



# ABOVE BOARD

## CHQ'S QUARTERLY NEWS

What IS CHQ? It stands for CGJROTC Headquarters. CHQ falls under FORCECOM and is located in Norfolk, VA. FORCECOM has an impact on every Coast Guard mission and is responsible for managing all training in the CG. CHQ consists of a team of eight Coasties who manage the CGJROTC Program, under the direction of CDR Clay Cromer aka Commodore.

# Cadet of the Quarter

## Phoenix DiProfio

Mission Bay High School

Cadet Commanding Officer C/LCDR Phoenix DiProfio has served in JROTC for three years and consistently exemplifies professionalism, respect, and dedication. She demonstrates unwavering commitment to duty, whether singing the National Anthem at official ceremonies and Color Guard events or maintaining regular communication with instructors and cadet staff. As the unit's Commanding Officer, she has been the program's highest-performing and most impactful leader.

Academically, C/LCDR DiProfio earned a 4.58 weighted GPA, the Seal of Spanish Bilingual, and the California Civic Seal of Engagement in recognition of her volunteer service. She led the school's JLAB Level II team, supervised 82 cadets across six classes, and successfully planned and executed the Annual Unit Inspection. She also represented the unit with distinction by performing the National Anthem at the U.S. Coast Guard Sector San Diego Sailor of the Year Ceremony, in addition to many other venues, consistently presenting herself with exceptional poise and military bearing.

C/LCDR DiProfio's most significant accomplishment was initiating and managing Operation Calm Garden, a campus revitalization project completed in March 2026. She coordinated funding across multiple school organizations to transform an underused garden into a welcoming outdoor gathering space. Recognizing the historical significance of a neglected memorial honoring a student lost to gun violence, she restored its prominence and, after learning of another student's recent passing from cancer, organized the creation of an additional memorial plaque. She personally coordinated with both families and planned a meaningful rededication ceremony that deeply impacted students, staff, and the community. The scope and complexity of this project reflected leadership typically expected of a junior officer or chief petty officer.

In March 2026, C/LCDR DiProfio was selected as one of only 10 cadets chosen from 65 applicants to serve on the J3 Brigade Staff, where she helps coordinate events for more than 3,500 JROTC cadets across 14 high schools representing all military services. She successfully led the largest school participation at the annual Cadet Ball, with 28 cadets attending and earning second place in the all-school table design competition.

Throughout her tenure, C/LCDR DiProfio has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, initiative, and service. She combines outstanding academic achievement with superior organizational ability, sound judgment, and genuine care for others. Her ability to inspire peers, manage complex projects, and represent both her unit and school with distinction reflects the highest standards of leadership and makes her exceptionally deserving of CHQ's first Cadet of the Quarter! Bravo Zulu, C/LCDR DiProfio!



**Congratulations to our first ever Cadet of the Quarter! Your national recognition is a direct result of your hardwork and commitment to the CGJROTC Program.**

Please follow the QR code to complete your submission form to nominate your cadet.  
(Each school may only submit one candidate per quarter.)



# OPERATIONS EAST



Barnstable High School took a field trip to Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards Bay, MA located at the west end of the Cape Cod Canal. Cadets had the opportunity to experience a tour of campus and T/S PATRIOT STATE (National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV)), “operate” ships in ship simulators, manage a search and rescue exercise in the emergency operations training center, participate in a Coast Guard skills relay with academy cadets in the Auxiliary University Program (AUP), and enjoy a great lunch in the academy’s dining hall.



## VS



A total of five students from Saraland High School (Saraland AL), completed all enlistment requirements and entered the Delayed Entry Program. To honor their commitment to serve our nation, the school hosted a Military Signing Day. We had two students enlist into the Coast Guard, two into the Marine Corps, and one into the Alabaman National Guard. Our Color Guard opened the ceremony with the Presentation and Posting of Colors. Students were given some words of wisdom from Chief Frenzel and words of encouragement from our Principal Scott Croley.



