

# Navy to Commission Guided-Missile Destroyer Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee



[Release from the U.S. Department of Defense](#)

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The Navy will commission its newest Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer, USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123), during a 10:00 a.m. EDT ceremony on Saturday, May 13, in Key West, Florida.

Rear Admiral Cynthia Kuehner, Commander, Naval Medical Forces Support Command and Director of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps, will deliver the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Remarks will also be provided by the Honorable Donald Norcross, U.S. Representative, New Jersey's 1st District and member of the House Armed Services Committee; the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy; Admiral Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations; the Honorable Teri Johnston, mayor

of Key West; and Ms. Kari Wilkinson, president of Huntington Ingalls Industries-Ingalls Shipbuilding division. The ship's sponsors, Ms. Louisa Dixon, Ms. Virginia Munford, and Ms. R. Pickett Wilson, will also be in attendance.

The ship's namesake, Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee, served as the second Superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps in 1911, and was also the first woman recipient of the Navy Cross. When she entered naval service in 1908, she was one of the first 20 women, known as the "Sacred Twenty," to join the newly established Navy Nurse Corps and contributed her nursing skills to the Navy during the First World War. This is the second ship named after Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee. The first ship, USS Higbee (DD 806), was the first combat warship named after a female member of the U.S. Navy.

"Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee was ahead of her time, from being one of the first members of the Navy Nurse Corps, to being its second Superintendent, to being the first woman to earn the Navy Cross," said Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. "I am confident that the crew who will sail USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee will continue to honor and embody her trailblazing legacy."

The ship will be the 72nd Arleigh Burke-class destroyer to be commissioned, with 17 additional ships currently under contract for the DDG 51 program. The ship is configured as a Flight IIA destroyer, which enables power projection and delivers quick reaction time, high firepower, and increased electronic countermeasures capability for anti-air warfare. The future USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee will be 509.5 feet long and 59 feet wide, with a displacement of 9,496 tons. It will be homeported in San Diego.

Media may direct queries to the Navy Office of Information at (703) 697-5342. More information on guided-missile destroyer programs can be found at: <https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFile>

[s/Article/2169871/destroyers-ddg/](https://www.history.navy.mil/destroyers-ddg/Article/2169871/destroyers-ddg/)

The ceremony will be live streamed at: <https://www.dvidshub.net/webcast/31425>. The link becomes active approximately ten minutes prior to the event (9:50 a.m. EDT).

Additional information about the namesake of the future USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123) can be found at: <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/people/namesakes/lenah-higbee.html>