

Sea Service Awards recognize top service members

Story and photo by
MC2 Michael A. Lantron

Navy Region Hawai'i Public Affairs

Forty-one Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen were honored during the 2008 Navy League Sea Service Awards sponsored by the Honolulu Council Navy League at the Hale Koa Hotel in Honolulu on Dec. 12.

The 48th annual ceremony was held to recognize excellence in service of select enlisted personnel and junior grade officers of the sea services assigned to commands in the Hawai'i region.

Also during the ceremony, Donny Salcedo received the 2008 George S.B. Walters Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard Award for civilian shipyard employees. Salcedo was chosen for his overall outstanding performance, leadership, enthusiasm, initiative and team spirit during the 12-month-long inactivation of USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (SSN 708).

Keynote speaker Marine Corps Col. Robert Rice, commanding officer of Marine Corps Base Hawai'i - Kaneohe, recognized each of the awardees as true leaders of their respective commands.

"The Sea Service awards go to leaders," said Rice. "You are here because of your leadership abilities and your command leaders recognized something special in you and nominated you for these prestigious awards."

Awards were presented to each winner by Rice and Don Morrison, president of the Honolulu Navy League. After each of the honorees received their award, Rice and Morrison announced the winners of the Sea Service Grand Award to the top enlisted and junior officer.

Recipients of the Sea Service Grand Award were Navy Lt. Jenna Raunig, assigned to Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific, and Naval Aircrewman Mechanic 1st Class (AW/NAC) Amy Smith, assigned to Patrol Squadron Four Seven at Marine Corps Base Hawai'i.

Raunig stated that for her and her shipmates to be acknowledged lets them know their hard work is noticed in the military community.

"I was very humbled to be nominated and surprised to be the winner," said Raunig. "I just want to thank the Navy League for recognizing all our hard work and this type of encouragement helps us know we're doing the right thing."

Smith believes that leadership works in a cycle, as she learned tricks of the trade from her leaders as a junior Sailor and now she teaches what she has learned to her junior Sailors.

"My leadership throughout my career has molded me to where I am today," said Smith. "I learn from those who have gone before me, make any changes necessary, and make sure I pass it on to others for when my time in the military is over."

Awardees were selected based on overall outstanding performance of duty, individual achievement, excellence in leadership, participation in community activities, and outstanding military bearing and appearance.

The Navy League is a worldwide civilian organization consisting of more than 65,000 members in more than 250 councils.