

Keel Authenticated for Future USS Pittsburgh



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By Team Ships Public Affairs

Pascagoula, MS – The keel for the future USS Pittsburgh (LPD 31), a San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock, was ceremonially laid at Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls Shipbuilding division, June 2.

The ship is the fifth Navy vessel to be named for the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and its surrounding region, which play a central role in our national defense infrastructure. The most recent USS Pittsburgh (SSN 720) was a Los Angeles-class submarine, which served the Navy from December 1984 to August 2019.

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 ship production. The keel is authenticated with the ship sponsors' initials etched into a ceremonial keel plate that is later incorporated into the ship. The LPD 31 sponsor is Mrs. Nancy Urban. The speaker at the keel laying was Rear Adm. Tom Anderson, Program Executive Officer, Ships.

"Shipbuilding is a team sport and is one of the most technically complex and challenging things we do in the defense industrial base. I would like to acknowledge the professionalism, skill and perseverance of the HII shipbuilders," said Anderson. "Thank you for spending yourselves in the worthy cause of bringing the future USS Pittsburgh into being."

The San Antonio class is designed to support embarking, transporting, and landing Marines and their equipment by conventional or air-cushioned landing craft. The ship's capabilities are further enhanced by its flight deck and hangar, enabling the ship to operate a variety of Marine Corps helicopters and the Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft (MV-22). Because of the ships' inherent capabilities, they are able to support a variety of amphibious assault, special operations, expeditionary warfare, or disaster relief missions, operating independently or as part of amphibious readiness groups, expeditionary strike groups, or joint task forces.

"The future USS Pittsburgh's keel laying is a momentous occasion and the Navy and its industry partners look forward to working together during the construction process," said Capt. Cedric McNeal, program manager, Amphibious Warfare Program Office, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. "Ultimately, LPD Flight II ships will provide capability and power projection to support a myriad of employment scenarios as a key component of the Amphibious Force structure for decades to come."

Ingalls Shipbuilding division is also currently in production

on the future USS Richard S. McCool Jr. (LPD 29) and the future USS Harrisburg (LPD 30).

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.