

COMMANDER NAVAL SURFACE FORCES EXPERT SHIPHANDLER AWARD



This award recognizes Surface Warfare professionals that excel in the art of naval shiphandling.

LIEUTENANT THOMAS J. WESTER *USS HOWARD (DDG 83)*

Lieutenant Tom Wester is a native of Brookfield, Wisconsin. He earned a Bachelors of Science in Applied Mathematics from the United States Naval Academy and was commissioned in 2016. He also holds a Masters of Management Science and Engineering from Stanford University.

At sea, LT Wester served as the Main Propulsion Officer and Assistant Chief Engineer aboard USS HOWARD (DDG 83), earning his Surface Warfare Officer pin while deploying to the FOURTH and SEVENTH Fleet Areas of Operations. Following his first tour, he continued on HOWARD, serving as Navigator for her homeport shift to Forward Deployed Naval Forces – Japan and first two SEVENTH Fleet Patrols.

Ashore, LT Wester served as an Analyst for the Institute of Defense Analyses and Project Manager at the Defense Innovation Unit, where he was also a plankowner. He currently serves as a Battle Watch Captain at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Allied Maritime Command.

Wester's personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (two awards), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two awards), as well as various other personal and unit awards.



HONORABLE MENTION

LT JOSHUA R. SANGRONES, USN *USS DETROIT (LCS 7)*

LT Joshua Sangrones was born in Makati City, Philippine Islands but considers Jacksonville, FL home. Selected for the Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) scholarship in 2013, he attended Jacksonville University in his hometown and received his commission in 2017 upon graduation with a Bachelor's degree in General Mathematics.

LT Sangrones served his first Division Officer tour onboard USS LASSEN (DDG 82) as the Main Propulsion Officer (MPO), Electrical Officer (ELECTRO) and Combat Information Center Officer (CICO) where he earned his Surface Warfare Officer pin.

As a second tour Division Officer, he served as the Assistant Operations Officer (AOPS) and Training Officer (TRAINO) onboard USS DETROIT (LCS 7) where he received the title of Junior Officer Shiphandler of the Year – Atlantic.

LT Sangrones' awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and various unit and service awards.