

African American Leaders of the Coast Guard: Past, Present and Future...

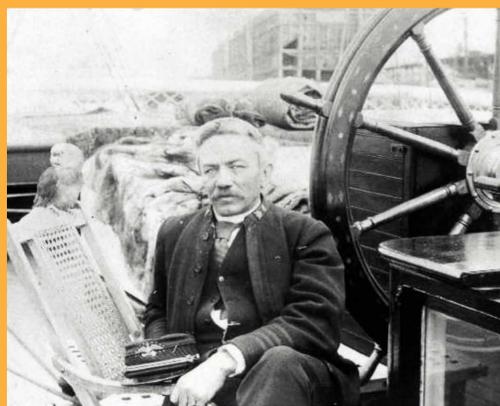
The United States Coast Guard has a long and complex history. The modern Coast Guard grew out of a merging of five federal organizations. The Revenue Cutter Service (1790) combined with the Life-Saving Service (1878) in 1915 to form the early Coast Guard. The Lighthouse Service (1789) merged with the Coast Guard in 1939. Finally the Steamboat Inspection Service (1838) and Bureau of Navigation (1884), which had combined in 1932, were incorporated in 1946. African Americans served in each branch of the Coast Guard from its earliest days. Despite enduring injustice and racial prejudice endemic in society which deprived African Americans of opportunity and recognition, many stood out in the Coast Guard as leaders. These men and women shaped the Coast Guard of the past as today's African American leaders shape the Coast Guard of the future.

Captain Michael A. Healy



United States Revenue Cutter Bear, ca. 1896.

"Hell-Roaring" Mike Healy is an enigmatic figure in Coast Guard history. The son of an Irish immigrant and a slave of mixed blood, Healy is the only man of African American descent to have held a command in the Revenue Cutter Service. He first went to sea as a cabin boy at fifteen years of age and joined the Revenue Cutter Service ten years later. In 1870, as a First Lieutenant, Healy served aboard the cutter *Rush* patrolling Alaskan waters where he earned the reputation as the best sailor in the North. In 1886, Healy received command of the cutter *Bear*, considered the greatest polar ship of its time. Healy's responsibilities included preventing seal hunting, bringing medical and other aid to the Alaskan natives, making weather and ice reports, preparing navigation charts, rescuing distressed vessels, transporting special passengers and supplies, and fighting violators of federal laws. He served as deputy U.S. Marshal and represented federal law in Alaska. Healy eventually retired from the Revenue Cutter Service as its third highest-ranking officer.



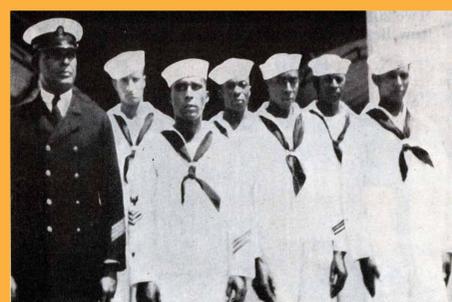
Captain Michael A. Healy, ca. 1890.

Richard Etheridge and the Men of Pea Island Life-Saving Station

Richard Etheridge, the first African American Keeper of a Life-Saving Station, was born a slave in 1843 on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. He served in the Union Army from 1863 until 1866, returned to the Outer Banks and joined the new Life-Saving Service in 1875. A tragically bungled rescue in 1879 garnered substantial public attention and led to the dismissal of the negligent Keeper of Pea Island Station. The Service's Superintendent chose Etheridge, known to be the best surfman on the Outer Banks, as the new Keeper. The racial standards of the day meant that Etheridge's crew of six men must be black. Knowing that his station faced public scrutiny, Etheridge developed thorough training drills enabling his men to undertake diverse and dangerous rescue tactics. Their valiant rescue of everyone aboard the schooner *E.S. Newman* in 1896 earned them the reputation of "one of the tautest [stations] on the Carolina Coast." Richard Etheridge, Benjamin Bowser, Dorman Pugh, Theodore Meekins, Lewis Wescott, Stanley Wise, and William Irving were posthumously awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal in 1996. Etheridge died while in service on May 8, 1900. Pea Island Life-Saving Station remained staffed by an African American crew until decommissioned in 1947.



