

Austal USA Celebrates Keel Laying for Navy's Future Flight II EPF Cody



Averil Spencer, sponsor of the future USNS Cody, speaks at the keel laying ceremony. *AUSTAL USA*

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA celebrated the Jan. 26 keel laying of the future USNS Cody (EPF 14) at its ship manufacturing facility in Mobile, Alabama, the company said in a release.

Cody is a Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport (EPF), one of 15 the Navy has contracted Austal to build. The ship is the first U.S. Navy ship named for the city of Cody in Wyoming.

A keel laying ceremony is the formal recognition of the start of a ship's construction. At Austal USA, the keel laying

symbolically recognizes module erection in final assembly and the ceremonial beginning of a ship.

The ship's sponsor is Averil Spencer, founder and executive director of Launch gURLs, a nonprofit that aims to close the gender gap in economic opportunities through entrepreneurship programming for adolescent girls globally. In honor of the U.S. Navy ship keel laying tradition, Spencer welded her initials onto a metal plate that will be installed in the ship. She was assisted by Austal USA A-class welder Amy Cunningham.

T-EPFs 14 and 15 will be built as Flight II variants. The Flight II Variant is an adaptive, modular package that can better host an embarked unit or be set up as a Role 2E medical facility, capable of performing primary surgery, resuscitative trauma surgery, critical care, oxygen generation, blood operations, laboratory functions, and associated ancillary services. The Flight II variant also incorporates an 11-meter workboat for mission use.