

FORT SCHUYLER

THE MAGAZINE FOR MARITIME COLLEGE ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

SUMMER 2025

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SUMMER 2025

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EDITORS

Pamela Jones
Director, Marketing & Communications
Maritime College

Tamara Bonet-Cardona
Associate Director, Marketing &
Communications
Maritime College

Don Gale
Editor, Maritime College Alumni
Association

PHOTOGRAPHY

RADM John A. Okon
Don Gale
Tamara Bonet-Cardona
Cadet Matthew Bindas

DESIGN

Virna Wong

CORRESPONDENCE IS WELCOME

Send your class notes to:

Fort Schuyler Magazine
Office of Marketing & Communications
SUNY Maritime College
6 Pennyfield Avenue
Throggs Neck, NY 10465

Email:

- communications@sunymaritime.edu
- editor@maritimecollegeaa.org

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(est. 1903).**

LETTER FROM STEVE CARBERY '80

President, Maritime College Alumni Association



MARITIME COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Dear Fellow Alumni,

Reflecting on the past six months, I am truly amazed at what we've accomplished together. Time flies—especially when our sails are full.

Following January's successful Sesquicentennial Gala, our celebratory gift to our alma mater, the Alumni Association has continued to support our members while advancing the mission of Maritime College. We helped graduating seniors initiate professional connections at our New Alumni Night in March and reinforced our own ties at our Spring Networking Event, held May 8 at Pennsylvania 6 in Manhattan. Our 36th Annual Golf Classic at Plainfield Country Club on June 9 was another fabulous success, drawing strong alumni support and participation.

Nationwide, our regional chapters continue to thrive. DelVal regularly hosts networking events with maritime professionals. Our Florida chapters—in Jacksonville, Tampa Bay, and South Florida—are actively building connections, and Houston remains a model of alumni engagement, with events such as sporting clays, golf outings, and industry meetups. Our newest chapter in New Orleans launched on June 11 with a gathering at the National WWII Museum, timed perfectly with TSES VII's port call—proving once again that when the ship docks, the alumni show up.

Our chapters play a vital role in mentoring young graduates and strengthening professional networks—especially important as we navigate the future under initiatives like the SHIPS for America Act.

Our relationship with Admiral Okon, the administration, the Foundation, the College Council, and the Parents Association is stronger than ever. SUNY Maritime is on the move, her future is bright, and we are ever grateful to help build her legacy. This spring, we proudly participated in key events, including Industry Day, the College's Birthday Week, and the 50th anniversary of women in the Regiment, underscoring our shared commitment to progress and inclusion.

On Giving Day, the College, the Foundation, and the MCAA raised over \$260,000, with \$20,925 earmarked for MCAA Summer Sea Term scholarships. We also celebrated the formal appointment of Rear Admiral John Okon '91 as the 12th President of SUNY Maritime College at his April 24 Convocation. That same day, we helped revive a proud tradition by partnering with the Athletics Department to induct a new class into the Maritime Athletics Hall of Fame—its first since 2013.

On May 23, I was honored to attend Graduation and Commencement in St. Mary's Pentagon, where I welcomed the newest alumni into our ranks with the presentation of MCAA lapel pins. Their confidence and professionalism speak volumes about the future of our community.

Among our most impactful efforts is the continued development of the Privateer Recruiting Officer Program (PROP). This initiative, built in collaboration with the College's administration, faculty, and Admissions team, and heavily funded by an endowment to the MCAA from Ronald Rasmus '60, trains alumni volunteers to support new student recruitment. After our March 31 session, we've certified 25 officers, and we welcomed 18 more on July 28, bringing us to 43 trained PROP volunteers since last fall.

At the MCAA, we remain committed to connecting with, engaging, and supporting you, our valued members. Through newsletters, social media, reunions, and events, we strive to keep you informed and inspired. We are also building a new digital engagement platform, with plans to go live this fall—stay tuned.

None of this is possible without the dedication of our Board of Directors, committees, office staff, and all of you—our sustaining members, sponsors, and donors. Your time, talent, and treasure keep us underway and on course.

"Steaming ahead smartly and checking compasses frequently." (Joe Gerson '47)

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen J. Carbery'.

Stephen J. Carbery '80

President, Maritime College Alumni Association

LETTER FROM JOHN A. OKON '91

President, SUNY Maritime College



Dear Maritime Nation,

Greetings from Fort Schuyler! As I head into the second year as your President, I am filled with gratitude and an even stronger resolve to lead *THE* Maritime College—First and Foremost—into its next chapter of excellence.

From the very beginning, I shared a clear set of priorities: ensuring Maritime College remains a national leader in maritime education and applied learning; growing enrollment; improving retention, graduation, and license pass rates; expanding fundraising efforts; maintaining fiscal strength; and cultivating a resilient, inclusive maritime culture—one that honors our proud legacy while boldly shaping our future. I am proud to report that we are making steady, measurable progress across all fronts.

This past year was not without its challenges. Like any great ship navigating the seas, we faced strong winds and stiff currents—but true to Fort Schuyler form, we met them head-on. We emerged stronger, more united, and more determined than ever. Together, we celebrated numerous milestones and achievements, including:

- Celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Women in the Regiment, the 75th Anniversary of our first African American graduate, Carl F. Burnett '50, and the 150th Anniversary of our first training ship and MUG class.
- Achieved athletic milestones: first-ever postseason football win, multiple postseason appearances and accolades, and our first Athletics Hall of Fame class in over five years.
- Earned academic honors: first place in the SNAME International Ship Design Competition and second place at the Connecticut Maritime Association Conference for groundbreaking research.
- Advanced campus transformation with a full rebrand—new logos, strong social media presence, new website, turf on Reinhart Field, and major upgrades to athletic and student spaces.
- Reached new heights in engagement and support, raising over \$1.2M at the 2024 Admirals Dinner and launching our first Annual Giving Day, raising \$260K.
- Completed a successful Summer Sea Term, training 516 cadets with port visits to New Orleans, Ponta Delgada, and Bergen.
- Seeing surging enrollment, with Fall 2025 projections trending up across freshmen, transfers, and graduate students.
- Through collaboration and shared governance, we developed our **Fiscal Stability Plan**, which the Chancellor approved in February

While these accomplishments are significant, we are far from finished. Our vision remains clear: to be the world's foremost maritime educational institution—setting the standard in training, innovation, and leadership development for the global maritime industry.

Now, more than ever, our mission is urgent and our purpose, profound. The recent release of the *SHIPS for America* Act and the White House Executive Order on Restoring America's Maritime Dominance underscore a national imperative: to produce more licensed mariners and maritime leaders who can think critically and act decisively. The nation is looking to institutions like ours.

The students, the region, and the country are counting on us—THE Maritime College family—to rise to the occasion. Together, let us continue to show the global maritime industry that New York Maritime stands First and Foremost.

With Utmost Respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Okon', written over a stylized, light-colored graphic that resembles a ship's hull or a signature flourish.

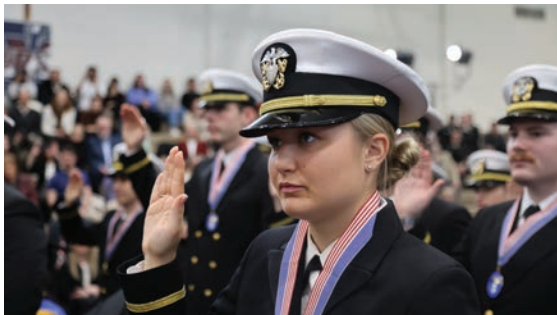
Rear Admiral John A. Okon USN (Ret.), USMS

CAMPUS NEWS

Commencement 2025

Commencement at Maritime College is more than a ceremony—it's a time-honored tradition that celebrates the hard work, resilience, and achievements of our students as they prepare to lead in the maritime industry and beyond. It marks both an ending and a beginning, honoring the transformative journey each student undertakes during their time at Fort Schuyler.

Under the leadership of President John A. Okon, the Maritime College proudly reinstated its Winter Commencement Ceremony. This milestone reflects the evolving needs of our students and the maritime community, offering greater flexibility and recognition for those who complete their degrees outside the traditional academic calendar. President Okon's decision underscores a renewed commitment to inclusivity, tradition, and ensuring that all graduates receive the celebration they've earned, no matter when they cross the finish line.



Following the success of our Winter 2025 Commencement Ceremony, we dove into preparation for our Spring 2025 Commencement Week, which was a vibrant celebration of achievement, leadership, and service, a fitting close to an exceptional academic year. Celebrations began with the Annual Student Excellence Awards. From scholarly excellence to leadership and community involvement, the ceremony honored individuals who exemplify the College's values of Loyalty, Valor, and Leadership.

Additionally, the College proudly recognized faculty recipients of the State University of New York's prestigious Chancellor's Awards for Excellence: Mr. Muhammed Acikgoz for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities; Dr. Daniel An for Excellence in Teaching; Ms. Laura Andrews for Excellence in Librarianship; Mr. Joe Tedesco for Excellence in Professional Service; and Mr. Peter Mammola for Excellence in Classified Service.

The week culminated in Commencement, celebrating the Class of 2025. Cadet Erik Areklett delivered a powerful valedictory address, reflecting on his time at Maritime College and the honor of serving as both Student Government Association President and Regimental Commander during the 2024–2025 academic year. His remarks captured the spirit of camaraderie, resilience, and leadership that defines our student body in and outside of Fort Schuyler.



CAMPUS NEWS



Soon after, the campus community gathered for the NROTC Commissioning Ceremony. Surrounded by proud families and mentors, our midshipmen took their oath of office, marking the beginning of their careers as officers in the United States Navy and Marine Corps. This tradition of service remains a cornerstone of the College's identity, reflecting our deep-rooted commitment to preparing students for leadership at sea and ashore.

This year's Commencement also included the conferral of two honorary degrees to distinguished alumni who have made lasting impacts on the maritime community. Captain Robert Cook '80, Founding Member and President of the Organization of Black Maritime Graduates, and Captain Howard Wyche '79, Founding Member and Treasurer of the same organization, were honored for their visionary leadership and decades of dedication to mentoring and supporting underrepresented mariners. Their contributions continue to inspire Maritime students and alumni alike, and we are grateful for their longstanding support in uplifting the next generation of Maritime graduates.

Let these memories serve as a testament to the enduring strength and excellence of the Maritime College community. As our graduates set sail on new journeys, we celebrate the accomplishments of all who made this year one of pride, purpose, and promise. ■



CAMPUS NEWS

SGA Celebrates Student Leadership and Excellence

The Student Recognition Ceremony is a tradition that serves as a meaningful celebration of the leadership, service, and harmony that define the student experience at Maritime College. While academic excellence remains the cornerstone of our mission, the strength of our campus community—and the students who lead

it—is equally vital to the College’s enduring success.

From leading student organizations and mentoring peers to serving in the Student Government Association, our students play an essential role in shaping a vibrant, inclusive campus culture. Their commitment to leadership and service reflects the values at the heart of the Maritime experience.

We extend our congratulations to this year’s award recipients and to the newly elected 2025–2026 Student Government Association Executive Board. Their dedication and initiative help carry forward the proud legacy of Maritime College, preparing them not only to succeed in their professions, but to lead with purpose beyond our campus. ■



Maritime College Shines at CMA Shipping Conference: Leading the Industry and Navigating the Digital Wave

At this year’s Connecticut Maritime Association (CMA) Shipping conference, the Maritime College community was well represented, including leadership, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. President RADM Okon delivered the keynote address – “Leading a Changing Industry.”

In addition to RADM Okon’s keynote address, Cadets Lauren Barritteau, Matthew Bindas, Emily Celentani, Lauren Clary, Isabelle Gautier, and Jack Pavelka participated in a panel discussion regarding social media and the maritime industry. It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to share social media’s impact as a new communication tool within the maritime industry.

Events like this offer our community, especially our students, the chance to network with industry leaders, alumni, and maritime professionals. We are excited to have offered our students the ability to attend, and we look forward to next year’s conference! ■



CAMPUS NEWS



Fort Schuyler Makes its Hollywood Appearance on CBS' *The Equalizer*

Maritime College Fort Schuyler makes its Hollywood appearance on an April episode of CBS' *The Equalizer*. During the winter 2024/2025 break, Fort Schuyler transformed into Fort Attucks, an army base where actress Queen Latifah's Robin McCall investigates when a soldier suddenly goes AWOL.

During filming, CBS producers used key areas of our historic campus and the local Bronx community. The Sallyport, McMurray Hall, and various rooms in the Fort can be spotted in this thrilling episode. ■

Largest Accepted Students Day in Maritime History

On April 26, the campus was thrilled to welcome over 400 future Privateers and their families to the largest Accepted Students Day in SUNY Maritime College history, bringing more than 800 people to campus!

The day kicked off with a warm welcome from our President, highlighting how a SUNY Maritime College education transforms lives. Attendees then participated in academic overviews of all programs, specialized sessions for graduate students, and one-on-one meetings with representatives from Financial Aid and the Registrar. Students also toured residence halls and athletic

facilities, explored the Regiment of Cadets, U.S. Coast Guard license program, and NROTC options. These future Privateers also received important next steps from the Admissions team.