Pea Island Life-Saving Station crew, 1896. Richard Etheridge is on the far left.



Pea Island Life-Saving Station crew, 1928. Left to right, Chief Boatswain's Mate George E. Pruden, in charge; Cleon C. Tillett, BM1/c.; Maxie M. Berry, Lonnie C. Gray [sic; Gray], Norphlet P. Meekins, John A. Mackey and Maloyd L. Scarborough."

The USCGC Sea Cloud (WPG-284)

The **USCGC Sea Cloud** was the first racially integrated ship in U.S. naval service since the Civil War. Originally a private yacht, the *Sea Cloud* became a Coast Guard weather station in 1942. The Navy assumed control of the ship a year later, but it remained crewed by Coast Guardsmen. Staffing issues and Roosevelt's mandate to integrate the Navy and Coast Guard led to an experiment. In 1943, LT Carlton Skinner proposed that African American seamen receive practical seagoing experience in an integrated operation. The Commandant agreed, promoted Skinner to Lieutenant Commander, and gave him command of the *Sea Cloud*. Skinner's crew consisted of 173 men, of whom four officers and 50 petty officers were African American. Skinner requested that the *Sea Cloud* not be publicized or treated differently from other ships in the task force. The *Sea Cloud* proved that an integrated crew could work just as effectively, if not more so, than a segregated crew.



The USCGC Sea Cloud

Jacob Armstead Lawrence

Artist **Jacob Lawrence** spent his youth in Harlem during the cultural movement known as the Harlem Renaissance. He received early training in the Harlem Art Workshop and his ground-breaking series, *Migration of the American Negro*, first opened in 1941. Lawrence was drafted into the Coast Guard in 1943 as a Steward's Mate, one of the few ratings open to African Americans at the time. He transferred to the USCGC *Sea Cloud*, where the commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander Skinner, recognized Lawrence and helped him obtain a Public Relations Specialist rating. Lawrence became the first African American combat artist in the Coast Guard. As a combat artist, he documented wartime experiences of servicemen. In 26 months of service, Lawrence produced 50 works of art, most of which were lost during post-war demobilization. Two of Lawrence's works remain in the Coast Guard Historic Collection.

Jacob Lawrence holding Embarkation ca. 1944.



BM1/c Maxie Berry, Sr. and The Berry Family

The **Berry Family** is a tried and true Coast Guard family with 22 members having served in the Life-Saving Service and the Coast Guard. Joseph H. Berry, Surfman, first joined the Pea Island Life-Saving Station in 1897. His son, BM1/c Maxie Berry commanded Pea Island Station during World War II and retired after 25 years of service in the Coast Guard. Maxie's son, Maxie M. Berry, Jr., retired as a Lieutenant Commander on September 1, 1976, while stationed in the Office of Civil Rights at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C.



Left: LT Herbert M. Collins, ENC Oscar Berry, and LT Maxie M. Berry, Jr. ca. 1968



Chief Boatswain's Mate Maxie Berry, Sr., ca. 1942. Officer in Charge of Pea Island Station, NC.

U. S. Coast Guard Women's Reserve (SPARS)

The onset of a world war and manpower shortages led the Coast Guard and other services to the realization that filling certain jobs with women allowed men to serve elsewhere. The U.S. Coast Guard Women's Reserve was founded in November 1942. Called SPARS (Semper Paratus, Always Ready), recruits were under military direction and subject to assignment based upon the needs of the service. African American women were not allowed into the SPARS until 1944. Five African American women enlisted: **Olivia J. Hooker, Julie Moseley Pole, D. Winifred Byrd, Yvonne Cumberbatch, and Aileen Cooke** became the first African American women in the Coast Guard.

Julie Moseley Pole and D. Winifred Byrd, ca. 1944, were among the first African American women in the Coast Guard.



