



# THE FEDERAL MARINER

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MSC \* NOAA \* ARMY COE \* MARAD

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION'S GOVERNMENT SERVICES DIVISION

## CIVMARS Active in Hurricane Relief Operations

### SIU Continues Efforts in Puerto Rico, United States Virgin Islands

Members of the SIU Government Services Division are playing vital roles assisting in humanitarian relief efforts in Puerto Rico.

Specifically, the CIVMAR-crewed hospital ship USNS Comfort arrived at the island Oct. 3. The vessel is part of what the U.S. Navy described as “the whole-of-government response effort and is assisting the Federal Emergency Management System (FEMA), the lead federal agency, in helping those affected by Hurricane Maria.”

The Comfort is a seagoing medical treatment facility which at press time had more than 800 personnel embarked for the Puerto Rico mission. More than 70 CIVMARS are responsible for work in the deck, engine, supply and communication departments. CIVMARS ensure the safe operation of the vessel at all times. Also travelling with the vessel are Navy medical and support staff assembled from 22 commands.

The hospital ship has one of the largest trauma facilities in the United States and is equipped with four X-ray machines, one CAT scan unit, a dental suite, an optometry lens laboratory, physical therapy center, pharmacy, angiography suite and two oxygen-producing plants, the Navy reported.

According to Navy representatives, the “Comfort’s primary mission is to provide an afloat, mobile, acute surgical medical facility to the U.S. military that is flexible, capable, and uniquely adaptable to support expeditionary warfare. Comfort’s secondary mission is to provide full hospital services to support U.S. disaster relief and humanitarian operations worldwide.”

On Nov. 6, the Comfort got an assist from another SIU Government Services

Division vessel. The ship replenished its medical supplies, food and other necessities by connecting with the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Big Horn while underway off the coast of San Juan.

As of Nov. 8, the Comfort had treated 1,476 patients, performed 147 surgeries and admitted 293 patients. Patients continued to be treated on the ship during the short underway period.

Meanwhile, the SIU is continuing to help collect, transport and deliver hurricane relief supplies to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI), in addition to assisting victims on the U.S. mainland.

Seafarers-contracted vessel operators Crowley Maritime and Tote Maritime, respectively, also are playing important roles in ongoing efforts in Puerto Rico. Other labor organizations and the AFL-CIO also are contributing significantly to what is sure to be a years-long endeavor.

Working with the labor federation and other unions (both maritime and non-maritime), the SIU continues collecting relief cargoes in Houston; Philadelphia; Jacksonville, Florida and elsewhere. The SIU also established a new fund to assist Seafarers and retirees living in areas affected by the recent hurricanes (this includes SIU affiliates). The fund’s name is Seafarers Disaster Aid Fund.

Click on the PayPal link on the SIU home page ([www.seafarers.org](http://www.seafarers.org)) in order to donate. If donating by check, please make it out to Seafarers Disaster Aid Fund and mail to:

Seafarers Disaster Aid Fund  
c/o SIU Secretary-Treasurer  
5201 Auth Way  
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Unlike prior relief funds set up by the union, the plan is to make the Seafarers



Members of the Disaster Medical Assistance Team transfer a patient to receive care aboard the Seafarers-crewed hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20). (U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ernest R. Scott.)

Disaster Aid Fund a permanent entity. This should help expedite donations and payments in the event of future catastrophes.

Understandably, Puerto Rico has garnered most of the headlines following the spate of hurricanes. Texas, however, is also facing a long, costly recovery. One news outlet noted that the Houston region has cleared “enough post-flood debris from its neighborhoods to fill 700 Olympic-size pools.”

More significantly, two months after Hurricane Harvey battered Texas, tens of thousands of people remained in temporary housing, and not all schools had

reopened at the time of this writing. By some estimates, Harvey caused approximately \$73.5 billion in economic losses, making it the second-costliest natural disaster in U.S. history (after only Hurricane Katrina).

