Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

National History Day Guides Students and Teachers Researching Untold Stories of Local U.S. Navy and Coast Guard Veterans from World War II

COLLEGE PARK, MD – November 11, 2026 – In honor of Veteran's Day, National History Day® (NHD) is proud to announce the **56 teachers** selected for its newest Silent Heroes® program, *Silent Heroes: Untold Stories of the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard in World War II*, sponsored by a grant from the Veterans Legacy Program in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. This fall, the selected teachers and more than **800 students** will research **over 120 Veterans** who served during World War II, continued to serve their communities after returning home, and are currently buried or memorialized in a U.S. national or state Veterans cemetery.

Teachers and students will meet monthly with historian Christopher Hamner, Ph.D. of George Mason University, to study the history of the Navy and Coast Guard, World War II, and the experience of Veterans who returned home to their communities. Supported by nine NHD research mentors, the student-teacher teams will use NHD-created materials and other resources such as Ancestry Classroom, Fold3, Newspapers.com, local libraries and historical societies, and Official Military Personnel Files requested from the National Personnel Records Center to guide their research.

"We are excited to continue the work of our *Silent Heroes* program in partnership with the National Cemetery Administration and tell the individual legacies of those who served in the Navy and Coast Guard during World War II," said National History Day Executive Director, Dr. Cathy Gorn. "Silent Heroes is a unique and rewarding experience for students to learn the history of World War II through the experiences of their Veterans, and in return, tell their untold stories. Not only do students gain historical thinking and research skills, but they also become connected to the personal and local histories that they have contributed to."

The participants will research their chosen Veterans' lives, military service, and community contributions this fall and tell the life and story of their Veterans' service by creating and publishing a profile on the Veterans Legacy Memorial and NHD's Silent Heroes website. See a sample Silent Hero profile here from NHD's 2025/2026 program, focusing on Marine Corps Veterans. Students will also prepare a eulogy to honor their Veterans at a spring 2027 visit to their local national cemetery. To accompany the digital profiles, NHD will produce video eulogies for the Veterans. See a sample NHD-produced eulogy here.

The teachers selected for the 2027 Silent Heroes program represent **32 states** and **50 U.S. national or state cemeteries.** NHD is proud to celebrate the following participating teachers and the Veterans they selected to research:

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

Teacher and School	U.S. Navy and Coast Guard Veterans	Cemetery
Ms. Falloncia Earnest Mabelvale Middle School Mabelvale, AR	U.S. Coast Guard Ship's Cook Second Class Bennie Fay Hollingshead U.S. Coast Guard Seaman Second Class Teral Oren Hardcastle	Little Rock National Cemetery Little Rock, AR
Ms. Donna Gustafson Santan Junior High School Chandler, AZ	U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Frank Rosorio Barreca U.S. Navy Aviation Machinist's Mate Vernon Clegg U.S. Coast Guard Yeoman First Class Beulah May Liston Haeberle	Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Marana Marana, AZ National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona Phoenix, AZ
Mr. Scott Sloat Arizona Agribusiness/Equine Center Prescott Valley, AZ	U.S. Navy Machinist's Mate First Class and U.S. Coast Guard Motor Machinist's Mate First Class Joseph H. Wyre U.S. Navy Quartermaster Second Class Marshall Earle Dobrott U.S. Navy Seaman First Class Preston Earl Pettus	Prescott National Cemetery, Prescott, AZ
Ms. Aditi Mehta Doshi Sherman Oaks Center for Enriched Studies (SOCES) Magnet Reseda, CA	U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander John Walter Reagan U.S. Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade Edwyna Elizabeth Korkuc Moyer U.S. Navy Painter Second Class	Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery San Diego, CA Los Angeles National Cemetery Los Angeles, CA

