



CIVIL RIGHTS ON DECK

**Asian American,
Native Hawaiian,
and Pacific Islander
Heritage Month**

‘BEHIND EVERY NAME, A STORY:’ COAST GUARD COMMEMORATES HOLOCAUST DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE

By Patrick Ferraris, Communications Specialist, CRD, USCG HQ

Coast Guard Headquarters held its Holocaust Days of Remembrance observance on May 8th at the Ceremonial Entrance.

Days of Remembrance commemorates the millions of European Jews persecuted and murdered between 1933 and 1945 by the German government and the Nazi party in what is known as the Holocaust. This year, Days of Remembrance was observed from May 5th to May 12th, with Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom HaShoah) falling on May 6th. This year’s theme, “Behind Every Name, a Story: The Courageous,” highlights the bravery and unique identities of Holocaust victims and survivors. Mr. John Luce, the event’s Executive Champion, paid homage to the resilience of those who resisted and aided others: “We recognize the heroes who risked everything,” he said, “who embody the values of compassion, equality, and justice.” The guest speaker, Ms. Amanda Rooney Stierli, U.S Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Program Manager of Civic and Defense Initiatives, focused her discussion on the complexities of moral decision-making. Her speech emphasized the legacies of those killed in the Holocaust, as well as those who survived. She noted how each individual story perpetuates the importance of upholding moral principles in challenging circumstances. “Their legacies of perseverance speak to us today,” Stierli stated. “Their legacies remind us to wrestle with the human dynamics that made the Holocaust possible. Dynamics that continue to challenge the security and stability of our global communities.” Reflecting on the contrasting choices and decisions that generate events like the Holocaust underscores the imperative need to learn from our global history and strive for a more equitable and just future. “Today, we remember and think about how we can do better,” Stierli said. “We remember to ask difficult questions and to try to understand how motivations and pressures impact the decisions and choices that we make.”

Pictured from left to right: Ms. Amanda Rooney Stierli, Cantor Sonya Zell, and Mr. John Luce pose after the event.



NEW POLICY STREAMLINES ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS FOR COAST GUARD CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES



The Coast Guard’s reasonable accommodation policy for disability and medical conditions has changed for civilian employees, making it smoother and more transparent. The update provides supervisors or decision-makers with clear guidelines on how to handle requests and also sets clear timelines for requests and responses. For supervisors, it is required to acknowledge any request on form CG-6080 and then promptly notify their local Civil Rights Service Provider (CRSP) about the request within five business days. Requests should be approved or denied within 15 business days, but the process should not exceed 30 business days. Any delays beyond 15 days must be justified in writing, and the employee and the servicing CRSP will be kept aware of the reasons and provided with regular updates on progress. If medical documentation is requested, the process will temporarily pause until the

supervisor receives and reviews the necessary documents. Every decision will be documented using the CG-6081 form, which ensures transparency and accountability. The Coast Guard is committed to supporting its employees with disabilities, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to participate equally. For any questions or guidance on reasonable accommodations, reach out to your local [Civil Rights Service Provider \(CRSP\)](#). You can read more about the new policy in [ALCOAST 172/24](#), and you can also access the new [reasonable accommodation web page](#).

BRIDGING ISLAND SPIRIT WITH COAST GUARD TEAMWORK

By Patrick Ferraris, Communications Specialist, CRD, USCG HQ

“In the islands, we say, ‘It takes a village.’ In the Coast Guard, we say, ‘It takes a team’ to achieve mission success,” Petty Officer Second Class Vinesha Blas, remarked. These two ideals, echoed from island roots to the armed forces, pair in a perfect harmony that fully epitomizes Blas’ dedication to service and teamwork. Born in Barigada, Guam, and raised in both Guam and Hawaii, Blas recounts memories of spending her birthdays with family at Guam’s annual “Liberation Day Parade,” commemorating the nation’s liberation from Japanese occupation on July 21st, 1944. These memories became the seeds of Blas’ dream to serve in the U.S. military. A current Coast Guard member and one of her mentors, Lt. Cmdr. Christine Igisomar, ultimately inspired her to join the Coast Guard. For Blas, the communal mentality of the Coast Guard instantly felt recognizable, almost as if it were a second home.