Tours of the Empire State VII and engaging waterfront activities offered a true glimpse into life at Maritime. Inspired by their experience, many students chose to submit their enrollment deposits that very day, officially starting their journey as Privateers!

We're proud and excited to welcome the newest cohort of Privateers! ■



CAMPUS NEWS

Eagle Fraternity's 50th Annual Camporee

From April 4th to 6th, scouting units from the tri-state area gathered at Maritime College to participate in the Eagle Fraternity's Annual Maritime Camporee at Fort Schuyler. Over 200 scouts arrived on Friday night, checked in, set up their camps, and went to bed early, as Saturday was packed with a full day of activities. Jamie McNamara '94 attended this event with Troop 14 that he leads in Metuchen NJ - and 22 scouts from his troop attended. Jamie is also the NJ Chapter president of the MCAA,

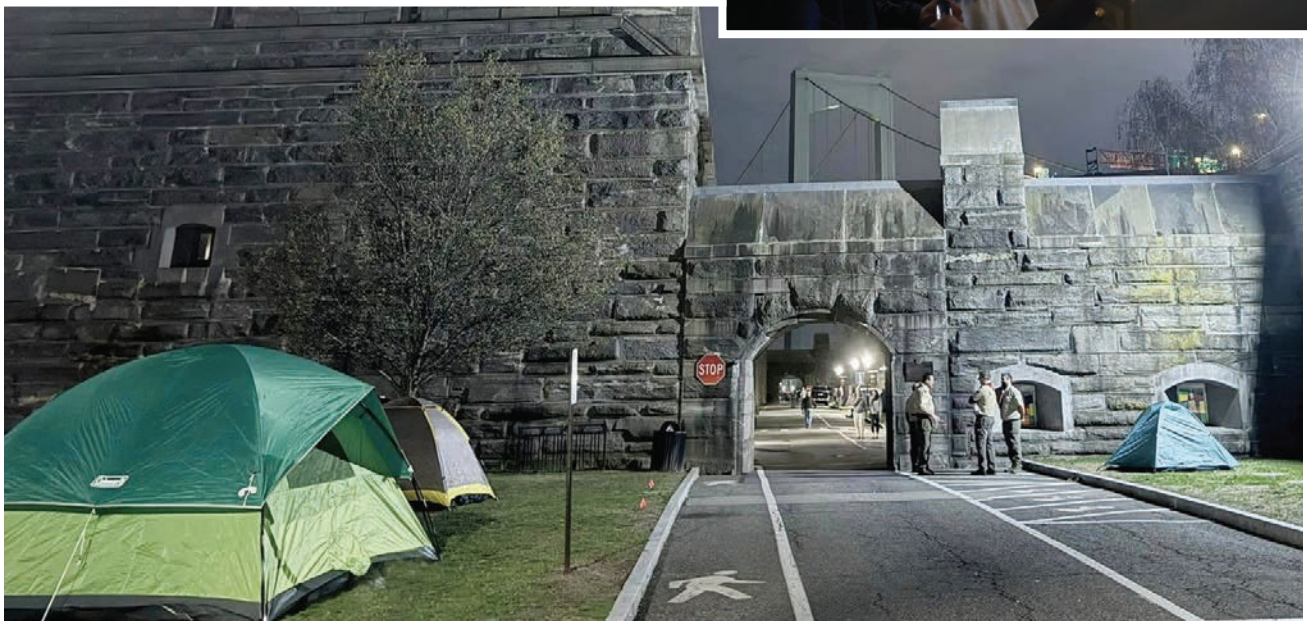
On Saturday morning, scouts and leaders enjoyed breakfast on the mess deck before participating in morning colors. They then moved on to various stations that provided a glimpse into the different majors and experiences offered at Maritime College. Activities included:

- Naval Architecture: Scouts constructed tin foil boats to learn about buoyancy and the significance of ship construction.

- Marine Environmental Science: Participants tested water samples and learned how to interpret the readings.
- Knot Tying: Scouts enhanced their knot-tying skills with the help of Deck License Cadets.
- Firefighting: Scouts had the chance to experience firefighting by learning how to use a fire hose and properly wear turnout gear.

In the evening, scouts interacted with midshipmen from the New York City ROTC Unit, experienced full mission simulators, and explored the extensive history preserved in the Maritime Industry Museum housed inside of Fort Schuyler.

On Sunday morning, scouts and leaders toured the T/S EMPIRE STATE VII before departing campus. Thank you to Cadets Liam Hill, Christopher Zender, Matthew Bindas, and volunteers for putting on a fantastic event! ■



CAMPUS NEWS

Back on Deck: Orientation Returns In Person

The newest class of Privateers were hosted on campus on Tuesday, July 8, for the institution's first "on-campus" orientation since Covid. Over 320 new students attended the full-day orientation. The event assisted in acclimating the new students to the campus, provided the opportunity to meet with campus leadership and the host of support services and departments available to them, and most importantly, the awesome opportunity to meet their classmates. Two additional "virtual" orientations were held for out of state students and parents and family members to ensure that all were becoming familiar with what to expect to successfully charting their course for 2025. ■



Boogie Down to the Sound: A Celebration of Maritime, Community, and Conservation

On Saturday, July 12, our Maritime College community came together for a vibrant, fun-filled day celebrating the beauty and importance of our local waterways. In partnership with City of Water Day, Boogie Down to the Sound was more than just a day of fun activities—it was a hands-on educational experience that brought together families, students, alumni, and local partners in a shared mission to explore and protect the Long Island Sound and East River.

The event featured a wide range of engaging activities that highlighted our connection to the water, including oyster restoration with the Billion Oyster Project, marine science demonstrations, and shoreline exploration stations where young explorers got a close-up look at the ecosystems thriving along our coast.

We were joined by the staff from Brooklyn Boatworks - thankful for their generous donation of 2 Opti.

Attendees also took to the water for kayaking, sailing, and boating sessions led by experienced skippers; I Fish NY also hosted a fishing clinic, which helped participants of all ages learn the basics of casting, catching, and conservation. Onshore, volunteers participated in stewardship projects and shoreline cleanups, reinforcing the importance of caring for our environment.

Adding to the excitement of the day, Maritime College President RADM John Okon '91 and First Lady Valerie Okon '92 met with families, students, and community members for a beautiful day out on the water. Their presence highlighted the College's commitment to environmental stewardship and community engagement. President Okon encouraged young participants in their exploration and emphasized the College's deep-rooted ties to the water that surrounds our historic campus.

An annual event, Boogie Down to the Sound was a true reflection of Maritime College's values, brought to life through a day of connection, celebration, and coastal care. Thank you to everyone who volunteered, participated, and made this special event a success! ■



APPOINTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



Dr. Todd Lidh

Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Todd Lidh has been appointed Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs, transitioning from the Interim role. We are incredibly fortunate to have someone with Dr. Lidh's extensive experience and passion for academic excellence and student success on our leadership team. Dr. Lidh has held several different roles at Maritime College, including Associate Provost for Academic Programs, Planning, and Assessment, Director of Institutional Research, and Director of the Education Opportunity Program.



Jennifer Mahoney

Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Jennifer Mahoney has been appointed the new Vice President for Institutional Advancement. Jennifer brings over a decade of experience in development, advancement communications, and alumni relations, and has already become a valuable asset to our College, by raising \$264,000 on Maritime College's first Giving Day.



Adam Groham

Dean of Students

Adam Groham has been appointed the new Dean of Students. Adam has held several roles in higher education for the past two decades, including LIU Post, University of San Diego, NY Institute of Technology, Webb Institute, and Maritime College. He has been a part of the Maritime Family for eight years as a member of the Regimental Cadre and served as the Commandant of Cadets at Maritime College for the past two years.



Jamel Ramsay

Director of Athletic

Jamel Ramsay has been appointed the new Director of Athletics at Maritime College, following a successful tenure as Head Football Coach for the Privateers. Ramsay's leadership has been instrumental in developing the athletic programs at Maritime, and he now transitions into his new role, bringing years of experience in coaching, mentoring, and student-athlete development.



Sean Forde

Chief of Police

Sean G. Forde was appointed as Chief of University Police, effective April 9. Sean has over 25 years of Law Enforcement experience including serving as the Executive Officer to the Chief of Police for the Town of Mount Pleasant.

"After numerous interviews, community surveys, and conversations with staff, faculty and students, Sean stood out among all the applicants," said Maritime College President John Okon. "He brings decades of experience to this role, and we are excited about his leadership and his commitment to further improving our campus community."



Lieutenant Colonel Robert J. Tart, USMC (Ret), '00

Commandant of Cadets

Lieutenant Colonel Tart '00 has been appointed as the new Commandant of Cadets. Rob returns to Maritime College bringing his leadership skills and expertise to provide guidance for our next generation of regimental students. A native of Staten Island, NY, Lieutenant Colonel Tart is a retired Marine Corps Officer with over 25 years of service. He graduated from Maritime College in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation and from U.S. Army War College in 2020 with a Master of Science in Strategic Studies-General.

THROUGH THE PORTHOLE

Every summer, hundreds of Maritime College cadets move aboard our beloved training ship to embark on Summer Sea Term—and Summer 2025 was no different. The Empire State VII welcomed over 510 cadets, along with dozens of faculty and staff, for a transformative voyage across the Atlantic. This year's itinerary included exciting port calls in New Orleans, Louisiana; the Azores, Portugal; and Bergen, Norway. Each destination offered unique cultural and operational learning experiences, allowing cadets to broaden their perspectives and strengthen their skills both personally and professionally. Throughout the journey, the Maritime College community followed along with pride,



witnessing the development of tomorrow's maritime leaders.

In true Maritime fashion, this year's sea term also recently hit a major milestone—*crossing the Arctic Circle* and officially joining the legendary **Order of the Blue Nose!** This time-honored naval tradition celebrates first-time sailors who brave the icy waters north of 66°33'N. It's more than just a line on a map—it's a rite of passage.

As they took a well-earned break from training and duties, our cadets earned the nod from the Royal Court of Boreas Rex and walked away with the coveted Blue Nose Certificate, proving they're tough enough to handle arctic winds and midnight

Continued on next page



REGIMENTAL NEWS

sun alike. At Maritime College, our focus is on USCG licensing and rigorous training, but we're never afraid to pause for a little fun—and some well-earned traditions along the way!

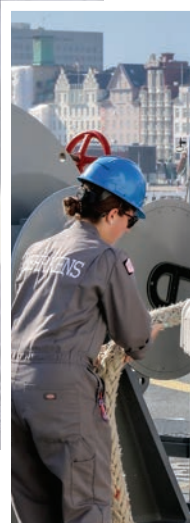
Maritime College takes great pride in preparing the mariners of the future through immersive, hands-on training in both engine and deck tracks. Cadets applied classroom knowledge to real-

time vessel operations, learning to troubleshoot complex systems, maintain critical machinery, and operate advanced equipment—all while developing the leadership and teamwork skills essential for life at sea. While the *Empire State VII* is a modern training vessel, this summer's transatlantic voyage—the ship's first—presented real challenges. Cadets and crew worked together to navigate

those moments, implementing systems that ensured a

successful and safe crossing. It's precisely these high-stakes, real-world experiences that elevate the sea term beyond routine training.

This summer also marked a proud moment for the Regiment of Cadets as two distinguished alumni returned to lead the next generation. Captain Tracy Barkhimer '88, USN (Ret.), joined as a Regimental Officer, bringing decades of maritime and naval expertise to her mentorship. USMC Lt. Col (Ret.) Robert Tart '00 stepped into the role of Commandant of Cadets, introducing a modernized approach that



REGIMENTAL NEWS

MEET ROBERT TART '00 *The New Commandant of Cadets*

It is a privilege to return home after 25 years to serve in the development of the future global leaders.

The First and Foremost's center of gravity is the Regiment of Cadets. Centers of gravity are the hub, the life-blood of any organization, and if removed, causes the organization to cease functioning as designed. Therefore, the Regiment must be sustained and firmly supported by internal and external stakeholders to ensure that the Peninsula of Opportunity continues to produce the critical thinkers and compassionate leaders of character that the maritime industry demands.

The Regiment is a team that will focus on "Brilliance in the Basics": chain of command, accountability, decision making, time management, organizational skills, customs and courtesies, and adherence to directives; all critical requirements for life aboard a vessel and ashore. Nested closely with the focus on the "Brilliance in the Basics" is the teaching of, and enforcement of, standards. We must get this right.

As a team we will instill the leadership traits of integrity, judgement, loyalty, and unselfishness. Leading one's peers is arguably the most challenging leadership requirement. Holding peers accountable for their choices is tough, but when done consistently, this builds moral courage, intestinal fortitude, and ethically sound leaders. The "leadership laboratory" will offer this opportunity to every member of the Regimental team.

The Regiment will ensure that the personnel serving as Regimental Affairs Officers are qualified and committed to the

development of the Cadets.

Regimental Affairs Officers will set the example and hold the Cadets accountable for their actions in a fair and consistent manner. The Cadets deserve nothing less.

