissioning committee, financial contributions, and attendance at the various functions/events.

Greater Kansas City Council (1st Award)

While supporting six youth groups, four shore commands, and three warships, the council focused much of their efforts this year on adopting and establishing a strong relationship with their namesake, USS KANSAS CITY (LCS 22).

The council was heavily involved in the ship's commissioning in April, but continued engagement throughout the year culminating in a 12-strong contingent of council members, plus Congressional staff, traveling to San Diego for a formal adoption ceremony, presenting SOY/SOQ wards, and attending the crew's Change of Command.

Prior to that, in July, the council assisted greatly in coordinating/hosting the Commanding Officer and six other crew members for a namesake visit to the city for Navy Week. The visitors participated in many Navy League events, but the capstone event was the flag raising ceremony and unveiling of a USS KANSAS CITY ship model (*commissioned by the council*), approximately 18" x 56", at Union Station where approximately 100,000 visitors a year pass through annually. The event was attended by approximately 300 and was covered by local media.

In support of the ship's 2021 deployment, the council worked with a local church to collect, assemble, and deliver Christmas Care Packages to all enlisted crew members (approx. 75), consisting of snacks, a book, and a personal letter to each crew member.

The council also adopted the Marine Corps Recruiting Station, Kansas City this year and formally presented the adoption certificate at the local Marine Corps Christmas party. The council connected the recruiting station with the Chancellor of the Metropolitan

Community College system in the Kansas City area, to facilitate access to the system by Marine recruiters.

Finally, with the council's sponsored Sea Cadet unit drilling at the Naval Reserve Center, Kansas City, the council decided to adopt the reserve center, too. That happened in 2020, but the pandemic prevented any in-person engagement. In 2021, however, the council presented the center with the adoption certificate, presented awards to their JSOQ, SOQ SOY and JSOY (12 awards total), and made many other visits in support of the Harry S. Truman Squadron Sea Cadets.

Small Council Winners

Marin County Council (3rd Award)

As with many other award recipients, the Marin County Council stood-out thanks to their support of warships not stationed local to the council. But in their case, and more to their credit, neither of their two adopted Navy Ships in Pearl Harbor are namesakes—USS GREENVILLE and USS HOPPER. Additional adopted units include two local Coast Guard shore commands and substantial support to a local Sea Cadet unit located on the other side of the Bay.

Plus, the council continued remote support for a local Coast Guard Cutter even after it relocated to Kodiak, Alaska, through its decommissioning in April! The ceremony in Kodiak was attended by several council members in conjunction with which all 150 crew members were presented a a custom-designed lithograph of the ship created by naval artist and historian George Bisharat. The ceremony, during which Navy League support of the ship over three decades was publically praised, was attended by Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Karl Schulz, and Commander, USCG Pacific Area (and Commandant-select) Vice Admiral Linda Fagan.

The council again provided recurring annual awards to SOY, JSOY and BJOY on their two adopted warships in Pearl Harbor. For USS GREENVILLE (SSN 722), in July, the council also attended the ship's 25th Anniversary and Reunion Party in Greeneville, TN, providing beverages for crewmembers at the welcome reception, as well as donating eight custom lithographs of the ship for fundraising. The council also traveled to Hawaii to present awards to USS HOPPER (DDG 70) and present foods from the mainland not available in Hawaii.

The council provided awards to their Sea Cadet unit, and provided financial support for basic operations as well as a year-end during holiday celebration. The council worked to successfully obtain from the Navy League a STEM grant of \$1,000, which they were able to match dollar for dollar.

For the USCG Pacific Strike Team, the council held a Sailor of the Quarter breakfast party for each of the four quarters to present their awards, along with a subscription to *Seapower* magazine. The council has begun also supporting the co-located unit, USCG Mobile Communications Command West, and will move to formally adopt them in 2022.

New Mexico Council (3rd Award)

Sitting at the northern edge of the Chihuahuan Desert, the New Mexico Council provided robust support to their two namesake submarines, USS NEW MEXICO and USS SANTA FE, both about 2,000 miles away¹. The council also sponsored 25 youth groups throughout the state, as well as units in Western Texas they picked-up from the former El Paso Council.

The Committee reached out to a local company, famous New Mexico Piñon Coffee, and secured a donation of over 350 pounds of coffee to be shipped to the two submarines. As a Christmas present from the council, approximately 25 lbs. of local spicy beef jerky was shipped for the crew to enjoy.

The Council provided manpower to help load, wrap, and ship boxes to the crew of the USS NEW MEXICO, with the local Blue Star Mothers, Rio Grande Valley Chapter. The boxes contained numerous personal items as well as local snack items. In total, 330 boxes were packed to send to deployed Navy ships (including the USS NEW MEXICO and a destroyer in the Pacific), and Reserve units in Europe and the Middle East.