# OPERATIONS WEST



**On April 19, 2026, Pinellas Park High School, led by SMSI, Master Chief Michael Collis and MSI, Chief Tyrone Stafford made CGJROTC History!**

**Their raiders team won first place in the All-Service Male division at the Army's National Raider Championships. They competed against 30 elite Raiders Teams from across all service branches.**

**This is the fruit of several years of dedication & preparation. Well-done representing our service & program with distinction!**



### **Final Placements for the Male Team**

**Overall: 1<sup>st</sup> place - National Champions; Ultimate Raider: 3<sup>rd</sup> place; SK team Run: 4<sup>th</sup> place; Gauntlet: 1<sup>st</sup> place; Physical Team Test: 6<sup>th</sup> place; Cross Country Rescue: 5<sup>th</sup> place; Rope Bridge: 5<sup>th</sup> place**

The National High School Drill Team Championships, often referred to as "The Nationals," is the premier all-service drill and ceremony competition in the United States.

This year's competition featured strong participation from three Coast Guard JROTC schools. In the color guard division, Pinellas Park, Veterans Memorial, and Sussex Technical competed against 42 other schools. Veterans Memorial High School's Color Guard placed 8th overall in the open level color guard competition. Thank you for representing our service!



## Joint Leadership Training in Wisconsin

Six cadets from Innovation High School in Orlando, FL traveled to Milwaukee, WI for a 10-day Joint Junior Leadership Academy, at Wisconsin Combined Training, which included over 175 Sea Cadets, civilian volunteers, and Coasties. Among the staff was our very own SKC Ash Armstrong, MSI at Kalani High School in Honolulu, HI; SKC taught Basic Aviation to cadets. JROTC cadets integrated themselves as leaders with US Naval Sea Cadets to lead over 65 sea cadets to boot camp graduation, raising the next generation of leaders learning followership, leadership, confidence, and gaining experience.

All six cadets attended and graduated Company Commander School to be able to staff Recruit Training (ages 14-17) and Navy League Orientation (ages 10-13). JROTC cadets and Sea Cadet staff cadets sacrificed their phones, adequate sleep, sweat, and tears during this demanding, yet rewarding evolution. Through their commitment to developing others, they pulled through to the end to see a 100% graduation rate.

During their visit, they were afforded the opportunity to spend time at Sector Lake Michigan where they met with the Sector Commander, CAPT Rhianna Macon, Deputy Sector Commander, CDR Nathan Downend, and Sector Lake Michigan's Command Master Chief, MCPO Colin Ryan, for whom they also witnessed a Change of Watch Ceremony. The cadets described this experience as "an eye-opening privilege."

Cadets also visited Coast Guard Station Milwaukee and participated in an in-depth sea cruise with the Coast Guard. They boarded a 45-foot RBM where they spoke with BMs and non-rates about their careers, life, and experiences in the Coast Guard.

The JROTC cadets learned a great deal about themselves, their leadership styles, strengths, and weaknesses, as well as many important life lessons that were all but easy. Their service and commitment to their charges enabled cadets of all ages to take the spotlight, shine, and work toward becoming the leader they aspire to be.

(Contributed by C/LCDR Mauro Almagro and C/P03 Marley Fejeran)



Cadets took a cruise with Station Milwaukee on a 45 RBM.



Cadet Command



Posing with Sector Lake Michigan's Command, following a Change of Watch Ceremony.



Sea Cadet Recruit Training Graduation



Morning Formation



SKC Armstrong teaches Aviation and touring the WI Flight for Life Hangar with the Aviation Cadets



C/LCDR Mauro "Abracadabra" Almagro



C/LT Lucas "What?" Bunn



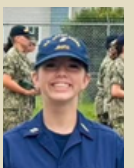
C/ENS Kennedy "Lashes" Tal



C/P03 Youssef "Zane" Zeinelidin



C/P03 Marley "Feral" Fejeran



C/SN Juliana "Hell-Man" Heilman

Please join us in welcoming LCDR Matthew W. Carson to the team! He will be serving as the SMSI at Saraland High School

LCDR Carson is a prior enlisted officer who notably served as an ET "A" School Instructor and Course Chief at TRACEN Petaluma from 2011-2014 and as a Recruit Company Commander at TRACEN Cape May from 2013-2014. He earned an Associate's degree in Electronics Technology, a Bachelor's degree in Social Science, and a Master's degree in Program Management. He is retiring as the OA Department Head at the U.S. Coast Guard Project Resident Office in Pascagoula following a distinguished Coast Guard career.