The Cadets want the Maritime experience, which is the Regiment. The Regiment is committed to building and sustaining camaraderie and pride, which will make that experience memorable and fulfilling.

We stand on the shoulders of the giants who came before us... The Reisenbergs, the McMurrays, the Luces, those forged in the ways of the seafarer, and who paved the way for the leadership development and education Cadets receive from the First and Foremost institution, Maritime College. The Regiment of Cadets owes them its commitment and dedication to carry forward the long legacy of this fine nautical school. The Regiment is ready to "Give way together" to ensure every Cadet achieves their success on their journey.

Best regards,

Robert J. Tart

Captain Robert J. Tart, '00
Commandant of Cadets



strengthened the College's longstanding tradition of leadership and excellence. With their guidance, cadets continued to grow—not just as mariners but as thoughtful and engaged leaders in a global industry.

One of the most meaningful aspects of this year's voyage was the cadets' commitment to giving back. At every port, they engaged in community service projects that reinforced Maritime's values of leadership, loyalty, and valor. From beach cleanups in the Azores to meal preparation and distribution with Second Harvest Food Bank in Louisiana, cadets gave their time and energy to leave each community better

than they found it. These activities not only made a tangible impact but also helped cadets reflect on their role in a globally connected maritime world.

By stepping off the ship and into local communities, cadets gained insight into the cultures, challenges, and values of the people they served alongside and encountered. These experiences highlighted the true purpose of the Summer Sea Term—not only to train future professionals but to cultivate leaders who understand the power of service, respect, and global connection. ■

ATHLETIC NEWS

Spring 2025 Athletic Highlights

- Women's lacrosse player Gabrielle Nicolosi set single-season program records for goals, assists and points, was selected as the Skyline Offensive Player of the Year, and became Maritime's first-ever All-American in the sport.
- Men's basketball player Jake Devaney, photo right, was chosen as both the Skyline and ECAC Rookie of the Year, as well as being named First Team All-Skyline and Third Team All-Metropolitan.
- Men's lacrosse player Nicholas Uzakewicz was honored as the Skyline Rookie of the Year and was one of six Privateers to receive a First Team All-Skyline nod.



- Rowan Hayes of the men's swimming & diving team won the 200-yard breaststroke and added two silver medals at the Metropolitan Championships. He also qualified for the ECAC Championships.



- Jessica Magee, photo left, won the women's 1-meter diving competition at the Skyline Championships, earning First Team All-Skyline honors for that performance.

- The men's basketball, men's lacrosse and women's lacrosse teams all reached the semifinals of the Skyline Tournament, while the baseball team made the Skyline Tournament.

- Steven Stassi (Football) and Gabrielle Nicolosi (Women's Lacrosse) were selected as Maritime's 2024-25 Male and Female Athletes of the Year, respectively. ■



Athletic Recognition Ceremony Honors Student Athletes and Inducts 13 to Chi Alpha Sigma National College Athlete Honor Society

We are proud to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our student-athletes at the 2025 Athletic Recognition Awards! Our Privateers consistently excel in sportsmanship, athletic performance, and academic success, continuously raising the bar for the next generation.

Additionally, we were proud to induct several student athletes into the Chi Alpha Sigma Athletic Honor Society. Their dedication and hard work, both on and off the field, do not go unnoticed.

Congratulations to this year's inductees! ■



ATHLETIC NEWS

Maritime College Celebrates the 2024 Athletics Hall of Fame Class

On April 24, 2025, Maritime College honored six extraordinary individuals whose contributions elevated Privateer athletics and inspired generations of cadets. The newest class of the Maritime Athletics Hall of Fame reflected the resilience and excellence that define the College's legacy—both on and off the field.

Charlie Munsch '73 - Football (Coach)

Charlie Munsch's journey with Maritime football spanned eras of transformation. A former player turned head coach from 1975 to 1982, Munsch helped shape the program's foundation. But his most enduring legacy came years later, when he played a critical role in reviving the football program in 2005 after a 14-year hiatus. A respected Professor of Engineering, Munsch brought his same tenacity from the sidelines to the classroom. For his tireless contributions, he was honored with the Fort Schuyler Football Booster Club Outstanding Service Award.

Dick Sadler '76 - Sailing

Few athletes have etched their names into the history of sailing quite like Dick Sadler. After earning All-American honors from College Sailing in 1976, Sadler joined Ted Turner's crew—alongside fellow Hall of Famer Gary Jobson—to win the prestigious 1977 America's Cup. His legacy extended far beyond that historic race. Sadler continued to support Maritime's sailing program as a volunteer coach, generously sharing his expertise and passion with future champions.

Rick Smith '81 - Rowing (Coach)

Rick Smith's influence on Maritime rowing was nothing short of legendary. As a four-year team member and senior-year captain, Smith's leadership was evident early. He returned to lead the program in 1986, serving as head coach for more than three decades. Under his guidance, the team competed in elite regattas along the East Coast and earned five gold medals at the prestigious Dad Vail Regatta. Smith also served as Master of the Training Ship Empire State from 1999 to 2018, shaping cadets on the water and at sea.

Peter Vecchio '92 - Swimming & Diving (Coach)

Peter Vecchio transformed Maritime's swimming & diving program

into a powerhouse. As head coach, he led the men's team to an astonishing nine consecutive Skyline Conference Championships from 2008 to 2016. He guided both the men's and women's programs until 2022, earning Skyline Coach of the Year honors three times and mentoring three Skyline Swimmers of the Year. Beyond the pool, Vecchio served as Chair of the Marine Transportation Department and as Relief Chief Mate aboard Empire State VII—exemplifying a life dedicated to Maritime's mission.

Ashley O'Brien '17 - Swimming & Diving

Ashley O'Brien stood out as one of the most versatile and driven athletes in Privateer swimming history. A two-time team captain and recipient of the Coaches Award, she competed in nearly every

freestyle and stroke event. Her leadership extended beyond the pool, where she played a key role in the Regiment of Cadets. After graduation, O'Brien took her skills and Maritime discipline to Florida, where she worked as a Project Manager for Engineering at Port Tampa Bay and coached youth swimming—continuing to inspire the next generation.



L-r: Jamel Ramsay, Dick Sadler '76, Charlie Munsch '73, Patrick MacDonald '18, Ashley O'Brien '17, Peter Vecchio '92, Rick Smith '81, and Maritime College President, John Okon '91.

Patrick MacDonald '18 - Basketball

Patrick MacDonald left an unforgettable mark on Maritime basketball. He became the only player in program history to record over 1,000 career rebounds—while also scoring more than 1,500 points and blocking over 100 shots. A three-time First Team All-Skyline selection and two-time All-Metropolitan Team honoree, MacDonald capped his senior year as one of 10 national finalists for the Jostens Trophy, awarded to Division III's Player of the Year. Upon graduation, he exemplified service once more—commissioned as an Officer in the United States Navy.

These six honorees not only broke records—they built legacies. Their stories served as powerful reminders of what it means to lead, compete, and uplift the Maritime College community. As members of the 2024 Hall of Fame, they joined a distinguished lineage of Privateers whose impact would continue to resonate for generations to come. ■

150 YEAR

HONORING OUR LEGACY

PAMELA JONES



INAUGURATION

On April 24, 2025, SUNY Maritime College formally inaugurated Rear Admiral John A. Okon, USN (Ret.), Class of 1991, as the institution's 12th President. A proud alumnus, President Okon returned to his alma mater with a deep sense of purpose and a bold vision for its future. Appointed by the SUNY Board of Trustees on June 4, 2024, he officially assumed leadership on July 1, 2024. Since taking office, President Okon has focused on aligning the College's educational mission with the evolving needs of the maritime industry, while ensuring its financial stability and long-term growth.

In his first year of leadership, President Okon has advanced both immediate priorities and long-range strategic goals with measurable momentum. He remains committed to growing enrollment, increasing retention and graduation rates, improving license exam pass rates, and strengthening fundraising efforts. His initiatives have enhanced academic pathways, expanded industry partnerships, and improved campus infrastructure, laying the groundwork for a stronger, more resilient Maritime College. At the heart of his presidency is a dedication to preserving the College's proud traditions while building a legacy that embraces innovation, leadership, and opportunity.

A champion of the student experience, President Okon has also worked to create an inclusive and mission-driven campus environment. Under his guidance, student engagement has grown, support systems have been fortified, and the College's identity as the "Peninsula of Opportunity" and "Engine of Upward Mobility" has been reaffirmed. His unique perspective as a seasoned leader in the U.S. Navy and as an alumnus brings a level of authenticity and passion that continues to inspire the College community.

Maritime College extends heartfelt thanks to SUNY Board of Trustees Chairman Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, SUNY Chancellor John B. King, Trustee Marcos Crespo, and the Chao Family for attending the inauguration and for their ongoing support of the College's mission and future. ■



S STRONG: , LEADING OUR FUTURE

WOMEN OF MARITIME LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

As Maritime College celebrates its 150th anniversary, the institution also marks a powerful milestone: 50 years since the first women joined its ranks. This commemorative event brought together trailblazers and emerging leaders for a morning of reflection, inspiration, and celebration. The program began with heartfelt remarks from RADM John A. Okon and keynote speaker Stacie Alexiou '04, who emphasized the critical role women play in shaping the future of the maritime industry. The first panel, *Where the Legacy Began*, featured two of the first seven female graduates — Karen M. Magliocca-Rocheteau and Deborah Kravchuk — who shared moving accounts of perseverance and resilience in the face of longstanding barriers.

The celebration continued with *Emerging Leaders*, spotlighting accomplished alumni who are redefining leadership across maritime sectors, followed by *From Fort to Heritage Hall*, which honored women inducted into the college's prestigious Heritage Hall. Throughout the event, cadet moderators guided thought-provoking discussions that bridged generations of female mariners. Together, these panels not only honored the legacy of women at Maritime College but also reinforced a commitment to diversity, innovation, and excellence in the maritime field. ■



L-r: Bridget Donovan '25, Karen Magliocca-Rocheteau '78, Deb Kravchuk '78, Aisling Donnelley '25, RADM John Okon.



L-r: Fiona Crean '27, Marissa Danzy '10, Alyssa Goncalves '22, Janice Abdelmesseheh '02, Celyna Custodio '23, Vasiliki (Val) Panagis '20, Bridget Donovan '25, RADM John Okon.



L-r: Stacie Alexiou '04 speaking with Aisling Donnelley '25

INDUSTRY DAY

As part of Maritime College's anniversary celebrations, a dynamic afternoon of panels highlighted the evolving landscape of the maritime industry and the remarkable achievements of alumni. The event began with a specialty session on Autonomous Vessels led by Reid McCallister, CEO of Greenpoint Marine LLC, followed by a deep dive into Vessel Construction with Michael LaGrassa of International Seaways. These timely discussions explored cutting-edge technology and industry challenges, setting the stage for a broader conversation about the future of maritime operations.

The momentum continued with Peninsula of Opportunity, an inspiring panel featuring members of the Class of 1991 who have forged successful paths across diverse sectors. Moderated by RADM John A. Okon '91, the discussion featured stories of service, innovation, and resilience from leaders including submarine captain and author Bob Ronscka, Port Director Bethann Rooney, and NTSB investigator Eric Stolzenberg. From navigating nuclear submarines to managing major infrastructure, the panelists demonstrated how far Maritime College graduates can go—and encouraged the next generation to dream just as big. ■





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Maritime Memories: Alumni Reflect on the Magic of Maritime

Undress-Whites

By Tony Criso, Ralph Sirico, Harry Skelly, and Ted Mason, Class of '57

Seen as authoritative, fashionable, or romantic by shore-bound folk, shipboard wear is all about form following function. Uniforms are worn by mariners according to rank, time of day, type of duty, or special occasions or events being observed. And our cadets' training ship uniforms have seen change over a century and a half, to say the least. '57 classmates Ralph Sirico, Ted Mason, Harry Skelly, and Tony Criso share a photo of the Class of '57 Engineers, which actually appeared in a portion of the Class of '55 yearbook, dressed in undress whites, an off-duty uniform no longer

used aboard the training ship. Says Ted, "This uniform was dropped somewhere along the way. I have no idea what year that might have been. It was a good "salty looking" affair that reminded one you were on a ship, a sailor, and looked the part." Ted recalls that undress whites were worn when "manning the rail" during port entry and departure, during evening mess, and after "knock-off". The working uniform – "blue shirts and dungarees, with and without grease and paint stains" – was always worn during work hours. Dress whites were worn when on liberty. ■

Some of the full names of these cadets in the photo are lost to time as they may not have graduated from Maritime. Left to right, standing at rear: unknown, Tom McCarthy, Bill Marklein, Frank Mutolo, Bill Walsh, Tony Criso, and Harry Polus. Standing, middle: Richard "Dick" Ness, J. Sammis, Kenny Graham, Ted Mason, and John "Jack" Glitzner. Seated. Front: Willard "Bill" Blowers, Gilbert "Gil" Williamson, Jimmy Hehn, Gabriel "Gabe" DeVitto, Vincent "Tom" Conroy, and Paul Kiene.



