Navy to Commission Guided-Missile Destroyer Daniel Inouye



The U.S. Navy's newest guided-missile destroyer, the USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118), sails through Pearl Harbor as Sailors man the rails, Nov. 18. *U.S. NAVY / Jason Treffry*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy will commission the future USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118), an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, during a 10:00 a.m. (HST) ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickham on Dec. 8.

The future USS Daniel Inouye is named in honor of the late U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye, who served as a Hawaii representative in the Senate from 1963 until he died in 2012.

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro will deliver the keynote address at the ceremony. Remarks will also be provided by Hawaii Gov. David Ige; Rep. Kaiali'i Kahele (D-Hawaii);

Honolulu Mayor Rick Blangiardi; Adm. Samuel Paparo, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet; Ken Inouye, son of Sen. Inouye; and Ed Kenyon, director of new construction programs, General Dynamics Bath Iron Works.

“The late Sen. Daniel Inouye spent his entire life in public service, both in uniform and out,” said Del Toro. “Sen. Inouye’s life is one to be emulated and the crew of this warship will not only be inspired by his legacy, but will stand the watch with the honor and dignity deserving of a ship bearing his name.”

The ship’s sponsor Irene Hirano Inouye, Inouye’s wife, established a strong bond with the crew before her passing on April 7, 2020. At the keel laying in 2018, she welded her initials into the ship’s keel and, in 2019, broke a bottle of champagne on the bow in a christening ceremony. During a “mast stepping” ceremony, she placed items special to Inouye in the ship’s mast.

The commissioning ceremony coincides with the 80th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor Remembrance Commemoration events. On Dec. 7, 1941, Daniel Inouye was a 17-year-old senior at Honolulu’s McKinley High School and rushed to a Red Cross aid station to help civilians and Sailors wounded in the attack.

On April 21, 1945, while serving with the 442nd Infantry Regiment Combat Team in Italy during World War II, an exploding grenade shattered his right arm during an assault. Despite the intense pain, he refused evacuation. He remained at the head of his platoon until they broke the enemy resistance and his troops deployed in defensive positions, continuing to fight until the regiment’s position was secured. Later in life, he received the Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism during the assault.

Cmdr. DonAnn Gilmore, of Anniston, Alabama, is the ship’s commanding officer and leads a crew of 329 officers and

enlisted Sailors. Gilmore is a graduate of The Pennsylvania State University. She previously commanded Mine Countermeasures Crew Exultant.

“This crew put a tremendous amount of work into preparing to bring USS Daniel Inouye to life on Dec. 8. We all share a deep sense of pride and honor to represent our namesake, the late senator and U.S. Army Medal of Honor recipient Daniel Inouye and those he represented for 53 years in the House and Senate,” said Gilmore. “Through USS Daniel Inouye’s service to our nation, every Sailor aboard will strive to make ours the preeminent ship on the waterfront. We embody the ship’s motto, a battle cry adopted from Sen. Inouye’s Army unit, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. We will ‘go for broke!’ as Daniel Inouye did on the battlefield and in halls of the Senate.”

The ship is nearly 510 feet long and has a navigational draft of 33 feet. As a Flight IIA destroyer, DDG 118 is equipped with Aegis Baseline 9, which provides improved, integrated air and missile defense capabilities, increased computing power, and radar capable of quickly detecting and reacting to modern air warfare and ballistic missile defense threats.

Built by General Dynamics Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine, Daniel Inouye was christened June 22, 2019, and delivered to the Navy on March 8, 2021. USS Daniel Inouye’s homeport is Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

The ceremony will be livestreamed at: https://www.dvidshub.net/webcast/27385. The link becomes active approximately 10 minutes before the event (9:50 a.m. HST).