

Austal USA Holds Keel Laying Ceremony for the future LCS Santa Barbara



Austal laid the keel for the U.S. Navy's 16th Independence-class littoral combat ship, the future USS Santa Barbara (LCS-32) at its facility in Mobile, Alabama on Oct. 27.

The keel was ceremoniously laid by the ship's sponsor, Mrs. Lolita Zinke, center, wife of former Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke.

MOBILE, Ala. –Austal USA, in Mobile, Ala., hosted future USS Santa Barbara ship sponsor and keel authenticator, Mrs. Lolita Zinke, Oct. 27 at a keel laying ceremony for the 16th Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ship (LCS). Mrs. Zinke welded her initials into the ship's keel plate officially authenticating that the keel of the future USS Santa Barbara (LCS 32) "has been truly and fairly laid."

Lolita Zinke is a native of Santa Barbara. After graduating from the University of California, Santa Barbara, Lolita graduated from California Western School of Law.

Lolita married Ryan Zinke and began a second career as a Navy spouse and additionally served as a civilian employee on the Flag Officer staff of Adm. Jeremy Boorda at the commander in Chief, U. S. Naval Forces Europe in London, United Kingdom. Her husband is a retired U.S. Navy SEAL who served in the Navy for 23 years; a former United States Representative from Montana; and the 52nd Secretary of the Interior.

Lolita was the Freshman President of the Congressional Club from 2015 to 2016, a congressional spouses club dedicated to furthering bipartisan relationships and charitable activities. She has served as a member of President Trump's National Hispanic Advisory Council; the President's Veteran's

Administration Landing Team; and the Veteran's Administration's committee on Veteran Families, Caregivers, and Survivors.

LCS 32 will be the third U.S. Navy ship to be named after Santa Barbara.