



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



September 14, 2009

Hispanic Heritage Month

"The opportunities afforded by the United States Navy to the diverse people of our country is not duplicated anywhere else on the planet. With our rich heritage, Sailors are uniquely prepared to lead change and innovation in all that we do. This will be the key to our success."

– Rear Adm. Albert Garcia, III, Deputy Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command

The U.S. Navy proudly joins the rest of the nation in honoring Hispanic Heritage Month, which celebrates the rich cultural heritage of our largest linguistic and ethnic minority in a month-long tribute to Hispanic contributions. Approximately 63,000 Hispanic active duty Sailors, 9,100 Hispanic Navy civilians, and 6,100 Hispanic reserve Sailors currently serve the nation. This year's Department of Defense theme is "[Embracing the fierce urgency of now.](#)"

Prominent Hispanics in our Navy

- Edward Hidalgo was the first Hispanic to serve as the Secretary of the Navy from 1979-81. His advocacy of recruiting more Hispanics into the Navy culminated in the founding of our Hispanic-based sea services affinity group, the Association of Naval Services Officers (ANSO).
- [David Glasgow Farragut](#) was the Navy's first flag officer, earning the rank of rear admiral in 1862. He later rose to the rank of four-star admiral. His most notable service was during the American Civil War. [USS Farragut \(DDG 99\)](#) was commissioned on June 10, 2006. It is the 76th Aegis warship in the fleet. Her motto is, "Prepared for Battle."
- Hispanic flag officers currently serving: Rear Admirals [Patrick Brady](#), [Albert Garcia](#) and [Samuel Perez](#).
- Capt. [Kathlene Contres](#) is the Navy's highest ranking female Hispanic line officer on active duty. In 2005, she became the first Hispanic woman to lead the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute ([DEOMI](#)) since it was established in 1971.
- Cmdr. Yvette Davids, became the first Hispanic woman to command a surface combatant in 2007. She commanded [USS Curtiss \(FFG 38\)](#).
- Cmdr. Eugene Valencia Jr., a Navy fighter ace, is credited with 23 air victories in the Pacific during World War II. A pilot of Hellcats, he led the most successful fighter plane division in American naval history and is the Navy's third ranking ace of all time.

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage month

Embrace the fierce urgency of now by celebrating Hispanic Heritage month in active and engaging ways.

- Encourage Sailors of Hispanic descent to participate in affinity groups like [ANSO](#). ANSO offers its members mentorship, professional development and affords an opportunity to discuss common concerns.
- Read *Mentoring and Diversity* by David Clutterbuck and Belle Rose Raggins, a [Navy Diversity Directorate recommendation](#). This book explores how organizations develop diverse mentoring relationships with a global perspective.
- Find out how to participate in [Upcoming Diversity Outreach Events](#).

Key Messages

- Hispanic Americans have served at sea in every war of our nation's history. They have not stood on the fringes of the service, but at its center as makers of American naval history.
- The Navy strives to reflect the face of the nation. Further, we want an officer corps that is reflective of the enlisted force it leads.

Facts & Figures

- 24 Hispanic Americans have attained the rank of Navy admiral.
- The term Hispanic refers to Spanish-speaking people of any race. In the 2000 Census, more than 35 million people identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino.
- Hispanic Heritage Month coincides with the national independence anniversaries of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.