

HII Authenticates Keel of Virginia-Class Attack Submarine Oklahoma (SSN 802)



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NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Aug. 02, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII’s (NYSE: HII) Newport News Shipbuilding (NNS) division authenticated the keel today for *Virginia*-class attack submarine *Oklahoma* (SSN 802).

“We enjoy participating in Navy traditions like this one because they remind us of the important role we play in our nation’s defense,” NNS President Jennifer Boykin said. “The nuclear submarines we build help ensure our peace and freedoms, and we take great pride in being a nuclear shipyard.”

The ship’s sponsor is Mary “Molly” Slavonic, an Oklahoma native. Slavonic has long supported both the state of Oklahoma and the Navy. She worked alongside her husband, former acting Under Secretary of the Navy Greg Slavonic, in building the USS *Oklahoma* (BB 37) Memorial in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to honor the 429 sailors and Marines who died aboard the battleship during the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

During Wednesday’s authentication, NNS welder Alex VanCampen etched Slavonic’s initials onto a metal plate, signifying the keel of SSN 802 as being “truly and fairly laid.” The metal plate will remain affixed to the submarine throughout its life.

Photos accompanying this release are available at:

<https://hii.com/news/hii-authenticates-keel-virginia-class-attack-submarine-oklahoma-ssn-802>.

“I am deeply honored to be the sponsor for *Oklahoma*, named in honor of my beloved home state,” Slavonic said. “This milestone marks the beginning of what will be a lifelong bond between my family and *Oklahoma*, including the incredible shipbuilders constructing her and the brave sailors who will serve aboard this mighty submarine.”

Oklahoma is the 29th *Virginia*-class fast attack submarine, the first of Block V and the 14th to be delivered by NNS.

“This time-honored tradition celebrates the hard work of thousands of shipbuilders from HII who have been working on *Oklahoma*, the first Block V *Virginia*-class submarine,” said Cmdr. Aaron Stutzman, commanding officer of the pre-commissioning unit. “This important step brings to life Congress’ charge in our constitution to maintain a Navy. I am very grateful for the opportunity to be *Oklahoma*’s first commanding officer, training our sailors to work alongside the shipyard community building *Oklahoma* and to be ready to take the world’s most technologically-advanced submarine to sea.”

NNS is one of only two shipyards capable of designing and building nuclear-powered submarines for the U.S. Navy. The advanced capabilities of *Virginia*-class submarines increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth.