Keel Laid for Future USS Philadelphia



Mrs. Maureen Paparo, sponsor for LPD 32, Philadelphia, and other platform guests watch as Cory Dillon, Ingalls Structural Welder, welds the sponsor's initials onto the keel plate at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, MS, March 3, 2026. (Photo/Luis Solis) In Photo From Left: Brian Blanchette, President of Ingalls Shipbuilding and Executive Vice President at HII Chris Kastner, President and CEO, HII, Captain Randy Slaff, Commanding Officer, Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair, Gulf Coast, Cory Dillon, Ingalls Structural Welder, Captain Matt Tardy, Unites States Navy, Amphibious Warfare Program Manager, Program Executive Office, Ships, Admiral Samuel Paparo, Unites States Navy, Commander, United States Indo Pacific Command, and husband to our ship sponsor, and Mrs. Maureen Paparo, Sponsor and Keel Authenticator of LPD 32. (Photo by Luis Solis)
From Team Ships Public Affairs, March 4, 2026

PASCAGOULA, Miss. - The keel for the future USS Philadelphia

(LPD 32), a San Antonio class-amphibious transport dock ship, was authenticated at HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division, March 3.

The ship is named in honor of the historic city of Philadelphia and its maritime legacy. The city is the birthplace of the U.S Navy and Marine Corps and was home to the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard from 1801-1995, which constructed numerous Navy vessels.

Keel laying authentication ceremonies are a centuries-old tradition marking a significant construction milestone where a ship transitions from design to reality. The keel was authenticated when the initials of the ship's sponsor, Ms. Maureen Paparo, were welded onto a steel plate. Paparo is a Philadelphia native and the spouse of Adm. Samuel Paparo, the 27th Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. This plate will be permanently affixed to the ship's hull, remaining with the vessel throughout its entire service life as a symbol of its beginning.

"The future USS Philadelphia honors one of America's foundational cities and its continuous support of the Navy and the maritime domain," said Capt. Matthew Tardy, program manager, Amphibious Warfare Program Office. "This keel laying marks the ceremonial beginning of construction and we look forward to delivering this ship to the fleet."

San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ships (LPD) are warships that embark, transport, and land elements of a landing force for a variety of expeditionary warfare missions, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief. They provide the Navy and Marine Corps with modern, sea-based platforms that are networked, survivable, and built to operate with 21st-century transformational platforms such as air-cushioned landing craft (LCAC), modern helicopters, and vertical take-off landing craft (MV-22).

Today’s ceremony underscores the Navy’s commitment to building America’s Golden Fleet. For 250 years, American naval power has projected strength globally. That mission continues – and intensifies. We operate forward 24/7, 365 days a year. This operational tempo demands continuous capability delivery, and the Golden Fleet is our answer.

As a Department of War acquisition organization, PEO Ships is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships and craft, and auxiliary ships, including special mission ships, sealift ships and support ships.