Estimates of Maria’s economic impact are also gigantic, ranging from \$45-\$95 billion. Irma, too, is expected to cost tens of billions of dollars in recovery.

*Editor’s note: Visit the News section of the SIU website ([www.seafarers.org](http://www.seafarers.org)) for updates on hurricane relief operations. We are also regularly posting photos and information on our social media sites, which are linked on the SIU home page.*



A patient is escorted near the Seafarers-crewed hospital ship USNS Comfort in San Juan, Puerto Rico. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Stephane Belcher.)



Chad Lomas, a pediatrician from Naval Hospital Pensacola embarked on the Comfort, treats a patient in Department of Health and Human Services medical tent on the pier. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Stephane Belcher.)

## President's Column

### Our Winning Team

At this time of year, many of us pause to give thanks and reflect on the past 12 months.

When I look back on all the stories in the Federal Mariner this year and the information I have collected from our federal mariners, I see an amazing amount of work and collective efforts to supply our military personnel, support our reduced operating status ships, safeguard our environment and so much more.



Michael Sacco

As always, the SIU executive officers and I are very proud and grateful for the efforts of the federal mariners working for ACOE, SUISUN Bay - MARAD, NOAA and MSC.

We have been carefully following the work of the CIVMARS aboard the hospital ship USNS Comfort. This ship underwent an emergency deployment in October to assist in the Puerto Rico hurricane recovery efforts. On October 16, I wrote a thank you letter to the crew noting in part that the Comfort's mission was timely and critical and that the work of the CIVMARS aboard the vessel was outstanding and uplifting. You can read more about the effort on page 4.

As we were conducting and attending the 2017 SIU convention along with the SIU affiliated Paul Hall Center's 50th anniversary event, we were also thinking about our fellow citizens and our seafaring brothers and sisters in Texas, Florida and the U.S. Virgin Islands who were impacted mightily by the destructive force of several hurricanes.

At our SIU convention in September, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao (the MARAD SUISUN Bay unit is located within this agency) was a featured speaker, as was Rear Admiral Mark Buzby, the current DOT Maritime Administrator (previous MSC Commander, now retired). They both expressed strong support and acknowledgement of the critical importance of the U.S. Merchant Marine. Their comments were timely and well received. You can read about these events on the front page.

During every holiday season, our thoughts also turn to those in need. To help those impacted by these weather-related disasters, the SIU launched a relief fund. Information is included in this edition and you can also donate by going directly to our home page at [www.seafarers.org](http://www.seafarers.org).

At the end of this year, certainly a tumultuous one, I send my best wishes to all our federal mariners here in the States and working worldwide. I wish you and your families good health, happiness. If you are away from home this season, here's to a very safe voyage and a safe return home.

We have a lot to look forward to in the New Year. I'm energized and ready to continue aggressively promoting the U.S. Merchant Marine as well as standing up for workers' rights. Your professionalism and your support are crucial parts of that effort. Together, we will succeed.

### SIU Directory

Michael Sacco, President

Augustin Tellez, Executive Vice President

David Heindel, Secretary-Treasurer

George Tricker, Vice President Contracts

Kermett Mangram,  
Vice President Government Services

Chester Wheeler,  
Asst. Vice President Government Services

### Check Out this Labor Website



## NATIONAL A. PHILIP RANDOLPH PULLMAN PORTER MUSEUM

"CELEBRATING AFRICAN AMERICANS IN U.S. LABOR HISTORY"

Union Communication Services-Worker Institute at Cornell ILR recently helped publicize the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum, which it described as "a cultural institution whose mission is to promote, honor and celebrate the legacy of A. Philip Randolph and contributions made by African-Americans to America's labor movement. The site places a significant focus on the African American Railroad Employee." Like maritime, the railroad industry is one in which employees sometimes live in their workplace. Visit the website at: <https://aprpullmanportermuseum.org/>