TAKE COMMAND

OF YOUR TIME OFF

Military Sealift Command (MSC) sets a new standard for time off, giving our civilian mariners (CIVMARs) more flexibility while keeping a steady paycheck. With the new 4-on-2-off rotation, you'll get two months of paid leave for every four months at sea—plus more opportunities to advance your career.

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POSITION	BASE SALARY	BONUS*	ANNUAL AVERAGE SALARY**
First Officer	\$94,737 - \$175,033	\$71,090	\$222,921
Second Officer	\$85,647 - \$148,032	\$64,235	\$184,629
Third Officer	\$76,552 - \$120,981	\$57,414	\$156,502
First Assistant Engineer	\$93,014 - \$171,758	\$18,602	\$223,537
Second Assistant Engineer	\$84,064 - \$145,184	\$16,812	\$190,122
Third Assistant Engineer	\$75,124 - \$118,662	\$56,343	\$190,433
Able Seaman- Watch	\$61,896	\$56,581	\$107,778
Able Seaman- Maintenance	\$59,127	\$46,422	\$98,778

*Sign-on bonus with a service agreement.

**Annual average salary includes base, overtime and other special pay.



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THE Maritime College: A STRATEGIC VOYAGE PLAN

At THE Maritime College, we believe American shipping and the global maritime industry are vital forces in New York, the United States of America, and a connected world. Their impact on trade, security, and sustainability drives us to innovate and lead in maritime education, creating solutions that shape a better future.



The Strategy of SUNY Maritime College was developed through the Planning, Budget, and Assessment Committee (PBAC)—a campus-wide shared governance process that encouraged input from every corner of our community. From collaborative committee work to open dialogue at faculty and staff town halls, this inclusive effort helped shape a Strategy that truly reflects the spirit and direction of the College.

Our updated Strategy—our Voyage Plan—is a forward-looking evolution of the 2018 Strategic Plan. It remains firmly grounded in the College's 'Why' and our enduring Core Values.

At THE Maritime College, we believe American shipping and the global maritime industry are vital forces in New York, the United States of America, and a connected world. Their impact on trade, security, and sustainability drives us to innovate and lead in maritime education, creating solutions that shape a better future. We cultivate the next generation of maritime leaders by combining exceptional small-classroom education with applied learning in state-of-the-art labs, simulators, and aboard our training ship. Through real-world experiences on land and at sea, we develop practical leadership skills in every student. We prepare resilient, ethically grounded leaders who are highly educated and trained to make a lasting impact in the global maritime industry.

CORE VALUES

Our Core Values: Loyalty, Valor, and Leadership. At THE Maritime College, our Core Values are the foundation of everything we think, say and do. They guide our actions, define our culture, and shape the leaders we become.

LOYALTY

We possess a strong sense of duty and a deep commitment to our classmates, colleagues, family, friends, and Maritime College. We accept the responsibility as the dedicated stewards of the college, entrusted with its legacy and future.

VALOR

We are courageous and focused, determined to face challenges and obstacles with unwavering resolve. Honest and moral, we actively seek opportunities to support and uplift others, going beyond expectations to make a positive impact on the lives around us.

LEADERSHIP

We consistently strive for excellence and uphold the highest standards of integrity in all that we do. We are committed to uplifting others, empowering them to reach their full potential while ensuring the collective success of the team.

Continued on next page

VISION AND MISSION

VISION

We are the world's foremost maritime educational institution, setting the standard in training, innovation, and leadership development for the global maritime industry.

MISSION

We forge adaptive and critical-thinking leaders ready for the evolving global maritime industry.



FIVE KEY PRIORITIES

This Voyage Plan has 5 key priorities, and through our core values, we will deliver on the college's Vision and Mission.

PRIORITY 1

Position the College for Greater Success. Strategically align resources to meet current and future needs, ensuring the College remains adaptive, competitive, and innovative in an ever-evolving academic and global landscape, setting the stage for sustainable growth, enhanced academic reputation, and greater opportunities for students, staff, and faculty. Accordingly, we will:

Objectives:

- 1.1 Grow enrollment.
- 1.2 Strengthen the College's financial foundation through fiscal discipline.
- 1.3 Build discretionary wealth through targeted fundraising initiatives that engage alumni, donors, and industry partners.
- 1.4 Implement environmentally sustainable operations and practices.

PRIORITY 2

Strengthen Academic Excellence and Innovation. Prepare students to excel in the global maritime industry by offering programs that seamlessly integrate in-depth disciplinary knowledge, applied learning experiences, and the adaptive skills necessary to navigate an ever-evolving field. Ensure our graduates are well-versed in technical expertise and prepared to adapt to emerging trends, technologies, and global challenges. Accordingly, we will:

Objectives:

- 2.1 Offer rigorous academic programs that are accessible to a diverse range of students.
- 2.2 Enhance applied-learning experiences aligned with industry standards, ensuring students gain practical, real-world skills directly relevant to their future careers.
- 2.3 Foster a diverse and consistently high-quality faculty who are practitioners and experts in their disciplines and actively engaged within the broader college community and the maritime industry.



PRIORITY 3

Enhance our Commitment to Student Success. Establish a supportive ecosystem that bolsters enrollment and prioritizes academic excellence, personal growth, and career readiness. Students are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and experiences needed to thrive in their academic pursuits and future endeavors. Accordingly, we will:

Objectives:

- 3.1 Implement and scale evidence-based practices that enhance academic performance and foster student success.
- 3.2 Develop data-informed retention strategies tailored to each stage of the student journey that improves success metrics, including graduation and job placement rates.
- 3.3 Offer targeted resources, personalized guidance, and applied developmental opportunities in and out of the classroom.



PRIORITY 4

Elevate the Student Life Experience. Foster an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages personal and interpersonal development while nurturing a strong sense of community that empowers students to succeed academically, socially and professionally. Accordingly, we will:

Objectives:

- 4.1 Create a more dynamic student-centered campus.
- 4.2 Enhance engagement opportunities that strengthen the campus community by fostering academic and personal growth and cultivating meaningful connections.
- 4.3 Broaden leadership, ethics, and teamwork initiatives by integrating co-curricular activities that are accessible to all student populations, fostering essential skills for personal and professional success.



PRIORITY 5

Promote the College's Prominence. Advance a distinctive identity that increases the College's visibility, recognition, and reputation globally while developing collaborative partnerships and leveraging networks to provide students, faculty, and staff with valuable insights, real-world experiences, and expanded opportunities for professional growth, research, and innovation. Accordingly, we will:

Objectives:

- 5.1 Elevate the Maritime College brand.
- 5.2 Strengthen alumni engagement and presence by fostering meaningful connections between graduates and the institution.
- 5.3 Deepen existing relationships and cultivate new partnerships across the full spectrum of the maritime industry, from shipping and logistics to technology and regulatory bodies.
- 5.4 Initiate and strengthen partnerships with educational institutions and community groups to create opportunities that benefit students and the broader community.
- 5.5 Use data-informed decision-making to identify and engage new maritime industry sectors while strategically elevating the college's standing. ■





John Bree '78, Chairman



Michael Chalos '70, Vice Chairman

SUNY MARITIME FOUNDATION

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LETTER FROM THE SUNY MARITIME FOUNDATION BOARD PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

Dear Maritime Community,

This past year has been one of historic milestones and record-breaking achievement for SUNY Maritime College and the SUNY Maritime Foundation. Thanks to your continued support, we completed our most successful fundraising year to date—fitting as we proudly celebrated the College's 150th anniversary.

The anniversary was marked by a memorable week of events, including our first-ever Giving Day, the Inauguration of Rear Admiral John A. Okon '91 as our new College President, and our largest-ever Accepted Students Day. These celebrations were more than commemorative—they reflected the strength, momentum, and unity of our entire Maritime community.

We are particularly energized by the leadership of RADM Okon, whose vision is bringing together students, faculty, alumni, parents, and industry partners like never before. Today, we see more alignment between the College, the Alumni Association, the Parents Association, and the Foundation, all working together to support a bold, shared mission.

The SUNY Maritime Foundation is proud to serve as the primary organization raising and managing private support for the College. In partnership with College leadership, we invest in strategic initiatives that enhance academic excellence, student success, and long-term institutional strength.

We have also welcomed new leadership within the Foundation itself. Jennifer Mahoney joined as Executive Director and also serves as the College's Vice President for Institutional Advancement, bringing new energy and strategy as we lay the ground work for the Foundation's next major phase of philanthropic growth. We are also growing our board and pleased to welcome Greg Smith '91 to the Board, whose insight and dedication further strengthen our work.

As we look ahead, growing the College's endowment is one of our top priorities. A strong endowment is essential to ensuring the College's financial stability and competitiveness, not just for today's students, but for generations to come. We are proud to report steady growth in our endowment and are committed to building on that momentum to support the next 150 years.

A Maritime College education is built on tradition, excellence, and hands-on learning. With your continued partnership, we will ensure it remains that way.

With gratitude,

John Bree '78
Chairman,
SUNY Maritime Foundation Board

Michael G. Chalos '70
Vice Chair,
SUNY Maritime Foundation Board

Maritime's First-Ever Giving Day Makes Waves with Historic Support

GIVING DAY 2025 A MAJOR SUCCESS!

On April 22, 2025 at Noon, Maritime College's first-ever Giving Day officially launched. The Maritime College community came together like never before—stacking hands, showing pride, and making a powerful impact. In just 24 hours, more than **540 donors** from across the globe contributed over **\$264,000**, marking a monumental moment in the College's history.

From New York to Sydney, Saipan, and even the middle of the Indian Ocean, the outpouring of generosity reached far and wide. This incredible show of support reflects the strength and spirit of the Maritime family—one that always shows up when it counts.

Class with most donors:

1984

Deckies v. Engine

DECKIES WON!

Farthest gift from a donor

GARY CORDES '66

First gift of the day

MARK WOESSNER '79

Most supported fund

**UNRESTRICTED
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Because of the alumni, family, parents, friend, faculty, and staff donors, our students will thrive—in the classroom, on the field, and at sea. Gifts help power everything from scholarships and academic programs to state-of-the-art simulators, student clubs, Regiment of Cadets, athletics, and the transformative Summer Sea Term.

Whether \$5 or \$500, every contribution helps shape a brighter future for Maritime students. Our donor community believes in the mission, supports the journey, and celebrates the success of every student.

Giving Day 2025 was one to remember—and set the course for even greater sights ahead. ■

One Day. One Hand. One Maritime.

Mark your Calendar: Giving Tuesday, December 2, 2025.

Victor Corso Announces \$100,000 Gift to Launch

THE VICTOR CORSO '83 HOPE FUND

At SUNY Maritime College's 2024 Admiral's Dinner, alumnus Victor P. Corso, Class of 1983, announced a generous \$100,000 gift to establish The Victor Corso '83 Hope Fund, a new endowed fund designed to create lasting impact for students, faculty, and the broader Maritime College community.

The Vic Corso '83 Hope Fund will provide flexible, unrestricted support each year to address the College's most pressing needs—whether that be student scholarships, funding for academic departments, enrichment opportunities, student activities, or even upgrades to campus facilities. The fund ensures that Maritime College has the resources to respond to emerging opportunities and



Ervin '80 Establishes “ONE HAND FUND” in Honor of Former Registrar



SUNY Maritime College is honored to announce that David Ervin, Class of 1980, and his wife, Jennifer, have made a bequest to establish The Dr. Howard English One Hand Fund. This endowed fund, created through their estate plans, pays tribute to Dr. English, the College's former Registrar, and the behind-the-scenes support he offered students in need.

By notifying the College of their planned gift, the Ervins become members of the St. Mary's Society, which honors alumni and friends who include SUNY Maritime in their estate plans through bequests, trusts, or other life income arrangements. Members of the Society demonstrate the highest level of commitment to

sustaining the College's mission and ensuring its long-term financial strength.

David Ervin shared the following memory about his inspiration to endow this fund:

“Hat in hand, I stood before Dr. English. It was 1977 or 1978, I can't recall. I had heard that you could apply for emergency cash loans through him. Truth be told, I didn't know Dr. English at all, never having dealt with him in my time at school. I was broke. My folks paid for tuition, room and board. The \$600 federal subsidy, and what I could make working over summer vacation and Christmas break, was what I had to live on for the year. I quit the soccer team, where I had started as a MUG, because I had torn up my cleats and

challenges, providing timely support where it can make the biggest difference.

"This fund is about helping Maritime remain strong and agile," said Corso. "It feels great to give back and hopefully inspire others to do the same. Maritime gave me the foundation for a successful career and life, and now it's my turn to help ensure that current and future students have those same opportunities."

The Hope Fund reflects Corso's belief in the power of education and the value of investing in the next generation. It embodies his hope that others in the Maritime community will feel inspired to support the College in their own way. ■

had no funds to replace them. I was close to tapping out.

I recall Dr English was a friendly man. He lent a sympathetic ear, heard me out with no question and promised to help. I had no idea if the couple hundred dollars came from his own funds or if he had another source. It certainly pulled me back from a financial brink. I did not buy new cleats with the money. I satisfied my need for competition through pick-up basketball and joining the sailing team.

