

# SURFACE FORCE INDEPENDENT DUTY CORPSMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

*The Surface Force Independent Duty Corpsman Award was established to identify highly motivated and specially trained Hospital Corpsman representing SURFPAC and SURFLANT to manage health programs and provide primary care under indirect supervision at sea.*



## COMNAVSURFPAC WINNER

**HMC(SW) ELISABETH ZAKARAUSKAS, USN**  
*USS HIGGINS (DDG 76)*

Chief Petty Officer Elisabeth Zakarauskas consistently demonstrated unparalleled performance as the Senior Medical Department Representative aboard USS Higgins. Her leadership was pivotal during an extended patrol and a fast-paced dry-docked ship repair availability. Under her guidance, her division achieved a remarkable 100% promotion rate, 100% PFA pass rate, and 100% retention, showcasing her ability to foster a culture of success.

During the ship's repair availability, Chief Zakarauskas developed a robust mental health resilience plan that significantly contributed to Sailors' well-being. By collaborating with Subject Matter Experts, she implemented proactive measures limiting unplanned losses due to mental health to only three. As Duty Section Leader, she efficiently managed force protection, damage control requirements, and the qualification status of 84 Sailors. She built a winning team driving her duty section to achieve over 180 qualifications allowing Higgins to expand to five duty sections successfully navigating the required major fire drill evaluated exercise.

Chief Zakarauskas's impact extends beyond the medical department. She delivered quality healthcare to over 350 Sailors daily, managing 250 routine sick call encounters, 173 consults to specialty care, and maintaining Higgins Individual Medical Readiness above 90%. As a technical expert, she coordinated Fleet Support Operations - Medical certification ahead of schedule, instructed numerous Tactical Combat Casualty Care - All Service Member courses, and ensured the ship's readiness by achieving early certification in her warfare area.

HMC is the go-to Independent Duty Corpsman (IDC) on the waterfront. Whether assisting other commands with supplies, training, or provider coverage, she always answers the call. She volunteered over eight weeks of coverage for three IDCs, distributed supplies to support six other units, and provided essential medical training to sailors from other commands. Due to her technical expertise and motivation to help other IDCs she was asked to provide coverage when the Squadron IDC was on temporary duty elsewhere, leading all other IDCs in the Squadron. Her qualifications as an Anti-terrorism Tactical Watch Officer and collateral duties, including Damage Control Training Team Member and Command Sponsorship Coordinator, highlight her versatility and commitment to operational readiness.

Chief Petty Officer Zakarauskas's outstanding contributions to the Navy, USS Higgins, and her crew make her the unequivocal choice for the Surface Navy Association Independent Duty Corpsman of the Year award. Her sustained superior performance, leadership across various roles, and dedication to the overall mission are truly commendable.

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## COMNAVSURFLANT WINNER

**HM1(SW/FMF) TYSON BRADLEY, USN**  
*USS THOMAS HUDNER (DDG 116)*

Petty Officer Bradley is the Independent Duty Corpsman that every afloat command deserves to have. His dedication to the Navy, his ship, and his shipmates is reflected in the superior performance of his duties as Thomas Hudner's Senior Medical Department Representative. His actions have resulted in Thomas Hudner receiving accolades from numerous superiors inside and out of the medical profession, to include Commander, Surface Forces Atlantic Force Surgeon. His leadership was instrumental in the command earning its Health and Wellness Green H Award and a READ-El score of 98%!

Beyond his primary responsibilities, Petty Officer Bradley actively seeks increased responsibility, taking on roles such as HM Division Leading Petty Officer, Watch-Bill Coordinator, and President of the First Class Petty Officer Association. His multitasking abilities were particularly evident during the ship's high operational tempo, including challenging deployments in Fifth and Sixth Fleet Areas of Responsibility. Despite limited resources, he maintained a remarkable Individual Medical Readiness score of 98%, showcasing his commitment to unit readiness.

Petty Officer Bradley epitomizes first class leadership across the deck plates of Thomas Hudner. He stepped outside of his division to take on further responsibility in the Executive Department as the departmental Enlisted Service Warfare Specialist (ESWS) representative, leading to increased readiness, qualifications and team cohesion among Medical, Navigation and Administration divisions. Under his leadership, four ESWS devices, six personal awards and 25 qualifications were obtained; all while never allowing the Medical department to falter! Additionally, HM1 Bradley stepped up and managed watch-bill assignments for 90 Sailors, maintaining Force Protection requirements while deployed.

A leader among leaders, Petty Officer Bradley's service as the First Class Petty Officer Association President reflects the trust and respect he commands from his peers. His commitment to servant leadership is evident in his proactive approach to supporting and guiding fellow Sailors, fostering an environment where everyone can succeed.

Petty Officer Tyson Bradley's exceptional performance, dedication, and total commitment to the Navy, the USS Thomas Hudner, and its crew make him the unequivocal choice for the Surface Navy Association Surface Force Independent Duty Corpsman of the Year. His accomplishments, spanning medical care, leadership, and overall ship readiness, are a testament to his outstanding qualities as a sailor, leader, and healthcare professional.