## GAO Study Shows Need for Sealift Boost

*Editor's note: The Government Accountability Office (GAO) is the audit, evaluation and investigative arm of the U.S. Congress. The GAO examines the use of public funds; evaluates federal programs and policies; and provides analyses, recommendations, and other assistance to help Congress make informed oversight, policy and funding decisions.*

A new study by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) underscores the need for the United States to further invest in its sealift capacity and ensure there are enough civilian mariners to crew activated vessels in the U.S. Maritime Administration's (MARAD) fleet. MARAD oversees 47 vessels in the Ready Reserve Force. These ships, normally maintained with reduced-operating-status (ROS) crews, may be called upon at any time and are required to be operational in a matter of days. The study was undertaken as a result an National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2017 request.

In the report, the members of the House Armed Services Committee noted that the Navy planned increased demands on the Military Sealift Command as the Navy moves to extend the global reach of its ships. This is in addition to the new tasking that MSC has been ordered to incorporate into its current missions. The report also noted that in some areas, MSC-operated vessels such as the expeditionary fast transport ships (formerly called joint high-speed vessels) and the afloat forward staging base have taken on additional roles in assisting forward-deployed Navy vessels.

The GAO released its report Aug. 22 with a revision on Oct. 31, 2017 outlining the need for the Navy to develop a long-term sealift recapitalization plan to protect the continued utility of MSC ships. MCS is one of the biggest employers of merchant

mariners in both the federal and private sector maritime industry. The Navy would be unable to operate its vessels without the support of MSC CIVMARS working aboard MSC-operated vessels or seafarers working aboard MSC vessels operated by private maritime companies. Both CIVMARS and seafarers receive important protections as employees sailing under SIU collective bargaining agreements.

According to the GAO, "This report (1) describes the readiness trends of the surge sealift and combat logistics fleets since 2012, (2) evaluates the extent to which the Navy has plans to address an aging surge sealift fleet, and (3) evaluates the extent to which the Navy has assessed the effects of widely distributed operations on the combat logistics force. GAO analyzed 3 to 5 years of readiness, maintenance, and exercise data, based on available data; visited surge sealift and logistics ships; and interviewed Navy, U.S. Transportation Command, and Maritime Administration officials."

The study found that since 2012, the readiness of the surge fleet has decreased, mission-limiting equipment casualties have increased, and maintenance periods are taking longer than expected. Additionally, the GAO determined that the projected sealift capacity, in millions of square feet, would drop from roughly 11 million in 2017 to 3 million by 2035, and then reduced to zero by 2055 without preventive action.

As stated in the study, "Given the (Navy) fleet's dependence on the combat logistics force, waiting until 2019 or 2020 to conduct an assessment, as planned, could result in poor investment decisions as the Navy continues to build and modernize its fleet. Furthermore, without assessing the effects of widely distributed operations on logistics force requirements and modifying its force structure plans

accordingly, the Navy risks being unprepared to provide required fuel and other supplies." In order to prevent this, the GAO recommended that the Navy design a comprehensive sealift recapitalization plan, and assess the effects of that plan on the combat logistics force.

The Navy concurred with the GAO's recommendations. The Navy responded to the GAO and stated that: "In November 2016, the Deputy Secretary of Defense directed the Navy to develop a plan for recapitalizing the surge sealift fleet. As the GAO report notes, that effort is in progress and is being finalized. Navy has coordinated planning options with Office of Secretary of Defense, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), and the Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD). The sealift recapitalization strategy that has been developed includes a three-phased plan that extends the service life of select vessels, acquires a limited number of used vessels, and a new construction, common-hulled shipbuilding program."

The Navy continued, stating that the Department of Defense's proposal for the Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) requested authorization for the purchase of used ships that, if approved, will begin the recapitalization process for the MARAD fleet.

The full GAO report is 33 pages long. It contains the Navy's comments to the GAO recommendations. A link to the report can be found on the SIU's website.