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

	William Bo Chi Tong	
Mr. Scott Cobun Mountain House High School Mountain House, CA	U.S. Navy Commander Harold Ralph Mazza U.S. Navy Commander John Hobart Rockwell, Jr.	Golden Gate National Cemetery San Bruno, CA
Mrs. Jennifer Harrington Irvine High School Irvine, CA	U.S. Navy Aviation Ordnanceman Third Class Edward Moran Mowbray U.S. Coast Guard Master Chief Electronics Technician Melvin Kealoha Bell Sr.	Riverside National Cemetery Riverside, CA
Mr. Sean Kercher Natomas High School Sacramento, CA	U.S. Navy Signalman Second Class Earl Paul Bauer U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander William Stanley "Stan" Aldrich	Sacramento Valley National Cemetery Dixon, CA
Mrs. Marie Arnett St. Mary Catholic Virtue School Littleton, CO	U.S. Navy Aviation Metalsmith Second Class John Charles Bink U.S. Coast Guard Coxswain Louis Earl Lehr	Fort Logan National Cemetery Denver, CO
Mr. John Smith-Horn Timothy Edwards Middle School South Windsor, CT	U.S. Coast Guard Yeoman First Class Anna Pulito Story U.S. Navy Ship's Service Man (Barber) Third Class James Cassarino	Connecticut State Veterans Cemetery Middletown, CT
Ms. Sandra Pagliughi Alice B. Landrum Middle School Ponte Vedra Beach, FL	U.S. Navy Aviation Machinist's Mate (Jet Engine Mechanic) Petty Officer First Class Herman Adolph Jones U.S. Navy Storekeeper Third Class Margaretta Marie *Busch* Woodward Smith	Jacksonville National Cemetery Jacksonville, FL

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

Dr. Lisa Babbage Louise Radloff Middle School Duluth, GA	U.S. Navy Signalman Second Class Kenneth Vincent Meyer U.S. Navy Cook Third Class William Henry Spear	Georgia National Cemetery Canton, GA
Mrs. Heather Meskimen Independence Junior High School Palos Heights, IL	U.S. Coast Guard Ensign Willard Glenn Taber U.S. Navy Aviation Ordnanceman Third Class William Merritt Banta	Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery Elwood, IL
Mrs. Kristin Rentschler Columbia City High School Columbia, IN	U.S. Navy Aviation Ordnanceman First Class Chester Nyle Parker U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy Gunnery Sergeant Verle Vinson Wiley	Marion National Cemetery Marion, IN
Ms. Cheryl Smith Johnston Middle / High School Johnston, IA	U.S. Navy Ship's Cook Second Class James Arthur Hudson U.S. Navy Motor Machinist's Mate First Class Robert Patrick Reyes	Iowa Veterans Cemetery at Adel Adel, IA
Mrs. Stefany Wells Van Buren County Community School Keosauqua, IA	U.S. Navy Seaman First Class Donald Patrick Beaird U.S. Navy Fire Controlman First Class Morris William Cloud	Keokuk National Cemetery Keokuk, IA
Mr. Jeffrey Schuh Seaman Middle School Topeka, KS	U.S. Navy Machinist's Mate First Class Louis Aloysius Aaron U.S. Navy Seaman Second Class Vance Emil Ambrose	Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery Leavenworth, KS
Mr. Nicholas Junker Republic County Jr./Sr. High School Belleville, KS	U.S. Navy Aviation Radioman Third Class Rix Donald Shanline U.S. Navy Gunner's Mate Third Class Vincent James "Jim" Scalia	Kansas Veterans Cemetery at Fort Riley Manhattan, KS

