



## NACON 2016: LEADERSHIP, INITIATIVE AND INNOVATION

by Zacary E. Wilson. Robert C. Miller contributed to this report.

**PHOENIX** – After a year of honor, respect and devotion to duty, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's 2016 National Conference (NACON), 24-27 August in Phoenix, Arizona, provided an exceptional forum for reflections on this annum's performance, and preparing responses to new challenges. And there was much to discuss.

Since August 2015, the Auxiliary has seen the growth of many programs within recreational boating safety. The Modern Marine Navigator course was launched in March on BoatUS.org, providing boaters with the skills of navigation from the convenience of their home. The Auxiliary Paddle Craft Program (AUXPAD), designed to combat the rising tide of human-powered craft deaths, has seen greater promulgation since its start in May 2015, and this year's NACON made extensive efforts to promote its needed expansion into more regions.

The Auxiliary has also seen the advent of new technologies, facilitating more efficient and quality member experiences. The Basic Qualification Course II (BQC II) will provide new members, in addition to longtime veterans, with valuable knowledge in topics from unit structure, to military courtesies and travel reimbursements. As well, "Tuesday Night Live" continues to provide prospective members with crucial information, every first Tuesday of the month, at 1900 Eastern and Pacific times.

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# NACON 2016

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Even then, the headline of information technology in the Auxiliary was the launch of the my.CGAux member portal on 12 August. Intended to reduce the over 20 websites that an average Auxiliarist uses to complete business, and to establish a collaboration platform for units and the Auxiliary overall, my.CGAux hopes to change the face of members' interaction with the organization. Even by late August, vibrant discussions on recruitment and policy were taking place on the site. However, along with these new tools, discussions came of the challenges which still lie ahead for the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

A theme of National Convention 2016 was the recruitment of new Auxiliarists, especially for younger generations. Andrew D. Welch, Director of Strategic Planning (DIR-S), noted that the Auxiliary needs to appeal to the style of volunteerism specific to millennials, and that opportunities, such as the Innovation Program, help to spur involvement and initiative. The winner of the individual 2015 Captain (CAPT) Niels P. Thomsen Innovation Award for cultural change, Auxiliarist Greg L. Warnock, even proposed a strategy of incentives for separating and retiring Coast Guard members to join the Auxiliary.

Even further on manpower, the necessity for Auxiliarists to complete mandated training was made abundantly clear by the National Executive Committee (NEXCOM). As of 24 August, 46 percent of all members, and 60 percent of members with recently recorded hours, had completed their mandated training. With numerous options available, such as on the Auxiliary Learning Management System (AUXLMS), in person sessions and online video presentations, CAPT F. Thomas Boross, Chief Director of Auxiliary (CHDIRAUX), noted that no Auxiliarist has an excuse not to complete mandated training.

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COMO Robert E. Nelson, II, ANACO-PPd left, and COMO Daren C. Lewis, ANACO-IT, right, at the NACON strategic planning session. USCG Aux photo by Joseph J. Giannattasio.



## Navigator Express Masthead

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Finally, in response to a report by the Public Education Directorate, COMO Robert T. Shafer, Assistant National Commodore for Recreational Boating Safety (ANACO-RB), stated “We have to do a better job selling safety!” While some programs, such as Modern Marine Navigation, have received many orders, the directorate had noted that a broader marketing approach was necessary to increase attendance. COMO Mark Simoni, National Commodore (NACO), added “We really need to place our focus on job No. 1,” and further referred the Auxiliary’s need to continue efforts on paddle craft fatalities.

“These four years have been the safest four years on record, and that is a testimony to the work of you all.”  
– CAPT F. Thomas Boross, CHDIRAUX

While the Coast Guard Auxiliary continues to make great strides in reducing boating fatalities and providing augmentation for Coast Guard missions, the organization lives in a changing world, where new technologies and new trends require new methods at every bend. NACON 2016 declared that, in order to meet these challenges, the Auxiliary must be prepared to adapt, and to be ready to find ever more advanced solutions in the 21st century to fulfil job No. 1: recreational boating safety.