### CIVMAR Note

**Restriction to ship grievance updates:** CIVMARS sailing on the 2015 Continuing Promise mission filed restriction to ship grievances during several of the South American port visits. The SIU completed an arbitration and submitted two briefs for the 10-day restriction in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, requesting back pay for those CIVMARS impacted. This leaves three other grievances to be addressed for this particular mission. Addition-

ally, the union and CIVMARS recently filed grievances for the recent *USNS Comfort* restrictions in the Puerto Rico hurricane relief mission. There is also an outstanding restriction grievance for CIVMARS aboard the *USNS Mercy* for restrictions in Vietnam.

The SIU will be updating CIVMARS about the progress of these grievances.

# United Seamen's Service: 75 Years of Dedication to Seafarers

*Editor's note: This article was submitted by the United Seamen's Service, which has an office within the SIU hall in Jersey City, New Jersey.*

The year was 1942. "Casablanca" was the Oscar-winning film, Bing Crosby's "White Christmas" was the top song, and the Dow bottomed out at 92. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt announced a national economic policy stabilizing wages, farm prices, and rents, and urged rationing scarce essential commodities.

The Second World War raged in both the Atlantic and Pacific, and in the midst of such historic events, the United Seamen's Service (USS) was born with the mission providing services abroad for American seafarers. Within a short time, we did so at 144 global locations.

Now, 75 years later and in light of the technological events that have impacted shipping, vessels and the role of American seafarer along with globalization, our agency continues in fewer locations. But the services provided – nearly 200,000 each year – are still necessary.

It was FDR and the maritime unions who felt the urgency to provide assistance to the exhausted, battle-traumatized, wounded and vulnerable merchant seafarers – strangers in unsavory or small, run-down ports far from home where they would stay for weeks on end. Thus, the USS was founded. The founders would never recognize those harbors today: clean, sprawling and run by computers with some ships that if stood on their end, would exceed the height of the Empire State Building. Nevertheless, the USS services are still vital in six strategic locations across the globe.

America's seafarers were the first casualties of World War II. In harm's way as they manned the vessels that carried supplies to U.S. troops. The U.S. War Shipping Administration recognized a need and developed the idea of the USS, recommended it to FDR and on August 8, 1942 the agency opened its doors around the world.

The centers were a home away from home where, as a safe haven, they provided hearty meals, medical attention, hotel-like facilities, recreation and personal amenities among the many services that were available. Rest homes for the convoy-weary and even gift shops for the mariners wanting to bring mementos back home provided additional needed, and desired, services.

The war ended and while the needs for more than 100 centers abated, USS services focused on a changing commercial and political world. In 1950, the Korean War outbreak meant that Asian ports were busy and looking to the USS for help in meeting the needs of those seafarers manning vessels carrying supplies and munitions for the military. At the same time, the Italian government offered the agency rent-free space to open a center in Naples, and the USS

opened seven facilities in the Middle East to serve the needs there.

The Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS), predecessor to the Navy's Military Sealift Command, developed a relationship with the USS in 1950 and over the years has rendered invaluable assistance to our agency's mission. The USS serves all American seafarers who deliver military cargo worldwide.

In 1965, our agency opened its first center in Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. Many of the USS staff were the last to leave Saigon in 1975, including our present Executive Director, Roger Kormer. Throughout our 75-year history, the USS has opened and closed centers as needed; virtually every experienced American seafarer can recall a stop at "the seamen's center" in a harbor they have visited.

The USS is also in the book business, providing reading materials to seafarers. The American Merchant Marine Library Association (AMMLA), founded in 1921, became a USS affiliate in 1973 and has endeavored to make life at sea more enriching and entertaining for the crew by installing sea-going libraries on USNS, Ready Reserve Force, and U.S.-Flag commercial vessels worldwide.

In 1970, USS efforts in Congress resulted in a law signed by President Richard Nixon authorizing the Department of Defense to provide USS support "whenever the President finds it necessary in the interest of United States commitments abroad."

