



News Release

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE SURFACE NAVY ANNOUNCES 2022 FREEDOM OF THE SEAS AWARD RECIPIENTS

SAN PEDRO, Calif., Oct. 12, 2022 – The [National Museum of the Surface Navy at the Battleship IOWA](#), the museum for America’s Surface Navy located aboard the historic Battleship USS Iowa Museum, today announced the recipients of its [2022 Freedom of the Seas Awards](#). The awards will be presented at the second annual Freedom of the Seas Awards event aboard the iconic Battleship IOWA in San Pedro, on Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022.

Held in honor of the Battle of Leyte Gulf anniversary, the largest naval battle of World War II, the Freedom of the Seas Awards honor those individuals and organizations that embody the core principles of the American Surface Navy’s mission to protect and defend our oceans for the benefit of the free world.

Freedom of the Seas Award - Secretary of Agriculture [Tom Vilsack](#) will receive the 2022 Freedom of the Seas Award, which is presented to an accomplished individual who embodies the core principles of the American Surface Navy to protect and defend our oceans for the benefit of the free world.

Secretary Vilsack is spearheading a transformation of the food system to ensure that the food system of today and the future is more resilient and more competitive globally. Under his leadership, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine are working together to enhance coordination between the U.S. and Ukrainian agriculture and food sectors to build a strategic partnership to address food insecurity.

VADM Samuel L. Gravely, Jr. Award - Retired Rear Admiral (RADM) [Sinclair Harris](#), Vice President, Client Relations for LMI, will receive the 2022 VADM Samuel L. Gravely, Jr. Award. The award, which was named in honor of the first African American in the U.S. Navy to command a Navy ship, command a fleet, and become a flag officer, recognizes leaders who exemplify the trailblazing, courageous service of the late U.S. Surface Navy Vice Admiral.

During RADM Harris' distinguished 34-year Navy career, which culminated as vice director for operations to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he led joint, combined, multinational, and interagency organizations across all aspects of defense, commanded the U.S. Fourth Fleet, and led U.S. naval forces assigned to the U.S. Southern Command.

Humanitarian Award - Jim Zenner, Director of Los Angeles County Military and Veteran Affairs, will receive the 2022 Freedom of the Seas Humanitarian Award, which recognizes those that exemplify the fearless bravery and tenacity necessary to sail through troubled waters to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as a core principle of America's Surface Navy.

Zenner is recognized for his leadership in creating the [Los Angeles County Veterans Peer Access Network](#) (VPAN). VPAN is a veteran-led, community-driven support network serving veterans and their families by providing resources in the areas of mental health, substance misuse support, housing, workforce development and employment, healthcare, education, legal services, social connections, and more. Zenner's VPAN has become the model program for integrated and effective veteran support for the country.

Commerce and Communications Award – [California Trucking Association](#) (CTA) will receive the 2022 Freedom of the Seas Commerce and Communications Award, which recognizes leaders in commercial shipping and communications that embody a core principle of the American Surface Navy in utilizing the ocean for the benefit of the free world.

Eric Sauer, Chief Executive Officer of CTA, will accept the award which recognizes the association's instrumental role in the movement of cargo, specifically on the front line of the goods-movement industry over the past couple of years. CTA's ongoing efforts to boost the economy, provide safe roads, protect the environment, and lower emissions have ensured the safe and responsible movement of goods through the challenging times throughout and following the COVID-19 pandemic.

“As situations across the globe continue to emerge, change and get increasingly complex, the United States Surface Navy's roles in international relations, free trade, humanitarian assistance, and technological innovation becomes even more important,” explained retired Navy Rear Admiral Mike Shatynski, Chairman of the Board of the National Museum of the Surface Navy. “The individuals and organizations that we are recognizing with this year's Freedom of the Seas Awards, are leaders whose incredible work and accomplishments exemplify the values and mission of our organization and the Surface Navy.”

Major sponsors of the Freedom of the Seas Awards 2022 are Lockheed Martin, Marathon Petroleum, UPS, the Port of Los Angeles, Collier Walsh Nakazawa LLP, and the Surface Navy Association. Lockheed Martin will present the VADM Gravely Leadership Award, UPS will present the Commerce and Communications Award, and Collier Walsh Nakazawa will present the Gravely Experience Student Scholarships.

Attendance at the Freedom of the Seas Awards 2022 ceremony is by invitation only. For information on sponsorship opportunities, contact Kyle Aube, Director of Development for Pacific Battleship Center, at kaube@labattleship.com or 877-446-9261, ext. 747.

About the Freedom of the Seas Awards

The Freedom of the Seas Awards is the premiere annual event of the National Museum of the Surface Navy at the Battleship IOWA. The event is held in honor of the anniversary of the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval battle in the history of the world, which occurred during World War II. The Awards honors those that embody the core principles of the American Surface Navy's mission to protect and defend our oceans for the benefit of the free world.

About the National Museum of the Surface Navy

Scheduled to open in 2025 aboard the historic Battleship USS Iowa Museum, the National Museum of the Surface Navy is the museum for America's Surface Navy. The museum's mission is to raise America's awareness of the importance of the United States Surface Naval Forces' role in international relations, free trade, humanitarian assistance, and technological innovation, not just in the past but today and into the future.

Located in the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro, Calif., Battleship USS Iowa Museum is one of the top five museums and attractions in Los Angeles, bringing the ship's history to life through in-person and virtual tours and educational programs for youth. In addition to providing a natural platform for veterans and patriotic civilians to come together as a community, Battleship USS Iowa Museum provides a wide array of impactful programs and resources that support the critical needs of our military and veterans.

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