Future USS Mobile Set for Namesake City Commissioning

The future USS Mobile (LCS 26) moves from its construction bay to the Mobile River in this 2020 photograph. *OFFICE OF BRADLEY BYRNE / Wikipedia*

MOBILE, Alabama – The future USS Mobile (LCS 26), the U.S. Navy's newest Independence-variant littoral combat ship (LCS), will be commissioned May 22, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. (CT) in Mobile, Alabama, the U.S. Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet said in an Apr. 21 release.

Due to ongoing public health and safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ceremony will take place in

compliance with Department of Defense, Centers for Disease Control, state public health, state, and local government guidelines and restrictions. The event will be livestreamed to offer maximum viewing by the general public.

“The Mobile crew worked hard to prepare their ship for this moment, and they will continue to see the fruits of their labor as they train and operate at sea,” said Vice Adm. Roy Kitchener, commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet. “We are refining the LCS class lethality and global sustainment infrastructure to better harness the versatility these ships bring to the surface force. Mobile is entering the fleet at a prime time in the LCS progression, as we implement lessons learned from other LCS deployers.”

Rebecca Byrne, president and CEO of The Community Foundation of South Alabama and wife of former U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne, R-Alabama, is the ship’s sponsor. As a former chairman of the Downtown Mobile Alliance and former executive director of United Way of Baldwin County, Rebecca has long served her community through civic, cultural, and church leadership roles.

Highlighting the commissioning is a time-honored Navy tradition where Rebecca will give the first order to, “man our ship and bring her to life.”

Mobile’s commanding officer, Cmdr. Christopher W. Wolff, a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Oklahoma, and the U.S. Naval War College, has deployed five times on five different ships. The third-generation naval officer leads a crew of 70 officers and enlisted Sailors.

USS Mobile was built in Mobile, Alabama, by Austal USA and was launched on January 11, 2020. The future USS Mobile is the fifth Navy ship to honor the city of Mobile, which has a rich historical relationship with the Navy.

The first Mobile was a Confederate, government-operated, side-wheel steamer operating as a blockade runner and captured in New Orleans in April 1862 by U.S. forces. Commissioned as USS Tennessee, the ship was later renamed Mobile. Commissioned in March 1919, the second Mobile, a Hamburg Amerika Lines passenger liner operating between Germany and the U.S. until the outbreak of World War I, was taken over by the Allied Maritime Council and assigned to the United States after the Armistice. USS Mobile (CL 63) participated in numerous Pacific Theater campaigns during World War II. Commissioned on March 24, 1943, the cruiser received 11 battle stars for the ship's time in service and was decommissioned in May 1947. The fourth Mobile (LKA 115) was an amphibious cargo ship serving from September 1969 until decommissioning in February 1994.

LCS is a highly maneuverable, lethal and adaptable ship designed to support focused mine countermeasures, anti-submarine, and surface warfare missions. The Independence-variant LCS integrates new technology and capability to affordably support current and future missions, from deep water to the littorals.

LCS is now the second-largest surface ship class in production, behind the Navy's DDG 51 Arleigh Burke-class destroyer program. USS Mobile will be homeported at Naval Base San Diego, California.

HII Awarded $107M Advance

Procurement Contract for LHA 9

USS Tripoli (LHA 7), the second America-class amphibious assault ship, transits toward Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Aug. 3, 2020. Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls Shipbuilding division has been awarded a $107 million contract modification for the LHA 9. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Annaliss Candelaria*

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls Shipbuilding division has received a contract modification from the U.S. Navy for $107 million to provide long-lead-time material and advance procurement activities for amphibious assault ship LHA 9, the company said in an April 19 release.

"The amphibious warship production line is a critical component of our nation's defense industrial base," Ingalls Shipbuilding President Kari Wilkinson said. "This funding will strengthen our suppliers and sustain jobs across the country in support of LHA 9 construction."

Ingalls is the sole builder of large-deck amphibious ships for the Navy. The shipyard delivered its first amphibious assault ship, the Iwo Jima-class USS Tripoli (LPH 10), in 1966.