LCDR Carson is married and has three children. In his free time, he enjoys fitness, hunting, fishing, traveling, and supporting his kids in their activities.

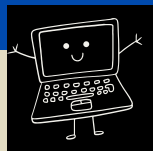
We are excited to welcome LCDR Carson to the CGJROTC team!



LCDR Matthew W. Carson



Please scan the QR code and complete a quick survey on the technology currently available in your classroom!



Instructors: ShopCGX.com is online and orders are being processed! Please continue to utilize this optimized ordering process to place your CGX orders. Orders are received, approved, and processed in 2-3 business days and received 1-3 weeks depending on your location. This modernization to our CGX acquisition process has streamlined the order process and drastically improved shipping times for CGX items. Instructions on how to use the ShopCGX portal are located in your school procurement folders. If you have any questions, please let us know! Happy Shopping!



We would like to give a special shoutout to **Edwin Medina** (12<sup>th</sup> grade) from Barnstable High School for being the Challenge Coin Contest Winner!

Be sure to keep an eye out for the coin reveal in the next issue!



## 2026 JLA - Yorktown, VA

The 2026 CGJROTC Junior Leadership Academy (JLA) held at Training Center Yorktown was a tremendous success, providing cadets with valuable opportunities to develop leadership skills, teamwork, discipline, and confidence.

A special thank you goes to our dedicated platoon mentors (Chief Wolner, Chief O'Leary, Chief Melendez, and Senior Chief Folckemer) whose hard work, professionalism, and commitment made this experience possible. Their guidance, encouragement, and leadership played a critical role in helping cadets grow and excel throughout the academy. We greatly appreciate their time, effort, and unwavering support in shaping the next generation of leaders.

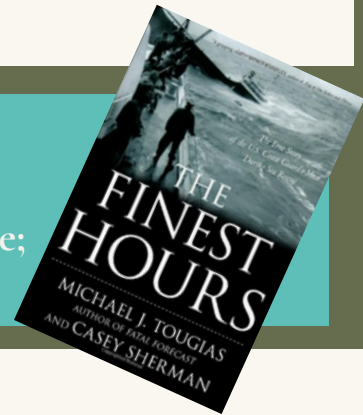
Click here for the Official : [CGJROTC JLA VIDEO](#)

CHQ Recommended Good Reads:

*The Finest Hours* by Michael J. Tougas & Casey Sherman

The True Story of the U.S. Coast Guard's Most Daring Sea Rescue;

Talk to your local librarian to borrow it today or find it online!



% of school in JROTC 6%  
# hours of Community Service (school year) 10,243.5  
# of field trips (school year) 77  
# of competitions (school year) 99  
# of AIM cadets 11  
# color guard events (school year) 259  
# seniors affiliating w/military (all branches) 59  
% seniors affiliating w/military (all branches) 30%  
# seniors affiliating w/USCG 28  
% seniors affiliating w/USCG 14%  
# seniors going to CGA 3  
# seniors going to Cape May 25  
Grad Rate (JROTC) 98%  
Estimated scholarships \$1,134,000.50



# PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATION = PIE

What is PIE? Established in 1991, the Partnership In Education (PIE) program allows members of the Coast Guard to provide volunteer support to hundreds of partner schools (elementary, middle, and high schools as well as colleges) and work directly with tens of thousands of students on a range of activities that promote the well-being and academic achievement of students, including in underserved communities.

