

NACON
(Coast Guard Auxiliary Conference)
August 26, 2017

Keith Christopher, President

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary held their annual meeting in Orlando, Florida the week-end of August 25, 2017. Rear Admiral Brown shared his remarks and thanked the Auxiliary for their efforts in support of Hurricane Harvey in Texas. He also shared that the Auxiliary has shared more than 4 million hours of service to the Coast Guard this past year. The Auxiliary's tradition of service is critically important to their success, as well as their support in providing education to the community in boating safety.

The Auxiliary and the Coast Guard will continue to work together in determining how to grow their membership, find new ways to support the Coast Guard and how the Coast Guard can support the Auxiliary. A lesson on leadership was shared—how to communicate what needs to be done, work across the chain of command, and work with horizontal leadership to accomplish the goals of the organization.

Words of inspiration and sharing of their mission and programs were shared by Richard Moore with the National Safe Boating Council. He announced the release of new youth activity books for boating safety, a Boating Safety Youth Award being offered, a rebranding of the Wear It campaign for life jacket wear, and the release of a marketing safety toolbox 'BoatBeat.org' to assist with resources for boating safety.

Boating regulation in states were being discussed through House Bills 711 and 7043. It was discussed about the Coast Guard recruiting needs—high recruiting needs, but a small force to recruit from. Only 28% of the total population would be eligible to serve.

Other reports included updates from the Sea Scouts, BSA, U.S. Sailing, Civil Air Patrol, United States Power Squadrons (USPS), and the Water Sports Foundation. The Water Sports Foundation created a brochure on paddling 'Be Smart, Be Safe, Have Fun' and distributed 7 million copies, which are also available when anyone purchases stand up paddleboards. New SUP videos have been produced to encourage safety. USPS is rebranding their tagline to 'America's Boating Club' to help sell the public on who and what they are about to encourage boaters to join.

At their closing banquet, President Keith Christopher of the National Boating Federation presented the Annual Flotilla of the Year Award for their efforts in providing public education on boating safety. The award was presented to: District 7, Flotilla 01-02, Canjrelos, Puerto Rico, Flotilla Commander Javier Bernabe, District Commodore Robert Weskerna for 2016, Commodore Judith Hudson 2017.