

## The Christening of JAMES

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On August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the Coast Guard's fifth National Security Cutter was christened Coast Guard Cutter JAMES at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, MS. The cutter is named for Captain Joshua James of the U.S. Lifesaving Service.

Brian Cuccias, the president of Ingalls Shipbuilding, presided over the ceremony which culminated with the ship's sponsor, Charlene James Benoit, christening the cutter JAMES by breaking a bottle of champagne on the bow. Mrs. Benoit is the great-great-niece of Joshua James, and provides a direct link between the cutter and its namesake.



*The ship's sponsor, Charlene James Benoit, christens JAMES. With her, from left to right, is the Prospective Commanding Officer CAPT Andrew Tiongson, Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard VADM Peter Neffenger, and President of Ingalls Shipbuilding Brian Cuccias.*

Joshua James is a legendary figure in Coast Guard history. His career of lifesaving started at the age of 15 when he began volunteering with the Massachusetts Humane Society. Over the course of 60 years, James devoted his life to the safety and protection of mariners; saving over 600 lives from the peril of the seas and reaching the rank of Captain in the U.S. Lifesaving Service. The U.S. Lifesaving Service eventually merged with the Revenue Cutter Service to form the modern day U.S. Coast Guard.



*VADM Peter Neffenger delivers the keynote speech at the christening of JAMES in Pascagoula, MS.*

The Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard, Vice Admiral Peter Neffenger, was the keynote speaker for the ceremony. VADM Neffenger's speech covered the life of Joshua James, the role he played in the U.S. Lifesaving Service, the role of the modern day Coast Guard

in the world, and the role that the new National Security will play in the Coast Guard fleet. During his speech, he said, “The boundaries surrounding illegal migrant activity, weapons, drug smuggling, and terrorism continue to blur and converge. The challenges created by that convergence require a 21st Century Joshua James. We need his spirit and his adherence to our values. We need his adaptability, his staying power, and his multi-mission focus.”

The newly constructed National Security Cutters are the most technologically advanced cutters in the Coast Guard fleet. They are designed to perform a variety of missions and operations at sea including: national defense, port security, alien migrant interdiction, maritime law enforcement, environmental defense, search and rescue, and drug interdiction. The National Security Cutters are well suited to the multi-mission focus that VADM Neffenger spoke of in his speech.

The Coast Guard will take delivery of Cutter JAMES from Ingalls Shipbuilding in June of 2015 and, the cutter will be formally commissioned into service on or about August of 2015. The Prospective Commanding Officer of JAMES, U.S. Coast Guard Captain Andrew Tiongson, had this to say about the christening of JAMES and the eventual commissioning: “One of the greatest aspects of a career in the Coast Guard is selfless service to our Nation and the world. Much like Joshua James did for 60 years, today’s Coast Guard men and women put the needs and safety of others above their own. The JAMES, along with the future crews who sail onboard her, will carry forward the legacy of service left by her namesake.”



*The National Security Cutter is 418 feet long with a maximum beam (width) of 54 feet. It has a range of 12,000 nautical miles, a crew of 110 personnel, and can carry two helicopters and three small boats. The ship has a propulsion plant consisting of two diesel engines and a gas turbine producing a total of 50,000 shaft horsepower.*