# Littoral Combat Ship USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul Commissioned

Sailors salute the audience during the commissioning ceremony of the Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21) in Duluth, Minnesota. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Sonja Wickard*

DULUTH, Minn. – The U.S. Navy commissioned its newest littoral combat ship, USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21), in Duluth, Minnesota, May 21, 2022, said Commander, Naval Surface Force, US Pacific Fleet, in a release.

Rep. Betty McCollum, of Minnesota's 4th District, was the principal speaker for the commissioning ceremony.

"The strength of America's national security, and the

democratic values we hold dear, are being tested today like they have not been in decades," said McCollum. "I can think of no two names that represent that strength more than Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Together we are one team – those who built this fine ship, and those who will serve on her. It is the strength and determination of the American people that is the backbone of our national security."

Erik Raven, undersecretary of the Navy, reflected on attending his first commissioning ceremony. "The Twin Cities represent the Great State of Minnesota's economic, cultural, and political center. The Twin Cities play a significant role in our nation's economic network," said Raven. "Now, more than ever, it is fitting that a littoral combat ship is named Minneapolis-Saint Paul – honoring the legacy of work and contribution of the people whose work ultimately impacts our daily lives nationwide and globally."

Vice Admiral Scott Conn, deputy chief of naval operations for Warfighting Requirements and Capabilities also attended. "Thank you all for preparing LCS 21 for this day," said Conn. "I recognize how special it is to be together for this milestone, and to spend this day bringing the newest ship in our fleet to life in this way. And more so, to do it in the State of her namesake cities is unique and special."

The governor of Minnesota, Tim Walz, also attended the ceremony. "This is a unique opportunity to gather ourselves as Minnesotans, and Americans," said Walz. "We're not just a country; we're an ideal."

Guest speakers for the event were Jon Rambeau, vice president and general manager of Lockheed Martin Integrated Warfare Systems and Sensors and Sen. Amy Klobuchar.

Rep. Pete Stauber, of Minnesota's 8th District, assisted in placing the ship into commission. The ship's sponsor Jodi

Greene, former deputy undersecretary of the Navy, gave the first order to “man our ship and bring her to life.”

Built by the Lockheed Martin and Fincantieri Marinette Marine in Marinette, Wisconsin. Minneapolis-Saint Paul was launched and christened in on June 15, 2019. The ship completed acceptance trials, Aug. 21, 2020, and was delivered to U.S. Navy on Nov. 18, 2021.

Minneapolis-Saint Paul will be homeported at Naval Station Mayport, Florida.

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# Ishee Nominated for Vice Admiral and Command of U.S. 6th Fleet

Rear Adm. Thomas E. Ishee. *U.S NAVY*

ARLINGTON, Va. — Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III announced May 20 that the president has made the following nomination:

Navy Rear Adm. Thomas E. Ishee for appointment to the grade of vice admiral, and assignment as commander, 6th Fleet; commander, Task Force Six; commander, Striking and Support Forces NATO; deputy commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe; deputy commander, U.S. Naval Forces Africa; and Joint Force Maritime Component Commander Europe, Naples, Italy. Ishee is currently serving as director, Global Operations, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska.

Ishee is a native of Danielsville, Georgia, and a 1987 graduate of the University of Georgia, where he majored in mathematics and computer science. He was commissioned in 1988 after attending Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island and earned a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Arts in Security Studies from the Air War College.

His sea tours included assignments onboard submarines USS Narwhal (SSN 671), USS Sea Devil (SSN 664), engineer officer onboard USS Tunny (SSN 682) and executive officer onboard USS La Jolla (SSN 701).

He commanded USS Key West (SSN 722). While in command, the crew was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation, the U.S. Pacific Fleet Arleigh Burke Trophy and Battle Efficiency Award. He also commanded Submarine Squadron 11, where he ensured the readiness of six fast attack submarines and oversaw the operations of three torpedo retrievers, a floating drydock and the Navy’s submarine rescue systems.

