



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



September 15, 2011

Hispanic Heritage Month

"America's strength lies in its diversity of backgrounds, experiences and skills. As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage month, we recognize the Hispanic Sailors who have proudly served in the Navy during every conflict since the American Revolution. Today, Hispanic Sailors, officers and civilians serve across every facet of naval operations and are critical to our success."
– Rear Adm. Patrick Brady, commander, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR)

The Navy joins the nation in observing [Hispanic Heritage Month](#) from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. This observance originated in 1968, when President Johnson proclaimed a National Hispanic Heritage week coinciding with the anniversaries of independence for Mexico, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. This was expanded in 1988 to encompass a month-long celebration of the histories, cultures and contributions of Americans who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. With a theme of "Many Backgrounds, Many Stories...One American Spirit," we celebrate the experiences and diversity of our nation's Hispanic Americans.

A Diverse Workforce, An Enriched Navy

Today, Hispanic Sailors, officers and civilians represent the very best of our nation and reflect the [long legacy of service by Hispanic Americans](#). Notable examples, past and present, include:

- Mexican-American civil rights leader Cesar Chavez, who served in the Navy from 1944-1946. In May, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus [announced](#) the naming of T-AKE 14, the 14th Lewis and Clark-class of dry cargo/ammunition ships, as [USNS Cesar Chavez](#).
- Hospital Corpsman [Luis E. Fonseca, Jr.](#), who was awarded the Navy Cross for saving the lives of several wounded Marines during the 2003 battle of An Nasiriyah, Iraq.
- [Rear Adm. Patrick Brady](#), commander, SPAWAR, who will receive the 2011 [Hispanic Engineer of the Year Award](#) from Great Minds in STEM Oct. 7 in Orlando, Fla., and [Leslie Y. Lugo](#) of Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division, winner of the organization's 2011 [Luminary Award](#).
- LT Lisseth Calvio of U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka, Japan, recipient of a LatinaStyle 2011 [Distinguished Military Service Award](#).

Diversity Outreach – Creating Connections, Highlighting Achievements

The Navy's [diversity strategy](#) includes sustained engagement with many diverse groups, increasing awareness of opportunities in the Navy. [Upcoming Events](#):

- [Hispanic Engineering, Science and Technology \(HESTEC\)](#) Week, Sept. 27 – Oct. 1, Edinburg, Texas
- [Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists, Inc. \(MAES\)](#) Symposium, Oct. 5-8, Oakland, Calif.
- [Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers \(SHPE\)](#) Conference, Oct. 26-30, Anaheim, Calif.

Key Messages

- Hispanic Americans have served at sea in every war of our nation's history. They have not stood on the fringes of service, but rather at its center as makers of American naval history.
- The Navy strives to reflect the nation it protects at all levels, to include the most senior leadership.
- The Navy supports the [Association of Naval Services Officers](#), an affinity group that fosters the professional development and mentorship of Hispanic Sailors, officers and civilians in the sea services.

Facts & Figures

- According to [2010 statistics](#) from the U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanics comprise 16.3% of the total United States population, or 50.5 million people, forming our nation's largest racial or ethnic minority.
- Our Navy reflects the diversity of our nation – today nearly 70,000 Hispanic Sailors, officers and DoN civilians serve in our Total Force.
- Three Hispanic flag officers, 158 Hispanic master chief petty officers and five Hispanic members of the Senior Executive Service lead our Total Force.