



# CIVIL RIGHTS ON DECK



## COMMANDANT SIGNS NEW POLICY STATEMENTS: RENEW YOUR COMMITMENT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

By Yvonne Nunn, EEO Zone Manager, CRD, Region 3, Zone 11

Have you read the Coast Guard's new [Equal Opportunity \(EO\) Policy Statement](#)? EO is the guiding principle of treating applicants and employees with dignity and respect without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, pregnancy, and sexual orientation), national origin, age, disability, protected genetic information, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, and reprisal or retaliation. The Coast Guard's EO Policy is essential to establishing expectations for a workplace that ensures fair treatment. It also reiterates the Coast Guard's commitment to ensuring equality and promoting diversity in the workplace. Every year, the Commandant reaffirms the Coast Guard's dedication to eliminating discrimination and harassment by releasing this policy. In the new statement, Adm. Fagan asserts that the Coast Guard can position itself to achieve and maintain mission excellence by fostering a positive culture free of unlawful discrimination practices. Top priorities include fair and consistent treatment, maintaining a work environment free from unlawful discrimination, and personal accountability. The Commandant outlines expectations for Commanding Officers, Officers-In-Charge, and all leaders to cultivate an environment that promotes the Coast Guard's core values of honor, respect, and devotion to duty. She further charges all personnel to respect one another in the workplace and carry out these policies. Success depends on the entire Coast Guard workforce maintaining a personal commitment to the principles of EO. Make time to read the new statement and to renew your dedication to ensuring a model EO workplace.



An employee hangs the new EO policy statement on a wall at Coast Guard Headquarters. Units and commands are required to post the updated policy statements in prominent and accessible places within their workspace.



Civil Rights Service Providers, Regional Directors, and other staff members from the Civil Rights Directorate gather at Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, Patrick Space Force Base, Fla., July 25, 2022. (Photo Courtesy of DEOMI)

## CIVIL RIGHTS PROFESSIONALS CONVENE AT EEO TRAINING CONFERENCE

By Patrick Ferraris, Communications Specialist, CRD, USCG HQ

The Civil Rights Directorate (CRD) hosted an Operations Conference at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI), Patrick Space Force Base, Fla., from July 25 - 29, 2022. More than 40 CRD staff members were in attendance and the conference provided attendees a chance to connect. "Being able to convene and network face-to-face was truly invaluable," said Chief Petty Officer Jessica Nicholson, Equal Opportunity Advisor, Miami, Fla. "These opportunities provide us meaningful moments to engage our entire community of civil rights staff, share knowledge, and create a unified network," she added. During the weeklong conference, the Coast Guard's civil rights staff was able to share best practices, participate in role-playing case studies, and sharpen their skills on topics like reasonable accommodations, the Defense Organizational

Climate Survey (DEOCS), and more. The conference, the first since 2019, also demonstrated the Coast Guard's commitment to serving the total workforce. "The Coast Guard workforce benefits from a staff of civil rights service providers (CRSP) that are credible and consistent in delivering excellent customer service," stated Leon Patterson, EEO Specialist, Baltimore, Md. "The conference platform provides a mechanism for CRSPs to gain knowledge and strategies from peers that perform the same important duties. This makes us prepared to provide effective professional services to support the Coast Guard mission."

# MAKING SENSE OF SCENTS: FRAGRANCE SENSITIVITY AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

By Phillip R. Wawrosch, EEO Manager, Region 4, Zone 10,

In a recent case, an employee at the Department of Health and Human Services filed a complaint with the EEOC alleging that he was subjected to discrimination when the Agency did not provide a reasonable accommodation for his disability. The employee claimed his coworker's perfume was triggering repeated migraine headaches. He notified his supervisor of this condition and after the supervisor spoke to the coworker, the employee claimed the coworker continued to wear perfume. The Agency offered to temporarily move the employee to a different building floor to avoid the scent. The supervisor explained that the employee's duties were transportable, and he could readily relocate the employee to an alternate workspace.

