



Commissioned Personnel Center CYBERFLASH

Edition:
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Message from the Director

Happy New Year, NOAA Corps!

I hope you all had a great start to 2026. The NOAA Corps entered 2026 strong, welcoming the newest members of the Corps when BOTC 147 reported aboard on January 6th! I had the honor and privilege to swear-in the 13 new Officer Candidates on January 7th. This BOTC class has traveled a rather unique road after the class was postponed in August of last year. As you might imagine, this caused serious disruptions and uncertainty in their lives as the NOAA Corps worked through how and when we could reschedule the class. Though this had the very real potential of leaving many of them disillusioned, they all showed up bright eyed and excited to begin their careers in the NOAA Corps. I was impressed and humbled by their display of resiliency and commitment. These traits certainly bode well for their future as NOAA Corps Officers.

In my discussions with BOTC 147 this week, the Officer Candidates repeatedly expressed how impressed and thankful they were for the organization's immense effort to keep them engaged between August and December. Many were offered the chance to serve as Survey Technicians aboard our ships, and they were invited to tour the aircraft, ships, and facilities at AOC and MOC-P, allowing them to interact with other NOAA Corps Officers. These opportunities were the result of monumental efforts and ingenuity from Recruiting, the Civilian Personnel Management Division, Marine Operations, Aircraft Operations, and many other parts of the OMAO team. This exceptional level of effort exemplifies a couple of unique qualities prevalent across OMAO that I have witnessed throughout my career: our fierce dedication to caring for our people, and our tenacity in attacking and solving problems that most others would deem unattainable or too difficult to pursue. While these qualities exist elsewhere in the organization, OMAO and the NOAA Corps excel here at levels I have not seen anywhere else. I am incredibly proud to serve as part of a team dedicated to creatively overcoming such significant obstacles in the face of adversity.

I imagine all of you can think of multiple instances where you have witnessed or participated in some of these impressive initiatives and accomplishments over the years. As we look forward into 2026, I urge you to reflect on some of these accomplishments-both personal and organizational-and challenge you to continue to embody this spirit of dedication and excellence in the year ahead.

All the Best,

Captain Ryan Wattam, NOAA
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center

On the Horizon

- 14 Jan 2026 Ops Working Group
- 4 Feb 2026 Officer Assignment Board

Approved Resignations, Separations and Retirements

- VADM Nancy Hann 01 Mar 2026
Terminal Leave: 22 Dec 2025
- CAPT Kurt Zegowitz 01 Mar 2026
- RDML Benjamin Evans 01 Apr 2026
Terminal Leave: 16 Jan 2026
- CDR Stephen Barry 01 Apr 2026
- CDR Elizabeth Mackie 01 Apr 2026
Terminal Leave: 16 Jan 2026
- CDR Lecia Salerno 01 Apr 2026
- CAPT Sarah Duncan 01 May 2026
- LT Carly Robbins 01 May 2026

BOTC 147 Reporting for Duty

On Wednesday, 07 January, BOTC 147 took the oath of office at Camp Nett in Niantic, CT as part of the on-boarding process for BOTC, officially starting their careers with the NOAA Corps.



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Over 35 friends and family virtually attended the ceremony for the 13 new officer candidates. The new officer candidates will report to the USCG Academy on Monday, 12 January, and are expected to graduate in April. Thank you to all who had a hand in facilitating BOTC 147. Welcome aboard, BOTC 147!!

Kaleena Davis	Tampa, FL
Austin Foote	Nevada City, CA
Madeleine Giordano	Alameda, CA
Kaitlyn Lera	Lake Tahoe, NV
Joseph McIntyre	Santa Cruz, CA
James Messersmith	Benzonia, MI
Jan-Paul Morillo Acevedo	Bayamon, Puerto Rico
Joshua Murdock	Overland Park, KS
Alexis Provencal	Naalehu, HI
Eric Stein	Oswego, NY
Alexandra Strelkow	Fort Lauderdale, FL
Katherine Wagner	Fairfax, VA
Bo Yang	Beijing, PRC

BOTC 147 Brown Bag Lunch

NOAA Corps Officer Training Center (NCOTC) is once again looking for volunteers from all ranks and career paths to hold 45 minute professional development sessions with members of Basic Officer Training Class (BOTC) 147. NCOTC staff would like to expand the officer candidates' exposure to additional NOAA Corps Officers to increase their awareness of the various operation and scientific support opportunities from as many people as possible. Topics covered will primarily focus on the various career paths available in the NOAA Corps and the relationship with the command wardroom.

