USCGC Calhoun Returns Home Following First Deployment



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NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Calhoun (WMSL 759) returned to their homeport in North Charleston, Monday, after completing the cutter's first deployment.

Calhoun's crew steamed over 3,500 nautical miles during a five-week deployment within the Coast Guard's First and Fifth districts area of responsibility. Calhoun's crew worked to enforce living marine resources regulations and maritime safety missions along the Eastern Seaboard. In support of operations Atlantic Venture and Ocean Hunter, Calhoun conducted 10 commercial vessel safety boardings, issued four violations, and patrolled the nation's maritime boundary line to support the sustainability of the marine ecosystem and safety of life at sea.

"The crew was brilliant at the basics with the landing,

launching helicopters, gathering intelligence, and sending out our boats with boarding teams to protect, defend, and save," said Capt. Timothy Sommella, Calhoun's commanding officer. "Our mission excellence at home leads to our credibility abroad as we support a rules-based, international order to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing."

During this deployment, Calhoun participated in this year's Fleet Week in New York alongside U.S. and German naval vessels. Fleet Week is a time-honored tradition which allows the Coast Guard to demonstrate the nation's sea power and interoperability with allies and partners. The crew of Calhoun participated in a variety of external events, hosted over 4,000 tours, showcased the Coast Guard missions, and supported on-going recruitment efforts.

"There is not a better feeling than returning to homeport after a highly successful patrol," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Aaron DeLuca, Calhoun's command senior enlisted leader. "We accomplished so much in such a short deployment period. This crew was able to test and operate all our installed systems and equipment, complete certifications for our flight deck operations, and had the opportunity to partake in dozens of community outreach and public relations events. These opportunities to make lasting memories and sea stories with shipmates help entice our members to continue to serve onboard Coast Guard cutters."

This was Calhoun's first operational deployment and maiden voyage following its commissioning ceremony in North Charleston on April 20. Calhoun now joins other Charleston-based national security cutters in the fleet, including, Hamilton, James and Stone, securing the Western Hemisphere against emerging threats to the environment and food sources while safeguarding the maritime transportation system and global supply chain.

Calhoun, manned by 130 men and women, is the newest 418-foot,

Legend-class cutter to join active service in the Coast Guard. The Legend-class cutter program leads the Coast Guard's ongoing surface fleet recapitalization, and when combined with the future offshore patrol cutters, will comprise the Coast Guard's offshore response capability for decades to come. The cutter's primary missions are counter drug operations, migrant interdiction, living marine resources, defense readiness, and command and control in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the world and at home.

Calhoun's namesake comes from the first Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard, Charles L. Calhoun. Calhoun led a distinguished career, serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II prior to enlisting in the Coast Guard in 1946. Calhoun's Coast Guard career was marked by over 170 months of sea service, including service in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Calhoun became the first Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard on Aug. 27, 1969, and was a champion for the service's enlisted personnel and is responsible for bridging the gap between the command and enlisted workforce.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit GoCoastGuard.com to learn about active duty, reserve, officer, and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found here.