## USCG ACADEMY ADMISSIONS PARTNER PROGRAM

by David John Sot

The **U.S. Coast Guard Academy** is the smallest U.S. service academy, and offers qualified applicants a four-year Bachelor of Science (B.S.) program with a curriculum heavily oriented towards math, science and engineering. Students receive a full scholarship, valued at \$500,000, and serve a five (5) year military commitment after graduation. Admission to the Coast Guard Academy is competitive, with applicants nationwide. No congressional appointments are required. The Academy provides a structured, military regimen and competitive athletics, in addition to academic programs.

**Who are Academy Admissions Partners?** We are volunteers for the United States Coast Guard Academy Admissions Office, located in New London, Connecticut. We recruit, interview and assist in recommending candidates for admission. Currently there are a total of 344 USCG Auxiliary Admissions Partners, and Auxiliarists comprise 30 percent of the total Admissions Partner group.

Partners attend college fairs, congressionally-sponsored service academy events and present appointment certificates at graduation ceremonies. Outreach partners make visits to high school guidance counselors, coaches, civic organizations and community youth organizations, as well as to science and math teachers.



Partners may visit with prospective cadets and their families to share information about the admissions process and the student experience. They also conduct interviews with qualified applicants in their local area. All these venues present an excellent opportunity for Academy Partners to act as Academy representatives and good-will ambassadors for the Academy’s benefit.

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# Admissions Partners

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The weeklong summer Academy Introduction Mission (AIM) Program is one of the most challenging and rewarding opportunities for college-bound high school students who are interested in the experience of a U.S. Coast Guard Academy cadet. Students participate in a program that challenges their self-discipline, physical stamina, commitment to service and capacity for teamwork. The AIM Program is one of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy's largest recruiting efforts. Five hundred of the most qualified rising high school seniors are selected for the AIM Program. Each applicant must be a U.S. citizen, a junior in high school and be between 16-18 years old when attending the program. They should be in good health and condition – be able to run, do pushups, situps and handle Connecticut's heat and humidity during the summer.

The opportunity for Auxiliarists to participate in the AIM Program as an Academy Partner is priceless. Selected Academy Partners assist the active duty and reserve members of the Coast Guard during each AIM Week. They help by standing watches in the Operations Center, assisting engineering sessions, acting as duty drivers and helping wherever else needed.

Auxiliarists interested in becoming an Academy Partner should visit [uscga.edu/partners](http://uscga.edu/partners). Click on "Steps to becoming an Academy Admissions Partner" and you will be guided through the application process. If there is a need in your area and you are qualified, you could become an official partner, possibly after attending mentored events. Once certified, designation in the Auxiliary is as an Assistant Branch Chief with 2 stripes.

The mission of the USCG Auxiliary Human Resources Directorate, Academy-AIM Division is to facilitate communication between the leadership and management of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and the national leadership of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. This is facilitated by contact with the Academy's Office of Admissions relating to Auxiliary participation in the Academy Partners Program.

# STRONG MISSION, STRONG FAMILIES

by R. Patrick Hickey



The Merriam-Webster dictionary reports the word *ombudsman* is of Swedish origin. During the 1800s, Sweden became the first country to appoint an official representative of the people. This year, the 30th anniversary of the United States Coast Guard's ombudsman program is celebrated.

Volunteer ombudsmen serve as liaisons between Coast Guard units, and the families of Coast Guard service members stationed at that command. Ombudsmen are communication resources that provide information and referrals, and may act as advocates for family members. Their training also prepares them to provide family readiness support during deployments, emergencies and crises.

An ombudsman is often the spouse of an active duty or reserve member. However, if a commanding officer is unable to select a spouse of an active duty or reserve unit member for their command, there are procedures for appointing a reservist or an Auxiliary member as an ombudsman.

You may find more information regarding the opportunities within the rewarding ombudsman program on the Auxiliary Human Resources website at [www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=h-dept](http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=h-dept) or the Coast Guard Health, Safety, and Work Life website at [www.uscg.mil/worklife/ombudsman.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/worklife/ombudsman.asp).