Circumstances have changed considerably for me. Those memories have stuck with me. Sometimes things just happen, and good people need a hand. My wife and I are very fortunate to be able to endow this fund to help others who may be in similar circumstances."

SUNY Maritime College is deeply grateful for the Ervins' generosity and vision. ■

ST. MARY'S SOCIETY

The St. Mary's Society recognizes and honors our alumni and friends who have generously provided gifts to the SUNY Maritime Foundation through bequests, trusts, and other life income arrangements. Society membership reflects the highest level of commitment to promoting excellence in maritime education. SUNY Maritime College is grateful to the members of the St. Mary's Society for their dedication to sustaining the long-range financial health of the College.



Become a Society Member

If you have named Maritime College in your will, or have otherwise included the College in your estate plans, you already qualify for membership. If you have not yet notified us of your intentions or are interested in learning more about planned giving, please contact Jeanne K. Murphy, Sr. Director of Development, at 347-842-1691 or by email at jmurphy@sunymaritime.edu.

St. Mary's Society Members

Dr. Michael and Kimberly Alfultis

Benita C. Allaire*

Arthur W. Andrew '75

RADM David Brown and Sheila McCurdy

CDR William T. Caldwell USNR (Ret.) '58

Victor Corso '83

Captain Edward E. Dangler USN (Ret.) '49

Barbara Decker

Dr. Brian G. Dengel '79

Dr. Joseph M. DePaso '75

David '80 and Jennifer Ervin

Dr. Renee M. Evans

Richard J. Feinson '69

William E. Forman Jr. '58*

Jose A. Guerrero '76

George J. Hallinan '57*

Douglas W. Hamilton '56*

Emil L. Kiefer '49*

Joseph Maurelli '63

Captain Walter J. Maznio '73

RADM John A. Okon '91 and
Valerie Okon '92

Donald J. Penniall '49*

Donald H. Seaman '71

Anthony J. Scolaro, Oct '46*

Robert S. Siegler '52

Captain Mang V. Vo '81

Fred C. Weber Jr. '47*

Leonard J. Weiss '46*

* Deceased

Leadership at Sea and Ashore:

MEET LCDR RAYMOND DONNELLY '06



LCDR Raymond Donnelly '06 has been serving as the Liaison Officer (LNO) supporting the Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program (SSMP) and Student Incentive Payment (SIP) Program, at SUNY Maritime since September 2022. The SIP Program provides financial assistance to cadets at state maritime academies who commit to serving in a U.S. Navy Reserve (USNR) Strategic Sealift Officer (SSO) billet after graduation. As an officer in the SSO Force, LCDR Donnelly understands the unique opportunities and responsibilities that come with this career path and is here to help guide you through your commitment, training, and future service. A Maritime College graduate himself, LCDR Donnelly knows exactly what it takes to succeed in the program and beyond. Since September 2022, he has been dedicated to supporting cadets, answering questions about SIP requirements, career opportunities, and pathways in the maritime industry. Whether you're looking for guidance on your service obligation, USNR training, or life after graduation, he's your go-to resource!

With nearly 15 years of sailing experience—including five years as a Captain—LCDR Donnelly brings a wealth of knowledge to his role. He has also worked shoreside as an instructor, teaching a range of USCG courses from Basic Training Refresher to

Advanced Firefighting, and is a certified U.S. Navy Small Arms Marksmanship Instructor (SAMI).

His career has taken him all over the world—supporting shipyards in Croatia, conducting ECDIS assessments in Norfolk, Charleston, and Philadelphia, and even getting underway aboard a submarine in 2018! Most recently, in the summer of 2024, he served



as Tactical Advisor (TACAD) at sea.

Fun Fact: When he's not supporting cadets or sailing the seas, you'll likely find him on the ice—playing hockey! ■

FROM SHIPMATES TO SOULMATES: *Two Alumni Tie the Knot*

On May 2, in the heart of Manhattan, two Fort Schuyler alumni celebrated not just a wedding, but a journey that began on the decks of the Empire State VI. William Patsakos '20, former Privateer Football player, and Caitlin Etienne '21, former Privateer Soccer standout, tied the knot in an elegant ceremony and reception at the iconic New York Public Library.

Surrounded by family, friends, shipmates, and proud members of the Maritime College community, the couple's big day was a powerful reflection of the bonds built on campus and at sea. Among the guests was Caitlin's father, Tim Etienne, a long-time admissions counselor at Maritime, underscoring how deeply the college has become a family tradition.



(L-R): Devon Etienne '27, Annaliese Etienne '25, Brianne Etienne '22, Caitlin Patsakos (formerly Etienne) '21, William Patsakos '20, Seth Patsakos, Jake Patsakos '28, Aiden Patsakos '28.

William and Caitlin's story began during the Summer Sea Term in 2019, when a spark ignited through mutual friends—her best friend was dating his best friend at the time. Fittingly, that pair is now married as well, and the four remain close, a testament to the lifelong friendships and connections forged at Maritime.

"We're very thankful for Maritime College and for finding each other there," Caitlin shared. "This place gave us more than a degree—it gave us each other, and a community that feels like family."

This joyful union is a shining example of what makes Maritime College so special: shared purpose, tight-knit community, and bonds that last far beyond graduation. ■



Alumni Sesquicentennial Gala Dinner

On January 30, 2025, the Maritime College Alumni Association, founded 1903, honored Maritime College's "150 Years of Learning at Sea" with a Sesquicentennial Gala commemorating our alma mater and our ongoing union with each other. More than 225 Maritime College staff, alumni, and friends joined the festivities at Tribeca Rooftop in Manhattan, NY.

Opening with cocktails, camaraderie, and networking, the event was graced with an invocation by Reverend Bill Allport, chaplain of Seaman's Church Institute in Port Newark, offering thanks for mariners, engineers, and for Maritime College's legacy and growth. Bob Fay '80 led a poignant tolling of Eight Bells for 56 alumni, from 1941 through 2017, who had crossed the bar in the past year. A video presentation followed encapsulating Maritime's history, from its founding in 1874 as the New York Nautical School, to its cutting-edge Mariner's and STEM education today. Produced and edited by Annmarie Bhola '98, with assistance from MCAA President Steve Carbery '80, plus material from the College's Stephen B. Luce Library, this video is archived on our Events page at <https://www.maritimecollegeaa.org/sesquicentennial-gala-celebration/>.

Dubbing the College "The Peninsula of Opportunity", Maritime College President RADM John Okon '91 shared College updates, his vision for the school's future, and described how he and his wife, Valerie Gessner Okon '92, had been focused on returning to the Fort ever since former President RADM Michael Alfultis announced his retirement in 2023. Okon issued a "ONE HAND" call to alumni to contribute our time, talent, and treasure – through the Maritime Foundation, by volunteering in the Privateer Recruiting Officer Program (PROP), through Summer Sea Term duty – to become involved with Maritime College's mission.

Dr. Salvatore Mercogliano '89, Associate Professor of History and Chair of the Department of History, Criminal Justice, and Political Science at Campbell University in North Carolina, enlightened attendees on aspects of American maritime history and how Maritime College's legacy is woven therein. Sal also related his endeavors with his YouTube channel, "What's Going On With Shipping", over 535,000 subscribers strong at this writing, bringing knowledge of the maritime world into popular culture. Sal credited his achievements to his ability to tap in to the knowledge and experience of Maritime alumni, proclaiming, "That's what an alumni association is!"



Keynote Speaker Rear Admiral Philip E. Sobeck, Commander, U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command

Keynote Speaker Rear Admiral Philip Sobeck, Commander, Military Sealift Command, in charge of nearly 140 MSC ships globally, lauded generations of leaders emanating from Maritime College through its history and their "can-do, get-it-done" attitude. Sobeck honored Maritime alumni such as Captain Harry Manning, New York State Nautical School Class of 1914 graduate and first Master of the SS United States. He cited Matthew Matson, Class of 2005, a former colleague who had declared Maritime a "hidden gem" that had "boosted my confidence to allow me to become a Chief Engineer in 2015." Sobeck proclaimed such leadership skills ingrained by Maritime College to be necessary today more than ever across the world's contested oceans.

The MCAA thanks our generous individual and corporate sponsors who funded this event. Many thanks to MCAA Executive Director Maggy Williams Giunco, Director of Operations Saira Yoo, Director of Communications Taylor Netchert, and our fabulous MCAA office volunteers for making this the historically significant and unforgettable celebration that so honored our alma mater, SUNY Maritime College – on which we alumni bestow our eternal gratitude. ■



Tom Murphy '93, Marianne M. Sanderson '95, and Jim Yahner '86



Joe Lorino '86 and Brian Baldeo



Gary Russo '83, Cadet John Donnelly, John Valvo '83 and Gino Trevellini '17



L-r: Dan Gastaldi '18-ITT, Bethann Rooney '91-MT and '04 ITM, Elizabeth Langmaid '19-Masters, Intl Trade Mgmt, Lance Baker '17-ITT, Henry Killian '10-ITT



L-r: Emcee Capt. Bob Fay '80, MCAA President Steve Carbery '80, Keynote Speaker Sal Mercogliano '89, of "What's Going on With Shipping" podcast, Admiral Sponsor A.J. McAllister '80 and Maritime College President John Okon '91



MCAA President, Steve Carbery '80 addressing the crowd



2025 MCAA Officers and Board of Directors in attendance. Front Row, l to r: Kyron Cooper '15, Steve Carbery '80, Kit Mattikow '23, John Valvo '83. Back Row, l to r: Sam Reilly '95, George Gacser '87, Seth Lucas '01, Vin Melwani '02, Rick McClain '14

36th Annual Maritime College Alumni Association **GOLF CLASSIC 2025**

Despite clouds and light rain, alumni from the Classes of 1967 through 2020 turned out in strong numbers at Plainfield Country Club for the 36th Annual MCAA Golf Classic. This flagship event continues to raise critical support for Maritime College students through sponsorships and registrations that benefit the Association's scholarship, networking, and mentoring initiatives.

Among the day's highlights was a generous contribution from John Enwright '01, owner of Heirloom Cider Company in Oswego, NY. Enwright donated two cases of his award-winning *Purely Pomme Sparkling Honeycrisp Rosé*, recognized at GLINTCAP 2024, for use as prizes and gift auction items. When shipping proved impossible due to regulatory hurdles, he personally delivered the cider—driving from Oswego to Edison on the morning of the event, just days after rotator cuff surgery. *A remarkable show of commitment to his fellow alumni—and a clear example of the Maritime tradition: follow through, do what you say, and show up when it counts.*

During the evening's Fireside Chat, Captain Mike Vinik '03, owner of Vinik Marine, shared his experience towing the iconic SS United States from Philadelphia to Alabama. Attendees were captivated by his account of the 1,100-mile voyage, accomplished with his 141-foot, 5,750-horsepower oceangoing tug, *Vinik No. 6*.

Special thanks to Admiral Sponsor McAllister Towing, along with all our generous sponsors and supporters, for their role in making this event a continued success. Appreciation is also due to MCAA Executive Director Maggy Williams Giunco, Director of Operations Saira Yoo, and Communications Director Taylor Netchert, whose leadership and attention to detail ensure smooth execution year after year.

Save the Date: The 37th Annual MCAA Golf Classic returns to Plainfield on June 8, 2026. Stay connected through MCAA publications and social media for updates. ■



Low Net winners: (l-r) James MacFarlane, A.J. McAllister '80, John Okon '91, Carl Henchey.



Closest to the Pin winner, Daniel Fitzgerald '96 and **Longest Drive winner,** Eric Poppito '17.



Greg Shockley '98, Greg Smith '91, Frank Burkhardt '90, and John Marriott '83.



Longest drive winner, Eric Poppito '17.



Maritime grads readying for the shotgun start.



Kevin Comerford '83, Chris Eyler '74, Jeff Klausner (KP), Sam Reilly '95



MCAA staff of Saira Yoo, Maggy Giunco, and Taylor Netchert, with alumni John Enwright '01, and John Valvo '83.



Gift and auction sponsor, Heirloom Cider Company, owned and operated by John Enwright '01, donated their Purely Pomme Sparkling Honeycrisp Rosé cider.



Class of 1983: Tom Keating, John Valvo, Kevin Comerford, Rich Hayes, Victor Corso.



Al Bergeron, Ray Marquardt '77, John Hannon '77 & Brian Ledwith '98.



MCAA Treasurer Sam Reilly '95 practicing on the putting green before the shotgun start.



Capt. Mike Vinik '03 speaks at the Golf Classic dinner about his experiences towing the SS United States to her final dock.