As military conflict goes on, American merchant mariners continue to work to support U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and elsewhere. The delivery of services to U.S. prepositioning crews and U.S. Fleet Sailors continues to be a priority for the USS. Our centers in Diego Garcia (a small atoll in the Indian Ocean opened in 1981), Okinawa, Busan, and Bremerhaven work closely with military commands in these locations to meet the needs of all seafarers. Other locations are in Casablanca and Yokohama.

Throughout our history, the USS has striven to improve the seafarer's quality of life by delivering necessary services to mariners from our port centers around the world. Over the years, we have had to adjust our course to keep our programs relevant; with the help of labor, management, and U.S. and allied governments, we have succeeded. In today's complex transportation system, such cooperation is crucial.

Thus, within this context we are writing on behalf of the USS Board of Directors and the seafarers we serve to request your support in maintaining USS services worldwide.

Donations to the USS are tax deductible. They may be sent to United Seamen's Service, 104 Broadway, Jersey City, NJ 07306 or donate through our crowd funding website:



Mariners utilize a United Seamen's Service vehicle to return to their vessel in Japan. Local transportation is one of many services available to seafarers through the USS.

[www.youcaring.com/ussrising](http://www.youcaring.com/ussrising) or you may donate through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Our CFC Donor Number is 12086.

SIU Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel recently noted, "If you have sailed into Bremerhaven, Germany; Casablanca, Morocco; Okinawa and Yokohama, Japan; Busan, Korea; and on the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, these centers are a home away from home for all seafarers. Many mariners have visited USS centers through-

out their 75-year history and I am sure have many fond memories of them and their staff.

"The USS has been struggling to keep these centers open and needs our help," he continued. "If you're in a position to make a donation, in any amount, it would go a long way in assisting this organization to reach their goal in capital funding to maintain these facilities. Please visit their funding website and make your donation today."

**The Union Plus Scholarship Difference**  
Helping SIU members and their children attend college

## Union Plus Scholarships help SIU families with the cost of college

Awards range from \$500 to \$4,000 and are available annually to students attending college, trade or graduate schools.

The Union Plus Scholarship application is now available.

Deadline to apply is January 31, 12pm (noon), Eastern Time

Learn more at [unionplus.org/Scholarship](http://unionplus.org/Scholarship)



## How to Become an SIU Member

Joining the SIU is easy. The union's website – [www.seafarers.org](http://www.seafarers.org) – includes printable PDF versions of forms that mariners may use to request and authorize payroll deductions for labor organization dues. The forms are posted at:

[www.seafarers.org/memberbenefits/civmar.asp](http://www.seafarers.org/memberbenefits/civmar.asp)

Forms are also available under "union forms" in the SIU membership tab.

### Contact Information

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# DOT Secretary Chao, Maritime Administrator Buzby Strongly Reiterate Support for United States Merchant Marine

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao and U.S. Maritime Administrator Mark Buzby unequivocally voiced the administration's backing of American mariners and the U.S.-flag fleet when they addressed the Seafarers International Union of North America convention.

Chao delivered the keynote speech Sept. 26 in Piney Point, Maryland, while Buzby was the final speaker the following day. The convention, conducted every five years, took place at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, which also hosted the school's 50th anniversary event.

Chao is familiar with the school, having appeared there in the early 2000s while serving as U.S. Secretary of Labor under President George W. Bush. She has worked with the SIUNA and with union President Michael Sacco even longer, dating back to her days with the Federal Maritime Commission and a previous stint at the DOT.

Buzby, too, is no stranger to the union and the school. He served as commanding officer of the U.S. Military Sealift Command from 2009-2013 and previously visited the Paul Hall Center (in addition to speaking at the 2012 SIUNA convention).

Chao opened her remarks by crediting Sacco for his effectiveness.

"You are lucky to have him," she told the delegates and guests. "I've always admired him, because from the very start, I saw a true leader who always puts the interest of his membership as the first priority in his life."

She then discussed U.S. relief efforts in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands (in addition to ongoing work in Texas and Florida), and commended all mariners – CIVMARS and seafarers – who immediately answered the call to assist in the operations.