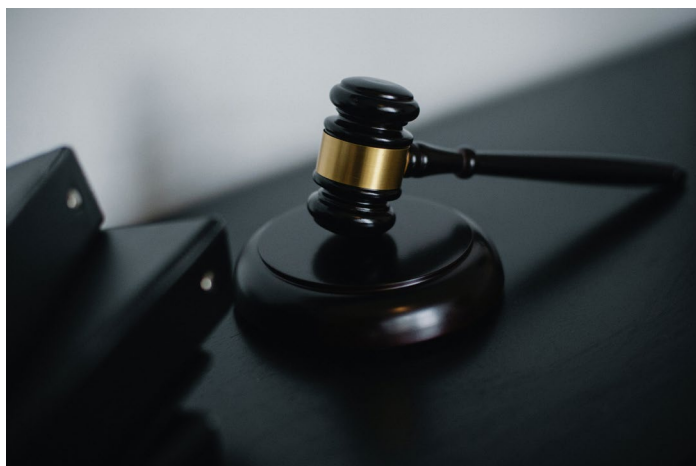
The coworker, however, was certified in work that could only be performed at their current location. The employee rejected the proposed accommodation, citing the relocation to be retaliatory. When an EEO specialist tried to arrange a meeting with the employee and supervisor to discuss alternative solutions, the employee asserted that no resolution was possible. Upon review, the EEOC found that the employee's actions effectively ended the reasonable accommodation process and found the Agency did not subject him to discrimination. The record showed that the Agency made a good faith effort to engage in the interactive process by offering the employee an interim accommodation to address the coworker's perfume. *Mario H. v. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, EEOC Appeal No. 2021004035 (April 20, 2022).*



**Equal Pay  
for  
Equal Work**

By Josh Love, EEO Zone Manager, Region 3, Zone 14,

Know your rights and the laws that were put in place to balance inequalities. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 protects against wage discrimination based on sex and requires that men and women in the same workplace be given equal pay for equal work. The jobs don't have to be identical, but they must be considerably equal. This is determined based on the job content not the job title. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women are paid 83 cents for every dollar in male wages and women of color are at an even greater disadvantage. In 1960, before the Equal Pay Act was established, women earned 61 cents for every dollar of men's wages. Although enforcement of the Equal Pay Act and other civil rights laws have helped narrow the gender wage gap, it's important to continue to address the pay disparities that remain. Learn more about the Equal Pay Act.



## COAST GUARD MEMBERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES

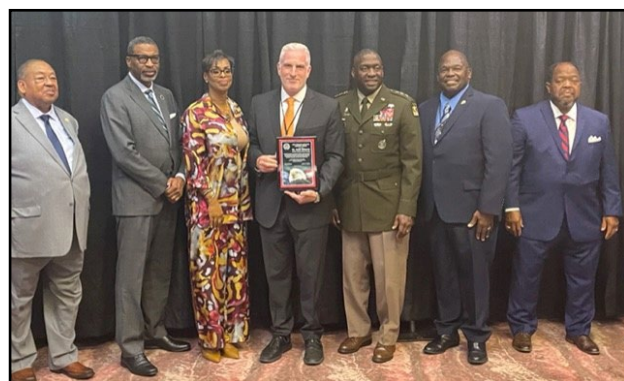
Bravo Zulu to two standout members of the Coast Guard team for being recognized for their contributions to underrepresented minorities. Chief Petty Officer George Soto is the recipient of the 2022 League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Excellence in Service Award. Soto was honored for his dedication to advancing diversity, education, economics, and health in communities with large, underrepresented populations. During the award period, Soto selflessly volunteered to support a Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program where he provided mentoring to 800 cadets from 30 high schools in Southeast Florida. [Read more about CPO Soto here.](#)



Dr. Aram deKoven, chief diversity officer at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, earned the 2022 National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award.

