

Keel Authenticated for First Flight III Arleigh Burke-Class Destroyer



Ship's sponsors (from left) Catherine B. Reynolds and Ruby Lucas trace their initials onto a steel plate that will be welded inside the USS Jack H. Lucas, the first Flight III Arleigh Burke-class destroyer. Looking on is Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant, who spoke at the Nov. 7 ceremony. Derek Fountain/Huntington Ingalls Industries

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – In a milestone for the DDG 51 program, the keel of the first Flight III destroyer, the future USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), was ceremoniously laid and authenticated at Huntington Ingalls Shipyard on Nov. 7.

Ruby Lucas and Catherine B. Reynolds, the ship's sponsors, authenticated the keel by etching their initials into the keel plate. Although the official start of fabrication for the Lucas began in May 2018, authenticating the ship's keel symbolically recognizes the joining of modular components and represents the ceremonial beginning of the ship.

"This destroyer was named after an American hero, Medal of Honor recipient Jack Lucas, and I am humbled and honored to be here today as we authenticate the keel on his namesake ship," said Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 class program manager, PEO Ships. "The Flight III ships will bring increased lethality and warfighting capacity to our warfighters, and today's milestone is the first of many to come as we work to deliver this highly capable ship to the Fleet."

US Navy's first Flight III Arleigh Burke destroyer's keel laid by @HIIndustries @USNavy @CavasShips
<https://t.co/iSU1vZ2KM7>

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DDG 125 will be the first Arleigh Burke-class destroyer built in the Flight III configuration with improved capability and capacity to perform anti-air warfare and ballistic-missile defense in support of the integrated air and missile defense mission.

The Flight III design contains modifications from the earlier DDG 51 class, enabling the SPY-6 radar, in association with Aegis Baseline 10, which includes larger electronically scanned arrays and the power generation and cooling equipment required to operate the powerful new radar.

These multimission surface combatants serve as integral assets in global maritime security, engaging in air, undersea, surface, strike and ballistic missile defense as well as providing increased capabilities in anti-submarine warfare, command and control and anti-surface warfare.

HII's Pascagoula shipyard also is building the guided missile destroyers Delbert D. Black (DDG 119), Frank E. Petersen Jr. (DDG 121) and Lenah H. Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123), amphibious assault ships Tripoli (LHA 7) and Bougainville (LHA 8) and amphibious transport dock ships Fort Lauderdale (LPD 28) and Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29).