



News Release

JONATHAN WILLIAMS RECEIVES DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

President and CEO of Pacific Battleship Center Recognized for 13 Years of Exceptional Contributions to the U.S. Navy Through Battleship IOWA Museum, Los Angeles Fleet Week and the National Museum of the Surface Navy

SAN PEDRO, Calif., Jan. 24, 2022 – The [National Museum of the Surface Navy at the Battleship IOWA](#), the museum for America’s Surface Navy located aboard the historic Battleship USS IOWA Museum, today announced Jonathan Willams, President and CEO, [Pacific Battleship Center](#), and President, [LA Fleet Week Foundation](#), has been awarded the Distinguished Public Service Award by the Department of the Navy. The Navy’s highest award for non-military civilians was presented to Williams by Secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro, during the Surface Navy Association’s 34th National Symposium in Arlington, Va.

Williams was recognized for his exceptional contributions to the Navy from July 2008 to July 2021 through the leadership and vision he provided for the Battleship IOWA Museum, Los Angeles Fleet Week and the National Museum of the Surface Navy, which will formally open on Oct. 13, 2025 on the 250th birthday of America’s Surface Navy. Among Williams’ accomplishments was the establishment of USS Iowa as a Navy-licensed national museum that provides direct and indirect support to the Navy and has become a “top five” tourist attraction and museum in Los Angeles. According to the award citation, it is due to Williams’ extraordinary vision and leadership that “the Battleship IOWA Museum and LA Fleet Week have become the example for ship museums and fleet weeks in recognizing the U.S. Navy and its critical role in serving our country and the world.”

“Since bringing USS IOWA to the Los Angeles waterfront in 2012, Jonathan has transformed the historic ship into a world-class museum that brings history to life and has made it a community platform that provides programming that gives back to the public through education, veteran and community programs,” stated retired Navy Rear Admiral Mike Shatynski, Chairman of the Board of the National

Museum of the Surface Navy. “He was key in bringing LA Fleet Week to the Port of Los Angeles and establishing the first and only national museum dedicated to the Surface Navy aboard Battleship USS IOWA. Jonathan’s leadership and achievements have provided immense benefits to the Navy and those who have served and he is most deserving of this award.”

Past recipients of the Navy Distinguished Public Service Award include Tom Hanks for his work in films including “Greyhound,” Sybil Stockdale her support of POWs and their families during the Vietnam War, and Joe Rosenthal for his iconic photo of Marines raising the U.S. flag on Iwo Jima in World War II.

“I am deeply humbled to receive this award in recognition of my ongoing commitment to our Navy and those who serve,” said Williams. “This award was made possible by the support of my family and friends, and the incredible commitment of our crew and supporters. Each of these individuals are owed a tremendous debt of gratitude and I accept this award on the behalf of each of them.”

About Battleship USS IOWA Museum and the National Museum of the Surface Navy

Located in the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro, Calif., Battleship USS IOWA Museum is one of the top five museums and attractions in Los Angeles, bringing the ship’s history to life through in-person and virtual tours and educational programs for youth. In addition to providing a natural platform for veterans and patriotic civilians to come together as a community, Battleship USS IOWA Museum provides an array of impactful programs and resources that support the critical needs of our military and veterans.

Scheduled to open in 2025 aboard the historic Battleship USS IOWA Museum, the National Museum of the Surface Navy is the museum for America’s Surface Navy. The museum’s mission is to raise America’s awareness of the importance of the United States Surface Naval Forces’ role in international relations, free trade, humanitarian assistance, and technological innovation, not just in the past but today and into the future.

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