

Sea Service Spouses Take Center Stage at Second Annual Maritime Gala



Former Chief of Naval Operations, retired Adm. Jonathan Greenert, thanks Navy League National President Alan Kaplan for his services. CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – In its second annual Maritime Gala the night of May 7, the Navy League honored awardees from the highest levels of the sea services, but also dedicated the night to the often unsung work of [sea service spouses](#).

The night's keynote speaker, retired Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert, pointed out that numerous military support organizations were founded by spouses, like Operation Gratitude and the Semper Fi fund, and he urged audience members to remember these organizations' important work in their annual giving.



The gala's keynote speaker, retired Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert. CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY

"Our sea services and our families would be hard-pressed to function without sea service spouses ... and they do it time after time," Greenert said.

He focused his speech on the importance of retaining the public's trust in the institution of homeland security and the military. Greenert noted that many other pillars of American life are losing ground in Americans' confidence, like the government or clergy, but the military is

earning its spot
as an exception to that rule.

“The American public needs and deserves an institution that we trust.”



Naval Services FamilyLine chair Leanna McCollum (center) accepts the Navy League’s first-ever Sea Service Spouse Organization Award, pictured here with Dana Richardson (right). CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY

He also acknowledged the service of Navy League National President Alan Kaplan, who is in the last few months of his term leading the organization in support of the sea services.

“The national president of the Navy League, the title, is really the ultimate volunteer position,” Greenert said. “It’s a gift to those of us in the sea services.”

The show featured an awards program, bestowing the Adm. Arleigh Burke Leadership Award to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John M. Richardson, where he was given the award by his wife, Dana Richardson, who gave the award to her “high school sweetheart and best friend.”



Navy League’s Alan Kaplan (left) and Dr. Vivian Greentree of First Data (center) present the Theodore Roosevelt Award to Bruce Mosler of Cushman & Wakefield. CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY

Richardson played an important role in another organization awarded the evening of May 7. The Navy League gave its first-ever Sea Service

Spouse Organization Award to Naval Services FamilyLine, where Dana Richardson serves as an ambassador.

The award, which was given by Ellyn Dunford, a long-time

advocate for military spouses and wife of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford, was accepted by FamilyLine chair Leanna McCollum, who acknowledged her organization's long history of volunteers that have kept it strong.



The CNO and his spouse during the second-annual Maritime Gala.
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"It wouldn't be possible to be here tonight without the support of the countless number of volunteers both now and since 1965," McCollum said.

In a surprise announcement, Navy League Executive Director Mike Stevens, retired Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, gave Naval Services FamilyLine a check for \$10,000.



Navy League Executive Director Mike Stevens (left) presents a check for \$10,000 to Naval Services FamilyLine chair Leanna McCollum (second from right), alongside CNO Adm. John Richardson (second from left) and his wife Dana Richardson (right).
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Head of corporate citizenship for First Data, Dr. Vivian Greentree, also a military spouse, gave out the night's second award, the Theodore Roosevelt Award, to Bruce Mosler, chairman of global brokerage at Cushman & Wakefield. He is an advocate for the veteran and military spouse community, focusing his efforts on the 100,000 Jobs Coalition, now the Veteran Jobs Mission.

The night included performances by the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon and closed with a trio of country music stars, including Chuck Wicks, the Navy League's first goodwill ambassador; Mark Wills; and Lonestar's Richie McDonald.