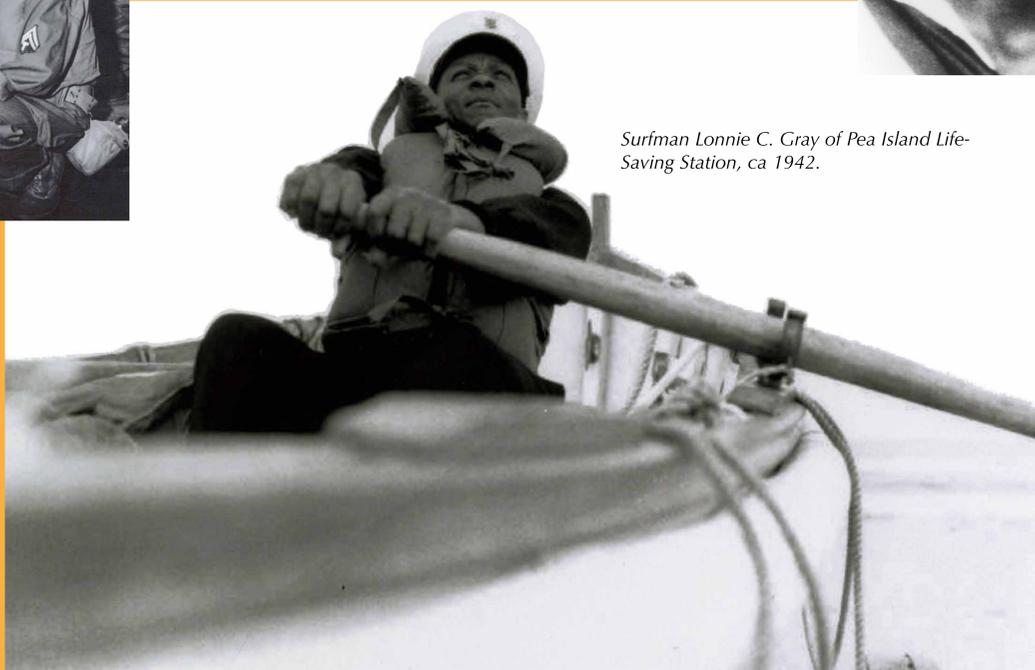
Alexander Palmer Haley

Alex Haley, author of *Roots*, joined the Coast Guard in 1939 as a Mess Attendant. Haley's prolific letter writing aboard the USCGC *Mendota* led to a side job ghostwriting love letters for his crewmates. He began writing in earnest, publishing articles in *Coast Guard Magazine* and other periodicals. In 1943, Haley transferred to the cargo ship USS *Murzim* (AK-95) in the South Pacific. He continued to write articles and established a newspaper, *Seafarer*, which garnered national attention for some of its editorials. After the war, Haley edited the Coast Guard publication *Outpost* and then served as reporter and editor for the *Helmsman* at Third Coast Guard District Headquarters in New York City. Haley finally achieved much-deserved recognition when the Coast Guard rated him Journalist, First Class in June 1949 and Chief six months later. Haley was the only Chief Journalist of any race in the Coast Guard at the time. He retired in 1959.

Alex Haley, ca. 1940



Surfman Lonnie C. Gray of Pea Island Life-Saving Station, ca. 1942.



Officer Candidate School

The Coast Guard Officer Candidate School (OCS) began as the Reserve Training School in February 1942. OCS was “among the finest examples of the nation’s ability to raise and train, on short notice, a strong cadre of citizen sailors to serve as seagoing officers in defense of their country.” Demobilization and the decrease in manpower needs at the end of World War II caused OCS to close its doors. The school was reestablished in 1951 at the Coast Guard Academy to give selected college graduates and Coast Guard Warrant and Petty Officers the opportunity to join the ranks of the Officer Corps. Importantly, OCS also provided African Americans one of the first opportunities to become Officers in the Coast Guard.

Lieutenant Junior Grade Joseph C. Jenkins

LTJG Jenkins graduated from OCS in April 1943 as the first African American Ensign in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, almost a full year before the U.S. Navy commissioned African Americans. Jenkins was promoted to Lieutenant Junior Grade and assigned to the USCGC *Sea Cloud*, the first integrated naval vessel since the Civil War. It is believed that Jenkins left the service at the end of the war.

Right: *LTJG Joseph C. Jenkins and LTJG Clarence Samuels aboard the Sea Cloud, ca. 1944.*



Lieutenant Clarence Samuels

Panamanian by birth, **LT Samuels** joined the Coast Guard as Seaman 2nd Class in 1920. In 1928, Samuels commanded Patrol Boat AB-15, the first African American to command a Patrol Boat. He was commissioned Lieutenant Junior Grade in 1943 and served on the USCGC *Sea Cloud*. Samuels’ 1944 promotion to Lieutenant made him the first African American to reach this rank. He commanded *Lightship No. 115* in 1944, *Lightship No. 91* in 1945, and the USCGC *Sweetgum* also in 1945. During postwar demobilization Samuels was removed from rank as Lieutenant and was returned to his original rating as Chief Photographer’s Mate. He retired from the Coast Guard in 1947.



