



Recognizing Service

On Monday, January 18, Americans across the country will celebrate life and legacy of Civil Rights leader Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. While Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is an official federal holiday, it is the only official holiday designated as a national day of service. On this day, Americans are encouraged to volunteer in honor of the Civil Rights leader and his enduring message of peace and justice. To honor this message of service, this month we will explore the Navy's humanitarian efforts as well as other Navy-related acts of service, including a sailor's love of service for their country, how sailors commemorated their time in the service, and the invaluable service NMAS volunteers and how you can get involved with the Museum.

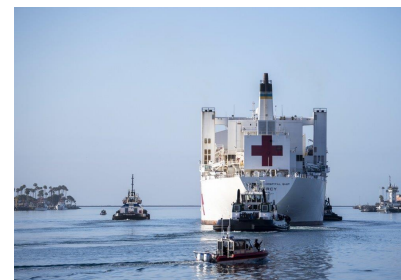
Noteworthy Scuttlebutt

Navy Humanitarian Efforts

In addition to defending our country, United States Navy Sailors frequently serve in humanitarian missions ranging from hurricane and earthquake relief, rescue at sea, refugee assistance, medical deployments, and more. The Navy's long history of humanitarian support remains a hallmark of the service today.

One early example of Navy humanitarian service involves support after the 9.0 magnitude earthquake shook Japan killing thousands of people and washing away entire cities from the ensuing tsunami on September 01, 1923. The Navy and American Red Cross supported relief efforts including amazing acts of heroism. Ensign Thomas Ryan rescued a woman trapped under rubble with two broken legs, rendering her unable to move. For his bravery and service, Ensign Ryan received the Medal of Honor.

In the spring of 2020, the Navy's hospital ships USNS *Comfort* (T-AH-20) and *Mercy* (T-AH-19) were deployed to New York and California to aid in COVID-19 patient care. Beginning with the USS *Red Rover* during the Civil War, American hospital ships provide medical care for the ill and wounded. [Learn about the evolution of hospital ships and their role in supporting military personnel and civilians.](#)



To discover more about the American Sailor and the Navy's humanitarian efforts, visit the [Naval History and Heritage Command's U.S. Naval Humanitarian Operations page](#).

[Learn More](#)

ENMAS Exhibits: Documenting Service



Since the United States Navy's beginnings in 1775, Sailors have served their country through honor, courage, and commitment. To commemorate and documents their time while serving, some sailors write letters or keep diaries. Other sailors document their service through art. One Sailor, J.A. Fort, who served during the Mexican-American War, embroidered his seabag (ca. 1848) with patriotic designs honoring his experiences and service while

in the Navy. This artifact is currently on display in "Sails Unfurled: the Dawn of the United States Navy."

Diving into History

In a 2019 blog post, NMAS Volunteer and Guest Blogger Jay Branson details the service of Joseph Brauneis, a radio operator/gunner during World War II. Like many sailors before and after him, Brauneis' time in the Navy changed his view of life, teaching him to "be gentle," and influencing how he lived his post-war life. The blog also highlights Brauneis' connection to Jay and the museum. A former NMAS volunteer, Jay brought warmth, passion, and a love of Navy history to his service to the museum.

[Read the Blog Post](#)



Enlisted sailors are often at the front lines of humanitarian service. With the signing of the Geneva Accords in 1954, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese residents moved between north and South Vietnam with the majority of them fleeing the Communist north. In an article by United States Navy Seabee Museum Director Dr. Lara Godbille, [learn more about how United States Navy Seabees](#)

[aided refugees during this operation.](#)



Education and Events

Despite many challenges related to COVID-19, NMAS' volunteers continued to serve in 2020, contributing over 650 hours of service to the museum. Through virtual service, they dedicated their time and energy to the museum by assisting with photography research, educational support, collection and exhibit work, and other invaluable service to the museum.

Honoring their efforts over the past year, this month we celebrate five volunteers receiving the Bronze Presidential Volunteer Service Award and two receiving the Silver Presidential Volunteer Service Award. To obtain these levels of service, a volunteer had to give 100-249 hours for the Bronze level and 250-499 hours for the Silver. Thank you to our volunteers for continuing to support the museum and our mission of telling the stories of the enlisted sailor!

Not without sadness, this fall NMAS lost one of our most robust and cheerful volunteers, Mr. Steve Winston. A friendly face and exuberant and imaginative storyteller, Steve was a tremendous supporter of the museum and its mission of telling the story of the enlisted sailor. This month we honor him and his service to the museum by sharing his [My Sailor Story](#).

[Read the Story](#)

How to Get Involved

Volunteering for NMAS has gone digital! Like many things in 2020, NMAS now supports digital volunteering for those looking to donate their time and creativity to supporting the history of enlisted Sailors. There are opportunities in all museum departments including collections and archives, education, and exhibits.

As a thank you, there are volunteer events throughout the year as well as early access to new exhibits. No previous military service required, and you only need an interest in the Navy's history and a passion to tell it.

Visit our [volunteer info page](#) or contact nmas.fct@navy.mil for more details.

[Find Out More](#)

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