

Keel Laid for Future USNS Ruth Bader Ginsburg



From Team Ships, Feb. 13, 2026

SAN DIEGO - The keel for the future USNS Ruth Bader Ginsburg (T-AO 212) was authenticated at the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard on Feb. 13. The event marked a major construction milestone for the John Lewis-class replenishment oiler.

The ship's namesake, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, was an advocate for justice who served on the U.S. Supreme Court for 27 years.

Keel laying authentication ceremonies are a centuries-old tradition marking a significant construction milestone where a ship transitions from design to reality. The keel was authenticated when the ship's sponsor, Jane Ginsburg, daughter of the late Justice, welded her initials onto a steel plate. This plate will be permanently affixed to the ship's hull, remaining with the vessel throughout its entire service life as a symbol of its beginning.

"This keel laying marks the first of many significant milestones for this ship and we are excited to bring this vessel to the Fleet," said John Lighthammer, program manager, Auxiliary and Special Mission Shipbuilding Program Office.

John Lewis-class replenishment oilers are a critical component of the Navy's Combat Logistics Force and are a cornerstone of the Navy's fuel delivery capability. These 746-foot vessels are engineered to provide robust support, with the capacity to carry up to 162,000 barrels of diesel ship fuel, jet fuel, and other cargo.

Operated by the Military Sealift Command, these ships enable the Navy's warships to remain at sea for extended periods,

providing the fuel, supplies, and provisions necessary to sustain global missions.

As a Department of War's acquisition organization, PEO Ships is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships and craft, and auxiliary ships, including special mission ships, sealift ships and support ships.