

# Navy to Christen Guided-Missile Destroyer John Basilone



ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy will christen the future USS John Basilone (DDG 122) during a 10:30 a.m. EDT ceremony on Saturday, June 18, at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine, the Defense Department announced June 17.

Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Troy Black will deliver the christening ceremony's principal address. U.S. Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, Vice Adm. Francis Morley, principal military deputy to the assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development, and acquisition, Vice Adm. Scott Conn, deputy chief of naval operations for warfighting requirements and capabilities, Don Basilone, brother of the ship's namesake and Charles Krugh, president of General Dynamics Bath Iron Works, will also provide remarks. The ship's sponsors are Ryan Manion and Amy Looney Heffernan, president and vice president of the Travis Manion Foundation. Heffernan is unable to attend the event. In a time-honored Navy tradition, Manion will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

The ship's namesake, Gunnery Sgt. John Basilone, received the Medal of Honor for heroism displayed in the Battle of Guadalcanal during World War II, where he led his heavy machine gun sections in defense of a critical position and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. Basilone later returned to action at the Battle of Iwo Jima in February of 1944, where he single-handedly destroyed an enemy blockhouse and led a Marine tank under fire safely through a minefield. He was killed in action later that day and was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for his unwavering devotion and valiant

spirit of self-sacrifice.

“The future USS John Basilone will serve as a constant reminder of the immense impact that actions taken by any one Sailor or Marine can truly have,” said Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. “Gunnery Sgt. Basilone is a national hero and this ship and crew will honor his legacy for decades to come.”

This is the second ship to honor Basilone. The first, USS Basilone (DD 824), was a Gearing-class destroyer in service from 1945 to 1977.