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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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USFF Announces 2013 DRA Sea, Shore Sailor of the Year

NORFOLK, Va. – USFF's deputy commander Vice Adm. Nora Tyson announced the 2013 U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFF) Direct Reporting Activities (DRA) Fleet Sea and Shore Sailors of the Year (SOY) during a ceremony at the Norfolk Waterside Sheraton, Thursday, March 6.

Aerographer's Mate 1st Class Stella G. Swartz, of Denver, CO, assigned to U.S. Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command, San Diego, was named USFF DRA Shore SOY, and Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Rosalinda, of Las Vegas, NV, assigned to Marine Corps Forces Command, was named USFF DRA Sea SOY.

Seven finalists from more than 1,000 commands belonging to USFF participated in a week of activities designed to highlight the individual accomplishments of the seven finalists. Each candidate also underwent an intense review board to determine who would be chosen as the USFF Sea and Shore SOYs. Hampton Roads military and civilian supporters sponsored various social functions leading up to the announcement. Tyson awarded each of the finalists a Navy Commendation Medal for their outstanding achievements.

"I can't tell you enough how proud I am of each and every one of you. I know how hard it is to only select one of you for the sea and one from the shore. You are all the best of the best and I know you will continue to be your very best," said Tyson in a speech to the finalists. "You are here not just for what you've accomplished this year, but for what you've done for our Navy, our county, your commands and your shipmates your entire career. You are the enlisted leaders

of today and the future Master Chiefs and Officers of tomorrow.”

Swartz and Finnerty will go on to compete against Sailors selected from both the Atlantic and Pacific fleets, and compete to become the Fleet SOY. The four Fleet SOY finalists will be automatically selected for chief petty officer.

The Chief of Naval Operations established the SOY Program in 1972 to recognize the outstanding Sailors of the Atlantic and Pacific Fleet. The program is designed to recognize the best all-around Sailors from the ranks of E-4 through E-6.

Sea Sailor of the Year finalist:

- AG1(IDW/AW/SW/EXW) Curtis J. Lester, *U.S. Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command, San Diego*

- HM1 (FMF/SW) Aaron I. Csatro, *U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command*

- LS1(EXW/AW) Kenneth D. Haney, *Naval Special Warfare Command*

Fleet Shore Sailor of the Year finalist:

- CTR1(IDW/AW/SW) Alexys E. Gomoll, *Navy Strike and Air Warfare Center*

- ET1(SW/AW) Bryce D. Brown, *Strike Force Training Atlantic*