Captain Bobby C. Wilks

CAPT Wilks completed OCS in 1956. He then attended flight school and became the Coast Guard’s first African American pilot. Wilks was known as an exceptional pilot; “he pushed the envelope and his skill brought men and women home.” In 1971, he received an Air Medal for a complicated rescue in rough weather and heavy seas. In 1977, Wilks became the first African American to attain the rank of Captain and serve as commanding officer of an air station. By the time Wilks retired in 1986 he had accumulated 6,000 flight hours in eighteen types of aircraft.



Commander Alwyn S. Young

CDR Young enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1978. A former chief petty officer, Young completed OCS in 1989 and, as of 2009, has served over 31 years in a variety of units. Young currently serves as Deputy Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Sector, St. Petersburg. He assists and advises the Sector Commander in meeting mission objectives as well as in leading, managing, and supervising Sector components with an emphasis on building and maintaining unity of effort. Young reported to Sector Saint Petersburg in July of 2007. A native of Chicago, Illinois, Young is married to the former Donna Ellis of Chicago. They have two sons, Alwyn Jr. and Donald Young.

Rear Admiral Steve Rochon

RADM Rochon enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1970. He served aboard the USCGC *White Bush* until 1973, attaining the rank of Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class. Rochon completed OCS in 1975 during the school’s tenure in Yorktown, Virginia. In 1979, he served in the Coast Guard Reserve while attending Xavier University of Louisiana. Rochon returned to active duty in 1984 serving as the Chief of the Reserve Training Branch of the Ninth Coast Guard District in Cleveland, Ohio. A New Orleans native, Rochon acted as the Coast Guard’s Director of Personnel Management in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He retired in March 2007 to assume the duties of White House Chief Usher. RADM Rochon is currently Director of the Executive Residence and White House Chief Usher.



Captain Dwight H. Meekins, Lieutenant Commander Dwayne Meekins and the Meekins Family

The **Meekins Family** is another long-serving Coast Guard family with roots in the Life-Saving Service. **Theodore Meekins**, Surfman #1, was part of the original crew of the first African American Life-Saving Station at Pea Island, North Carolina. He earned a (posthumous) Gold Life-Saving medal for the rescue of the *E.S. Newman* in 1896. His grandson, **CAPT Dwight H. Meekins**, first enlisted in the U. S. Navy in 1971. His career followed a varied path – Boot Camp, Machinist Mate “A” School, Electronics Tech “A” School, and then worked in the ET rate until his Division Officer suggested he consider OCS. Meekins began AOCS in February 1974, received a commission of Ensign in May 1974, and continued Flight Training. He received his wings in 1975. Because of his family’s connection to the Coast Guard and its unique variety of missions, Meekins requested an exchange tour and was assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Port Angeles, WA in 1977. He received an inter-service transfer into the Coast Guard in 1979. Meekins retired in June 2000 with a total of 19 years of aviation tours and over 6,000 flight hours. His son, **LCDR Dwayne Meekins**, enlisted in the Coast Guard in June 1994. After completing his studies at North Carolina A&T State University, Meekins attended OCS in May 1996 and earned his commission. He served his first tour at the Coast Guard Recruiting Command. From there, Meekins transferred to Marine Safety Office, Group Los Angeles-Long Beach as an Inspector and Planning Officer. He then served two years at Marine Safety Office, Tampa assisting the unit transition into Sector St. Petersburg. As of 2009, Meekins served in CG-81 (Office of Planning and Performance) working on Coast Guard Modernization. He is proud to be able to continue the legacy of his Coast Guard family.