Ingalls has since built five Tarawa-class (LHA 1) ships, eight Wasp-class (LHD 1) ships and the first in the new America class of amphibious assault ships (LHA 6) in 2014. The second ship in the America class, USS Tripoli (LHA 7), was delivered to the Navy in early 2020. Bougainville (LHA 8) is under construction.

Inaugural Unmanned Battle Problem 21 to begin April 19

Vice Adm. Michael Moran, principal military deputy assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition), speaks with representatives from General Atomics Aeronautical about the MQ-9 Sea Guardian unmanned aircraft at Pier 12 on Naval Base San Diego. U.S. Pacific Fleet's UxS IBP 21, April 19-26, integrates manned and unmanned capabilities into the most challenging operational scenarios to generate war fighting advantages. *U.S. NAVY*

SAN DIEGO – The Navy begins its inaugural multi-domain manned

and unmanned capabilities exercise April 19, the U.S. 3rd Fleet said in an April 16 release. The exercise will feature unmanned capabilities “Above the Sea, On the Sea and Below the Sea.”

Led by U.S. Pacific Fleet and executed by U.S. 3rd Fleet, Unmanned Integrated Battle Problem 21 will generate warfighting advantages by integrating multi-domain manned and unmanned capabilities into the most challenging operational scenarios.

The exercise will feature operational, unmanned systems such as the MQ-9 Sea Guardian Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, the Medium Displacement Unmanned Surface Vessels Sea Hunter and Sea Hawk, and small and medium Unmanned Undersea Vehicles with modular payloads.

“Building off advances achieved over the past decade in unmanned aviation, Pacific Fleet is answering the Chief of Naval Operations’ drive to put the Navy’s Unmanned Campaign Plan into action,” says Rear Adm. Robert M. Gaucher, director of maritime headquarters at U.S. Pacific Fleet. “Furthermore, by exercising our full range of unmanned capabilities in a Pacific warfighting scenario, UxS IBP21 directly supports U.S. Indo-Pacific Command’s warfighting imperative of driving lethality through experimentation.”

Unmanned systems alongside the traditional, manned naval force will give the U.S. Navy the advantage needed to fight, win and deter potential aggressors. This exercise will directly inform warfighters, warfare centers and developers to further incorporate unmanned capabilities in day-to-day Fleet operations and battle plans.

“The overall goal is to integrate our unmanned capabilities across all domains to demonstrate how they solve CNO and Fleet Commander Key Operational Problems,” says Gaucher. “To get after these problems, UxS IBP21 will include maneuvering in

contested space across all domains; targeting and fires; and intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance.”

USS The Sullivans Deploys in Support of British Carrier Task Group 21

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68), departed Mayport, Florida, April 19, for deployment to participate in HMS Queen Elizabeth (R08) Strike Group. *U.S. NAVY*

MAYPORT, Fla. — The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile

destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68), departed Mayport, Florida, April 19, for deployment to participate in HMS Queen Elizabeth (R08) Strike Group, the U.S. 2nd Fleet said in a release.

The inclusion of U.S. forces in the strike group will improve expeditionary capabilities and interoperability between NATO allies, demonstrating the United States' commitment to the NATO alliance.

"It is an honor to sail in this elite multi-national strike group on the frontline demonstrating a fully integrated force that showcases the special relationship that our countries have," said Cmdr. David Burkett, commanding officer of The Sullivans. "USS The Sullivans' namesakes would be extremely proud of us as we boldly show that, we stick together!"

The ship is named after the five Sullivan brothers who died when their ship, the USS Juneau, was sunk by a Japanese submarine during the battle of Guadalcanal in World War II. It is the second Navy ship to be named after the brothers.

The Sullivans recently participated in a successful Composite Unit Training Exercise alongside the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group and the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit that included a NATO vignette and training with SEALS from an East Coast-based Naval Special Warfare Group.

