

Press Release

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Navy League Announces 2020 Adm. Vern Clark and Gen. James L. Jones Safety Award Winners

Awards Honor Navy and Marine Corps Personnel That Exemplify Culture of Safety

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Navy League of the United States — a nonprofit civilian, educational and advocacy organization that supports America’s sea services: the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and U.S.-flag Merchant Marine — announced the winners of this year’s Adm. Vern Clark and Gen. James L. Jones Safety Awards.

Typically handed out at Sea-Air-Space, the Navy League’s premier exposition held in April but forced to cancel in 2020 due to the coronavirus crisis, the organization presents awards recognizing Navy and Marine Corps organizations or personnel whose innovative actions, examples or suggestions have reduced fatalities and/or mishaps among Sailors, Marines or civilians within the department.

This year’s winners are Merrill E. Dickinson Jr., Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany; Christopher Rew and David Deuel, Naval Safety Center Norfolk; the U.S. Marine Corps’ 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendelton, California; and Naval Base Kitsap, Washington.

“Our honorees exemplify a culture of safety through their commitment to a vision that decreases mishaps and fatalities for our Navy and Marine Corps,” said Mike Stevens, executive director of the Navy League of the United States and retired 13th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. “These individuals and organizations serve a critical function in enabling our nation’s warfighters to maintain readiness while reducing operational risks.”

2020 Winners

Merrill E. Dickinson Jr.

Merrill E. Dickinson Jr. has served the workforce of Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany as a Civilian Marine safety professional since 1994. As home to the Marines Corps’ largest industrial complex, the installation has nearly every type of occupational hazard. In the 16 years Merrill has managed the program, the command has been recognized for safety excellence nearly every year with 17 different awards from the Department of Defense, Department of the Navy, Marine Corps and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Christopher Rew and David Deuel

Christopher Rew, lessons learned program manager, and David Deuel, lessons learned coordinator for the Naval Safety Center have dramatically improved the outreach and communication of hazards, risk mitigation strategies and safety awareness across the Navy and Marine Corps, leading to an increase in operational readiness and a decrease in mishaps and lost work time. During fiscal year 2019, they

produced 27 safety lessons learned and 24 sanitized safety investigation reports, more than double the output of previous staff.

1st Marine Division

Biweekly one-on-one meetings with the chief of staff and safety director, the director's ability to engage the commands, and the information and training bestowed on unit-level safety officers all keep 1st Marine Division able to mitigate potential safety mishaps. The division successfully trained over 1,000 marines on how to optimize their nighttime live fire and maneuver trainings, despite relying on 20-year-old night vision technology that is often cited in safety mishaps. From fiscal year 2017 to 2019 the division had a significant reduction in overall mishaps and near misses, including a 26% reduction due to increased inspections.

Naval Base Kitsap

Through its vigilance to safety, Naval Base Kitsap has reduced the number of civilian mishaps in fiscal years 2018 to 2019 by 53%, civilian lost-work days decreased from 563 to 381 in that same timeframe. The base attributes these rapid decreases to an increase in the number of safety briefings, increased focus on operational risk management and wide promulgate of lessons learned from Mishap Review Boards to all base personnel. In 2019, Naval Base Kitsap received Voluntary Protection Program Star recognition from OSHA.

For more information on any of this year's winners, please contact the Navy League via the information below.

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About the Navy League of the United States

The Navy League of the United States, founded in 1902 with the support of President Theodore Roosevelt, is a nonprofit civilian, educational and advocacy organization that supports America's sea services: The Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and U.S.-flag Merchant Marine. Through national and local programs, the Navy League of the United States provides a powerful voice to educate the public and Congress on the importance of our sea services to our nation's defense, well-being and economic prosperity. The Navy League provides support to our sea services personnel and their families and youth programs, such as the Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Junior ROTC and Young Marines, that expose young people to the values of our sea services. For more information, go to www.navyleague.org.