SECNAV Names Navy's DDG 146 After MoH Recipient, Former U.S. Navy Seal, U.S. Senator and Nebraska Governor Robert Kerrey

From SECNAV Public Affairs, Jan. 4, 2025

WASHINGTON – Today, Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Carlos Del Toro named the Navy's newest Arleigh Burke-class Guided Missile Destroyer, the future USS Robert Kerrey (DDG 146).

DDG 146 honors former U.S. Senator, Nebraska Governor, and naval officer Joseph Robert Kerrey, who received the Medal of Honor for heroism displayed during the Vietnam War. This will be the first Navy vessel named after Kerrey.

"One of the great privileges I have as Secretary of the Navy is to name ships, and it is my honor to name the future USS Robert Kerrey (DDG 146)," said Del Toro. "This will be the first Navy vessel named in his honor, and it is most appropriate we do so, for his actions in Vietnam and his continued service to this country well beyond his Naval service."

On Jan 3, Del Toro and Kerrey met in NYC to share the news of the naming of the destroyer. Del Toro named DDG 145 at a press conference at the Intrepid Museum prior to the meeting with Kerrey.

"My sincere thanks to President Biden, Secretary of the Navy Del Toro, and the United States Navy that gave me the opportunity to serve my country for three of the best years of my life," said Senator Kerrey. "I am very grateful for this

recognition.”

Born in Lincoln, NE in 1943 and entering the Navy in 1966, Kerrey completed Officer Candidate School and Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training. He deployed to the Republic of Vietnam as a platoon officer with Delta Platoon, SEAL Team 1 in 1969. On 14 March 1969, he led his team on a mission to capture important Viet Cong political leaders who had set up a base of operations on an island in the bay of Nha Trang. The platoon scaled a 350-foot cliff and were descending from a ledge overlooking the enemy camp when a grenade exploded at Kerrey’s feet, severely injuring his right leg and propelling him backward onto jagged rocks. Immobilized by his multiple wounds, Kerrey nonetheless continued directing his team in securing the enemy camp and finding an extraction site for helicopter evacuation. Kerrey ultimately would lose his lower leg, but his steadfast courage and leadership under fire earned the gratitude of his Nation.

He received the Medal of Honor in 1970, the first Navy SEAL to be so honored. He subsequently served as the 35th Governor of Nebraska (1983-1987) and as a U.S. Senator from Nebraska (1989-2001), as well as a member of the 9/11 Commission.

Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, built around the Aegis Combat System, are the backbone of the U.S. Navy’s surface fleet providing protection to America around the globe.

They incorporate stealth techniques, allowing these highly capable, multi-mission ships to conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence to national security, providing a wide range of warfighting capabilities in multi-threat air, surface and subsurface domains. These elements of sea power enable the Navy to defend American prosperity and prevent future conflict abroad.