His tours ashore included assistant professor of Naval Science at the University of Texas at Austin; engineer and executive officer of Moored Training Ship MTS 626; executive assistant to the deputy commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet; director of intelligence and special operations for Commander, Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet; director of operations for Commander, Submarine Group 7 and Task Force 54/74; senior

advisor to the Secretary of Defense for U.S. Pacific Command Plans; executive assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations; deputy commander, Joint Functional Component Command-Global Strike; director of operations, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa; deputy commander, U.S. 6th Fleet, and commander, Submarine Group 8.

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# USS Ronald Reagan CSG Departs Yokosuka for 2022 Deployment

YOKOSUKA, Japan – The U.S. Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), and its strike group departed Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka on May 20 to support security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, said Lt. Cmdr. Joe Keiley, Commander, Task Force 71 Public

Affairs, in a release.

During this routine at-sea period, Ronald Reagan, its strike group ships, the embarked Carrier Air Wing 5, Carrier Strike Group 5 and Destroyer Squadron 15 staffs are expected to work with allies and partners, promote adherence to a rules-based international order, as well as maintain presence and flexibility to meet the needs of the U.S. Department of Defense.

Ronald Reagan successfully completed sea trials in preparation for deployment on May 17.

“Ronald Reagan’s forward deployed presence underscores our nation’s commitment to our allies and partners,” said Capt. Fred Goldhammer, Ronald Reagan’s commanding officer. “Our crew has worked very hard to make the ship ready to face any future challenge, and I am tremendously proud of their efforts. The Sailors onboard Ronald Reagan are incredibly talented and resilient, and their unwavering commitment to our mission helps ensure that our nation’s maritime presence remains strong.”

Sailors manned the rails in summer white uniforms as the ship pulled away from the pier.

“The Ronald Reagan strike group and its team of professional Sailors across its commands, are ready to respond throughout the region in service of our maritime interests,” said Rear Adm. Michael Donnelly, commander, Task Force 70, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 5. “The support of our families makes what we do at sea possible. In the days ahead we will strengthen our relationships with like-minded allies and partners, and deter anyone who would seek to disrupt international norms.”

The Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group will include the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruisers USS Antietam (CG 54)

and USS Chancellorsville (CG 62), as well as Arleigh Burke-class destroyers from DESRON 15.

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# Navy Awards General Dynamics Electric Boat $313.9 Million for Columbia-Class Submarine Work

An artist's rendering of the future Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines. *U.S. NAVY*

GROTON, Conn. – General Dynamics Electric Boat, a business unit of General Dynamics, has been awarded a modification to

the previously awarded Columbia Integrated Product and Process Contract by the Naval Sea Systems Command, the company said May 19. The modification has a total value of $313.9 million.

The contract modification will support submarine industrial base development and expansion for the construction of the Columbia-class fleet ballistic missile submarines as well as additional support for the manufacturing, procurement and delivery efforts for United Kingdom Strategic Weapon Support System kits.

“Ballistic-missile submarines are the critical, survivable leg of our nation’s nuclear arsenal and Columbia is the Navy’s top acquisition priority,” said Kevin Graney, president of General Dynamics Electric Boat. “We are grateful for the steadfast trust and support the Navy and Congress have in Electric Boat as we continue the work we began 15 years ago to deliver Columbia and the next 60 years of deterrence for our nation.”

Electric Boat will continue to work with its vendors and subcontractors to optimize efforts to ramp up production capability and support the increased demand associated with the Columbia program.

At 560 feet long with a displacement of nearly 21,000 tons, the submarines of the Columbia class will be the largest ever built by the United States. The Columbia will have a fuel core that will power the submarine for its entire service life, eliminating the need for a mid-service refueling and increasing the time the ship can spend on deployment. Electric Boat will deliver the lead ship to the Navy in 2027.