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

Mr. James Clapp Powell County High School Stanton, KY	U.S. Navy Specialist Artificer Second Class Dudley Abbott U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard Gunner's Mate Second Class Kenneth Durwood Robinson Sr.	Camp Nelson National Cemetery Nicholasville, KY
Ms. Caroline Richards Charles M Sumner Learning Campus Sullivan, ME	U.S. Navy Aviation Radioman Petty Officer Third Class James Henry Bezanson, Jr. U.S. Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade John Ryder Driscoll	Acadia National Cemetery Jonesboro, ME
Ms. Taila McKenzie William Wirt Middle School Riverdale, MD	U.S. Navy Sonarman Third Class Dr. Milton Julian Bailey U.S. Navy Storekeeper (Disbursing) First Class Shirley Louise *Vlasak* Baltz	Cheltenham State Veterans Cemetery Cheltenham, MD
Mr. Coby Treadway St. Mary's Ryken High School Leonardtown, MD	U.S. Navy Aviation Technician's Mate John Strong Mackenzie U.S. Navy Personnelman (Recruiter) Esther Jeanne *DerVartanian* Oliver	National Memorial Cemetery at Quantico Triangle, VA
Mr. Benjamin Guidot Severn Run High School Severn, MD	U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard Radioman Navigation Petty Officer Second Class Armin Francis Mohr U.S. Coast Guard Seaman Apprentice Barbara Winifred Newkirk Metzger U.S. Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade Jack Thomas Parke	Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery Owings Mills, MD
Ms. Allison Gibbs Lynn English High School Lynn, MA	U.S. Coast Guard Ship's Cook Second Class Mary Louise *Smethurst* Lloyd U.S. Navy Motor Machinist's	Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Winchendon Winchendon, MA

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

	Mate Third Class Robert John Dufour	
Mrs. Shawn M Pashby Emerson Elementary Fraser, MI	U.S. Navy Steward's Mate First Class Clarence E. Isabell Jr. U.S. Navy Fireman Second Class Herman Allen Siersma	Great Lakes National Cemetery Holly, MI
Mrs. Tiffany Manning Beach Middle School Chelsea, MI	U.S. Coast Guard Seaman First Class Donald James Truran Sr. U.S. Navy Seaman First Class Harry Arthur Dion Sr.	Great Lakes National Cemetery Holly, MI
Ms. Elizabeth Green College and Career Technical Institute Pascagoula, MS	U.S. Coast Guard Motor Machinist's Mate First Class Mathias Scotty Anderson	Biloxi National Cemetery Biloxi, MS
Dr. Megan Burian Marquette High School Chesterfield, MO	U.S. Navy Seaman First Class Carl Lewis Nagel U.S. Navy Seaman First Class James William Dorsey	Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery St. Louis, MO
Mr. Thomas DuSold Colstrip High School Colstrip, MT	U.S. Navy Aviation Ordnance Third Class Frank Everett "Bud' Holter U.S. Navy Lieutenant Gordon Wesley Spear	Eastern Montana Veterans Cemetery Miles City, MT
Mrs. Devon Mullman Butte Central High School Butte, MT	U.S. Navy Storekeeper First Class Lillian Elvira *Kentta* Nethig U.S. Coast Guard Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Petty Officer Olani Elmer Aronen	Montana State Veterans Cemetery Fort Harrison, MT
Ms. Sarah Lyda Lavina Public Schools Lavina, MT	U.S. Navy Aviation Ordnanceman Glen Douglas Hall U.S. Navy Aviation	Yellowstone National Cemetery Laurel, MT