“I have been able to integrate the two during my time in the Coast Guard,” Blas said of the shared emphasis on community that both her culture and the Coast Guard embrace. “That perspective of teamwork has allowed me to forge meaningful connections with people and work effectively within the Coast Guard and throughout my career so far.” Her exceptional performance and leadership have garnered recognition, culminating in the prestigious 2024 Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Uniformed Services Award. Blas has dedicated herself to elevating awareness of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community within the Coast Guard, particularly while serving as the Executive Secretary of FAPAC-USCG. For Blas, such efforts have always been second nature, and the recognition they have earned her came as a celebrated surprise. “I was shocked when I found out I received the award,” she stated. “I felt humbled and honored that my command and FAPAC leadership felt it appropriate to recognize me for my efforts within this organization,” she continued. “I do the things that I do because I believe in FAPAC’s mission, which is to create a sense of belonging for those within the AANHPI community and provide mentorship and professional development opportunities for others; not for recognition.” [Read more about YN2 Blas in the full article.](#) Pictured from left to right: Fahmida Chhipa, FAPAC President, YN2 Vinesha Blas, and Adm. Linda Fagan, Coast Guard Commandant, at FAPAC’s 39th National Leadership Training Program, May 8, Leesburg, VA. (Photo by PA2 Erik Villa Rodriguez)



WORKPLACE PROTECTIONS FOR BREASTFEEDING MOMS: THE PUMP ACT IN ACTION

By Terina Obina-Pabia, EEO Specialist, CRD, Region 3, Zone 11

The Providing Urgent Maternal Protection (PUMP) Act expanded workplace support for lactating employees, including the Coast Guard workforce and provides specific requirements for lactation stations. Employers must provide a designated space that is functional, private, free from interruption and is not a bathroom. These spaces should have comfortable seating, electrical outlets, and access to running water, and must be easily accessible throughout the workday. Coast Guard Base Alameda, for example, provides nursing mothers with a space that meets PUMP Act standards and exceeds the minimal standards. It’s centrally located on the base with clear instructions on who to contact for those who need access. Employers demonstrate their commitment to supporting lactating employees and promoting maternal well-being in the workplace by providing dedicated lactation stations equipped with essential amenities. By prioritizing privacy, cleanliness, and accessibility, these stations contribute to a positive breastfeeding experience for employees, reducing stress and promoting healthy milk production. Beyond individual benefits, incorporating lactation stations serves broader organizational goals and can lead to higher job satisfaction, increased retention rates, and improved employee morale. Creating a breastfeeding-friendly workplace fosters a culture of inclusivity and equity, where all employees feel valued and supported in balancing their work and family responsibilities. Please [access this guide](#) for more information, or [contact your local Civil Rights Service Provider](#). Pictured: Left: Private door with lock to the Base Alameda Nursing Mother’s Station. Center: Nursing station amenities include: room with temperature control, microwave for sanitizing, refrigerator to store milk and other lactation supplies, sink with hot and cold running water, electrical outlets for breast pump, and more. Right: Changing table and furniture.





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FROM THE FIELD: COMMAND PARTNERSHIP WITH CIVIL RIGHTS DIRECTORATE

By Capt. Mimi Moon, Deputy Sector Commander, Sector Puget Sound

Much is said about the Coast Guard’s “no fail” missions: search and rescue, defense readiness, and protecting the marine transportation system. Recently, the Commandant and the Coast Guard have placed more focus on our primary “no fail” mission as leaders: providing our people with a workplace in which they feel valued and respected and one that is free of harassing behaviors. Just like other missions, challenges arise when building and maintaining an inclusive workforce.

Navigating those leadership issues requires a proactive approach and leaders are not alone in navigating workforce challenges – the Civil Rights Directorate (CRD) is a highly valuable resource that should be leveraged more. Our Civil Rights Service Providers (CRSPs) offer more than just mandated training and managing complaint processes. When a Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey (DEOCS) uncovered a slow burning climate issue within Sector Puget Sound, we sought out an Equal Opportunity (EO) review to get to the root of the matter and chart a path to address the underlying causes with haste. When precursors to harassing behavior started to percolate, we worked with the CRD to create tailor-made solutions that reinforced adherence to core values and to review actual federal cases with relatable examples of bullying, hazing, and harassment. Know that you are not alone and your CRSPs are standing by to offer support, guidance, and tools to address a myriad of workforce challenges you might face. Through collaboration and proactive engagement with the CRD, commands and Coast Guard leaders can navigate challenges with confidence and ensure that we collectively build and maintain a culture of respect and inclusivity. [Contact your local CRSP to learn more.](#)



WELCOME ABOARD SCOTT WILLIAMS

The Civil Rights Directorate welcomes Scott Williams, who will serve as the Equal Opportunity Manager for Region 3, Zone 13, in Seattle. Mr. Williams retired from Coast Guard aviation with over 27 years of service. He previously served as the military Equal Opportunity Advisor for Zone 14 in Hawaii for six years. He holds a bachelor’s degree in social studies from Chaminade University and a master’s degree in education from Old Dominion University. He and his wife Lauren, of over 25 years, have five wonderful children. His hobbies include snowboarding, motocross, hiking, and fishing.



JUNE OBSERVANCES

The Coast Guard commemorates Juneteenth and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and others (LGBTQ+) Pride Month in June. All Coast Guard units are encouraged to participate in and host activities that promote awareness of these observances. You can learn more about each by clicking on their graphics.