CAPT Allen Thompson, CAPT Dwight Meekins and LTJG Dwayne Meekins (as of 2009, Lieutenant Commander Meekins)



Commander Darrell Singletery

CDR Singletery is the first African American chosen for a Permanent Comissioned Teaching Staff position at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. He joined the Coast Guard in 1990, attending enlisted recruit training and the OCS summer program. Upon finishing a degree in Education, Singletery completed OCS in Yorktown, Virginia and received his first assignment as Ensign aboard USCGC *Forward*. There he contributed to the interdiction and repatriation of over 700 Haitian and 237 Chinese migrants and provided key intelligence information for the federal prosecution of a maritime smuggling venture involving 2500 kilos of cocaine. Singletery was awarded two Masters degrees and is “All But Dissertation” in his doctoral studies in Business Management at Morgan State University. He teaches at the Academy in the Department of Leadership and Management.

Lieutenant Commander Zeita Merchant

LCDR Merchant joined the Coast Guard in 1997. Upon completing OCS in 1998, she reported to the Marine Safety Office (MSO) New Orleans. There Merchant served as a first responder and Unified Command member of the largest oil spill in U.S. waters since *Exxon Valdez*, a 554,000-gallon crude oil spill effecting southern Louisiana’s commerce, natural wildlife resources, and wetlands. In 2008, the Coast Guard selected Merchant to attend postgraduate school for Environmental Management. In 2009, she attended George Washington University working towards a Master of Public Administration in Environmental Management and was also pursuing a Doctorate in Business Administration at the National Graduate School.



Lieutenant Commander Pride L. Sanders

In 2007, **LCDR Sanders**, a 1998 OCS graduate, reported to Sector Miami in support of District Seven’s High Tempo High Maintenance multi-crew operations. During his tour, Sanders commanded three 110-foot patrol boats, patrolled over 3800 operational hours, interdicted and repatriated over 300 illegal migrants, and made significant contributions to the professional development of junior officers in the Miami area. “*African Americans represent a small population in the Coast Guard...as an African American officer you will undoubtedly stand out and probably be the only one at your particular unit. I knew this from day one and was ready and willing to accept the challenges that lay ahead...It isn’t my job to be the best African American officer; it is my job to be the BEST OFFICER I can be...*” Sanders currently serves as a Coast Guard liaison to the Joint Chief of Staff in the Western Hemisphere Branch Directorate responsible for Counterdrug/Counter Narco-Terrorism and Mass Migration Strategic Planning and Policy.



Lieutenant Jeanine (McIntosh) Menze

LT Menze is the first female African American Coast Guard pilot. Born in Jamaica, Menze learned to fly in 1999, fulfilling a childhood dream. After college, Menze worked at a Miami airport where she witnessed Coast Guard Air Station Miami fly rescue, humanitarian, and law enforcement missions. This compelled Menze to join the Coast Guard, believing it to be a noble and rewarding career. Menze completed OCS in 2003, attended flight school at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas, and received her wings in 2005. She became an Aircraft Commander in the HC-130 in 2008 and, as of September 2009, is enrolled in the Instructor Pilot syllabus at Air Station Clearwater, Florida.



Lieutenant Royce James

LT James is a member of the Permanent Commissioned Teaching Staff in the Physics Section, United States Coast Guard Academy. He served for a year with the AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps as a Team Leader prior to enlisting in the Coast Guard. James graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Physics from New Mexico State University in 1999 where he served on internships at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center and the National Science Foundation. Upon graduation from OCS in 2000, he served as a project engineer at the Coast Guard’s Command and Control Engineering Center (C2CEN). He earned a Master’s of Science Degree from Columbia University in 2003, and while on faculty at the Coast Guard Academy, a Ph.D. in Plasma Physics from Stevens Institute of Technology in 2009. James lives in New London with his wife Jessica James-Carnes, two daughters Isis and Yemaya, and son Olorun.

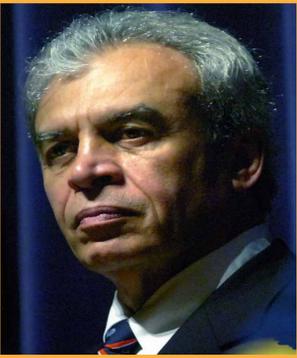
Officer Candidate Christine Jean-Charles