Please use this [Google form](#) to view the list of topics and sign up for a session.

<https://forms.gle/RERSLBmmdZ56GgZg8>

While not guaranteed, CPC may have funding to support travel for those interested in an in-person visit and presentation. Due to the dynamic nature of the BOTC program, these dates are the best estimate we have in advance for when the students will be available, but they may be subject to change. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility.

Please email ops.ncotc@noaa.gov or deputychief.ncotc@noaa.gov with any questions.

Designation of Unusually Arduous Sea Duty Ships for Calendar Year 2026

The Director, NOAA Corps and Office of Marine and Aviation Operations has approved the designation of Unusually Arduous Sea Duty ship assignments for calendar year 2026.

Based on the review of the prescribed criteria outlined in OMAO Policy 1206- Designation of Unusually Arduous Sea Duty, and operational demands, the following ships are expected to be away from their assigned homeport for more than 50% of the calendar year. Consequently, the following NOAA Ships have been designated as unusually arduous for calendar year 2026:

- *Henry B. Bigelow*
- *Pisces*
- *Thomas Jefferson*
- *Oregon II*
- *Ronald H. Brown*
- *Gordon Gunter*
- *Oscar Dyson*
- *Reuben Lasker*
- *Rainier*
- *Oscar Elton Sette*
- *Okeanos Explorer*

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If changes to the ship schedules warrant additional designations later in the year, Marine Operations will generate a memorandum requesting those changes. The approved memo, along with the last ten years of Unusually Arduous designations, are hosted on the [CPC intranet](#) under Director memos.

Leave Submission Procedures During Direct Access Outages

Officers are reminded that if you need to request leave while Direct Access is unavailable, you should utilize the NF-56-12 (Request for Leave) form.

Please submit the completed form to your supervisor to ensure you have written documentation of your approved leave during the system outage. You can access the form on the CPC intranet, here: [NF-56-12 Request for Leave](#).

The paper form is for approval and documentation purposes only. Once Direct Access is restored or the leave has been taken, the leave transaction must be entered into Direct Access to ensure it is accurately charged against your leave balance.

SAME Colbert Medal and Karo Award Nominations Open

Did you or someone you know make outstanding contributions to engineering and science? Show your appreciation and nominate them, or even yourself, for the Colbert Medal or Karo Field Unit Award!

The [Society of American Military Engineers \(SAME\)](#), a multi-disciplined organization representing all U.S. uniformed services and diverse technical and socio-demographic backgrounds that works to address engineering-related

challenges the nation faces. NOAA continues to participate in this society through the NOAA Corps Liaisons which include the task of compiling nominations for the awards.

The Colbert Medal recognizes a NOAA individual's outstanding contribution to engineering through achievement in design, construction, administration, research, or development. The Colbert Medal is named in honor of RADM Leo Otis Colbert who was the third director of the US Coast and Geodetic Survey (USCGS), predecessor of the NOAA Corps, and oversaw its operations during World War II.

The Karo Award recognizes a NOAA field unit for outstanding contribution in an engineering or scientific field. The Karo Award is named in honor of RADM Henry Arnold Karo who was the fifth director of the US Coast and Geodetic Survey and oversaw the expansion of USCGS as it joined the Environmental Science Services Administration, predecessor of NOAA. Nominations must be for an employee of NOAA, officer or civilian, active or retired. The nomination shall consist of at least two pages, beginning with a concise sentence stating the reason for the award and followed by a more detailed description of the contributions or achievements and their significance to engineering and science.

For the Karo Award, a list of all individuals in the unit shall be included with the nomination. Submit nominations via email to the Uniform and Awards board (noaacorps.uab@noaa.gov). **Deadline for all nominations is Wednesday, January 28, 2026** and medals will be presented in person at the [SAME Joint Engineering Training Conference \(JETC\)](#), May 19-21, 2026 in Portland, OR.

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For more information about the awards, SAME, or JETC, email the NOAA Corps SAME Service Liaison, LCDR Nick DeProspero, at nicolas.deprospero@noaa.gov.

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