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

	Ordnanceman Third Class Robert Lloyd Lubbers	
Mrs. Amy Diegel Bennington Middle School Bennington, NE	U.S. Coast Guard Watertender Second Class Bernard Leonard Kush U.S. Navy Seaman First Class Lionel Leon Cutliff	Omaha National Cemetery Omaha, NE
Mrs. Sarah Burr Syracuse Middle/High School Syracuse, NE	U.S. Coast Guard Electrician's Mate First Class Fred Smith Haeberle U.S. Navy Yeoman First Class Howard Arthur Linn U.S. Navy Radioman Second Class Reginald Fredrick Pyle	Omaha National Cemetery Omaha, NE
Mrs. Megan Philbrook Andover Elementary / Middle School Andover, NH	U.S. Coast Guard Radioman Second Class Armand Fred Wood U.S. Coast Guard Motor Machinist's Mate First Class Ottawell Andrew Henry	New Hampshire State Veterans Cemetery Boscawen, NH
Ms. Lauren Connolly Kearsarge Regional High School North Sutton, NH	U.S. Navy Yeoman (Stenographer) First Class John Patrick Walsh U.S. Navy Machinist's Mate Third Class Richard Leander Maes	New Hampshire State Veterans Cemetery Boscawen, NH
Ms. Amy Martin Page Santa Fe High School Santa Fe, NM	U.S. Coast Guard Yeoman Third Class Dorothy Louise *O'Hara* Butler U.S. Navy Boatswain's Mate Second Class Clyde James Floyd Faucett	Santa Fe National Cemetery Santa Fe, NM
Mrs. Elizabeth Ramirez	U.S. Coast Guard Fireman David	Santa Fe National Cemetery

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

Edward Ortiz Middle School Santa Fe, NM	Ernest Gallegos U.S. Navy Chief Radioman Joseph Ignatius Butler II	Santa Fe, NM
Mr. Anthony Ruggiero P.S./M.S. 122 Astoria, NY	U.S. Coast Guard Machinery Technician First Class Martin W. Curry U.S. Navy Cook Petty Officer First Class James Edward Blakely	Calverton National Cemetery Calverton, NY
Mrs. Christine Shouldis William E. Grady Career and Technical Education High School Brooklyn, NY	U.S. Coast Guard Chief Pay Clerk John J. Hagmaier U.S. Navy Seaman First Class William Leonard Agnell	Long Island National Cemetery Farmingdale, NY
Ms. Patricia Robblee Lejeune High School Lejeune, NC	U.S. Coast Guard Ship's Cook Enoch Arden Parker, Sr. U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Algie "Maury" Maurice Stuart, Jr.	Coastal Carolina State Veterans Cemetery Jacksonville, NC
Mrs. Amy Boswell Ms. Whitney Cooper Valle Springs Middle School Arden, NC	U.S. Navy Sara Ellen *Shirley* Musolf U.S. Navy Electrician's Mate Vernon Otis Rhodes	Western Carolina State Veterans Cemetery Black Mountain, NC
Mr. Zach Hochhalter Fargo North High School Fargo, ND	U.S. Navy Commander Dr. Glenn R. Melvey U.S. Navy Aviation Machinist's Mate Second Class Orville Kenneth Holsen	Fargo National Cemetery Fargo, ND
Mrs. Lauren Noble Dominion Middle School Columbus, OH	U.S. Navy Apprentice Seaman Melvin Busha Nowling Sr. U.S. Navy Sonarman (Harbor Defense) Third Class George Maynard Pittenger	Dayton National Cemetery Dayton, OH

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

Ms. Colleen Wise Lamberton & Wilson Middle School, Carlisle High School Carlisle, PA	U.S. Navy Captain George Theodor Steidel U.S. Navy Boatswain's Mate First Class Angelo Ignatius Bruscia	Indiantown Gap National Cemetery Annville, PA
Mrs. Pamela Silverblatt Canon-McMillan Middle School Canonsburg, PA	U.S. Coast Guard Commander Charles August Mautz III U.S. Navy Storekeeper First Class Rita Anne *Maio* Magill	National Cemetery of the Alleghenies Bridgeville, PA
Mrs. Shawn Lucas Neshannock Junior/Senior High School New Castle, PA	U.S. Coast Guard EN-2 George Theodore Szilvasi U.S. Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade Margaret “Rose” Judy *Skeehan* Lackner U.S. Navy Gunner’s Mate Richard Harry Ligashesky U.S. Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade Vincent Frederick Lackner	National Cemetery of the Alleghenies Bridgeville, PA
Ms. Maureen McGuirl Jamestown Lawn Avenue School Jamestown, RI	U.S. Navy Gunner’s Mate First Class Francis “Tiny” Earl Clark U.S. Navy Lieutenant Walter George Swistak	Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery Exeter, RI
Mrs. Christina O’Brien North Providence High School North Providence, RI	U.S. Navy Electronic Technician’s Mate Second Class Judge Thomas Domenic Pucci U.S. Navy Construction Electrician’s Mate Chief Petty Officer William Orville Grimshaw	Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery Exeter, RI
Ms. Caroline Milhorn Spring Hill High School	U.S. Coast Guard Chief Machinery Technician Third	Fort Jackson National Cemetery Columbia, SC