In 2009, **OC Jean-Charles** enrolled in OCS. The youngest daughter of Haitian Immigrants, Jean-Charles dreamed of being an astronaut and worked hard through High School and College to achieve her certification as a pilot and flight instructor. Jean-Charles “*chose to serve in the Coast Guard because the Coast Guard harbors a tradition of excellence and holds its personnel in high regard. In particular, Coast Guard pilots are among the bravest around the world. Upon successful completion of Officer Candidate School, I plan to excel in Coast Guard flight school and eventually joining the pilot fleet I so admire.*”



The United States Coast Guard Academy

The Coast Guard Academy began in 1876 on the topsail schooner *Dobbin*. Cadets received training aboard a series of vessels until 1900 when a facility was established at Curtis Bay, Maryland. In 1932, the Academy moved to its present location in New London, Connecticut. African American students were not enrolled in the Academy until the 1950s, with the first African American Cadet graduating in 1966. Since then the Academy has had many exceptional African American students pass through its halls to become officers and leaders of character of the United States Coast Guard.



Commander Merle J. Smith, Jr.

CDR Merle J. Smith, Jr. became the first African American graduate of the Academy when he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1966. He served on the cutter *Minnetonka*, as Commanding Officer of the patrol boat, *Cape Wash*, and later as Commanding Officer of the patrol boats *Point Mast* and *Point Ellis* in Coast Guard Squadron One in Vietnam. Smith later served on the International Affairs Staff at Coast Guard Headquarters. After completing his law degree from George Washington University, he was assigned as the Deputy Chief of Military Justice at Coast Guard Headquarters and was later assigned as Assistant Law Professor at the Academy. While at the Academy, he was the Advisor to the Class of 1977, an Assistant Football Coach and an Inaugural Aide to the staff of President Carter. After thirteen years of active service, Smith transferred to the Coast Guard Reserve and joined the legal staff of the premier builder of nuclear submarines, the Electric Boat Company where he retired as Chief Counsel, sixteen years later. CDR Smith served nine years in the Coast Guard Reserve before retiring in 1988. He was inducted into the U.S. Coast Guard Academy Hall of Heroes in 2007.

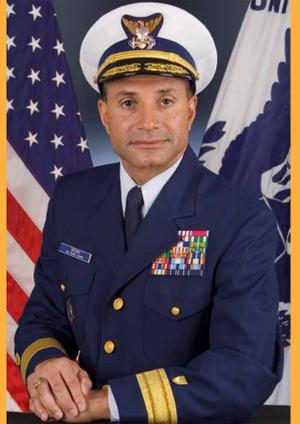
Rear Admiral Erroll M. Brown

RADM Brown became the first African American to achieve flag rank in the Coast Guard when he was promoted to Rear Admiral in 1998. Brown graduated from the Academy in 1972 with a degree in Marine Engineering. He holds additional masters degrees in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, Industrial and Operations Engineering, Business Administration, and National Security and Strategic Studies. His Coast Guard career included service on the icebreaker *Burton Island*, the cutters *Jarvis* and *Rush*, and as Commander, Maintenance and Logistics Command Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia. He retired in 2005 after 33 years of service. He currently serves as the program evaluator for the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology.



Rear Admiral Manson K. Brown

RADM Brown, a native of Washington, DC, graduated from the Coast Guard Academy in 1978 with a Bachelors of Science degree in Civil Engineering. Brown's Coast Guard service includes serving as Assistant Engineering Officer aboard USCGC *Glacier*; Commander of Maintenance & Logistics Command Pacific; Commander, Coast Guard Sector Honolulu; Commander, Coast Guard Group Charleston; Military Assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation (DOT) from 1999 to 2002, including duty as the Acting Deputy Chief of Staff for six months after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; and a temporary assignment as the Senior Advisor for Transportation to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, Iraq. Working in a combat zone, Brown oversaw restoration of Iraq's major transportation systems, including two major ports. RADM Brown currently commands the Fourteenth Coast Guard District in Honolulu, Hawaii.



