

# Austal USA Christens the Future USNS Point Loma



Mobile, Alabama – With the smash of a champagne bottle on the bow of the ship, Elizabeth Asher christened the future USNS Point Loma (EPF 15) at a ceremony Aug. 10 at Austal USA’s Mobile ship manufacturing facility. Asher is the sponsor of Point Loma, one of 16 expeditionary fast transports (EPF) the U.S. Navy has contracted Austal USA to build.

Asher holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in art history from the University of Maryland at College Park. A proud Navy wife since 1991, she lived in Point Loma with her husband, Naval Academy graduate and retired Navy doctor Dean Asher, while he served on U.S. Navy attack submarine USS La Jolla (SSN 701). Their son, Jacob Asher, is a naval aviator in training stationed in Milton, Florida.

Speakers at today’s event included: Nikolas Guertin, assistant

secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition; Vice Admiral Scott Gray, USN, commander, Navy Installations Command; Michelle Kruger, Austal USA president; and Stan Kordana, vice president of program execution, General Dynamics Mission Systems.

“Austal USA was excited to see Mrs. Asher christen the second Flight II EPF for our great Navy today. These Flight II Expeditionary Fast Transports combine the best of the EPF’s transport mission with a new enhanced medical capability that will bring lifesaving support to our forward deployed sailors and Marines and will be a sign of America’s humanitarian presence and support throughout the world’s global commons,” said Kruger. “These ships are built by an incredible team of men and women who remain steadfast in their commitment to being the absolute best in the industry by providing the most cost-effective and capable ships to our great Navy.”

The future USNS Point Loma is named after the San Diego seaside community with a long-standing naval presence. Point Loma, bordered by the Pacific Ocean, San Diego Bay and the San Diego River, is home to Naval Base Point Loma. Comprised of six installations, the base provides support to 70 U.S. Pacific Fleet afloat and ashore-based tenant commands. EPF 15 is the second naval vessel to represent this naval community.

EPF Flight II provides a Role 2E (enhanced) medical capability which includes, among other capabilities, basic secondary health care built around primary surgery; intensive care unit; ward beds; and limited x-ray, laboratory and dental support. The EPF’s catamaran design provides inherent stability to allow surgeons to perform underway medical procedures in the ship’s operating suite. Enhanced capabilities to support V-22 flight operations and launch and recover 11 meter Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats complement the ship’s medical facilities. These Flight II upgrades along with EPF’s speed, maneuverability and shallow water access are key enablers for mission support of future Distributed Maritime Operations and

Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations around the world. Flight II retains the capability of the Flight I to support other missions including core logistics.

EPF 15 is the second EPF Flight II ship built by Austal USA. The Navy is currently embarking an Expeditionary Medical Unit (EMU) aboard the first EPF Flight II ship delivered by Austal USA, USNS Cody (T-EPF 14), at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story. The EMU is a cutting-edge medical support system with personnel from EMU-1 designed to provide Role 2 (R2) level healthcare services both afloat and ashore.