



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



Sept 14, 2010

Hispanic Heritage Month

"Today, contributions of Hispanics to the mission of the Navy are woven into every segment of naval operations. Recognizing that America's strength lies in its diversity, it is in the Department of the Navy's best interest to draw from every diverse group in our nation. We must leverage the strength of the diversity that our nation and our people have to offer."

– Hon. Juan M. Garcia, III, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

[Hispanic Heritage Month](#) was established in 1988 to celebrate the culture and traditions of those who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico, and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. While originally proclaimed as National Heritage Week in 1968, Hispanic Heritage Month is now celebrated from Sept. 15 – Oct. 15, coinciding with the anniversaries of the independence of five Latin American countries, Mexico and Chile. At a population of more than 48 million, Hispanics comprise our nation's largest ethnic or racial minority. This month's theme, "[Heritage, Diversity, Integrity, and Honor: The Renewed Hope of America](#)," reflects the unique experiences and contributions that Hispanics have made to our nation.

Recognizing Our Diversity

The Navy's strength is a product of its diversity. Hispanics have served bravely in the Navy through every war and conflict since the American Revolution. Today, more than 63,000 Hispanic and Latino Sailors and civilians serve in the Navy Total Force. Some notable Hispanics in our Navy, past and present, include:

- Naval aviator Cmdr. [Everett Alvarez](#), who was shot down over Vietnam in 1964 and withstood more than eight years of torture and solitary confinement before being released.
- [Cmdr. Yvette Davids](#) became the first Hispanic woman to command a surface combatant when she took command of the USS Curtiss (FFG 38) in 2007.
- [Edward Hildago](#) became the first Hispanic to serve as secretary of the Navy in 1979.
- [Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Phillip Azevedo](#) was awarded a Bronze Star for his actions during a 12-month individual augmentee deployment to Afghanistan in 2009.
- [Rear Adm. Samuel Perez](#), commander of Task Force 42, oversaw all port activities and coordination during Operation Unified Response in Haiti in January 2010.
- Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuel) 2nd Class Estella M. Garcia, of Naval Air Technical Training Center, and Mr. John J. Evans, of Naval Sea Systems Command, were recipients of the 2010 [National Organization of Mexican American Rights](#) (NOMAR) Meritorious Service Award.

Engaging in Diversity Outreach – Highlighting Achievements

Each year, the Navy's sustained outreach efforts contact a variety of diverse populations. Events highlighting the achievements of Hispanics during Hispanic Heritage Month include:

- [Hispanic Engineering, Science and Technology](#) Week, Sept. 26 - Oct. 2, Edinburg, Texas.
- [Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists](#) Symposium, Sept. 29 - Oct. 3, Anaheim, Calif.
- [Hispanic Engineer National Achievements Awards Corporation](#) Conference, Oct. 7-9, Orlando, Fla.

Key Messages

- The Navy proudly joins the nation in the commemoration of Hispanic Heritage Month and the celebration of our nation's diversity.
- The Navy employs top-performing Sailors and civilians whose diverse backgrounds, experiences and skills are necessary to meet today's challenges.
- The Navy supports the [Association of Naval Services Officers](#), an affinity group that fosters the advancement and recognition of Hispanic Officers in the sea services.

Facts & Figures

- Four admirals, three members of the senior executive service and 156 master chief petty officers of Hispanic heritage are leading the Navy today.
- A showcase of notable Hispanics in the Navy's history can be found at the Navy History and Heritage Command website at <http://www.history.navy.mil/>.
- The U.S. Navy's Spanish language recruiting website is available at www.elnavy.com.
- Presentation aids are available from the [Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute](#).