

**U.S. COAST GUARD  
CHIEF JOURNALIST ALEX HALEY AND COMMANDER JIM SIMPSON AWARDS  
PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

Information is the catalyst for accountability in our society. Inherent in the first amendment, under freedom of speech and freedom of the press, the American people have an expectation of transparency and a “right to know” from their government. United States Code Title 14, specifically empowers the Commandant to collect, publish, and distribute information concerning Coast Guard operations to meet this public expectation. As servants of this public trust, we have an obligation and responsibility to educate the public on Coast Guard activities. Communication with the public is an element of operations that is fundamental to mission success.

The Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award recognizes the special achievements of individual Coast Guard members whose efforts and published works have furthered the operational goals of local commanders and the service at large. The Commander Jim Simpson Award recognizes a unit’s overall achievement in supporting the Coast Guard’s public affairs program.

These awards exist to encourage and formally recognize Coast Guard-wide participation in conducting public affairs. The Coast Guard’s success depends in great measure upon the American public’s understanding and support of our missions.

**CHIEF JOURNALIST ALEX HALEY AWARD**

**VI. Background**

The Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award is named in honor of the Coast Guard’s first chief journalist and renowned author. The award recognizes the achievement of individuals whose efforts and published works have helped raise the visibility of the Coast Guard.

For individuals holding full time public affairs positions, the award acts as the clearing house for the Defense Media Awards. Winners will be automatically entered to compete against professional communicators from all branches of the armed forces.

**II. Eligibility**

This competition is open to Coast Guard active duty, reserve, civilian, and auxiliary members, as well as family members of Team Coast Guard. Eligibility is not restricted to public affairs specialists or full time public affairs officers.

Members of other services are not authorized to compete in any category.

Government contract employees and products where content is produced by government contractors are not authorized to compete in any category.

Use of copyrighted audio, video, and imagery is not authorized without documented permissions. If copyrighted materials are used in a submission, provide a statement on the source of the items used and what permissions for use were granted.

### III. Milestones

#### 2016

Jan. 1	Program year began
Dec. 31	Program year ends

#### 2017

Jan. 9	Judges selected
Feb. 6-10	Entries judged
March 17	Winners announced
April 5	Winners entered in Defense Media Awards

### IV. Award Categories

The Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award is divided into 18 separate categories divided into two groups.

**Group A:** Coast Guard public affairs specialists may compete in all categories. Public affairs specialists are defined as active duty, reserve and civilian members filling a public affairs billet.

**Group B:** Individual Coast Guard members not assigned to full-time public affairs billets may only compete in the categories listed under Group B. Individual Coast Guard members are defined as active duty, reserve and civilian members, auxiliary, or Coast Guard family members not filling a public affairs billet.

### V. Submission Criteria

Entries may be submitted from Jan. 1 through Feb. 1, 2017. Entries received after Feb. 1 will not be judged. Entries must be authorized products approved for public release. All entries must have been published, posted on public websites, or otherwise publically disseminated during the competition year, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2016.

All entries must be submitted using the Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award online entry form available at: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/cg092/CG-0922/CG-09225/SitePages/CG-09225%20Awards.aspx>

#### **Group A: Public affairs specialist submission criteria:**

No single product may be entered in more than one category except when used as part of a submission for Coast Guard Communicator of the Year, Coast Guard Journalist of the Year or Coast Guard Photographer of the Year. Individuals who elect to compete in an of-the-year category may not simultaneously enter another of-the-year category during the same competition year.

All entries must follow the Defense Media Awards nomination guidance for each category available at <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/cg092/CG-0922/CG-09225/SitePages/CG-09225%20Awards.aspx>

Individuals may submit multiple entries in each individual category.

Units may submit only one entry in the Outstanding Communication Plan category.

A signed memorandum from a commanding officer must accompany each submission. The memorandum shall state the category for which the individual is recommended and certify that all work was produced by the individual during the competition calendar year. One memorandum noting all categories is acceptable if submitting for multiple awards.

All photo and video submissions will be uploaded to the Defense Video Imagery Distribution System with appropriate captions and formatting. All print submissions must be uploaded in Adobe PDF format using the online entry form.

Any links to products must be working the day of judging for the submission to be judged.

**Group B: Individual Coast Guard member submission criteria:**

No single product may be entered in more than one category. Individual Coast Guard members may compete in all categories except Coast Guard Communicator of the Year, Coast Guard Journalist of the Year and Coast Guard Photographer of the Year.

Individuals may submit multiple entries in each individual category.

Units may submit only one entry in the Outstanding Communication Plan category.

