

Press Release

For Immediate Release



U. S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao to Receive AOTOS Award from United Seamen's Service at November 1, 2019 Gala

JERSEY CITY, NJ, JUNE 25, 2019 — The United Seamen's Service has announced that U.S. Secretary of Transportation, **The Honorable Elaine L. Chao**, will receive the 2019 Admiral of the Ocean Sea Award based on her career-long commitment to the maritime industry. The other, previously announced recipients are **James Given**, President of the Seafarers International Union of Canada; **Anil Mathur**, President and CEO of Alaska Tanker Corp.; and **Joseph Pyne**, Chairman of the Board of the Kirby Corporation.

The maritime industry's most prestigious award will be presented at the 50th annual AOTOS gala at the Sheraton New York Times Square Hotel, New York City, on November 1, 2019. During this event, a number of American seafarers will receive recognition for specific acts of bravery and heroism while at sea.

In announcing Secretary Chao's selection, Lieutenant General Kenneth Wykle, USA, (Ret.), AOTOS Committee Chairman, said, "We are honored that Secretary Chao will attend the AOTOS event and personally accept the award."

Secretary Chao assumed her office on January 31, 2017. She was previously Secretary of Labor under President George W. Bush.

Secretary Chao was raised in Queens, New York and subsequently earned her MBA from Harvard Business School. Early in her career, she specialized in transportation financing in the private sector. She began her executive career in public service working on transportation issues at the White House. She then served as Deputy Maritime Administrator, U.S. Department of Transportation; Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission; and, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

As U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Secretary Chao has been one of the strongest advocates for the U.S. maritime industry in Department history. She has consistently reiterated the need for a modern U.S.-flag fleet, crewed by skilled U.S. Merchant Mariners, as an important component of U.S. national security. To that end, more funding for MARAD has been requested than in any previous Administration's budgets-- \$682M for FY 2020. She also advocated for additional new school training ships. And as a signal of

her unprecedented support for the U.S. maritime industry, within the first six months of her tenure as U.S. Secretary of Transportation she visited the Ready Reserve fleet in Beaumont, Texas and toured two American flagged vessels. She also gave her first commencement speech as Secretary to the graduating class of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy on June 17, 2017.

She also served as Director of the Peace Corps, and later as President and CEO of the United Way of America.

“Secretary Chao brings to AOTOS her background in transportation, non-profit work, labor and a macro-view of all the sectors that apply to the mission of USS,” said General Wykle. “We look forward to greeting her on November 1.”

SIU President Michael Sacco described Secretary Chao as “someone who not only understands our industry, but also truly cares about the American worker. She is a tremendous leader and is universally respected, admired and trusted throughout our industry.”

The AOTOS Award commenced in 1970 and has honored more than 80 industry leaders, while the USS marks its 77th anniversary this year. USS President Edward Morgan noted, “Whether operating 144 service centers in 1942 to look after American seafarers and the military or ensuring we honor our true industry leaders as Admiral of the Ocean Sea, USS has continued to be an important presence in the American maritime industry.”

For AOTOS 2019, Sacco is Dinner Chairman. F. Anthony Naccarato of American Maritime Officers Service and Joseph Cox, President Emeritus of the Chamber of Shipping of America, 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.

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 at (973) 650-0105 or Lisa Aurichio at (917) 476-8366 or the staff at aotos@bsya.com or (732) 817-0400. To contact USS directly, call: (201) 369-1100 or email: ussammla@ix.netcom.com

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