Keel Authenticated for Future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr.



160917-N-LV331-002 OXFORD, Miss. (Sept. 17, 2016) Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Ray Mabus announces the names of the future Arleigh Burke-class destroyers DDG 125 and DDG 126 as USS Jack Lucas and USS Louis H. Wilson Jr. during the Ole Miss Rebels college football game against the Alabama Crimson Tide. Lucas and Wilson are both Marine Corps Medal of Honor recipients and Mississippians. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Armando Gonzales/Released)
Release from Naval Sea Systems Command

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From Team Ships Public Affairs BATH, Maine –The keel for the future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr. (DDG 126), a Flight III Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, was ceremonially laid at Bath Iron Works, May 16, 2023.

The ship is named for Marine Corps Commandant, General Louis Hugh Wilson Jr., a World War II and Vietnam War veteran who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism during the Battle of Guam. Following his service in Vietnam, he served as the 26th Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1975 to 1979.

The contemporary keel laying ceremony represents the joining together of a ship's major modular components at the land level, and is a significant milestone in the production of a ship. The keel is authenticated with the ship sponsors' initials etched into a ceremonial keel plate that is later incorporated into the ship. Co-sponsors of DDG 126 are Dr. Susan Rabern and Mrs. Janet Wilson Taylor, Gen. Louis H. Wilson's first daughter.

The event commemorated the first Flight III ship to be ceremonially laid down at Bath Iron Works.

"We are proud to reach this important milestone in the production of the future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr," said Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51-class program manager, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. "This great warship will carry the legacy of General Wilson's unwavering commitment and service to our country."

The DDG 51 Flight III upgrade is centered on the AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar and incorporates upgrades to the electrical power and cooling capacity plus additional associated changes to provide greatly enhanced warfighting capability to the fleet.

Bath Iron Works is currently under contract to build 10 destroyers, and is currently in various stages of construction on the future John Basilone (DDG 122), Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124), Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), William Charette (DDG 130), and Quentin Walsh (DDG 132).

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, sealift ships, support ships, boats and craft.

For more information on the Flight III Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers, visit: https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/Team-Ships/PEO-Ships/DDG-51/