



For Immediate Release

For More Information Contact:
Susan Rak-Blanchard
Director, Communications & Marketing
251.431.8641

Mobile Area Chamber's Military Appreciation Event Recognizes Current & Future Military Leaders

- This is the 33rd annual event and the first to be held virtually
- Lt. Col. Louis J. Lartigue Sr. (Ret.) honored with the Gen. Gary Cooper Outstanding Service Award

[July 2, 2020] Today, the Mobile Area Chamber and its Military Affairs Committee presented five awards during the broadcast of its 33rd annual Military Appreciation event, and recognized 14 Junior ROTC cadets from area high schools.

“As so many of you know, the Mobile area boasts a high concentration of veterans and veterans are an integral part of business in Mobile,” said Bill Sisson, the Chamber’s president and CEO.

The 2020 award winners are:

Gen. Gary Cooper Outstanding Service Award

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Louis J. Lartigue Sr. (Ret.) received the Chamber’s Gen. Gary Cooper Outstanding Service Award. Lartigue attended high school at McGill Institute in Mobile and college at the University of Southern Mississippi, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in personnel and industrial management and completed the ROTC program as a Distinguished Military Graduate and was commissioned in the Signal Corps.

He joined the U.S. Army in 1968, serving in a variety of capacities, including the 9th Infantry Division in Vietnam, staff positions with the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group in Thailand/Laos, and at the headquarters of the U.S. Army Communications Command, headquarters of the U.S. Army Europe and headquarters of the Department of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics at the Pentagon.



Lartigue continued his education, earning a master's degree in logistics management from the Florida Institute of Technology. Following his army career, Lartigue worked in the private sector for 15 years, before returning to Mobile and serving in a variety of volunteer roles, including president of the South Alabama Veterans Council.

The award is named in honor of Mobile's Gary Cooper who served as a Major General in the U.S. Marines, and is given to a member of the community that best embodies the attributes he displaced throughout his career – achievement, courage, excellence and humility.

Navy League Awards

The Mobile Council of the U.S. Navy League presented two awards to members of the Sea Services.



The Hugh M. Casteix award was given to U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer Daniel Eisenhard, who is the senior law enforcement boarding officer at Sector Mobile. He was recognized for spearheading eight surge operations to combat illegal charter vessels and boating in the Gulf Coast region, contributing to multiple joint agencies operations at the ports and his role as a Customs Border Patrol vessel crew member. Among his volunteer activities, Eisenhard established a youth flag football league in west Mobile.



U.S. Navy Chief Damage Controlman William Purhamus received the Rear Adm. J. Lloyd Abbot Award. He is currently serving as the ship superintendent for the future USS CANBERRA (LCS 30) under construction at Austal USA and scheduled to launch in the spring of 2021. His volunteer efforts are centered largely around supporting the Shiners Hospital for Children.

South Alabama Marine of the Year

U.S. Marine Corporal Alex Massey was named the South Alabama Marine of the Year. He is an administrative specialist with the 3rd Force Reconnaissance Company in Mobile. Massey was recognized for his work on the units mailing equipment that saved the Marine Corps thousands of dollars. In 2019, Massey completed the Corporals Course at Marine Forces Reserve Headquarters where he was a Distinguished Graduate and Class Commander. He volunteers his time at the Mobile Ronald McDonald House and supporting the Toys for Tots campaign.



Military Spouse of the Year



Lynn Lugo was awarded the Military Spouse of the Year by the U.S. Coast Guard Aviation Training Center Mobile. Lugo was honored for her volunteer service at Baker High School, serving as on the Parent Teachers Student Association, the Soccer Booster Board and Baseball Booster Board. She also volunteers at St. Paul’s Episcopal Campus Store, is the parliamentarian for the ATC’s Spouse’s Club’s Executive Board and has helped plan numerous events for ATC and Sector Mobile families.

Mobile County Public School System JROTC Awards

While not yet members of the Armed Forces, Junior ROTC cadets are young members of our community learning military skills as well as traits of good citizenship and public service. Unfortunately, we are not able to have the cadets at the ceremony due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recognized cadets were:

School

Baker High School
B.C. Rain High School
Blount High School
Bryant High School
Chickasaw High School
Citronelle High School
Davidson High School
LeFlore High School
Mary G. Montgomery HS
Murphy High School
Satsuma High School
Theodore High School
Vigor High School
Williamson High School

Cadet Rank

Cadet Major
Cadet First Sergeant
Cadet Staff Sergeant
Cadet Lieutenant Colonel
Cadet Captain
Cadet Captain
Cadet Lieutenant Commander
Cadet Second Lieutenant
Cadet Lieutenant Colonel
Cadet Staff Sergeant
Cadet Major
Cadet Command Sergeant Major
Cadet Major
Cadet Major

Cadet Name

Jacob Hollifield
Jacqurius McDowell
Ajia Janae Blackmon
Jonathan Garden
Sarah Rhodes
Brianna N. Dykes
Levi Meade
Cameron Harness
Ava C. Ndonga
Shaunte Horace
Julianne Lowe
Amber Havard
Mikiah Lilly
Jamiah Nicole Hendricks

“Mobile has a rich history of dedication to the defense of our country. Mobile is currently home to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Mobile District), the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Mobile and the U.S. Coast Guard Air Training Center (ATC), as well as U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, U.S. Army Reserve and Alabama National Guard units. Coupled with that, we have a strong business environment and growing industrial base that supports our military,” said U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant (Ret.) Chris Curry with the Mobile Airport Authority and chairman of the Chamber’s Military Affairs Committee.

###

About the Mobile Area Chamber

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce is a private business organization with more than 1,800 members that employ 98,255 people, and the economic developer for the City of Mobile and Mobile County. We represent business interests of the Mobile region, advocating for business-friendly legislative policies and serve as a resource for small businesses and area entrepreneurs. Additional information is on the Chamber’s, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).