The vignette, developed by Carrier Strike Group Four and Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Centre of Excellence (CJOS COE), consisted of familiarity training designed to facilitate allied maritime interoperability and integration, in practical terms using NATO procedures, messaging formats and chat capabilities.

The vignette developed and refined a clear list of interoperability requirements for future Navy

force generation, and improved allied maritime command-and-control linkages.

“To ensure truly effective deterrence and defense in the North Atlantic, we need to make sure that the navies of NATO can work as one team, and that means interoperability is vital,” said Commodore Tom Guy, Royal Navy, deputy director CJOS COE. “This NATO vignette has been a great step forward in pursuing allied interoperability. CJOS COE looks forward to continuing to develop this for future deploying strike groups.”

In Oct. 2020, USS The Sullivans participated in U.K.-led exercise Joint Warrior 20-2 as part of HMS Queen Elizabeth Strike Group. The exercise provided pre-deployment opportunities for the international strike group.

Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba Returns Home to Boston After 61-Day Patrol

The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba (WMEC 907), returned home to Boston, Tuesday, following a 61-day counter-narcotics patrol in the Caribbean Ocean. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

BOSTON –The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba (WMEC 907), returned home to Boston, Tuesday, following a 61-day counter-narcotics patrol in the Caribbean Ocean, the Coast Guard 1st District said in an April 19 release.

The 270-foot Escanaba's 100-person crew supported operation Leeward Horizon and Unified Resolve, presidential initiatives designed to disrupt transnational criminal organizations in Central and South America.

Escanaba's crew deployed with two members from the Barbadian Coast Guard, helping strengthen a vital maritime partnership and improving the interoperability between the two nations.

While transiting to their operational area, Escanaba's crew provided humanitarian and medical assistance to 25 Haitian migrants including five children and a pregnant woman. The migrants were rescued from an unseaworthy vessel and were ultimately repatriated to Haiti.

The crew of Escanaba also rescued two mariners stranded at sea approximately 25 miles from St. Lucia and conducted two boardings of Venezuelan fishing vessels actively fishing in the territorial seas of other countries These boardings assisted in the disruption and reporting of wide spread illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU) in the area.

“I am very pleased with the total team effort from our crew on this patrol,” said Cmdr. Mike Nalli, Escanaba’s commanding officer. “We completed multiple training events with partner nations to combat the flow of illegal drugs into our country and disrupt the criminal networks which operate in that part of the Caribbean. Overall, the crew and I are thrilled with what we accomplished and are excited to be home.”

In addition, the crew of Escanaba also completed a biennial training assessments in Mayport, Florida prior to patrol departure. This training evaluated their overall readiness in five warfare categories: Weapons Systems, Command and Control, Damage Control and Medical, Engineering, and Navigation and Seamanship. Demonstrating proficient mission capabilities, the crew completed over 65 drills and evaluations, earning an overall score of 96%.

Known as “The Pride of Boston,” the Escanaba is a medium-endurance cutter homeported in Boston.

Crowley Completes First U.S. Design for Fully Electric Tug

with Autonomous Technology

An illustration of Crowley's fully electric tugboat with autonomous technology. *CROWLEY ENGINEERING SERVICES*

SEATTLE – Crowley Engineering Services has completed the design of the first fully electric U.S. tugboat with autonomous technology, providing operators a sustainable and high-performing system for ship assist and harbor services in any port, the company said in a April 19 release.

The Crowley design, powered by the expertise of recently integrated subsidiary Jensen Maritime, leverages a large battery system and power saving technology to operate in a fully electric mode while producing zero air emissions or greenhouse gases. The 82-foot tug will provide 70 short tons of bollard pull, featuring an Azimuthing drive propulsion system with two 1,800 kW motors and a 6 MWh battery.

The new design is featured in an animated video available here.

The design also supports fully customizable features to meet

the vessel design requirements with the future in mind. The platform design can be adjusted for alternate power capacities suitable for a standard hybrid framework if desired. The fully modular batteries allow for upgrades as technology changes. In addition, Crowley has developed an onshore charging station to fully support charging and reliable performance at the home port.