A signed memorandum from a commanding officer must accompany each submission. The memorandum shall state the category for which the individual is recommended and certify that all work was produced by the individual during the competition calendar year. One memorandum noting all categories is acceptable if submitting for multiple awards.

For photo and print entries, submit links to published photos and articles containing original imagery. If no links are available, upload a high resolution scan of the published material as an Adobe PDF clearly showing the published work. For videography, submit a link to the published video productions or operational video broadcast by a television or internet outlet. If no links are available, submit a DVD with a copy of the command endorsed memorandum to:

Defense Information School  
Attn: U.S. Coast Guard Liaison  
6500 Mapes Road  
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755

## VI. Categories

### Group A: Coast Guard public affairs specialists

<b>Cat.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Description</b>
PIOD	Photo – Operational Documentation	Photo of real-world operations not related to training, exercise or simulation.
PITD	Photo – Training Documentation	Photo of joint or service exercise, or training event.
PIPS	Photo – Picture Story	Series of pictures that reveal a storyline or single theme.
PINP	Photo – News Photo	Photo of a service related scheduled or unscheduled news event.
PIFP	Photo – Feature Photo	Service related storytelling photo not news related.
PIPO	Photo – Portrait	Picture of a person showing character and personality. Official photos not allowed.
PIPI	Photo – Pictorial	Photo that enhances a subject with an emphasis on composition and aesthetics.
VUSP	Video – Short-form Production	Self-contained video package conveying military information, 5 minutes or less.
VULP	Video – Long-form Production	Self-contained video package conveying military information, 5 to 15 minutes.
VOID	Video – Operational Documentation	Product depicting operation or contingency comprised of uncontrolled activities.
VITD	Video – Training Documentation	Product depicting an exercise or training event comprised of uncontrolled activities.
PIFS	Print – Feature Story	A written work with a focus that is maintained and supported throughout.
PUOC	Print – Outstanding Communication Plan	A communication document written to assist a command in achieving its goals.
PIBC	Print – Commentary/Blog Post	An informational or conversational piece posted on an official military blog.
PIPJ	Print - Photojournalism	Three to five photos with captions and related story. Not submitted elsewhere.
CGJY	Print – Coast Guard Journalist of the Year	Submission must follow Defense Media Award submission criteria for MJY.
CGCY	Print – Coast Guard Communicator of the Year	Submission must follow Defense Media Award submission criteria DCY.

CGPY	Photo – Coast Guard Photographer of the Year	Submission must follow Defense Media Award submission criteria for MPY.
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**Group B: Individual Coast Guard member**

<b>Cat.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Description</b>
PIOD	Photo - Operational Documentation	Photo of real-world operations not related to training, exercise or simulation.
PITD	Photo - Training Documentation	Photo of joint or service exercise, or training event.
PIPS	Photo - Picture Story	Series of pictures that reveal a storyline or single theme.
PINP	Photo - News Photo	Photo of a service related scheduled or unscheduled news event.
PIFP	Photo - Feature Photo	Service related storytelling photo not news related.
PIPO	Photo - Portrait	Picture of a person showing character and personality. Official photos not allowed.
PIPI	Photo - Pictorial	Photo that enhances a subject with an emphasis on composition and aesthetics.
VUSP	Video – Short-form Production	Self-contained video package conveying military information, 5 minutes or less.
VULP	Video – Long-form Production	Self-contained video package conveying military information, 5 to 15 minutes.
VOID	Video – Operational Documentation	Product depicting operation or contingency comprised of uncontrolled activities.
VITD	Video – Training Documentation	Product depicting an exercise or training event comprised of uncontrolled activities.
PIFS	Print – Feature Story	A written work with a focus that is maintained and supported throughout.
PUOC	Print – Outstanding Communication Plan	A communication document written to assist a command in achieving its goals.
PIFS	Print – Commentary/Blog Post	An informational or conversational piece posted on an official military blog.
PIPJ	Print - Photojournalism	Three to five photos with captions and related story. Not submitted elsewhere.

**VII. Judging**

Judging for the Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award will take place annually the first week of February at Coast Guard Headquarters. Commandant CG-0922 will select judges based on their professionalism in communication and visual information.

All entries will be judged on professional excellence, originality, storytelling ability and creativity. Judges' decisions are final. The judges' discretionary comments and feedback will be provided after the competition.

Judges will select only one first, second and third place winner in each category. Judges will select only one first place winner in each of-the-year category. If no entry in a category is considered within contest standards, judges may choose to withhold any or all awards within that category.

Winners' names will be announced via ALCOAST message.

## **VIII. Awards**

### **Group A**

First place winners in each category will receive a plaque and a flag letter from the Director of Governmental and Public Affairs.

