New Gerald R. Ford-Class Aircraft Carrier John F. Kennedy to be Christened Dec. 7

The aircraft carrier Pre-Commissioning Unit (PCU) John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) show in October reaching a construction milestone, Oct. 29, 2019, as its dry dock area is flooded three months ahead of its slated production schedule leading up to the christening of the second Ford-class aircraft carrier, scheduled for Dec. 7, 2019. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Adam Ferrero

ARLINGTON, Va. —The Navy's newest aircraft carrier, the future USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), will be christened on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019, during an 11 a.m. ceremony at Newport News, Virginia, the Defense Department said in a Dec. 4 release.

John F. Kennedy is the second aircraft carrier of the Gerald R. Ford class, slated to replace USS Nimitz (CVN 68), when that ship is decommissioned.

Former NASA Administrator Charles F. Bolden, also a retired major general of the U.S. Marine Corps, will deliver the ceremony's keynote address. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy, President Kennedy's daughter, will serve as the ship's sponsor and break a bottle of American sparkling wine against a plate welded to the hull.

"USS John F. Kennedy will carry the legacy of its namesake and the power of our nation," said Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly. "The advanced technology and warfighting capabilities this aircraft carrier brings to our global challenges will strengthen our allies and partners, extend our

reach against potential adversaries and further the global mission of our integrated naval force."

CVN 79 is the second aircraft carrier to honor President John F. Kennedy for a lifetime of service to the nation. The president wore the uniform of our nation as a Navy lieutenant during World War II and served as the 35th president of the United States from January 1961 to November 1963.

John F. Kennedy, along with its embarked air wing and other strike group assets, will provide the core capabilities of forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security and humanitarian assistance.

Built by Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division, the Gerald R. Ford class incorporates advances in technology, such as a new propulsion system, electric plant, Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS), Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG), machinery control, radars and integrated warfare systems.

At 1,092 feet in length and 100,000 tons, CVN 79 incorporates more than 23 new technologies, comprising dramatic advances in propulsion, power generation, ordnance handling and aircraft launch systems. These innovations will support a 33% higher sortie generation rate at a significant cost savings, when compared to Nimitz-class carriers. The Gerald R. Ford class also offers a significant reduction – approximately $4 billion per ship – in life-cycle operations and support costs compared to the earlier Nimitz class.

The ceremony can be viewed on the Navy Live blog at http://navylive.dodlive.mil.