

## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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### ***ANDRE GRIKITIS, THOMAS MERRELL AND JAMES MILLER, NAMED 2017 USS ADMIRAL OF THE OCEAN SEA AWARD RECIPIENTS***

### ***48<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GALA EVENT TO BE HELD OCTOBER 13 IN NEW YORK***

**JERSEY CITY, NJ (JUNE 26, 2017)** - The United Seamen's Service (USS) 2017 Admiral of the Ocean Sea Awards (AOTOS) will be presented to Andre Grikitis, Operating Chairman, Intermarine LLC; Captain Thomas Merrell, President, General Dynamics American Overseas Marine (AMSEA) and James Miller, Chairman, accepting for Philly Shipyard. The maritime industry's most prestigious award will be presented at the 48<sup>th</sup> annual gala at the Sheraton New York Times Square Hotel, New York City, on October 13, 2017. During this event, American seafarers will receive recognition for their specific acts of bravery and heroism while at sea.

Lieutenant General Kenneth R. Wykle, US Army (Ret.), announced the recipients at the 74<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of USS Trustees. He said: "We are pleased that the operator of Intermarine, the global leader in the transport of project, breakbulk and heavy lift cargo; AMSEA, a leading operator of ships for the U.S. Military Sealift Command and commercial customers; and a shipyard committed to building Jones Act vessels have accepted this year's AOTOS designation." He added: "All are committed to keeping the American fleet strong and American seafarers working."

Andre Grikitis has used a combination of personal commitment and business savvy to propel Intermarine LLC to the forefront of America's heavy lift and specialized cargo vessels. He began his career in the maritime industry as a chartering manager with World Trade Shipping, a New York-based vessel operator. In the early 1980s, he joined another New York-based vessel operator, T.J. Stevenson, as Vice President. In 1993, Mr. Grikitis acquired the vessel operations of his then employer, D.W. Lee, Inc., which he later renamed Cargoships, Inc. Cargoships became responsible for all ship chartering for Intermarine's services. In 2006, Mr. Grikitis became the Chief Operating Officer for Intermarine. He was responsible for the U.S. Flag division. During his term as President and CEO, and currently as Operating Chairman, Mr. Grikitis led the expansion and development of the company and its services. These include a U.S. Flag

fleet consisting of seven U.S. Flag multi-purpose vessels engaged in worldwide trade. He recently concluded a new-build program for the construction and delivery of state of the art, efficient and economical vessels that will deliver over the next five years. He received a Bachelor of Science in Business from Central Connecticut College and a master's degree in Criminal Justice from C.W. Post in New York.

Thomas Merrell leads one of America's most productive U. S.-flag vessel operators. He has been with General Dynamics American Overseas Marine (AMSEA) since 1984 and was named President in 2008. After graduating from State University of New York Maritime College at Fort Schuyler, NY, he sailed with Gulf Oil and was a captain with Amoco. After 20 years with AMSEA in 2004, he was named Vice President of Marine Operations, responsible for the efficiency of Marine Operations, Safety and Training, Insurance and Communications ashore and afloat for the American Overseas Marine fleet of over 21 vessels. During this time frame the USNS Stockham moved through two shipyards and was converted to MSC's first AFSB vessel. He also worked to provide liaison, selection, and evaluation of husbanding agencies worldwide. During his role as VP, he managed eight ships for AMSEA's Fast Sealift Ship (FSS) program and AMSEA's vessel safety record became an industry leader.

Captain Merrell's visionary leadership and commitment to hard work has made his company a significant resource for the U. S. Navy's Military Sealift Command and for commercial entities. He holds Masters Degrees in Management from Lesley College, and Math and Science Education from Simmons College. A retired Lieutenant from the U. S. Naval Reserves; he is affiliated with numerous professional and charitable maritime organizations.

James Miller is Chairman of the Board at Philly Shipyard and previously served as President and CEO of the Shipyard from June 2008 to April 2011. During his tenure at the shipyard, Mr. Miller was instrumental in reinvigorating the yard and positioning the yard for the increased oil transportation needs following the shale oil "revolution" in 2010 and onwards. Prior to his role at the shipyard, he was President of Aker Solutions Process and Construction (P&C) Americas, where he was responsible for the operations of seven business units.

Philly Shipyard, formerly Aker Philadelphia Shipyard, is a leading U.S. commercial shipyard constructing vessels for operation in the U.S. Jones Act market. Philly Shipyard possesses a state-of-the-art shipbuilding facility and has earned a reputation as the preferred provider of oceangoing merchant vessels.

Philly Shipyard was founded in 1997 by the City of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the United States Government and the Kvaerner Shipbuilding Division as Kvaerner Philadelphia Shipyard. It is located on a portion of the former Philadelphia Naval Shipyard which was closed in 1995. The shipyard was completely rebuilt from 1998-2000 and was optimally designed to support commercial shipbuilding operations. Since its inception, the yard has delivered 26 vessels (four containerships, twenty product tankers, two aframax tankers) representing more than 50% of the entire U.S. oceangoing commercial fleet production, for a variety of U.S. based shipping companies, including Matson, OSG, Crowley, American Shipping Company, American Petroleum Tankers and SeaRiver Maritime, Inc.

Proceeds from the AOTOS event benefit USS community services abroad for the U.S. merchant marine, seafarers of all nations, and U.S. government and military overseas. The recipients will share the evening with a group of American seafarers.

For AOTOS 2017, Michael Sacco, President of the Seafarers International Union, is Dinner Chairman. F. Anthony Naccarato of American Maritime Officers Service and Joseph Cox will be National Committee Co-Chairmen.

USS continues to provide community services for the U.S. Merchant Marine, the American Armed Forces, and seafarers of the world. USS, a non-profit agency established in 1942, operates centers in six foreign ports in Europe, Asia, and Africa and in the Indian Ocean, and also provides seagoing libraries to American vessels through its affiliate, the American Merchant Marine Library Association.

Edward Morgan is President and Roger Korner is Executive Director of USS. Information about the gala, sponsorships, tickets and advertising in the journal is available from USS AOTOS Coordinator, Barbara Spector Yeninas or Lisa Aurichio at [aotos@bsya.com](mailto:aotos@bsya.com) or (732) 817-0400 x 16. To contact USS directly, call: (201) 369-1100 or email: [ussammla@ix.netcom.com](mailto:ussammla@ix.netcom.com)

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