“Crowley’s design provides operators the tugboat solution to continue serving ships quickly and powerfully, while reducing their environmental impact by eliminating a carbon footprint,” said Ray Martus, vice president, Crowley Engineering Services. “This new design sets the standard for innovation by showing that sustainability and power can work together seamlessly in our maritime industries.”

With no exhaust stack, the tug has 360 degrees of visibility from the pilot’s station, allowing the operator to see without obstruction. The tug has also been designed for future autonomous operation to increase the safety and efficiency of the operation including integrated automation and control systems. The intelligent maneuvering and control system offers more efficient vessel operations and allows masters to focus holistically on the overall control and positioning of the vessel in increasingly busy harbors.

Vice Adm. Linda L. Fagan Nominated to be Coast Guard Vice Commandant, First Coast

Guard Female 4-Star Admiral

Vice Adm. Linda L. Fagan, nominated to be the next vice commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

WASHINGTON – Vice Adm. Linda L. Fagan has been nominated by the White House to be the next vice commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, the service's headquarters announced in an April

19 release.

She currently serves as the commander of the Coast Guard Pacific Area, overseeing all Coast Guard missions from the Rocky Mountains to the waters off the East Coast of Africa. Fagan concurrently serves as commander, Defense Force West and provides Coast Guard mission support to the Department of Defense and Combatant Commanders. Fagan is a 1985 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy and is the Coast Guard's first-ever Gold Ancient Trident, the officer with the longest service record in the Marine Safety field.

"Vice Adm. Fagan is an outstanding leader with 36 years of Coast Guard operations, policy-making, joint service, and interagency experience," said Adm. Karl L. Schultz, commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. "Throughout her distinguished career, she has been a top performer and a trailblazer. As the Coast Guard's first female four-star admiral, and President Biden's nominee to serve as the Coast Guard's 32nd vice commandant, Adm. Fagan will be instrumental in moving the Service forward at a critical juncture in our history."