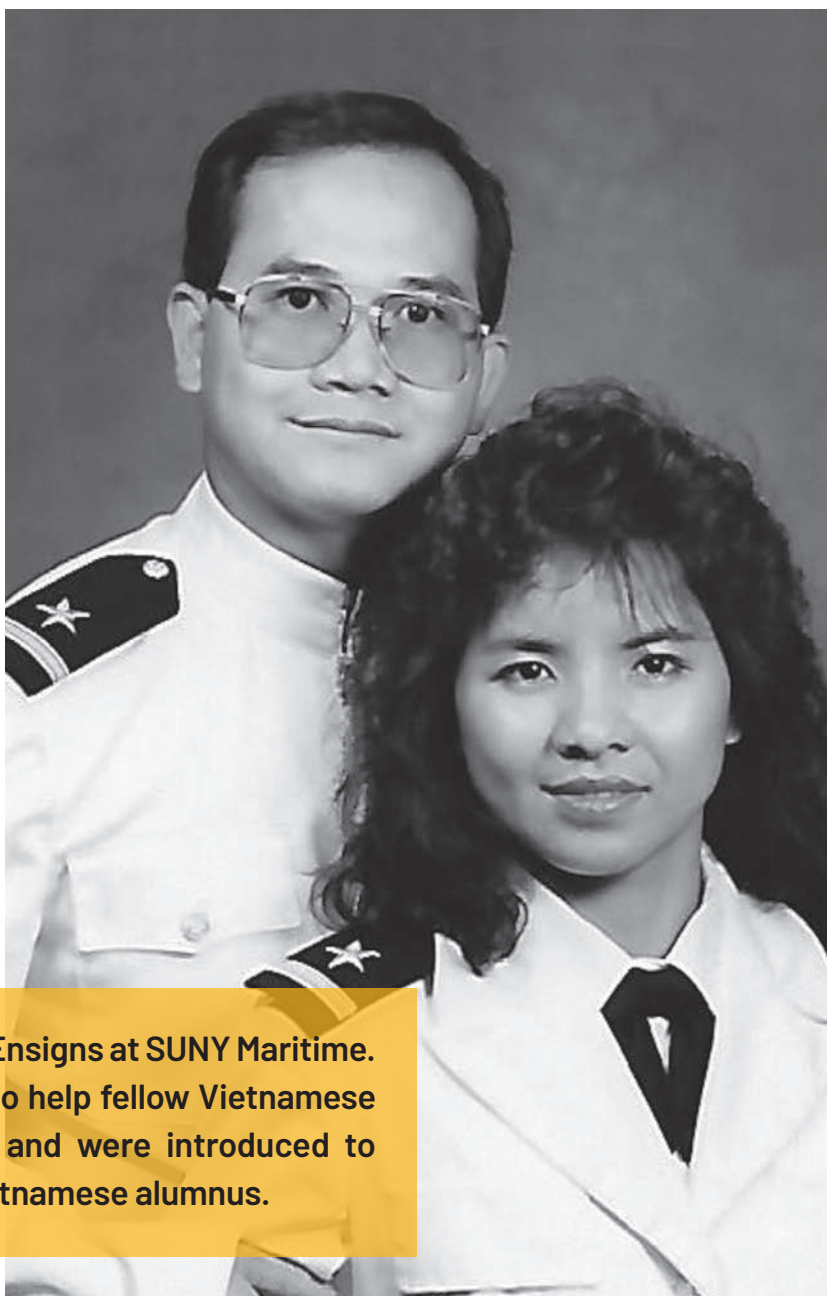
From Desperation to a Dream: **JOHN TRAN '89 AND VAN LE**

Maritime alumni come from countless backgrounds. John Tran '89 and Van Le '90 came virtually through the gates of death.

BY DON GALE

Vietnam refugees, Tran (his first name anglicized from Quang) and Le have shared their story with U.S. Navy veteran Bill Lindman '73, who served aboard the aircraft carrier USS Midway (CV-41) during the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. Lindman's friendship with the couple began in 1989 when he worked at Maritime College as Director of Small Vessel Operations and hired Tran as a newly-licensed Third Assistant Engineer. Says Bill, "On the fiftieth anniversary of America's concluding our involvement in the Vietnam conflict, and given our current political and cultural discourse, we all felt it time that their story was told."

The prospect of conscription by the Communist regime into the Vietnamese Army motivated eighteen-year-old John Tran and his brother Chau (now Dexter), with his family's encouragement, to flee the country in 1978. While her path and Tran's had not yet crossed, cultural conditions were quickly driving Van Le, also eighteen, to the same decision. They would become two of an estimated three million people who attempted to flee Vietnam between 1975 and 1997, among whom



John Tran '89 and Van Le '90 as Ensigns at SUNY Maritime. The couple met while working to help fellow Vietnamese refugees to settle in the U.S. and were introduced to Maritime College by another Vietnamese alumnus.

Van and John have built their married life and their business together in the U.S. for more than 45 years.

'90

it is estimated that nearly a quarter million died in the very attempt. Those fleeing overland across Cambodia into Thailand were threatened by dangers of the jungle, conditions of war with that nation, and interception by the brutal Khmer Rouge regime. Escape via the sea route was marked with dangerously overcrowded and unseaworthy boats, storms, disease, starvation, drowning, pirates, and rape. Of course, any discovery of attempts to flee by government authorities resulted in extremely harsh punishment including years of imprisonment and, possibly, the death penalty.

John's family opted for the sea route of escape for him and his brother, at the cost of virtually all the family's life savings. According to John, he and his brother were whisked from home in a small van to the seacoast town of Bac Lieu, where they were hidden for three months while fuel, food, and provisions were gathered for the voyage. The thirty-meter-long fishing boat, into which they were crammed with several hundred other refugees, had minimal seating and no sleeping accommodations, only a compass for navigation, and was operated by former South Vietnamese Navy sailors whom John says demonstrated no competence as offshore mariners. Beset by days-long storms with boarding seas, the refugees regularly resorted to bucket brigades to avoid foundering. At the Malaysian town of Kuantan, John and the refugees were discharged and, through local assistance, were transported to a United Nations camp in Cherating where John and his brother waited nearly a year for passage to

California – and to freedom.

Meanwhile, Van Le, together with one brother and one sister, left home on foot in the summer of 1979, accompanied by a black-market guide from Saigon, through Cambodia and into Thailand. Escaping detection whilst crossing war-ravaged Cambodia was tenuous. The trio dressed as native Cambodians, and they steadfastly avoided interactions along the way. Another of Le's two brothers who had earlier attempted escape had been caught by the Khmer Rouge and incarcerated in a forced labor camp. Only due to regime collapse and desertion by the camp's guards was he able to escape to Thailand. In one perilous week, Van and her siblings made it to a Red Cross camp in Thailand, from which they were transported to a UN camp. The trio waited about a year before transfer to another camp in Morong, in the Bataan Province of the Philippines and, eventually, to the United States.

John and Van finally met one another while working at a refugee resettlement facility in Albany, New York, helping fellow Vietnamese émigrés build new lives. Bill Lindman '73 says that the two were introduced to Maritime College by another Vietnamese alumnus. Living at Quarters Five on campus, Lindman remembers



inviting John, Van, and their families to the house at the time of Van's graduation in 1990, "We must have had about fifteen people in the house who had come to see her graduate." Lindman also recalls a particularly haunting quote by John, recounting his flight from Vietnam and the odds of success, another time when he and Van met Bill and his wife for dinner, "Nine to die. One to live."

The couple, both of whose families had been shopkeepers in Vietnam, relocated to Boston, opening a retail computer store in 1995. John Tran '89 and Van Le '90 have thus continued their families' legacies and grown their business fortune, as well as their relationship, on the American shores of refuge. Bill Lindman proclaims, "the hallowed halls of SUNY Maritime College, on the Peninsula of Opportunity, Purpose and Determination, have been honored by them. ... America is blessed to have them in its midst. Incoming students and alumni should know their story." ■

Passing the Helm:

THE TIMMEL FAMILY'S MARITIME

Through its 150-year legacy, Maritime College has spawned legacies beyond its boundaries. The Timmel family of Tampa, Florida, are a prime example.

BY DON GALE



John C. Timmel '81

John C. Timmel '81, who earned a B.S. in Marine Transportation with a Humanities concentration, recalls the culture shock of INDOC and his MUG year: "We helped each other by telling ourselves that this was just a mental game that we could win with the right attitude." The routine of the Regiment – morning formation, squaring corners, challenges by upperclass cadets – was overshadowed by the load of classes and homework on the path to a Bachelor of Science degree and a U.S. Coast Guard officer's license. Says John, "I was also elected Fourth Class President – both a great pleasure and a huge additional time challenge."

John began his career as a Third Mate with Exxon Shipping Company (later SeaRiver Maritime), ascending through the ranks over seven years. His desire to serve as a harbor pilot being ignited early, he inquired at ports of call for piloting apprenticeships. Hearing from a Mississippi River Bar Pilot that Florida would provide his best opportunity, John relocated to Tampa in 1988, becoming a Deputy Pilot three years later with the Tampa Bay Pilots Association. "I had a very satisfying 32-year career, completing nearly 8,000 transits upon Tampa Bay. I served as Deputy Pilot Training Officer and President, and as Vice President of the Florida Harbor Pilots Association," John says. Additionally, in 1995, John founded Starboard Ten, his maritime expert witness consulting company, and, with marine surveyor Charles A. Harden and substantial support from Robert

Franzblau '47 and Captain Joe Gerson '47, established the American Victory Ship and Museum in Tampa.

While Jack Timmel '09 and Carter Timmel '17 followed their father's footsteps into Maritime College, both arrived as transfer students with prior engineering education. "Provost Dr. Joseph Hoffman '75 worked with me to transfer my engineering credits toward a degree in Marine Operations while working on my USCG Deck license," says Jack. "I took license classes with my MUG year classmates, academic classes with upperclass engineers, and my license seminar prep with grad students, so I had a diverse group of shipmates." Jack also served First Class year as E-Company Commander and as Chief Boats Rate on 1/C cruise. His early experience with the OSG tanker fleet echoed his father's background, as did his endeavor to become a Tampa Bay Pilot after earning his Master's Unlimited license. "I've been working as a Pilot in Tampa for ten years and serving as the Association's manager for the last four," he says.

Like Jack, Carter studied Marine Operations whilst pursuing his Deck license, considering it a "good mix of deck and engineering and less business heavy than Marine Transportation," he says. Carter enjoyed his Deck courses and teachers including Peter Vecchio '92, "Mate" Jim McKoy, who crossed the bar in 2018, Professor Michael Sobkow '01 (MS '17) and Captains Richard Fitzgerald '77 and Hugh Stephens. Carter worked with

TIME LEGACY



Captains Carter Timmel '17, John Timmel '81, and Jack Timmel '09 aboard the bridge of SS American Victory, one of only three surviving and operable World War II-era Victory class ships, in 2025. With support of New York State Maritime Academy Class of 1947 alumni Robert Franzblau and Captain Joe Gerson and Tampa surveyor Charles Harden, John brought the ship to Tampa and founded the American Victory Ship and Museum. Jack has served as Chief Mate and as Master aboard American Victory during historic cruises.

Crowley Maritime aboard their State class tankers, a parallel with both his father and brother, shortly after graduation. Sailing both the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean several years, Carter sat for the Florida Deputy Harbor Pilot exam and applied for an opening at Tampa. "Studying twelve hours per day for months and sitting twice for the exam was one of the most challenging things I've ever done. The deputy training program in Tampa continues to be challenging yet rewarding," says Carter, who hopes to become a fully licensed pilot before year's end.

Like many alumni, the Timmels all laud Summer Sea Terms as highlights of their Maritime College experience. Says John, who cruised aboard TS Empire State V, "How often can a student cross the Atlantic Ocean aboard a WWII ship, explore exotic lands, and experience historic cultures with some of the best friends they will ever have? These were life-shaping experiences that will be cherished forever." Jack echoes this sentiment: "By far, my best experiences came from Summer Sea Terms." Jack feels that he benefited from cruising before internet and cell service at sea became ubiquitous: "I

could explore foreign countries with friends, play exhibition rugby matches with overseas teams, and cross the ocean in a way that is irreplicable today." Like Jack, Carter sailed TS Empire State VI during his SSTs. "I'd say the highlight of my 1/C cruise, other than exploring Europe with my friends, was working as a Navigation Rate and being able to plot the course and create the voyage plan for the Mediterranean leg of the cruise, and spending time with my dad who signed on as an instructor for the first leg of the cruise."

This introduces an aspect of the Timmel family's Maritime legacy that began before Jack and Carter became Tampa Bay Pilots: John '81 served aboard TSES VI in 2008 and 2016, alongside his sons. "I'm honored that Captain Rick Smith '81 and I graduated together and that I had the opportunity to sail with him on Summer Sea Terms as an Adjunct Professor, teaching Ship Handling, while my sons were cadets. If you're ever able to give back to Maritime in this way, I highly recommend it." Wise words to alumni wishing to pass the helm on to future generations of mariners, as Captain John Timmel '81 has to his sons Jack '09 and Carter '17. ■



Carter '17 and John '81 aboard TSES VI during Carter's 1/C SST.



First Class cadet Jack Timmel '09, left, with his father Capt. John Timmel '81, in Rome during Jack's 1/C Summer Sea Term in 2008. John served as an Adjunct Professor teaching Ship Handling during both his sons' 1/C SSTs.



Capt. Jack Timmel '09, shown here piloting an orange juice tanker into the Port of Tampa Bay.

