

YOUTH AWARDS GIVEN IN N.J.

Story by
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Eight New Jersey Auxiliarists and the crew of the USCG Cutter *Katherine Walker* have won the 2007 Coast Guard Commandant's Partnership in Education Award in recognition of their "outstanding achievement" in youth-related activities.

The award was made by Captain Joseph Kolb, Deputy Director, USCG Office of Civil Rights, in a February ceremony at Coast Guard Station Bayonne (N.J.). It was accepted on behalf of CGC *Katherine Walker* by her Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Amy E. Florentino.

The Auxiliary members who also received recognition were: Dee Thompson, DSO-PA 1SR, and Salvatore Ruggiero, FC-44; and, from Flotilla 10-2, Monica Valdes, VFC, Patti Espejo, FSO-FN; Steven Temple, FC; Regina Whitehead, FSO-MA; Dennis Whitehead, IPFC; and, Melissa Corrado, FSO-PE, all D1SR

The award acknowledged hard work and initiative in setting up and supporting successful youth-targeted programs on CGC *Katherine Walker*.

The 24 active-duty Coasties and eight Auxiliarists in the program contributed over 300 volunteer hours in support of the Partnership in Education program, in which 580 New Jersey and New York students, pre-kindergarten to high school level, participated.

The programs were initiated under a Presidential Proclamation and the National Community Service Act of 1990. The Coast Guard's commitment includes enhancing educational opportunities and career awareness for America's youth.

Participants work directly with the students to heighten awareness of traditional Coast Guard values, with emphases on scholarship, personal initiative, responsibility, citizenship, drug-free lifestyles, and individual self-worth.

The programs enhance the Coast Guard's visibility as a possible career alternative for youth after high school

graduation.

The CGC *Katherine Walker* unit award recognized outstanding achievement via its association with the Naval Sea Cadets' Aegis Division, Woodbridge (N.J.) High School, George Washington High School (N.Y.) Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corps, St. Rose Lima School, Bayonne, N.J., New Jersey Girl Scout Troops, and the local Science, Technology and Engineering Program.

The Coasties also were recognized for mentoring one senior apiece at two high schools, both of whom were subsequently selected to attend the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. ☺

Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, students, and others involved in the youth education program gather after the Commandant's 2007 Partnership in Education Unit Award was presented. Proudly displaying the plaque are LT Amy E. Florentino, Commanding Officer, USCGC *Katherine Walker*, and Captain Joseph Kolb, deputy director, USCG Office of Civil Rights, who presented the award.