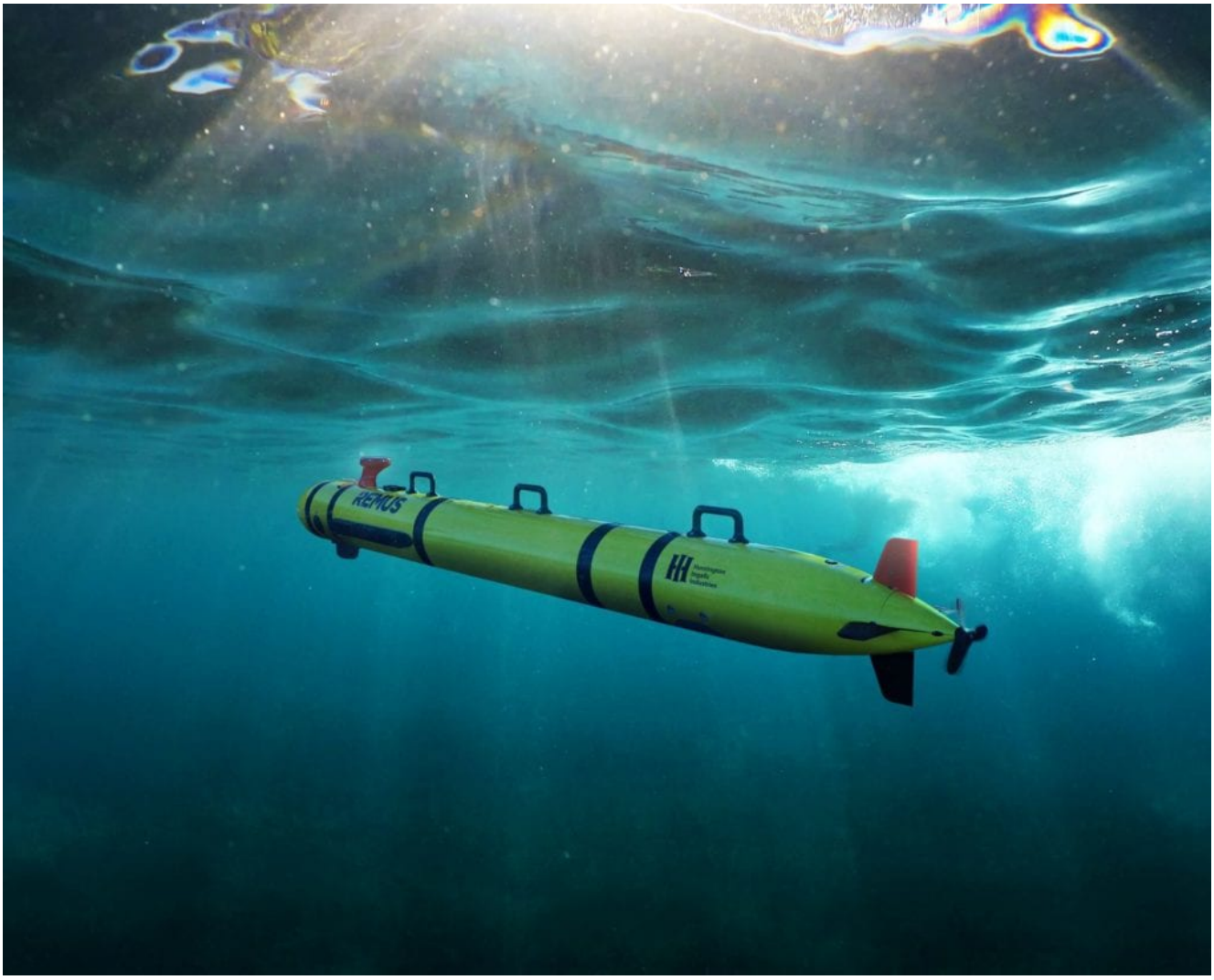
Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas released a statement on Fagan's nomination.

"I am pleased that President Biden has nominated Vice Admiral Linda Fagan to be the vice commandant of the United States Coast Guard," it says. "She is a superb leader who, as the 32nd vice commandant, will guide the Coast Guard at a time when its mission of securing our maritime borders, ports, and waterways has never been more important. If confirmed, Vice Admiral Fagan would serve as the first woman to be promoted to a 4-star rank in the Coast Guard. We are grateful to Vice Admiral Fagan for continuing her service to country, for the trail she has blazed, and for inspiring us all."

Pending confirmation, Fagan is expected to relieve current Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard Adm. Charles W. Ray on June

18.

HII Announces Commercial Release of REMUS 300 Unmanned Underwater Vehicle



Huntington Ingalls Industries' Technical Solutions division has announced the commercial release of its REMUS 300 unmanned underwater vehicle, shown here in an artist's rendering. *HUNTINGTON INGALLS INDUSTRIES*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries announced on

April 19 the commercial release of its REMUS 300 unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV). This new, open architecture, small-class UUV can dive to depths of 305 meters (1,000 feet) and has endurance options up to 30 hours.

“The REMUS 300 is the most advanced small-class UUV on the market,” said Duane Fotheringham, president of the Unmanned Systems business group in HII’s Technical Solutions division. “It combines everything we’ve learned from more than 20 years of development on our REMUS 100 systems with enhancements like advanced modularity and a more robust structure and sensors. We’re excited to offer this solution to customers who are looking to dive deeper and go longer with a flexible, man-portable system.”

Built on the REMUS Technology Platform, the REMUS 300 has compact and efficient core electronics, advanced autonomy and a common operating system that allows for interoperability with the entire REMUS family of systems. Its open architecture design and modularity enable integration of the latest hardware and software, with an optional hardware development kit and software development kit to enable third-party integration.