# Navy to Commission Future Littoral Combat Ship Minneapolis-Saint Paul

The future USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (PCU LCS-21) arrives in Duluth, Minnesota on May 16. PCU LCS-21 is a United States Navy Freedom-class littoral combat ship that will be commissioned in the Port of Duluth on Saturday, May 21. *U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD / 1st Lt. Crystal Kirchner*

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Navy will commission the future USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21) as the newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship during a 10 a.m. CDT ceremony Saturday, May 21, in Duluth, Minnesota, the Defense Department said May 20.

USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul is the second naval ship to honor Minnesota's Twin Cities, although each city has been honored twice before.

The principal speaker is U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum. Additional speakers include Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz; U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar; U.S. Rep. Pete Stauber; Undersecretary of the Navy Erik Raven; Vice Adm. Scott Conn, deputy chief of naval operations for warfighting requirements and capabilities; and Jon Rambeau, vice president and general manager of Lockheed Martin Integrated Warfare Systems and Sensors. The ship's sponsor is Jodi Greene, principle at the Mabus Group and former deputy undersecretary of the Navy for policy. She will give the first order to "man our ship and bring her to life."

"It is fitting that a littoral combat ship is named for Minneapolis-Saint Paul, honoring the rich history, hard work, and contributions of the people there," said Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. "I am certain the crew who will man this ship will carry on the legacy of the Twin Cities and will play an important role in the defense of our nation and maritime freedom."

The first U.S. Navy warship named Minneapolis-Saint Paul was a Los Angeles-class submarine launched in 1983 that participated in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (SSN 708) was the first submarine to carry Tomahawk missiles specifically designed for use in strikes against Iraq during the Gulf War. Having served for over two decades with distinction, the Navy decommissioned the submarine in 2007.

USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul will homeport at Naval Station Mayport, Florida.

The ceremony will be live-streamed at USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul Commissioning. The link becomes active approximately 10 minutes before the event (9:50 a.m. CST).

# MQ-25 Team Preps for first Air Vehicle, Control Station Integration Test Event

Rear Adm. Brian Corey, who oversees the  Program Executive Officer for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons, observes an MQ-25 engineer demonstrate the functionality of the unmanned system's MD-5 ground control station May 17 at the System Test and Integration Lab in Patuxent River, Maryland. *U.S. NAVY*

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The Navy's Unmanned Carrier Aviation program office (PMA-268) is moving forward with integrating its two key elements – the MQ-25 air vehicle and the MD-5 ground control station – at the program's System Test and Integration Lab at Patuxent River, Maryland, the Program Executive Office for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons said May 18.

PMA-268 is the lead systems integrator, working closely with its two prime industry partners, Boeing and Lockheed Martin Skunk Works, to ensure the expeditious integration of the MQ-25 Stingray air vehicle, the MD-5 GCS and aircraft carrier

modifications required to support MQ-25 operations.

The MD-5 GCS is part of the Unmanned Carrier Aviation Mission Control System, the system-of-systems required for MQ-25A command and control. UMCS also includes aircraft carrier and shore site infrastructure modifications, Navy produced ancillary equipment and integration with command, control, communications, computers and intelligence systems.

Rear Adm. Brian Corey, who oversees the Program Executive Office for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons, visited the lab May 17 for a firsthand look at the equipment required to operate MQ-25.

“It is great to see momentum with GCS following the successful MQ-25 flight demonstrations last year,” he said to the government/industry team. “The air vehicle and GCS are equally important to this program and this is the team that is going to stitch it together.”

Just recently, Lockheed Martin delivered the latest system developmental release to the Navy and plans to help integrate the MD-5 system with the air vehicle next month.

“This will be the first time we are integrating an air vehicle and GCS from two different prime contractors,” said T.J. Maday, MQ-25 labs and integration manager. “And this is all being done with the government as the lead system integrator within the government lab.”

Early integration allows for risk reduction and integration testing between the air vehicle and ground control station and provides the opportunity to ensure network connectivity between development environments are functional.

Lockheed Martin also recently delivered two MD-5 ground control stations to Webster Outlying Field in Saint Inigoes, Maryland, to support MQ-25’s test transportable control stations. These will be the first assets to control the

MQ-25’s initial Unmanned Carrier Aviation Mission Control System flight in 2023.

