

# PEO Columbia Recognized for Acquisition Excellence



NAVSEA's PMS 397 Columbia Class Submarine Program team photo for the Packard Award. *U.S. NAVY / Laura Lakeway*

WASHINGTON – Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen H. Hicks named the Columbia-class submarine program office (PMS 397) winner of the 2021 David Packard Acquisition Excellence Award during the virtual 2021 Defense Acquisition Workforce Awards on Dec. 15.

The Columbia-class submarine program is developing the follow-on to the Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) which currently serve as the cornerstone for the nation's strategic deterrence force. The David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Award recognizes Department of Defense acquisition programs and their teams that have demonstrated exemplary acquisition excellence, innovation and reform.

“Our winners this year are the best of the best among our nation's public service professionals,” said Hicks, adding that the work of the department's acquisition professionals “is vital to supporting our nation's military.”

The Columbia-class submarine program stood out from other DoD acquisition efforts by developing and executing acquisition, contracting, supply chain, workforce development and sustainment improvements. The Columbia-class team negotiated and awarded the first modern-era, two-submarine purchase for the first and second-of-class submarines.

“Traditionally, we buy the first-of-class submarine under a single contract. With Columbia, though, we're confident that we can project the total costs for both the first and second hulls and therefore put both PCU Columbia (SSBN 826) and the SSBN 827 on a single contract to maximize efficiencies and

help ensure the on-time delivery of these national assets. In doing so, we avoided about \$1.5 billion in costs,” said Rear Adm. Scott Pappano, Program Executive Officer, Strategic Submarines.

According to Columbia-class program manager, Capt. Jonathan Rucker, “As the Department of Defense’s highest-priority acquisition program, the Columbia team and its industry partners continue to design, build, test, and sustain the nation’s high quality, sea-based strategic deterrent on schedule within budget. The program continues to try to be a leader within the acquisition community executing program efforts and supporting other programs through the acquisition community.”

Pre-commissioning unit Columbia is scheduled to deliver in 2027 and conduct its first strategic deterrence patrol in 2030.