Second and third place will receive a flag letter.

First, second and third place will be entered in the respective Defense Media Award category.

Of-the-year winners will be entered in the respective Defense Media Award category.

### **Group B**

First place winners in each category will receive a plaque and a flag letter from the Director of Governmental and Public Affairs.

Second and third place will receive a flag letter.

## **COMMANDER JIM SIMPSON AWARD**

### **I. Background**

The Commander Jim Simpson Award is named in honor of the late public affairs officer best remembered for his efforts to promote the Coast Guard through the news media. The award recognizes a unit's excellence in its entire public affairs program.

### **II. Eligibility**

The Commander Jim Simpson Award recognizes Coast Guard active duty, reserve and civilian members assigned to Coast Guard units. Eligibility is not restricted to public affairs specialists or full time public affairs officers.

Members of other services are not authorized to compete in any category.

Government contract employees and products where content is produced by government contractors are not authorized to compete in any category.

### III. Milestones

#### 2016

Jan. 1	Program year began
Dec. 31	Program year ends

#### 2017

Jan. 9	Judges selected
March. 6-10	Entries judged
April 14	Winners announced

### IV. Award Categories

The Commander Jim Simpson Award is divided into seven separate categories divided into two groups.

**Group A:** Public affairs offices may compete in the Coast Guard Public Affairs Office of the Year award. Public affairs offices are those teams of public affairs professionals who are assigned to Coast Guard area, or district command cadres. District public affairs detachments will not be considered independently for this award.

**Group B:** All other Coast Guard units may compete in the Outstanding Unit Achievement in Coast Guard Public Affairs award within their respective category.

### V. Submission Criteria

Entries may be submitted from Feb. 1 through March 1, 2017. Entries received after March 1 will not be judged. All content included in an entry must have been produced during the competition year, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2016.

All entries must be submitted using the Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award online entry form available at: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/cg092/CG-0922/CG-09225/SitePages/CG-09225%20Awards.aspx>

Before sending, compress large electronic files in Adobe PDF format not to exceed 26 pages.

Submissions shall depict a unit's overall public affairs program and demonstrate how the unit furthered the goals and objectives of the local command, district commander and Coast Guard at large through communication. Units should only provide their best examples to demonstrate achievement in the areas of:

A. **Media and social media:** Media relations includes efforts undertaken to inform a specific target audience via media or social media action with the intent of furthering a goal or goals of the organization. An example would be a seasonal campaign to improve boating safety.

**B. Community relations:** Community relations includes efforts undertaken to improve or maintain a relationship with a local public, not directly through media relations tactics, i.e. unit open houses, static displays and booths, speaker's bureaus.

**C. Internal communication:** Internal communication includes any efforts to inform, educate or influence an internal audience through a variety of tactics to include newsletters, websites and social media.

**D. Crisis communication:** Crisis communication includes a response to any unplanned event that has the potential for significant negative impact on the organization where quick planning and application of crises communication principles was essential.

**E. Communications planning:** Communication planning may include any event that is foreseen, yet has the potential for a negative or positive impact on the organization and requires communication planning to successfully manage. Examples include historic anniversary, significant unit deployment, court martial, significant policy change or unit relocation.

**F. Reputation management:** Reputation management may include any efforts undertaken to maintain, strengthen, improve or repair the image of the organization within a target audience through specific tactics. An example would be demonstrating consistent and intentional messaging in press releases highlighting an area of expertise within the organization such as search and rescue.

**Summary:** Success in each area must be quantified in a summary not to exceed two pages, although a summary of every category is not required, i.e. if there are no incidents requiring crisis communications, a summary is not required for that area. Each summary may highlight a single initiative or may encompass several initiatives supporting the same goal. For example, a submission for community relations may highlight a single event with a large impact, or several events throughout the year with a common goal. Each summary must contain the following four sections:

**A. Research:** It should be explained how a communication need was identified, what the need was and what key audiences were identified. An example would be identifying that a large segment of a local community was unaware of the mission of a local unit. Some components to discuss in the research section may be: What signaled the communication need? What goal or objectives could be achieved by undertaking the action? What audiences were identified? What strategies were identified as being effective? Research can be as complex as a local survey to gauge understanding or as simple as distilling a communications goal from the commanders intent.

**B. Planning:** The planning section should address what went into the development and what goals and objectives were identified. An example would be identifying a speaker's bureau as the most effective communications mechanism with a goal of increasing the number of key publics who could explain the mission of the unit. Some components to discuss in the planning section are: What decisions were made based on the information identified in the research? What goals were crafted based on the research? What tactics were identified as likely to be most effective?