The MQ-25 will be the world’s first operational, carrier-based unmanned aircraft. It will provide an aerial refueling capability that extends the range, operational capability and lethality of the carrier air wing.

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# SECNAV Names Future Arleigh Burke-Class Destroyer Telesforo Trinidad


WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced May 19 that a future Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer will be named USS Telesforo Trinidad (DDG 139),

honoring Fireman 2nd Class Telesforo De La Cruz Trinidad, the only Filipino in the U.S. Navy to be awarded the Medal of Honor.

“My first time learning about Petty Officer Trinidad’s story was as a midshipman at the Naval Academy and since being sworn in as secretary, I have wanted to honor his heroic actions by naming a ship after him,” said Del Toro. “This ship and her future crew will be a critical piece in strengthening our maritime superiority while also emphasizing the rich culture and history of our naval heritage.”

Trinidad was born Nov. 25, 1890, in Aklan Province, Panay, Philippine Islands. On Jan. 21, 1915, Petty Officer Trinidad was serving aboard USS San Diego when the captain decided to conduct a four-hour full-speed and endurance trial to determine if the ship could still maintain its officially rated flank speed. Following the trial, an obstructed tube in one of the ship’s boilers gave way, creating a chain reaction. Trinidad re-entered the closed space to the No. 2 boiler to save Fireman 2nd Class R. W. Daly. As he was carrying Daly through the No. 4 fireroom, an explosion of No. 3 boiler hit Trinidad, which burned him in the face. After seeing Daly to safety and despite his injuries, Trinidad then assisted in rescuing another injured shipmate from the No. 3 fireroom. For his bravery, the U.S. Navy awarded him the Medal of Honor.

“I am pleased to honor Trinidad’s life and legacy today – especially during Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month,” said Del Toro. “Having a ship named after such a significant figure highlights our diverse culture and that our people will always be our strategic advantage against any adversary. I hope the naming of this ship is a beacon for not only Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders but for all our Sailors, Marines and civilians who serve across the Department of the Navy. The service and sacrifice of these men and women have made our military and our nation stronger and better.”

# Keel-Laying for Columbia SSBN Set for June 4

An artist’s rendering of the future U.S. Navy Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines. *U.S. NAVY*

WASHINGTON — The keel-laying ceremony for the first new-generation nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarine (SSBN) will take place June 4.

The keel-laying date for the future USS Columbia (SSBN 826) was mentioned by Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Connecticut, during a May 18 hearing of the Seapower and Projection Forces subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee. The ceremonies will be held at the General Dynamics Electric Boat Shipyard at Quonset Point, Rhode Island.

The date was announced to employees of Electric Boat the same morning. The missile compartment and other components are built at Quonset Point. Final assembly of the submarine will take place at the Electric Boat facility in Groton, Connecticut.

HII's Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, Virginia, builds 22% of the submarine, including the bow and stern.

General Dynamics Electric Boat was awarded a $5.1 billion contract in September 2017 to complete the design of the lead boat and in November 2020, the company received a nearly $9.5 billion award for construction and test of the USS Columbia and lead work on the USS Wisconsin. Including the Columbia, hull numbers SSBN 826 through 837 have been reserved for the new class, which previously was known as the Ohio-class Replacement Program.

The Columbia design features a new reactor with a core designed to last the life of the boat. The Columbia class also will feature an X-stern plane configuration with a waterjet propulsor, electric drive and integrated power system, a six-mast sail with sail planes and a large-aperture bow sonar. The subs will retain the Trident D5LE missile system.

Advance construction of the Columbia began in 2019 and delivery is expected in 2027. The first Columbia SSBN is scheduled to be on patrol in fiscal 2031 to maintain the undersea leg of the nation's nuclear deterrent force.

The Columbia class is to completely replace Ohio class SSBNs by 2039.