"The department's goal, even during this emergency, will be to maximize employment of American seafarers and American-flagged vessels in the recovery effort," Chao said. "So, we will be vigilant about requests for waivers to the Jones Act that are unnecessary to deal with the emergency."

Chao then detailed some of the administration's efforts to finalize a proposal "to rebuild and revitalize our country's infrastructure, including ports and waterways. This will be impacting every sector, including maritime."

Secretary Chao informed the audience that in the works is a 10-year program, that would be expected to generate a trillion dollars in spending.

"A key part of the plan is eliminating the unnecessary bureaucratic roadblocks and delays that are holding up the delivery of new infrastructure for years, even decades," she added.

Specifically focusing on the U.S. maritime industry, she cited the importance of the U.S. Maritime Security Program (MSP). Chao also said, "We want to maximize access to U.S. government-impelled preference cargos. We want to maintain support of the Jones Act, and we want to engage, train and support Ameri-

can mariners.... Strengthening America's maritime industry is not an afterthought. This industry is vital to America's wellbeing, security, and prosperity."

Buzby described the SIUNA as "a great maritime federation, and I know it pretty well. I have worked closely alongside Mike and (SIU Executive Vice President) Augie (Tellez), not so long ago when I was commander of Military Sealift Command. I respect both of these gentlemen and I respect this organization, and I always look forward to coming back and spending time with you."

He recalled the massive but cooperative undertaking of updating the Civilian Mariner Personnel Instruction (CMPI) 610 during his time at MSC. That project not only benefits mariners, he noted, but also reflects how different segments of the industry can and do work well together.

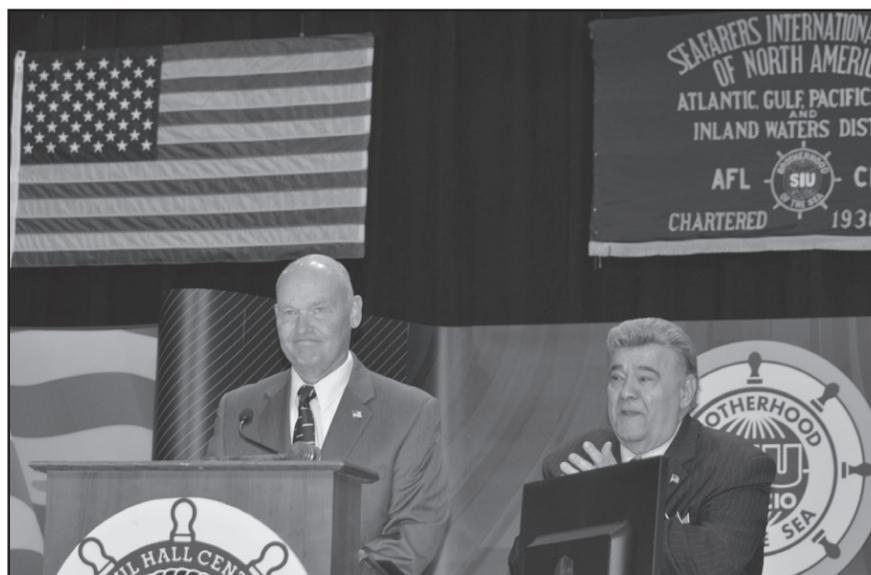
"I'm used to working with unions," Buzby said. "That's how I worked with them. I'm used to sitting down, rolling up our sleeves and getting things done, and that's how I intend to go forward and operate as the maritime administrator. I want that same attitude of cooperation and openness in this job as I did at Military Sealift Command."

He applauded U.S. mariners for their response to the recent hurricanes, and then recalled some of his statements from earlier this year when he was being confirmed for the MARAD job. During that process, he made it clear to Congress that the nation relies on the Ready Reserve Force (RRF), among other components of the U.S. Merchant Marine, to "execute its wartime missions, deploying and sustaining our forces overseas."

