

Keel Authenticated for Future Destroyer USS Ted Stevens



Ship sponsors Catherine Ann Stevens, Susan Stevens Covich and Lily Stevens Becker, Ingalls Shipbuilding President Kari Wilkinson and Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 class program manager, Program Executive Office Ships, at the rear, pose with the keel plate of the future USS Ted Stevens. *HUNTINGTON INGALLS INDUSTRIES.*

WASHINGTON – The keel of future USS Ted Stevens (DDG 128), the 78th Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, was ceremonially laid at Huntington Ingalls Industries Ingalls Shipbuilding, March 9, Team Ships Public Affairs said in a release.

The ship is named for the late Sen. Ted Stevens from Alaska. Stevens was the longest-serving Republican U.S. senator in history at the time he left office and was the third senator to hold the title of president pro tempore emeritus. He was the president pro tempore of the United States Senate in the 108th and 109th Congresses.

The contemporary keel laying ceremony represents the joining together of a ship's modular components at the land level. The keel is authenticated with the ship sponsors' initials etched into a ceremonial keel plate as part of the ceremony. Sponsors of DDG 128 are Catherine Stevens, wife of the ship's namesake, and Susan Stevens Covich and Lily Stevens Becker, daughters of the namesake.

"The Flight III upgrade fulfills a critical need for the Navy. Flight III ships like the future USS Ted Stevens will serve as a deterrent to our adversaries using the ship's increased power projection capability as a result of the upgraded Aegis Combat System and Air and Missile Defense Radar," said Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 class program manager, Program Executive

Office Ships. "We are honored to have the Stevens family with us today as we mark this important milestone in building the Navy's and the nation's next great warship."

The DDG 51 Flight III upgrade is centered on the AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar and incorporates upgrades to the electrical power and cooling capacity plus additional associated changes to provide greatly enhanced warfighting capability to the fleet. Flight III is the latest flight upgrade in the more than 30-year history of the class, building on the proud legacy of Flight I, II and IIA ships before it.

HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding is also in production on the future USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123), USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), USS Jeremiah Denton (DDG 129), and USS George M. Neal (DDG 131).