INDUSTRY ENCOUNTER

Burke Chapter of the Association of the United States Navy (AUSN) Celebrates 36th Annual Mess Night

On March 21, alumni joined the Burke Chapter of the Association of the United States Navy (AUSN) at Larchmont Yacht Club in Larchmont, NY to celebrate their 36th Annual Mess Night– and to honor one of our own! Featured speaker CAPT Kevin Mannix '86, USN (Ret), addressed nearly eighty AUSN members and guests at this “dining out” event. Former “Skipper” of the Blue Angels, with 1,328 arrested landings aboard 12 aircraft carriers, Mannix’s Navy career included several Air Wing Commander posts and Director of Training for the Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Center.

Hosted by Burke Chapter President LCDR Patrick Murphy, Mess Night

was attended by five cadets and five midshipmen invited from SUNY Maritime College and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, respectively, as well as by Maritime alumni invited by CAPT Ted Mason '57, USN (Ret), Mess Night “Plank opener”, and a Vice President of the Mess. Maritime College Chief of Staff CAPT Tom Murphy '93, USN (Ret), International Transportation Management and Maritime and Naval Studies grad student Kit Mattikow '23, James Spear '11, Director, LNG Center of Excellence and of Professional Mariner Training at Maritime, and CAPT Dennis Farrell, USN, commanding officer of New York City NROTC, also attended.



CAPT Kevin Mannix '86, USN (Ret) is the honoree of the evening.



Maritime College cadets attending are: Malcolm Blackwell 4/C, Noah Cardenio 4/C, Pietro Lorino 2/C, Joseph Ferrante 1/C, Daniel White 4/C.



L-r: Class of '80 alumni Tom Breglia, James Maloney, his wife Debra, Jennifer Hayes, and Steve Gulotta. Jennifer and Steve are both past Presidents of MCAA, while Jim has long assisted the MCAA in many capacities and currently teaches Admiralty Law and International Business & Transportation Law at Maritime.

CLASS NOTES

'45 August Stoeffler '45 celebrated his 100th birthday on March 11—and the Maritime family celebrated with him! Augie's daughter, Jill, at left in the photo, reached out to MCAA President Steve Carbery '80 who teamed up with College President RADM John Okon '91 to send Augie a special birthday letter, plus a Maritime College hoodie and pennant. Chief of Staff Tom Murphy '93 gathered the entire Regiment of Cadets to sing "Happy Birthday, Augie!" on the Quad, a moment that was recorded and shared with him. Long-time MCAA supporter Eileen Femenia even delivered Augie an e-card with greetings from Domers across social media. According to Carbery, Augie was "blown away" by all the Maritime love. Augie still enjoys a round of golf twice every week – impressive for a fellow with a hundred laps around the sun.



Class of '57– 68th Reunion

The Class of 1957 held its 68th Reunion at the College and nearby restaurants in New Rochelle, NY, from May 8-10, 2025. Although the weather was foul, Lexy Rivera, Maritime College Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations, Campus Tour Guide Kai John 4/C, and Ship Tour Guide and grad student Liam Thomas, provided campus tours via golf carts as well as tours of TS Empire State VII. "We cannot say enough times, 'Thank You' to Lexy and her team. They were excellent!" says Ralph Sirico '57. "For us MUGS who sailed on Empire State II and III, the new ship is amazing and provides

numerous training opportunities. It even has a large gym aboard."

The classmates were joined at breakfast and lunch on the Mess Deck, by Capt. Tom Murphy '93, Chief of Staff, and Leigh Winfrey, Professor of Engineering, who updated them about the College. Ralph Sirico's grandniece, Isabella Morabito, a freshman Engineering student, also joined the group.

Excess reunion funds will be donated to each of the Class's scholarship funds.



Seated left to right, are Edward Villella, Jack Burns, Steve Bottas (son of deceased classmate Michael Bottas), Cathy Shepherd, and Ed Shepherd. Standing, left to right, are Ralph Sirico, Ted Mason, Carol Mason, Linda Villella, Jim McGovern, Tony Criso, Claudia Criso, Lisa Drzewiecki (daughter of the Shepherds), and Gil Williamson.

CLASS NOTES

Class of '69 – Annual Golf Outing



Peter Baci and his Class of '69 fellows enjoyed archetypal Sunshine State weather of fresh breezes and blue skies March 13 for their eighth annual golf outing on the links of Celebration Golf Club in Celebration, Florida, a couple of miles from Walt Disney World Resort. Pictured here are Bill Liedy, Dave Esdale, Pat Phillips, Bob Johnston, Peter Baci, Barry Cooke, John Darcy, and Don Wilbur. Bob Johnston is Past President of the SUNY Maritime Foundation, and Bill Liedy and John Darcy served as Third Assistant Engineers aboard the SS United States in 1969 under the command of Capt. Leroy Alexanderson '30.

'70 Ringing a bell" as a metaphor for memory recall is something these '70 classmates would know about! Steve Munoz, Greg Gutchigian, David Fekishazy, and Bob Gaunt, left to right in the group photo right, gathered at Steve's home in Wappingers Falls, NY on October 22, 2024, to celebrate the delivery of a model of the historic tug DALZELLEAGLE. The model was made by Greg and Bob, and its display case by woodworker Scott Martin '70. Built in 1958 by Jakobson Shipyard Incorporated of Oyster Bay, New York, the 1,600-horsepower DALZELLEAGLE later served as McAllister Brothers until 2011 for the McAllister Towing Company. The steel bell in the group photo is also an artifact of Steve's, recovered by his father from the Arthur Tickle Engineering Company, a legacy Brooklyn ship repair yard, when it closed in the 1980s. Greg and Bob also prepared for posterity a model of TSES VII, donated to the Maritime Museum at Fort Schuyler on December 3, 2022. Inspired by Greg and classmate Capt. Jack Craft, the model was brought



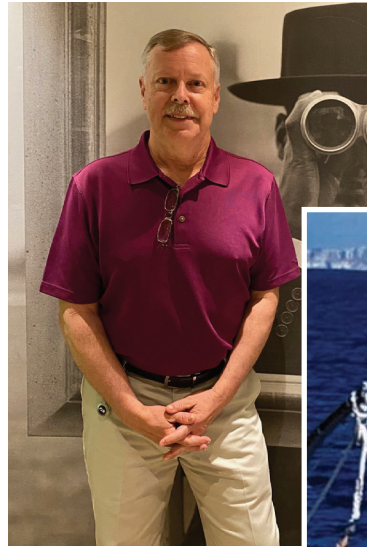
to life through more than a year of planning and construction. Presenting the model in the photo below are, left to right, Scott Martin, Bob Gaunt, Greg Gutchigian, Jack Craft, and event coordinator Steve Munoz.



'73 A lighthouse in a storm-tossed sea of life is an apt metaphor for our Alumni Association and the camaraderie we share in the Maritime family – a sentiment not lost on these Class of '73 gents. From left to right are Jim Rich, Frank Wiegand, Stu Wikander, and Tim Gardner, all of whom gathered with their spouses at Tim's home last June 1st on the shores of Virginia's Smith Mountain Lake. Tim and his wife, Vicki, built the lighthouse shown, a replica of the Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse near Annapolis, MD.

CLASS NOTES

'78 Michael Holmes '78 is pleased to share that he was elected President of the USS New Jersey Veterans Organization during the Battleship New Jersey (BB-62) Reunion aboard "The Big J" in Camden, New Jersey, last September. The organization honors the thousands who served aboard the most decorated battleship in US Navy history during her service life and coordinates former crew members with Memorial staff to support the ship's memorialization. Following service aboard USS *McInerney* (FFG-8) as damage control officer, Holmes was selected by RADM William Fogarty, Commanding Officer, to serve as the 4th Commissioning Reactivation Officer, followed by Repair Officer, aboard the New Jersey. His service aboard Big J from 1981-84 included supporting the Multinational Force (MNF) in Beirut, Lebanon from September 1983 to April 1984. Holmes' decades-long naval career culminated with service as Chief Engineer for fleet support and modernization of both variants, LCS-1 and LCS-2, of the U.S. Navy's Littoral Combat Ships. The left photo shows Holmes on New Jersey's flight deck off Beirut in 1983; at right, he is enjoying a recent cruise shipboard in the Mediterranean. Holmes credits his naval success with his Maritime education which "prepared me to meet the unknowns that come with shipboard engineering and life at sea."



'82 We Domers learn time and again that your shipmates will support you for life, as evidenced in this photo from Johnny Galgano '82, taken in 2021 when he and other classmates gathered at the home of Randall Brooks '82 following the passing of Randall's wife, Jeannie. From left to right: Brian "Sven" Bernhard, Larry Freed, Glen Denton, Patrick "nrml" Nowicki, Tim Bunt, Bob Anderson, Ed Crouch, Pete Boehm, Professor Patrick Crilley, Randall Brooks, and Johnny Galgano.

'88 One of the Grateful Dead's rock ballads declares that "I've Been All Around This World" ... and many Domers can rightly claim likewise! Well, several folks from the Class of '88 managed to catch up with the Grateful Dead tribute band Dead & Company during a March-to-May residency at The Sphere in Las Vegas, Nevada USA last March 28th. Pictured left to right are Shaun Hession, Rob Hintz, Noel Capellini, James Hogle III, Robert Burke, George Doumar, and Raymond Feige. Tragically, Ray Feige, a chief marine diesel engineer with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, was killed on May 24 when an explosion occurred on the tank barge on which he was working that day. With fellow alumni who have crossed the bar, Ray is remembered in Ebb Tide in this issue.



CLASS NOTES

'90 On February 1, **Richard Ohlsen '90** was ordained to the Vocational Diaconate at the Cathedral of the Incarnation of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island. A third-year seminarian at The George C. Mercer School of Theology, Richard augments his spiritual calling with a distinguished public service background. Supplementing his career at Brookhaven Laboratory in Upton, NY as Manager of Nuclear Materials Management, Richard has spent over 25 years in emergency management, including leadership roles in the aftermath of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. He helped develop Episcopal Relief and Development's domestic disaster response program and co-founded the homeless ministry Neighbors Being Human. Richard holds degrees from SUNY



Maritime, Norwich University, and is All But Dissertation for a doctorate from Walden University. Married to Maria, with two grown children, Richard serves at St. Anselm's Church in Shoreham, NY. In this photo, Richard is shown at his ordination with Amie Carter '00 at right.

'96 Few of us ever forget INDOC, our drastic introduction to Maritime life and culture so transformative that it culminates in its own graduation! Here we see MUG Recognition Ceremony for the Class of '28, of which Wesley Perreault, center, is a cadet. Proud parents, **Sean Perreault '94**, left, and **Mariya (Bazzicalupo) Perreault '96**, right, were regaled by Wes's stories and experiences from Indoctrination that day. "Some things don't change!" Mariya laughs. This photo was submitted by Bridget (Meenaghan) Bendo '96 – who was Mariya's roommate and Sean's MUG.



'91 Congrats to **Bethann Rooney '91**, Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, who was honored as the **2025 Person of the Year** by the New York/New Jersey Foreign Freight Forwarders and Brokers Association at their 107th Annual Dinner Gala in New York last February. A leader in maritime transportation, Beth began her career as a port captain/vessel



agent before joining the Port Authority in 1993. She ascended the ranks and spearheaded innovations in port performance, security, and sustainability—including the creation of the nationally recognized Council on Port Performance. Appointed Director in 2022, she has shaped data-driven strategies to strengthen port reliability and efficiency. Beth holds a bachelor's in marine transportation and a

master's in international transportation from SUNY Maritime, and is an Accredited Marine Port Executive with the International Association of Maritime and Port Executives (IAMPE).

'91 Congratulations to **Eric Stolzenberg '91** on being named Director of the National Transportation Safety Board's Office of Marine Safety!



A seasoned mariner, investigator, and naval architect, Stolzenberg has led some of the nation's most high-profile marine investigations—from the tragic El Faro sinking to the Titan submersible incident and recent bridge strikes in Baltimore and Manhattan.

Eric Stolzenberg graduated in 1991 with a degree in Naval Architecture and served in the Merchant Marine before launching an impactful career in marine safety. His leadership continues to shape the future of maritime safety across the U.S. and beyond.

CLASS NOTES



'99 Congratulations to **Marlene Nicolaou-Boyer '99**, appointed President of WISTA USA!

A proud graduate of Maritime College, Marlene brings deep expertise to the role, having served as a U.S. Navy Reserve officer, sailed as a deck officer, and led in tanker operations and commercial sales. She currently serves as Global Commercial Manager at Stolt Tankers USA Inc.

Her appointment was announced at WISTA USA's Annual General Meeting this May in Cape Canaveral, FL. We're proud to see Maritime leadership shaping the future of global shipping!

'17 Two days before Thanksgiving, **Liam Gagliano '17** celebrated a career milestone when he was sworn in as an Apprentice Pilot for the Sandy Hook Pilots Association by the Board of Commissioners of Pilots of the State of New York (BCPNY). Sharing the moment on November 26, 2024, left to right, are alumni Stephen Feminella '07, Liam Gagliano '17, and Joseph Ahlstrom '82. Steve, who was name-dropped in a 2019 Power & Motoryacht feature article on Sandy Hook Pilots, had happened to be at the BCPNY offices that day to renew his license. Many alumni recall Joseph Ahlstrom, Professor with the Marine Transportation Department at Maritime College since 1996, as well as a BCPNY Commissioner since 2019.