USS SANTA FE was mailed plaques to recognize the ship's SOY, JSOY, and BJOY. The council actively supported SANTA FE crew members visiting their namesake city by arranging tours of local businesses and volunteer activities at several charities, and with local law enforcement/fire departments. The council also arranged for five separate crew member dinner events, three ad hoc lunches, and a breakfast donated by a local business. The council also supported the ship's Family Readiness Group's single sailor gift bags program to ensure they had snacks and food items to enjoy on deployment.

Vallejo Council (1st Award)

The recently-reinvigorated Vallejo Council supports three youth groups, two shore commands, an aviation squadron, and a submarine tender based overseas.

They also played a key role in the proper maintenance of, and reverence to, the Mare Island Naval Cemetery, as well as getting legislation passed to return it to the Veteran's Administration. The cemetery has served as a unifying cause for many of the council's adopted/sponsored units/youth groups, bringing them together to activities such as general clean-up, Wreaths Across America, as well as Veteran's and Memorial Day events.

In support of the Guam-based USS EMORY S LAND (AS 39), the council presented two Sailors of the Year, a gift card, council challenge coin, Navy League pen, certificates and a one-year membership to NLUS.

¹ USS SANTA FE was in overhaul at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in New Hampshire for the majority of the year, but is now homeported in San Diego, CA.

In support of all of their youth groups, the council set-up a recruiting booth during Vallejo's annual Waterfront Days, prepared recruiting flyers, offered giveaways, and had unit information for the public.

The council provided the RADM Richard O'Kane Division Sea Cadets a \$1,000 STEM Grant and secured \$500 matching from NLUS. One cadet attended the annual Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony and was able to engage with Pearl Harbor survivors, various senior officers, the Governor of Hawaii, and the National President of VFW. The council provided financial support to Jesse Bethel High School NJROTC in support of a "field trip" by the entire unit to the various Navy Bases in San Diego.

The USCG Station Vallejo, CA was supported through Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and desserts. During the Mare Island Naval Cemetery Wreaths Across America ceremony, the council invited the newest member of the Station to be the one who posted the Coast Guard flag.

Very Small Council Winner

Lake Merritt Council (2nd Consecutive Award)

The Lake Merritt Council supports the large Coast Guard presence in the San Francisco Bay Area and formally adopts Coast Guard Base Alameda, two National Security Cutters, as well as two local youth groups.

In partnership with the Alameda Council, the Lake Merritt Council supported USCGC MUNRO (WMSL 755) with individual awards and deployment support, including 10 banker boxes of morale items for the crew during deployment, hosting a family welcome home sign-making party at which the council also served refreshments, and providing refreshments for the families on the pier upon the ship's return. The diverse items in the banker's boxes were assembled through a mix of fundraising, soliciting donations (including Oakland *A*'s totes and bobble heads!!), and contributions from the two councils. On the pier for the ship's return, the council handed-out small American Flags made in America by Veterans.

Similar support was provided to USCGC STRATTON (WMSL 752) in conjunction with the Santa Clara Valley Council. In addition to SOQ awards, deployment support for STRATTON was focused on their absence during Christmas and New Year's Eve. The council assembled the morale items into 152 Christmas Gift Bags to be left on each crew member's rack on Christmas morning. The also purchased 30 bottles of sparkling apple cider as the ship's "bubbly" for New Year's Eve, as well as 10 gingerbread house kits and candy for a gingerbread house decorating contest planned for the holidays at sea. For the ship's holiday raffles, the Oakland *A*'s donated eight large shopping bags of players bobble heads, team fleece blankets, sports socks, pennants, ball caps, sports shorts, and sports t-shirts. The council also provided two RAZOR adult tricycles for the raffles.

The council also took the lead in running two groups of tables at Base Alameda's 2021 Coast Guard Day family event in August. Supported by several councils in the Pacific Central Region, Lake Merritt organized/coordinated the support, set-up the tables, coordinated with the Base, and broke-down the area once complete. The councils provided a children's book give-away (over 500 books offered) and a large selection of craft supplies.

Once again, after COVID restrictions were eased, the Lake Merritt Council, in conjunction with the Alameda and Oakland Councils, were able to hold their annual BBQ on Coast Guard Base, Alameda open to all local adopted units, as well as any others on the base. At least 160 Coasties and their families attended.

The council didn't forget about their Hancock Sea Cadet Squadron either. They awarded the cadet of the year with a Teddy Roosevelt Medal and a gift certificate, and provided funding to support general operations and ad hoc needs.

Finally, the councils supported the commissioning of USS OAKLAND (LCS 24) with participation on the commissioning committee, financial contributions, and attendance at the various functions/events.