

Navy Announces Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award 2015

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By Navy Installations Command Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- The Navy announced the Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman Award to formally recognize the dedication and contributions of ombudsmen across the fleet May 18.



The award honors Mrs. Sybil Stockdale's support to families of other POWs during her husband's - Vice Adm. James Bond Stockdale - seven-year internment in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. The award recognizes four of the Navy's top ombudsmen who have served their command and families with selfless dedication and commitment to family readiness in three areas - Afloat commands (Fleet Forces Command, both Atlantic and Pacific), Ashore commands under Navy Installations Command, and Navy Reserve Force commands. A Navy administrative message (NAVADMIN) informing the Navy about this new award was also released today.

The Ombudsman of the Year Award criteria include:

- * Demonstrating the ability to effectively communicate between the Navy family and the command.
- * Maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and confidentiality while providing a positive role model for command members and families.
- * Facilitating and promoting a healthy sense of community among command families by assisting and supporting Navy families to include emergencies, mobilization or deployment.
- * Demonstrating consistent compliance with training and required reports according to OPNAVINST 1750.1G (located at www.cnic.navy.mil/OmbudsmanOfTheYear).

To be eligible for the award, ombudsmen must be registered in the Ombudsman Registry, located at <https://ombudsmanregistry.org>, and have distinguished themselves in supporting Navy families, served as an ombudsman in good standing for at least 1 year, and embody the core values of the Ombudsman Program.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to honor Mrs. Stockdale," said Matt Straughan, director for the Navy's family support programs for Navy Installations Command. "This award allows us to formally recognize the hard work and sacrifices made by our ombudsmen who support our sailors and their families world-wide."

The Navy Family Ombudsman Program was created in 1970 by Admiral E.R. Zumwalt, Jr., then Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), to improve communication between commands and the families of Sailors who served in them.

In 2006, CNO Admiral Michael G. Mullen re-emphasized the importance of the program and signed an updated instruction, highlighting the requirement that all Navy families have access to a Navy Family Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman is a volunteer, appointed by the commanding officer, to serve as an information link

between command leadership and Navy families. Ombudsmen are trained to disseminate information both up and down the chain of command, including official Department of the Navy and command information, command climate issues, quality of life improvement opportunities and community resources. Ombudsmen provide resource referrals to families when needed and are instrumental in resolving family issues before the issues require extensive command attention.

Nomination packages must be submitted to the appropriate organization via the chain of command, NLT 30 June 2015. Winners will be announced at the Ombudsman Appreciation event to be held in San Diego in September 2015.

Additional information about the Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award and the Navy's ombudsman program may be found by visiting: www.cnmc.navy.mil/OmbudsmanOfTheYear.