

Navy to Christen Future USNS Cherokee Nation



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The Navy will christen the Navajo-class towing, salvage, and rescue ship, the future USNS Cherokee Nation (T-ATS 7), during a 10 a.m. CDT ceremony Saturday, June 8, in Houma, Louisiana.

The Honorable Chuck Hoskin, Jr., Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, will deliver the principal address. Remarks will also be provided by the Honorable Franklin Parker, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs; Vice Adm. Scott Gray, commander, Navy Installation Command; and Mr. Ben Bordelon, President and Chief Executive Officer, Bollinger Shipyards. In a time-honored Navy tradition, the ship's sponsor, the Honorable Victoria Vazquez, Deputy Speaker of the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council, will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

The future USNS Cherokee Nation is the second ship in its class and will be operated by the Navy's Military Sealift Command. The vessels will replace the existing Powhatan-class T-ATF fleet ocean tugs and Safeguard-class T-ARS rescue and salvage ships in service with the U.S. Military Sealift Command.

The Navajo-class is a new series of towing, salvage, diving, and rescue ships (T-ATS) being constructed for the U.S. Navy. The Navajo-class is a multi-mission common hull platform that will be deployed to support a range of missions such as towing, rescue, salvage, diving, humanitarian assistance, oil spill response and wide-area search and surveillance operations.