ENS Davis graduated from the Academy in 2008 with a degree in Electrical Engineering. In 2007, Davis was the first Coast Guard cadet ever to receive a Harry S. Truman Scholarship. She was also the Coast Guard Academy's first female African American Valedictorian. In her speech Davis stated, "... For the Coast Guard, 'by any means necessary' is not a willingness to kill for humankind but more so a willingness to die...I know I'm up here today because I'm a nerd who managed to be the best number, the best piece of paper for the past four years, but I'd also like to think that I'm here because I respect humanity..I need you to take this moment and see that I am black. See that I am a woman. I'm not going to tell you to close your eyes and imagine anything because we need to open our eyes and look this reality dead in the face. I need you to see that I am human. I am just like you. No better, no worse. If we can accept each others' humanity, we can make history. Humanity is our homeland, and classmates, we must remind our nation of the true definition and dynamic of homeland security. Promoting renewable energy is securing the homeland. Protecting the public from terrorist strike is securing the homeland. Treating all people, whether migrant or felon, with mercy and human decency is securing the homeland. Saving lives is securing the homeland. We must never forget our legacy. We must never forget the freedom and liberty that make us America. We have made a pledge to society that on this earth to the best of our ability, by any means necessary, we will preserve and protect humanity..." Davis serves as a Marine Inspector for Coast Guard Sector New York.



Ensign DeCarol Davis

Lieutenant Olivia Grant

LT Grant graduated from the Academy in 2004 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. In 2009, she became Engineering Officer for the cutter *Venturous*; Grant and LT Carrie Wolfe share the honor of being the first African American women to serve as Engineering Officers of a cutter. "As an African American Officer, I could not be more proud to be a member of the United States Coast Guard during these historic times. I realize that the only limitations we face as minorities are those we impose on ourselves. With that said, I feel my responsibility to this organization is two fold; 1) To lead with integrity and consistency; and, 2) To mentor those that follow me by actively supporting their pursuit of excellence. The Coast Guard just like any other prestigious organization can be hard to navigate; however, I find with hard work, and a couple well placed mentors, anything is possible."



Lieutenant Carrie Wolfe

LT Wolfe, a native of Newport News, Virginia, graduated from the Academy in 2002. Wolfe's first assignment was as a Student Engineer and Damage Control Assistant (DCA) aboard USCGC *Legare*. The DCA maintains an effective damage control organization for a cutter and its crew. As DCA, she was integral in the cutter receiving a Battle "E" award for Damage Control readiness. She is the Engineer Officer onboard USCGC *Spencer*. Wolfe and LT Olivia Grant share the honors as the first African American women to serve as the Engineering Officers of a cutter. As EO, Wolfe is responsible for the maintenance and operation of all main propulsion, auxiliary, damage control and electrical systems, equipment and machinery, and for the control and correction of damage. Wolfe holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from the Academy, and an M.S. in Engineering Management.

Lieutenant Junior Grade Michael Gardner

LTJG Gardner graduated from the Academy in 2007 with a degree in Government. His first assignment was in Sector New Orleans in the Enforcement Division in Intelligence. He remains at Sector New Orleans, but presently serves as the Enforcement Operations Supervisor. Gardner states, "I attended the U.S. Coast Guard Academy from 2003-2007. It was the only college I applied to, but I felt it would give me a good opportunity to see a different part of the country, would give me a great education and practical law enforcement and leadership experience, and a set of readily transferable job skills. I was a four year member of the football team, and was on the team in 2006 that went 8-1, the first winning season in ten years. I found the Academy to be challenging, but I learned valuable time management skills that have helped me immensely in my personal and professional life...From the Academy, I learned that time management and taking care of the people that work with you are the two most important skills any officer can have."



Cadet Jacqueline Fitch

Cadet 1/c Fitch is a Management major in the Coast Guard Academy class of 2010. She is the first African American female to serve as Regimental Commander, Fitch is also an active member of all of the Diversity Councils and has held leadership positions within her academic major and the corps of cadets. She has been noted for her high ethics and standards, hard work, determination, and positive attitude, and is well respected. Fitch loves the integration of religion, race, gender, and culture that the Academy and Coast Guard embraces. She is looking forward to being an officer in the world's oldest continuing seagoing service and believes that as an African American officer, she will be able to bring a different point of view to the Coast Guard.

Cadet Jonathan Scott

Cadet 1/c Scott, a native of Ocean Springs, Maryland, is a Government major in the Coast Guard Academy class of 2010. Scott serves as Regimental Command Staff Officer "First Lieutenant," and served as a Guidon as a Second Class Cadet. His goal is to command a cutter that prosecutes the Law Enforcement mission. Scott states, "The values at the Coast Guard Academy aligned with my own: to save and protect people in need."

