

SECNAV Del Toro Names Two Future Guided-Missile Destroyers (DDG 143) and (DDG 144)



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Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced the names of the Navy's newest Arleigh Burke-class Guided Missile Destroyers, the future USS Richard J. Danzig (DDG 143) and the future USS Michael G. Mullen (DDG 144) during a U.S. Naval Academy Commencement Week ceremony, May 22.

DDG 143 honors the Honorable Richard J. Danzig, the 71st Secretary of the Navy, and DDG 144 honors retired Admiral Michael J. Mullen, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Chief of Naval Operations. These are the first ships to bear their names.

"Secretary Danzig and Admiral Mullen were visionary leaders in the mold of the greatest naval leaders that came before. Together they have nearly 100 years of service," said Secretary Del Toro. "Both Secretary Danzig and Admiral Mullen worked tirelessly to ensure our Sailors and Marines had the resources, technologies, and capabilities to set them up for success. I am proud to honor them with these new DDGs."

Born in New York City in 1944, Secretary Danzig received a B.A. degree from Reed College, a J.D. degree from Yale Law School, and Bachelor of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Oxford University.

Secretary Danzig served in the Office of the Secretary of Defense from 1977 to 1981, first as a Deputy Assistant

Secretary, then as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Logistics. In these roles, he contributed to the Department's mobilization and deployment of manpower and material. Secretary Danzig later served as Under Secretary of the Navy from November 1993 to May 1997, before being sworn in as Secretary of the Navy on Nov. 16, 1998.

Secretary Danzig's tenure emphasized four themes: ridding the Services of "a conscript mentality" by treating Sailors and Marines as skilled workers and supporting them with new capital investments and personnel systems; achieving better synergy between the Navy and Marine Corps; strengthening the ability of the sea services to influence events ashore; and embracing new technologies to better achieve those goals. Since the end of his tenure, he has served in multiple technology and national security-oriented think tanks, councils, and panels.

"This is such a wonderful honor. It's certainly a wonderful and touching thing," said Secretary Danzig. "What is most important to me is that this provides a connection among all of the Sailors who will be on this ship."

Commissioned in 1968, Mullen first deployed aboard the USS Collett (DD 730) for operations off the coast of Vietnam as part of U.S. Seventh Fleet. His command tours include the USS Noxubee (AOG 56), USS Goldsboro (DDG 20), USS Yorktown (CVN 10), Cruiser-Destroyer Group TWO with concurrent duties as commander of the USS George Washington (CVN 73) Aircraft Carrier Battle Group, U.S. Second Fleet with concurrent command of NATO Striking Fleet Atlantic, and U.S. Naval Forces, Europe with concurrent command of Allied Joint Force Command located in Naples, Italy. Staff and shore tours include service at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Bureau of Naval Personnel, and multiple tours in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

As Chief of Naval Operations, Mullen led the united maritime strategy, oversaw support for the Global War on Terror, and expanded relations with partners and allies.

As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he focused on Joint/combined combat operations in Afghanistan and Libya as well as a major humanitarian operation in Japan; implemented the repeal of Don't Ask/Don't Tell; and stood up U.S. Africa Command and U.S. Cyber Command.

"This is an honor of a lifetime and one I certainly never expected. It says so much about the Navy that I love, and it represents most of my life at sea," said Mullen. "So, along with my wife, Deborah, and my family, this is just something that is so very, very special."

Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, built around the Aegis Combat System, are the backbone of the U.S. Navy's surface fleet providing protection to America around the globe.

"DDG 143 and DDG 144, once built and commissioned, will be the most technologically advanced warships ever built, just as Jack H. Lucas, Carney, Arleigh Burke, and each of their predecessors in the long and storied life of the class," said Secretary Del Toro.

They incorporate stealth techniques, allowing these highly capable, multi-mission ships to conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence to national security, providing a wide range of warfighting capabilities in multi-threat air, surface and subsurface domains. These elements of sea power enable the Navy to defend American prosperity and prevent future conflict abroad.