The REMUS 300 design incorporates feedback from hundreds of REMUS 100 users and provides the ability to exchange payloads, allowing application flexibility. Common applications include mine countermeasures, hydrographic survey, rapid environmental assessment, search and recovery, and marine research. Modular energy sections allow for field replacement of 1.5, 3.0 or 4.5 kilowatt-hour lithium-ion batteries enabling up to 10, 20 or 30 hours of endurance.

More than 500 REMUS UUVs have been sold to 25 countries worldwide. Standard configurations of the REMUS 300 can now be acquired internationally and commercially, with orders being accepted now for delivery in 2022.

Learn more about the new REMUS 300 UUV at: https://tsd.huntingtoningalls.com/capabilities/unmanned-systems/unmanned-underwater-vehicles/remus300m/.

HII Achieves Milestone in RCOH of USS George Washington

The aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) celebrated the reopening of the aft crew mess with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 16, 2021. Pictured (Left to right): Capt. Kenneth Strong, the ship's commanding officer; CVN 73 program director Thomasina Wright; and Scott Menkes, deputy project supervisor for Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Newport News. *U.S. NAVY / MCSN Dakota Nack*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division reached a major milestone on the

refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH) of USS George Washington (CVN 73), the company said in an April 16 release.

Following a ribbon-cutting ceremony, Sailors ate the first meal prepared in the galley in the nearly three years since the ship arrived at Newport News. The opening of the crew galley is one of the last significant steps before the first 1,100 Sailors are expected to move aboard in June.

“George Washington has gone through a transformation since it arrived at Newport News for the mid-life refueling overhaul and maintenance availability,” said Todd West, Newport News’ vice president, in-service aircraft carrier programs. “The crew beginning their move aboard and the reopening of berthing spaces and galleys, all supporting our nearing completion of the RCOH, is a sign that the ship is being brought back to life. We look forward to continuing our work with our Navy partners to redeliver the ship to the fleet.”

The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier is in the final stages of testing, which is designed to exercise all aspects of the propulsion plant systems and will certify the systems and components for future operations over the next 25 years of service. The RCOH is more than 85% complete, and the ship is on track to be re-delivered to the Navy in 2022.

USS Oakland Commissioning Ceremony Set for April 17

The USS Independence, a sister ship to the future USS Oakland, which will be commissioned on Saturday, April 17. *U.S. NAVY*

ARLINGTON — The Navy's newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship, the future USS Oakland (LCS 24), will be commissioned at 10:00 a.m. PST on Saturday, April 17, 2021 in Oakland, California, the Defense Department said in an April 16 release.

Due to public health and safety concerns related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the commissioning will be a private event. The ceremony will be live-streamed for those unable to attend. The following link will become active approximately five minutes prior to the event (9:55 a.m. PST): https://allhands.navy.mil/Live-Stream.

Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas W. Harker, will deliver the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Ms. Kate Brandt, Google sustainability officer, is the ship's sponsor. The ceremony will be highlighted by a time-honored Navy tradition when Ms. Brandt gives the order to "man our ship and bring her to life!"

Cmdr. Francisco X. Garza, a native of Phoenix, Arizona, is the ship's commanding officer and leads a crew of 70 officers and enlisted personnel. The 3,200-ton Oakland was built by General Dynamics/Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama. The ship is 421 feet in length, has a beam of 103 feet, and a navigational draft of 15 feet. The ship is powered by two gas turbine engines, two main propulsion diesel engines, and four waterjets to reach speeds up to 40-plus knots.

"The USS Oakland crew is excited and ready to bring our ship to life and join the fleet," said Garza. "We are privileged to be a part of this ship and embody the spirit of the people of Oakland. As plank owners and future crew members build a positive legacy for this ship, the city of Oakland will experience those successes with us."

Oakland is the third ship to bear the name. She is the 12th Independence-variant LCS and the 297th ship to join our battle force. The littoral combat ship is a fast, agile, focused-mission platform designed to operate in near-shore environments, while capable of open-ocean tasking and winning against 21st-century coastal threats such as submarines, mines, and swarming small craft. The LCS is capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence.

USS Oakland will be homeported at Naval Base San Diego, California.