If you have a desire to serve or have questions, please contact the Ombudsman Program Manager, Ms. Christine DeGraw, at (202) 475-5142, or email at [Christine.M.DeGraw@uscg.mil](mailto:Christine.M.DeGraw@uscg.mil).



## USCGC *DONALD HORSLEY* COMMISSIONING CEREMONY SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

**SAN JUAN, P.R.** – Commissioning ceremony of one of the new "Super-Cutters," the USCGC *Donald Horsley* (WPC-1117) Friday, 20 May at U.S. Coast Guard Sector San Juan in Puerto Rico. Rear Admiral Scott A. Buschman, Commander, Seventh Coast Guard District, placed the cutter in commission. Captain Robert Warren, Commanding Officer Sector San Juan; the assuming command of the USCGC *Donald Horsley*, Lieutenant Colleen Denny and Lieutenant (junior grade) Patrick Leavitt; as well as the ship's company and VIP guests, stand proudly at the Coast Guard pier after the ship was officially commissioned. U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary photo by Lourdes R. Oliveras.



# LOCAL AUXFS TEAM SUPPORTS USCGC JAMES RANKIN

by David F. Grieco

On 11 August 2016, Lorraine Colletta, Assistant District Staff Officer – Food Service, and Auxiliary Food Specialist (AUXFS) trainee David Grieco of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary District 5SR prepared and served lunch aboard the USCGC *James Rankin*.

The *James Rankin* is one of 14 Keeper Class cutters that support and provide maintenance to local aids to navigation. On a ship of this size, food service personnel are a premium, with a maximum of 2 personnel when fully manned. This can create tricky situations, as food service specialists must complete various assignments ashore like other Coast Guard personnel, but must also prepare two or three meals a day for the crew. While underway or dockside, food service personnel also stand watch, adding even more to this complexity.

When a mandatory ashore duty was required for the *James Rankin*'s food service officer, AUXFS Colletta and AUXFS trainee Grieco volunteered to support the *James Rankin*, less than one day after the initial request for support was submitted.

AUXFS Colletta and trainee Grieco prepared marinated Mahi-Mahi, seasoned chicken legs and thighs, steamed vegetables, rice and fresh salad. To finish off the meal, they also baked peanut butter cookies, which were greatly received by the crew of the *James Rankin*. Once prepared, AUXFS Colletta and trainee Grieco worked with the *James Rankin*'s food service



Lunch aboard the USCGC *James Rankin* on 11 August 2016 consisted of marinated Mahi-Mahi, chicken, rice and steamed vegetables.

officer to serve lunch to the entire crew.

While in port, the USCGC *James Rankin* provided an excellent medium for AUXFS trainees to work with experienced Coast Guard food service personnel and AUXFS instructors in an operational environment. The USCGC *James Rankin* looks forward to future AUXFS support in the upcoming months.

## RESOURCES, PROGRAMS AND UPDATES FROM NACON

by Zacary E. Wilson and Robert C. Miller

Participation at the Auxiliary's National Conference 2016 was an excellent resource for members to learn the newest roll-outs and updates for Auxiliary programs. Many workshops were held, detailing announcements from Auxiliary Paddle Craft (AUXPAD) program updates, to a new mapping tool from the Performance Measurement Directorate. If you were not able to attend the conference, or would like to hear more about workshops you may have missed, please read below to find news and information from throughout the Auxiliary.

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# NACON Updates

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**AUXPAD and Vessel Safety Checks.** The AUXPAD program was promoted by recreational boating safety (RBS) staff at NACON to counter a growing trend of human-powered boating fatalities. The expansion of the Auxiliary into the paddle craft arena is an opportunity to bring new strategies and approaches in safety to a growth area of recreational boating. Opportunities to collaborate with entities, such as the American Canoe Association and big-box retailers in partner visitations, will undoubtedly result in positive dividends in this important area of the Auxiliary's RBS mission.

**PWC Operations and Administration.** Personal water craft (PWC) can be used to augment traditional Auxiliary boat operations and provide outreach to this segment of the boating public. Auxiliarists considering using PWCs as facilities should remember that operational demands are different from those in traditional vessels. Operators will always get wet and will need proper personal protective equipment for conditions on the water. Water and weather conditions, such as lightning or the presence of waves over 3 feet in height, may prohibit safe operations. Personal water craft also have less capacity to stow gear. However, such facilities can provide valuable assistance in achieving our operational goals.