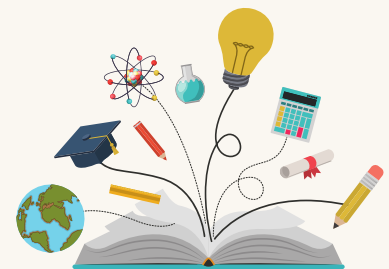
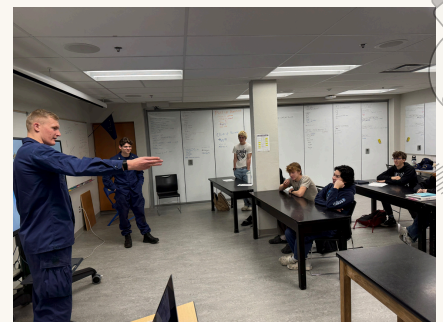
The PIE Program benefits everyone. Students learn about civic responsibility, applications of academic disciplines, and different career opportunities. Coast Guard members further serve as positive role models and mentors in communities where they live and work. And teachers, schools, and communities receive support in developing our nation's future civilian and military workforce and leaders.

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PIE Program activities include:

- Providing instructional support on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) subjects such as marine science, engineering, and mathematics
- Supporting students in extracurricular clubs and events such as science fairs, computer literacy programs, and robotics competitions
- Hosting interactive educational field trips to Coast Guard Stations
- Actively participating in school celebrations and events
- Delivering presentations regarding civic responsibility and military life
- Helping coach youth sports
- Engaging students in school clean-up, gardening, and other beautification projects
- Participating in school coat, backpack, and school supplies drives
- Tutoring students
- Mentoring students
- Participating in career days
- Providing students with job shadowing experiences

Several CGJROTC schools are already partners! If you are a teacher/JROTC instructor, school administrator, or a member of the Coast Guard Family (active duty, reserve, auxiliary, civilian or retired) interested in participating in the PIE Program, please contact your local PIE Program Coordinator or Edward Stoker, National PIE Program Manager at [Edward.A.Stoker@uscg.mil](mailto:Edward.A.Stoker@uscg.mil). The Coast Guard has hundreds of units across the country that are actively engaged in their community providing advisory, instructional support, enrichment, and extended services to schools through the PIE Program.



Congratulations to the four CGJROTC teams that represented the program at the JLAB National Championship in Washington, DC, from June 11–15: Kodiak High School, Pinellas Park High School, MAST Academy, and Saraland High School.

A special congratulations to Saraland High School, which earned the title of 2026 CGJROTC Champion. For the first time in CGJROTC history, our champion advanced to compete in the All-Service Championship Match, where Saraland delivered an outstanding performance in its inaugural appearance.



## Auxiliary University Program



Did you know that the Coast Guard has an Auxiliary University Program?

The AUX AUP's mission is to provide a continuous resource of well-trained viable officer candidates which can develop into career officers in the Coast Guard or similar service agencies.

This program provides operational and leadership training, as well as real world experience, to undergraduate students at any point in their academic career; it significantly strengthens the resume of OCS or DCO applicants! Over 70% of AUP candidates achieve a commission in the Coast Guard after graduation!

AUP units are established at host institutions, including all six Senior Military Colleges, five of six State Maritime Academies and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, and general education colleges and universities across the country.

If interested, please visit [www.CGAUXEDU.us](http://www.CGAUXEDU.us) for more information or contact [braeden.s.krzenski@cgauxnet.us](mailto:braeden.s.krzenski@cgauxnet.us).

## Commodore's Corner

*Beware! Here follows rambling thoughts of the Commodore --*

During JLA, I picked up a copy of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* in the Yorktown Battlefield National Park gift shop. Paine wrote this book to galvanize thought and momentum around the cause of the American Revolution, and therefore I wanted to make sure to read it for America's 250<sup>th</sup>! I'm struck by a quote from the earliest pages – "time makes more converts than reason." In other words, sustained incremental change often overpowers deeply-held ideas. While Paine had an application in mind for societal change in his book, I also believe there's great application for personal change, and an encouragement to have a "bias for action."

I bet this might apply in your life about something new, like JROTC. Maybe you originally thought, "I don't know if this thing is for me!!" But, you showed up, learned the cadet creed, stayed late for color guard, and even joined a few teams. With the passage of time, you took small steps that changed how you used to think, see yourself and relate to others.

This can apply to so many areas--from relationships and exercise to joining JROTC or the military. Paine didn't say reason was useless (of course not!), but being willing to consistently make the wisest use of our time and patiently experience the results might be the most powerful and efficient way to see great change.

