

# Construction Begins on Future USNS Hector A. Cafferata Jr.



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By Team Ships Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO – Construction started on the sixth Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB), the future USNS Hector A. Cafferata Jr. (ESB 8), at General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (GD NASSCO), Aug. 8.

The ESB ship class is highly flexible and used across a broad range of military operations supporting multiple operational phases, similar to the Expeditionary Transfer Dock class.

Acting as a mobile sea base, they are part of the critical access infrastructure that supports the deployment of forces and supplies to provide prepositioned equipment and sustainment with flexible distribution.

“The ESB platform has demonstrated they have not only the flexibility, but the capability the fleet needs while protecting our warfighting advantage,” said Tim Roberts, Strategic and Theater Sealift program manager, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. “The ship will support a variety of mission sets while focusing on its core capabilities of aviation facilities, berthing, special operations, equipment staging support, and command and control operations.”

In July 2023 the ship was named by Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro in honor of Medal of Honor recipient and Korean War veteran Hector A. Cafferata and is the first ship to carry his name.

GD NASSCO is also currently under construction on the future USNS Robert E. Simanek (ESB 7) as well as John Lewis-class Fleet Replenishment Oilers, USNS Earl Warren (T-AO 207), Robert F. Kennedy (T-AO 208), Lucy Stone (T-209) and Sojourner Truth (T-AO 210) with Thurgood Marshall (T-AO 211), Ruth Bader Ginsburg (T-ASO 212) and T-AO 213 under contract.

As one of the Defense Department’s largest acquisition organizations, PEO Ships is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships, special mission and support ships, and boats and craft.