**Paddle Craft Education Materials.** The E-Directorate is promoting new guides to safety in conjunction with the expansion of the Auxiliary Paddle Craft program. The E-Directorate website, online at [www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=E-DEPT](http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=E-DEPT), has a front page link their new material "A Paddler's Guide to Safety." This information is available to USCG Auxiliarists, as well as international partners by contacting the E-Directorate. When using this new information, students should be instructed to reference [americasboatingcourse.com/lawsbystate.cfm](http://americasboatingcourse.com/lawsbystate.cfm) for possible human-powered vessel registration requirements in their states.

**Basic Qualification Course.** In order to better educate and prepare new members of the Auxiliary, the T-Directorate is rolling out a new update of its program, the Basic Qualification Course II (BQC II), with

course content available in the Auxiliary's Online Classroom at [classroom2.cgaux.org/moodle](http://classroom2.cgaux.org/moodle). This seven-module course, ranging in topics from Auxiliary history to reimbursements, intends to provide information necessary for Auxiliarists, at Basically Qualified (BQ) status or higher, to be successful in the organization. While mandatory completion to achieve BQ status for new members is not planned until 2017, current members are encouraged to complete the course and take the respective exams at the National Testing Center, online at [ntc2.cgaux.org/NTC](http://ntc2.cgaux.org/NTC). The BQC II is still in beta development.

**Measurement Projects.** Peter K. Jensen, Director of Performance Measurement (DIR-M), presented an update on software tools for Auxiliary leadership and measurement. A new mapping software application, located at [www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=M-DEPT](http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=M-DEPT), shows the location of Auxiliary and Coast Guard units, as well as information on their membership size and activities. It is an easy to use, intuitive interface that superimposes icons on a map produced by Google, Inc. "It's the best thing I have seen all weekend," observed Auxiliarist McCarthy. In addition, a new Web-based tool has been released by the M-Directorate to provide reports for leadership on mandatory training completion within a district, division or flotilla.



An Auxiliarist assists another with a water reentry during a skills workshop. USCG Aux photo by Joseph J. Giannattasio.

# AUXILIARY SCUTTLEBUTT

**'scuttle-butt:** A drinking fountain in the Coast Guard is called scuttle-butt. A scuttlebutt in old days was a cask that had openings in the side, fitted with a spigot. Sailors used to congregate at the scuttlebutt, or cask of water, to gossip or report on the day's activities.\*

On this page you will find all the important events and critical information to keep you up-to-date on the current happenings in the Auxiliary.

\* from the USCG Glossary

## KEEP UP TO DATE ON MARITIME REGULATIONS

Subscribe to the U.S. Coast Guard's Maritime Commons blog at:

[mariners.coastguard.dodlive.mil](http://mariners.coastguard.dodlive.mil)

## MANDATED TRAINING 2016 AND BEYOND

Mandated Training must be completed by 01 Jan. 2017 (and earlier in order to qualify for certain activities and events). Visit the Mandated Training website at:

[wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=t-dept&category=auxmt](http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=t-dept&category=auxmt)

and then click on the "AUXMT FAQ" for 2016 information.

Stay emotionally healthy to cope with day-to-day challenges.

Take the Building Resilience and Preventing Suicide Course.

## MY.CGAUX IS NOW ONLINE

Create a profile, add your shipmates and join the discussion at:

[my.CGAux.org](http://my.CGAux.org)



## NEED A GUIDE TO MEMBER TRAINING?

Consult the new Member Training Compendium at:

[wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=t-dept](http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=t-dept)

## HELP WANTED

[cgaux.org/members/wantads](http://cgaux.org/members/wantads)

## DISTRIBUTION FOR THE NAVIGATOR EXPRESS

- All members of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.
- Coast Guard Auxiliary Association Inc. members and staff.

Note: please add [uscgauxms@cgaux-net.us](mailto:uscgauxms@cgaux-net.us) to your address book. Messages sent from that email address are official messages of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

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