CHAPTER GATHERINGS



HOUSTON CHAPTER

SPORTING CLAY SHOOT, HOUSTON | OCTOBER 17, 2024

Alumni of the Houston Chapter got together for a day of camaraderie and fun testing their mettle at Houston's Inaugural Sporting Clay Shoot at American Shooting Centers at George Bush Park on the west side of Houston. Shoot challengers of Team 2 enjoying a



break at the pavilion at right are, l-r: John Cappabianca '06, Justin Miller '08, Colin Hay '20, Houston Chapter friend Aatish Sadani, Peter Johnston '77, and Houston Chapter President Greg Wagner '01. Brandishing rifles at the range, left photo, are Team 4, l-r: Chapter friend Charles Cutter, Mike Brown '82, Ann Marie Poninski '94, and Chapter friend Chris Mahaffey.

CHAPTER GATHERINGS

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER IS ONLINE!

ABOARD SS AMERICAN VICTORY | FEBRUARY 4

June 18th, 2025 marked the one-year anniversary of the MCAA's Tampa Bay Chapter! Following get-togethers last summer, described in the Winter 2025 issue of *Fort Schuyler*, the chapter has furthered its success with both informal meet-ups and corporate-sponsored gatherings.

The chapter hosted a keynote event February 4th, 2025 aboard the SS American Victory, one of only three surviving and operable World War II-era Victory class ships. Completed May 24, 1945 in 55 days at California Shipyards in Los Angeles, American Victory is moored in the Channel District of Tampa, FL. Attending Maritime College alumni were accompanied by others with intimate ties to the historic ship, her Tampa homeporting, and her preservation.

After World War II, SS American Victory carried cargo in the U.S.-led Marshall

Plan aiding the recovery of western Europe, followed by activation from ready reserve for military transport during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Except for a 1985 refit under the U.S. government-sponsored Victory Ship Validation Program, followed by 26 hours of sea trials, American Victory remained inactive from 1969 through 1999.

In 1996, inspired at a Baltimore Propeller Club convention, Tampa Bay Pilot Capt. John C. Timmel '81 teamed with marine surveyor Charles A. Harden to acquire the SS American Victory as a maritime memorial in Tampa, an endeavor that saved the ship from being scrapped. Harden's son, Charles "Chuck" Harden, joined the February 4th Tampa Bay gathering in honor of his father. Captain Timmel's academic and maritime legacy are carried forth by his sons, Captain Jack Timmel '09, a ten-

year Tampa Bay Pilot, and Captain Carter Timmel '17, now in the Tampa Bay Deputy Pilot training program. The Timmels are featured in this issue of *Fort Schuyler*.

Robert Franzblau and Captain Joe Gerson, both Class of 1947 alumni of our predecessor New York Maritime Academy, played prominent roles in bringing American Victory to Tampa Bay. To commemorate their legacies, their respective daughters, Alix Franzblau and Rhonda Gerson, were gifted plaques at the event to honor their fathers' dedication in

preserving
maritime
history.



The MCAA Tampa Bay Chapter banner proudly flies on the rail of the SS American Victory's fantail at the February 4th chapter gathering. In the group photo: honored guests Alix Franzblau and Rhonda Gerson appear to left and right at the center of the Tampa Bay Chapter banner. In addition to Ashley O'Brien '17 and Kerri Bancroft '05, front row, far left, attending alumni included Alex Georgiadis '08, Al Illustrato '08, Joseph LaMantia '05, Paul Kalapodas '00, Kirby Stross '77, Nick D'Jimas '96, John Timmel '81, Karen Williams '15, Jon Darcy '69, Michael Kucharski '75, Walter Burke '81, Carter Timmel '17, Lesley Valdez '24, David Chalson '74, Tom Tomalo '73, Ethan Murray '17, Michelle Nabach '94, and Sam Farney '64. (not in photo sequence)

CHAPTER GATHERINGS

DEL-VAL PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

15TH ANNUAL ALL ACADEMY HOLIDAY PARTY | DECEMBER 12, 2024

The Delaware Valley Chapter is exemplary in uniting alumni with their maritime community. The chapter partners with other local maritime societies, associations, and trade groups, and reaches out to students and adults interested in and pursuing maritime careers. December 12, 2024, marked DelVal's 15th Annual All Academy Holiday Party, with Maritime alumni joined by alumni and friends from U.S. maritime academies including Maine, Massachusetts, Texas, Kings Point, the U.S. Naval Academy, and the Coast Guard Academy.



Maritime College alumni shown at the Holiday Party in the above photo, left to right, are: Karl Hausheer '79, Howard Wyche '79, Craig Tomalo '08, Josh Becker '14, Matt Sherman '13, Aneesh Bakshi '83, DelVal Chapter President Art Sulzer '74, Robert Degan '69, Steve Richter '81, John Reynolds '64, Michael Cummings '89, Carl Mattia '67, Ed Johnson '86, Mike Reagoso '96, Doug Jaarsma '03, Paul Ginnane '95, John Brown '83, and Chris Begley '83.

157TH ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER | APRIL 2, 2025

The photo below, from the 157th Annual Meeting and Dinner of the Vessel Owners' and Captains' Association of the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay on April 2, shows Maritime alumni, l-r: Jim Roche '81, Drew Hodgens '91, David Cluff '88, Bob Fay '80, Owen Palmiotti '07, Art Sulzer '74, Ward Guilday '84, Daseul Kim '17, Michael Connors '85, Kelly McCandless '08, Uve Schultz '64, and John Reynolds '64.

From DelVal Chapter President Art Sulzer '74: "I am pleased to announce that Maritime Cadets won three of the six \$3,500 scholarships that were awarded by the Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society this year. This is our thirteenth year of scholarships, and we have raised over \$600,000 for the program over the years." The Del Val Chapter partners with POPMS on this program. Maritime College cadets who won scholarships



this year are Liam McBride 4/C, DiMichael Olmo 4/C, and Pierce Mallon 2/C. McBride and Olmo appeared in the Spring 2024 Fort Schuyler as high school seniors recruited by Sulzer and the DelVal Chapter and "commissioned" by then-College President Alfultis at a Chapter Gathering on April 4, 2024.

CHAPTER GATHERINGS

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

BURY THE HATCHET IN WOODBRIDGE, NJ | FEBRUARY 12

Imagine aiming for a target with an axe instead of a bow and arrow! That was the reality for alumni of the New Jersey Chapter when they beat the winter chill last February 12th

at Bury the Hatchet in Woodbridge, NJ, enjoying warmth, fellowship, team building, and a unique game of skill, poise, and coordination.



Jamie McNamara '94, Karen McNamara, Stephanie Makar, Nick Makar '96, George Gacser '87, George's friend, Justin Gathard '06, Paulina Trzepacz '05, Mass Maritime alumnus John Rizzuto, Mike Vinik '03, Shea Sweeney '15, Chris Katz '99, and Todd Stevens '93.



Justin Gathard '06 and Paulina Trzepacz step up to position for their next throws



GREEK CHAPTER

T.G.I. FRIDAYS AT FLISVOS MARINA, ATHENS | NOVEMBER 27, 2024

Members of the Greek Chapter gathered last November 27, 2024 to celebrate Thanksgiving Eve at T.G.I. Fridays at Flisvos Marina, a popular gathering place in south Athens for locals and travelers by land or sea, and also a favorite venue for our Greek alumni contingent. In the photo, from left to right, are Sofia Athanasatos '03, Giannis Vasileiadis '09, Dimitrios Kokkinis '03, George Spyridonos '09, Neofytos Kourtesis '09, Anna Tsabanakis '09, and Michail Kourtesis '16.



EBB TIDE

Anthony "Tony" Lazzaro	'41	Dennis Durand	'68
Edward "Ed" Hatton	'45	Harvey Fadden	'68
William "Bill" Fedorko, Sr.	'46	Nolan Gimpel	'68
Robert "Bob" Houston	'47	Matthew "Matt" Colie	'70
John Storm	'49	Gary Ferrone	'70
Edward Carpenter	'55	Peter Johnson	'71
Capt. Walter Hatton	'55	Kenneth "Ken" Chapple	'72
Edward "Ed" or "Hoppy" Hopkins	'58	James "Jim" Lancaster	'72
Daniel "Dan" Lynch	'58	Stephen "Steve" Thorpe	'73
Theodore "Ted" Sergio	'58	Alfred "Al" or "Butch" Blakely	'75
Albert Song	'59	Robert "Bob" McNair	'75
Charles "Chuck" Lawson	'60	Phillip "Phil" Schoenster	'76
John Zerbo III	'60	John Kennedy	'77
Donald "Butch" or "Don" Irving	'61	Kevin Harris	'78
Vincent "Blako" Barone	'62	Carlota (Jouvin-Poetzscher)	'80
Francis "Terry" Amrhein	'63	Danforth, MS	
Richard Bingmann	'63	Tan Lam	'85
Joseph "Jay" Barsin	'64	Andrew "Andy" Reeve	'85
Harry Stoehr	'64	William Strein	'85
Darryl Zdenek	'64	Raymond "Ray" Feige	'88
Dennis Schroeder	'65	Michael Fogarty	'89
Frank Hanrahan	'66	Capt. Jeffrey "Jeff" Monroe, MS	'91
Robert "Bob" Daley	'67	Yoav Ehrenhalt	'01
Dennis DiSalvo	'68		

UPCOMING EVENTS

FOR MARITIME COLLEGE ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| September 16 | Admiral's Dinner
Marina del Rey, Marina Drive, Bronx, NY |
| October 4 | Athletics Hall of Fame
SUNY Maritime College, Bronx, NY |
| October 6 | Inaugural Sporting Clays Outing
Hudson Farm in Andover, NJ
Visit the MCAA website for event details and to register |
| October 17-18 | Homecoming Weekend
October 17
Maritime College Alumni Association – Ancient Mariner Golf Outing at Pelham Bay & Split Rock Golf Courses, Bronx, NY
October 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maritime College Alumni Association Annual Membership Meeting• Class Reunion events, Pass-in-Review• Heritage Hall Induction• Tailgate and Football Game with Reunion Class Parade/Regimental March On• Alumni Post-Game Celebration at Paddy's on the Bay |
| November 25 | Fall Networking and Nominations Meeting
Cast nominations for open Board Trustee and Officer seats while networking with fellow alumni and industry professionals. |
| January 23, 2026 | Winter Commencement
Riesenberg Gymnasium, SUNY Maritime College, Bronx, NY |
| January 29, 2026 | Distinguished Alumni Honors Dinner
Join us as we honor alumni and friends for their personal and professional accomplishments at the end of January in New York City. |
| Spring 2026 | New Alumni Night
Upcoming and recent graduates will have the opportunity to meet with alumni and industry professionals in a casual atmosphere for an evening of mentoring.
Spring Networking
Join us for our bi-annual networking evening in New York City. |
| June 8, 2026 | 37th Annual Golf Classic
Plainfield Country Club in Edison, NJ |

Stay connected with us by checking our websites and following us on social media!

SUNY Maritime College

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Maritime College Alumni Association

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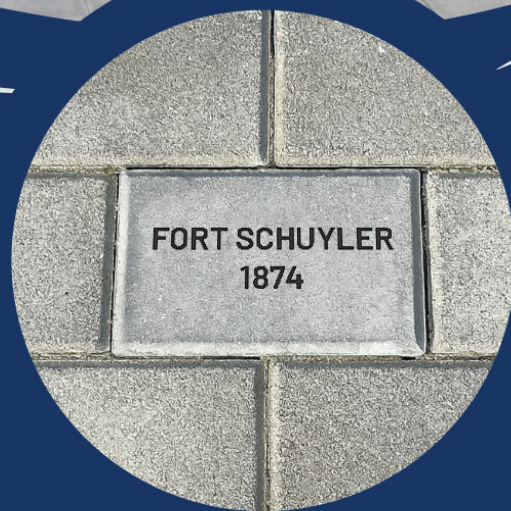


Leave Your Mark at the Heart of Campus

Celebrate your story with a personalized brick on the Quad flagpole walkway at Maritime College.

Recognize a meaningful connection—honor a loved one, commemorate a milestone, or celebrate your SUNY Maritime journey—while supporting and inspiring the next generation of maritime leaders.

- 6"x 9" Brick – \$1,000: four lines of engraving at 17 characters per line
- 12"x 12" Brick – \$2,500: six lines of engraving at 23 characters per line



Order Your Brick Today



For more information, please contact:
Angel Schwartz
718-319-1310 aschwartz@sunymaritime.edu

phi•lan•thro•py: goodwill toward humankind; the desire to promote the welfare of others

GIVING TUESDAY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

Save-the-date for #GivingTuesday, the global day of philanthropy following Thanksgiving weekend.

- ✓ Give thanks with family and friends
- ✓ Treat yourself to some retail therapy
- ✓ **Make your gift** to the unrestricted Sallyport Fund