Dr. deKoven tirelessly supported civil rights and inclusivity for cadets at the Academy and its civilian workforce. [Read more about Dr. deKoven here.](#) Pictured above: Dr. Aram deKoven is shown with his 2022 Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award along with NAACP and DoD leaders including Derrick Johnson, NAACP President & CEO (second from left), Karen Boykin-Towns, NAACP Vice Chairwoman of the Board of Directors, and LTG Raymond S. Dingle, Surgeon General, U.S. Army at the NAACP National Convention, Atlantic City, NJ, July 19, 2022. Pictured left: CPO Soto is shown with his 2022 Excellence in Service Award for the Coast Guard, along with nominating officers Master Chief Petty Officer Mike Hvozda, Sector San Juan command master chief, Capt. Robert Pirone, Sector San Juan deputy commander, and event guest Lt. Cmdr. Chuck Wilson, commanding officer of the USCGC Joseph Doyle at the 93rd League of United Latin American Citizens National Convention and Exposition in San Juan, Puerto Rico, July 28, 2022 (Both Courtesy Photos).







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# MANAGING CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE: THE ART OF COLLABORATION

*By Elliot Colon, Alternative Dispute Resolution Specialist, CRD, USCG HQ*

Welcome back to our last in a series of articles explaining conflict management in the workplace. In previous editions, we [compared and contrasted avoidance and accommodation](#) and [examined competing and compromising](#). To wrap up the series, we will identify a conflict management solution that leaves all involved persons victorious and fully satisfied with the results; collaboration. Collaborating is the “Win-Win” solution where everyone in the party benefits. Those who choose to collaborate have a high degree of concern for all members of the team. This includes having honest discussions about important issues with each party and

listening carefully to concerns expressed in a nonthreatening environment. Collaborators look at solutions as “our way.” The purpose is to develop a suitable solution that satisfies everyone’s needs. Although collaboration might not work in every situation, it’s a target to work towards which can leave everyone satisfied. Reviewing the conflict management styles together, let’s imagine an orange as a catalyst for dispute. A person may ignore the orange, though they secretly want it (Avoidance). Another would give up the orange instead of causing a commotion (Accommodate), with the spoils going to the victor (Competing). Then there’s the idea of simply cutting it in half to share the fruit; but is everyone really satisfied (Compromise)? What if there was more discussion about what each wants from the orange? Perhaps one wanted the rind for a recipe and the other wanted the fruit to eat (Collaboration). Several factors can determine which conflict style will work best for each situation and looking at the circumstances before deciding which one to use is ideal. Picking the management style may be just as important as getting to the solution of a conflict or argument solution. Further questions and comments can be sent to [HQS-SMB-CG00H-ADR@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-SMB-CG00H-ADR@uscg.mil).



*Through the collaboration management style, individuals work to find a solution that factors in everyone’s feedback and will generally make each party feel satisfied with the outcome. (USCG Photo by PO3 Emily Velez)*

The deadline for Commanding Officers (COs) and Officers in Charge (OIC) to complete the annual Civil Rights Command checklist is October 31st! The checklist is a management tool designed to assist leaders with understanding and complying with their legally required civil rights responsibilities. To assist leadership with these responsibilities, the Civil Rights Directorate created the Command Checklist which is distributed by local Civil Rights Service Providers (CRSPs). All units are encouraged to participate, but only those with 50 or more positions are required to complete the checklist. For more information, contact your local CRSP and read [ALCOAST 285/22](#).

## UNITING FOR AN INCLUSIVE, STRONGER NATION

*By Juan Torres, EEO Program Specialist, CRD, USCG HQ*

From September 15 to October 15, the Nation recognizes National Hispanic Heritage Month. During this period, we celebrate the history, culture, and contributions of Hispanic Americans — those whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. The Coast Guard traces the history of Hispanic Americans in the Service to the early 1800s. The theme for 2022 is “Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation.” Unidos translates to mean united or connected. Throughout the Coast Guard, unification is a driving factor in creating a workplace that is inclusive and equitable. All Coast Guard Commands and units are encouraged to commemorate this observance by highlighting the accomplishments of the Hispanic American community through events or using various platforms (virtual, website, newsletters, and social media).

