SECNAV Names Future Constellation-Class Guided-Missile Frigate Lafayette



Graphic rendering of the future USS Lafayette (FFG 65), named in honor of Marquis de Lafayette and his service during the American Revolutionary War. USS Lafayette is the fourth of the new Constellation-class frigates, scheduled to commission in 2029. The Constellation-class guided-missile frigate represents the Navy's next generation small surface combatant. From Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs

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Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Carlos Del Toro announced in Paris that a future Constellation-class guided-missile frigate will be named USS Lafayette (FFG 65), June 29.

The future USS Lafayette will honor Marquis de Lafayette and his service during the American Revolutionary War.

A member of the French nobility, the young Lafayette took a fervent interest in the cause of the American revolutionaries, and in December 1776, was contracted into service as a major general in the Continental Army. In 1779, he returned briefly to France, where he successfully advocated for military aid for the Americans. He was wounded at the Battle of Brandywine, where British soldiers shot him in the leg. After his recovery, Lafayette joined Gen. George Washington as a member of his personal staff, forming a bond that has been characterized as the one shared between a father and his son.

"Their shared ideals—that all people deserve liberty and the pursuit of happiness, as well as an unflinching commitment to

democratic governance—are the foundation upon which the relationship between France and the United States of America continue to build upon today," said Secretary Del Toro during remarks at the naming ceremony in Paris. "Just think, were it not for the Marquis de Lafayette's willingness—along with that of tens of thousands of his compatriots—to fight alongside our Continental Army and Navy during our Revolutionary War centuries ago, we might not be here together this evening."

In 2002, Congress posthumously made Lafayette an honorary U.S. citizen.

Three previous Navy vessels have been named in honor of Lafayette: a sidewheel ironclad ram, a transport ship (AP 53), and a ballistic missile submarine (SSBN 616).

USS Lafayette, the fourth of our new Constellation-class frigates, is scheduled to commission in 2029. The other ships in the class are USS Constellation (FFG 62), USS Congress (FFG 63), and USS Chesapeake (FFG 64).

USS Lafayette and her sister ships bring with them increased lethality, survivability, and the capabilities that our Joint Force requires to conduct operations around the world with our partners and allies.

"Just as her namesake, the Marquis de Lafayette did almost 250 years ago, USS Lafayette and her crew will stand ready to answer our Nation's call to defend our shared principles around the world, ensuring that our global maritime commons remain free and open for all who wish to use them for lawful activities," said Secretary Del Toro.

U.S. Ambassador to France Denise Bauer said, "The vital American-French alliance owes much to our historic naval partnership and to the early leadership of the Marquis de Lafayette, and so it is entirely fitting that the United States Navy will name a vessel in honor of this legendary hero."

The Constellation-class guided-missile frigate represents the Navy's next generation small surface combatant. This ship class will be an agile, multi-mission warship, capable of operations in both blue-water and littoral environments, providing increased combat-credible forward presence that provides a military advantage at sea.

The Constellation-class will have multi-mission capability to conduct air warfare, anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare, electronic warfare, and information operations.

Specifically, the class includes an enterprise air surveillance radar, Baseline Ten Aegis combat system, a Mk 41 vertical launch system, communications systems, Mk 57 gun weapon system countermeasures, and added capability in electronic warfare and information operations with design flexibility for future growth.

A ship naming celebration will also take place at George Washington's Mount Vernon in Virginia on July 3, 2023.

Find more information on Constellation-class guided-missile frigates here.