# LCS Successfully Completes First Land-Attack Missile Exercise

An AGM-114L Longbow Hellfire missile launches from the Surface-To-Surface Missile Module aboard Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Montgomery (LCS 8). *U.S. NAVY / Lt.j.g. Samuel Hardgrove*

PACIFIC OCEAN – The U.S. Navy's littoral combat ship class successfully launched sea-based missiles at a land-based target for the first time during a proof-of-concept exercise on May 12, said Lt.j.g. Sam Hardgrove in a May 16 release.

Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Montgomery (LCS 8) fired three AGM-114L Longbow Hellfire missiles to strike a land-based target several nautical miles away as part of the LCS surface-to-surface mission module, or SSMM.

“This test proved the critical next step in increasing lethality of the littoral combat ship,” said Cmdr. Dustin Lonero, Montgomery’s commanding officer. “Using our speed and shallow draft, we are now uniquely optimized to bring this level of firepower extremely close to shore in support of our warfighters and operators on the beach.”

The Longbow Hellfire missile already plays a key role in the up-gunned surface warfare mission package. Originally fielded by both variants of the littoral combat ship in 2019, the missile has repeatedly demonstrated the capability quickly defeat multiple swarming fast attack craft or fast inshore attack craft. Each LCS is capable carrying 24 missiles.

“The SSMM is a fundamental cornerstone of LCS lethality and evolving capability to provide enhanced fire support in the littorals and over the horizon in support of the Navy and Marine Corps fighting force,” said Lt. Michael Jones, a warfare-tactics instructors from Surface and Mine Warfare Development Center. “The new ability for LCS to conduct maritime strikes bolsters the ship’s role in conducting shaping operations within amphibious and expeditionary warfare areas.”

The Longbow Hellfire missile was commissioned in 1998 and has proven successful over its years of service across all U.S. military branches. Originally designed as an anti-tank weapon for the U.S. Army, its all-weather millimeter-wave sensing, semi-active laser guidance continues to prove extremely effective in the maritime domain against all manner of threats.

“If you take a proven program of record and adapt its capability for the maritime warfare environment, you have a win for the taxpayer, improved interoperability between various services, and an increased lethality and competitive edge at sea,” said Chief Gunner’s Mate David Wynne,

Montgomery’s weapons chief petty officer.

Combining emerging technologies, an MQ-8C Fire Scout unmanned helicopter, from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 23, remained airborne providing advanced targeting and bomb hit assessment capability. The Fire Scout already provides littoral combat ships an over-the-horizon intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting capability.

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# U.S. Navy DDG Seizes $39 Million in Drugs in Middle East

An MH-60R Seahawk from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron

(HSM) 35, Detachment 1, provides aerial support to an interdiction team from guided-missile destroyer USS Momsen (DDG 92) approaching a fishing vessel May 16. The vessel was seized while transiting international waters in the Gulf of Oman. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Lily Gebauer*

MANAMA, Bahrain – A U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer seized 640 kilograms of methamphetamine worth $39 million from a fishing vessel while patrolling international waters in the Gulf of Oman, May 15-16, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet public affairs said May 17.

A U.S. Coast Guard interdiction team from USS Momsen (DDG 92) discovered the illegal narcotics during a flag verification boarding in accordance with international law. The confiscated drugs and fishing vessel remain in U.S. custody.

The vessel's nine crew members identified themselves as Iranian nationals and will be transferred to a regional nation for repatriation.

Momsen was operating in support of Combined Task Force 150, one of four task forces under the Combined Maritime Forces. The international naval force has increased regional patrols to locate and disrupt unlawful maritime activity.

The vessel was interdicted while transiting international waters along a route historically used by criminal organizations to smuggle people, weapons, narcotics and charcoal. Crew members attempted to discard more than 60 bales of the seized drugs as Momsen approached.

CTF 150 has conducted nine successful drug seizures in 2022, resulting in the confiscation of heroin, methamphetamine, amphetamine pills and hashish worth a combined value of $130 million.

Combined Maritime Forces is the largest multinational naval partnership in the world. The organization includes 34 nations and is headquartered in Bahrain with U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and U.S. 5th Fleet.