



Press Release

Surface Navy Operating in the Red Sea Named Recipient of 2024 Freedom of the Seas Award by National Museum of the Surface Navy

SAN PEDRO, Calif. – Oct. 3, 2024 – The [National Museum of the Surface Navy](#), founded aboard [Battleship USS IOWA](#) and scheduled to open in 2025, today named the Surface Navy operating in the Red Sea the recipient of the 2024 [Freedom of the Seas](#) Award. The Freedom of the Seas Award goes to an accomplished individual or organization that embodies the core principles of America’s Surface Navy to protect and defend our oceans for the benefit of the free world.

The award will be presented to crew members of USS *Samuel L Gravelly* (DDG-107) at the Freedom of the Seas Award Gala on Saturday, October 19, 2024, aboard the iconic Battleship IOWA in San Pedro. Held in honor of the Battle of Leyte Gulf anniversary, the Freedom of the Seas Awards is the premier annual event of the National Museum of the Surface Navy and Battleship IOWA. The crew members of USS *Gravelly* recently returned from a deployment to the Red Sea and will accept the capstone award on behalf of the ships and sailors operating in the Red Sea.

The Surface Navy operating in the Red Sea plays a crucial role in maintaining Freedom of the Seas. In addition to fighting Houthi terrorists, Somali pirates, and Iranian smugglers, they are showing the U.S. flag in the contested Red Sea waters through which fifteen percent of all world trade travels and the cables enabling underseas commerce between Africa, Europe, and Asia lie.

“Surface Navy ships in the Red Sea are in the most intensive operational maritime environment since World War II,” explained retired Navy Rear Admiral Mike Shatynski, Chairman of the Board of the National Museum of the Surface Navy. “On a daily basis, the Surface Navy is ensuring commerce and communication and providing humanitarian assistance at one of the six strategic choke points for world trade. This generation of sailors is the best we’ve seen and they are the best trained and best equipped in history.”

The annual Freedom of the Seas Awards event is held in honor of the Battle of Leyte Gulf, considered to be the largest naval battle of World War II. Attendance at the award event, which is by invitation only, includes top leaders from the education, veteran, community, industry, government, and military sectors. For information on sponsorship opportunities, contact Kyle Aube, Director of Development at kaube@labattleship.com.

About the Freedom of the Seas Awards

The Freedom of the Seas Awards is the premiere annual event of the National Museum of the Surface Navy at the Battleship IOWA. The event is held in honor of the anniversary of the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval battle in the history of the world, which occurred during World War II. The Awards honors those that embody the core principles of the American Surface Navy's mission to protect and defend our oceans for the benefit of the free world.

About the National Museum of the Surface Navy

Scheduled to open in 2025 aboard the historic Battleship 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.

Located in the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro, Calif., Battleship IOWA Museum is one of the top four 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 IOWA Museum provides a wide array of impactful programs and resources that support the critical needs of our military and veterans.

Media Contact:

Ken Hagihara, APR, Fellow PRSA
Media Relations Representative
Pacific Battleship Center | National Museum of the Surface Navy at the Battleship IOWA
(o) 949-768-4423 x-101
(m) 949-796-3112
khagihara@labattleship.com

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