Pointing out the strong backing he has received from Gen. Darren McDew, the commanding officer of the U.S. Transportation Command, Buzby added, "Mariners of the U.S. Merchant Marine and those RRF ships are really essential assets in our ability to protect our forces. I am committed to make sure that both ship-wise and crew-wise, we're ready to go when needed."

"The final priority that I discussed with Congress during my pre-meetings and hearings was strengthening those three pillars of the U.S. flag ... to make sure that we keep our U.S. Merchant Marine strong," he continued. "The Jones Act, Maritime Security Program, and cargo preference are needed to keep our ships under the flag and to keep our mariners working. They are all critical elements that I am going to be defending with my full energy and I know that Secretary Chao feels the same way."

*Editor's note: In addition to hosting the convention, the Paul Hall Center also conducted a ceremony for its 50th anniversary. That gathering included several speeches and a 13-minute video, produced by Kramer Caswell, which is available on the SIU website on the Paul Hall Center landing page. A commemorative Piney Point edition of the LOG was mailed to SIU halls, and it, too, is posted on the SIU website, both in the News section and in the Paul Hall Center section.*



Secretary Chao (top photo) delivers keynote remarks at the convention. Maritime Administrator Buzby (left in bottom photo, with SIU President Michael Sacco) addresses delegates and guests near the end of the proceedings, the following day.



Attendees view the debut of the school's anniversary video.

## Spotlight on Mariner Health

### Guard Against Aneurysms

*Editors note: Spotlight on Mariner Health is a new periodic column for the Federal Mariner. If you would like to see a specific health issue covered, send an e-mail to [siufedmariner@seafarers.org](mailto:siufedmariner@seafarers.org) or contact your Government Services representative.*

Federal mariners work in difficult conditions. Many are forward-deployed, away from access to immediate medical care. Taking good care of yourself and monitoring symptoms which feel different than the norm is very important.

An aneurysm is an enlarged part of the blood vessel. These areas are important to discover quickly because they may become larger and weaker over time.

If the area gets very large, it can rupture. This is a serious health event that will affect many individuals in many different ways.

Aneurysms may range from life-threatening to just being found on a routine X-ray. Your doctor may want it treated quickly or he/she may just watch the aneurysm and see what happens over time.

Symptoms differ depending on where they are in the body. If an individual has a cerebral aneurysm, that person may experience fatigue, loss of balance, speech problems, double vision,

severe headaches, loss of vision, neck and jaw pain. Another person may experience abdominal pain or tenderness, hypertension, and signs of shock if it is found to be an abdominal aneurysm.

Risk factors for an aneurysm include diabetes, obesity, hypertension, smoking, alcohol abuse, high cholesterol, and increasing age. Atherosclerosis can be the cause of many aneurysms.

As we all age, there may come a time when the wall of the artery becomes harmed by plaque. Plaque can cause the arteries to narrow and even cause blockages. The blood flow will slow and an aneurysm may occur.

Doctors may order an Ultrasound, CT Scan, MRI, lab work, or an Angiogram if they are concerned about any abnormal findings. Some individuals are born with a weakness in the blood vessel that may not show up until later in life-congenital malformations. Unfortunately, many have had this happen over time due to age, diet, injury, lack of exercise, certain diseases, infections, and basic lifestyle choices.

Aneurysms are handled by a team approach. You may need to see a neuro-surgeon, a cardiac doctor, a chest surgeon, a renal-surgeon, and many others doctors depending on where the aneurysm is located in the body.

All treatments are individualized and specific to the type of aneurysm that a person has. If an aneurysm is diagnosed quickly and treated rapidly, that person has a good chance of survival. Again, this depends on the type of aneurysm that person has!

The most important things people can do to help prevent aneurysms are to control their blood pressure, sugar levels and weight. Keep active with regular exercise, watch what you eat, and do not smoke!

Keep doctor appointments and take medications as prescribed. Stay healthy and happy!