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

Chapin, SC	Class Robert Louis Norquist	
Ms. Jennifer Brooks Spring Hill High School Chapin, SC	U.S. Coast Guard Coxswain Louis Douglas Barden U.S. Navy Carpenter's Mate (Construction Battalion) Donald Leroy McCune	Fort Jackson National Cemetery Columbia, SC
Mr. Marc Turner Spring Hill High School Chapin, SC	U.S. Coast Guard Yeoman (Typist) George William Masters Sr. U.S. Coast Guard George Washington Butler III U.S. Navy Signalman Second Class Carl Mounts Estep U.S. Navy Yeoman First Class Eleanor Pierson *Leech* Lewis	Fort Jackson National Cemetery Columbia, SC
Mrs. Kim Guthrie Palmetto Christian Academy Gaffney Gaffney, SC	U.S. Navy Gunner's Mate Third Class John Dacus Mahon, Sr. U.S. Navy Seaman First Class Christian Stephen Kristup Sorensen	M.J. Dolly Cooper Veterans Cemetery Anderson, SC
Ms. Susan Cagley Grace Baptist Academy Chattanooga, TN	U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy Permanent Commissioned Staff David Alexander Clark U.S. Navy Lieutenant John Lynde Anderson	Chattanooga National Cemetery Chattanooga, TN
Dr. Gerald Holland Smithfield High School Smithfield, VA	U.S. Coast Guard Lieutenant Commander John Joseph Macionis U.S. Coast Guard Aviation Machinist's Mate First Class Zenas Elbert Fearing Sr.	Albert G. Horton, Jr., Memorial Veterans Cemetery Suffolk, VA

Mary Walsh
Communications Manager
mary@nhd.org
P: (301) 314-8379
nhd.org

Mr. Andrew Abeyounis Grafton High School Yorktown, VA	U.S. Navy Teleman (Mailman) Minnie Cleva Tisdale U.S. Navy Commissaryman Third Class Blas F "Bill" Villanueva Sr.	Albert G. Horton, Jr., Memorial Veterans Cemetery Suffolk, VA
Ms. Sarah Pulliam Portage High School Portage, WI	U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman First Class Benjamin D. Vukos U.S. Navy Aviation Machinist's Mate Third Class Betty M. Whitney Prieve	Central Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery Waupaca, WI
Mrs. Cepia-Grace Buchanan H.W. Longfellow School Milwaukee, WI	U.S. Coast Guard Boatswain's Mate Second Class Roman Joseph Piotrowski Sr. U.S. Coast Guard Apprentice Seaman Margaret Raimer Braam	Wood National Cemetery Milwaukee, WI

###

About National History Day

NHD is a non-profit organization based in College Park, Maryland, that seeks to improve the teaching and learning of history. Established in 1974, NHD currently engages more than half a million students each year in conducting original research on historical topics of interest and supports teachers through professional development opportunities. Students present their research as a documentary, exhibit, paper, performance, or website. Projects compete first at the local and affiliate levels, where the top entries are invited to the annual National Contest at the University of Maryland at College Park. NHD is sponsored in part by the Joyful Noise Charitable Foundation, The Better Angels Society, Bezos Family Foundation, Library of Congress, Dr. Scholl Foundation, Behring Global Educational Foundation, and the National Park Service. For more information, visit nhd.org.

MEDIA CONTACTS: mary@nhd.org / DKCNHD@dkcnews.com