**C. Implementation:** The tactics to execute the plan should be explained in quantifiable detail. An example would be printing a notice in the local paper about the opportunity for speakers or issuing press releases. It should be noted what resources went into the plan, what challenges had to be overcome, what modifications were made to the plan to achieve success? What timelines were involved? Was the initiative annual or a short duration? Implementation should highlight the unit's skill and commitment at executing the communication in an effort to reach the end goal.

**D. Evaluation:** The success of the tactics implemented should be explained in detail. The best examples of public relations efforts should have quantifiable results that tie back to an initial communications objective. For example, a speaker's bureau with a goal of one event per month, but having conducted 16 speaking events in the local community, would have exceeded the goal, but must demonstrate having reached the target audience tied to the goal.

**Supporting material:** Supporting material specifically referenced in the research, planning, implementation or evaluation sections may be included immediately following each section and is limited to two pages per section. Referenced video or audio may be included on a separate DVD not to exceed 5 minutes in length. Examples of supporting material may include a graph quantifying all press releases for the year (do not submit all related press releases), a comprehensive list of community relations events with a breakdown of attendees, a list of published photographs or features, a media distribution report noting viewership or readership or a video clip of an aired production.

A. For submission of video or audio that supports an office/unit's public affairs efforts, send DVDs (not to exceed five minutes in length) with an appropriate command endorsed memorandum to:

Defense Information School  
Attn: U.S. Coast Guard Liaison  
6500 Mapes Road  
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755

B. A commanding officer's recommendation memorandum is required not to exceed two pages. The memorandum shall articulate which award the office/unit is recommended, a brief description of the office/unit's achievements, and validation that all work was produced by the office/unit during the competition calendar year.

## **VI. Format:**

All award submission pages should be formatted as follows:

MS Word document

Font: Times New Roman 12

Margins: No less than .5"

Running head, left aligned: (Year) CDR Jim Simpson Award - Unit name

Page numbers: bottom center

Paragraph headers: (bold) Research, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation

No photographs or graphics on summary pages.

Supporting material page may contain photographs, graphics and data tables that clearly support items discussed in the summary.

Page 1-2: Commanding officer’s recommendation memorandum. Do not include a designed cover page.

Page 3-4: Media and Social Media

Page 5-6: Supporting material

Page 7-8: Community relations

Page 9-10: Supporting material

Page 11-12: Internal communication

Page 13-14: Supporting material

Page 15-16: Crisis communication

Page 17-18: Supporting material

Page 19-20: Communications planning

Page 21-22: Supporting material

Page 23-24: Reputation management

Page 25-26: Supporting material

If there is no content for any category, omit pages rather than include intentionally blank sections.

## VI. Categories

### Group A: Public Affairs Offices

<b>Cat.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Description</b>
CGPAO	Coast Guard Public Affairs Office of the Year	Public affairs professionals who are assigned to Coast Guard area, or district command cadres.

### Group B: Coast Guard Units

<b>Cat.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Description</b>
OAPA-LA	Outstanding Unit Achievement in Coast Guard Public Affairs (Large Afloat)	All vessels equal to or greater than 225-feet.
OAPA-SA	Outstanding Unit Achievement in Coast Guard Public Affairs (Small Afloat)	All vessels less than 225-feet.
OAPA-SEC	Outstanding Unit Achievement in Coast Guard Public Affairs (Sector)	All sectors.
OAPA-OA	Outstanding Unit Achievement in Coast Guard Public Affairs (Operations Ashore)	All operations ashore (stations, aids to navigation teams, etc)
OAPA-AS	Outstanding Unit Achievement in Coast Guard	All air stations.

	Public Affairs (Air Station)	
OAPA-SUP	Outstanding Support Unit Achievement in Coast Guard Public Affairs	All training commands, bases, logistics and service centers.

## VI. Judging

Judging for the Commander Jim Simpson Award will take place annually the first week of March at Coast Guard Headquarters. Commandant CG-0922 will select judges based on their professionalism in communication and visual information. Submissions will be judged on initiative, consistency, impact, management, and program/product quality.

Judges' decisions are final. The judges' discretionary comments and feedback will be provided after the competition.

Judges will select only one first and second place winner in each category. If no entry in a category is considered within contest standards, judges may choose to withhold any or all awards within that category.

Winners will be announced via ALCOAST message.

## VII. Awards

### Group A

First place units and nominated members will receive a plaque and a flag letter from the Director of Governmental and Public Affairs.

Second place units and nominated members will receive a flag letter from the Director of Governmental and Public Affairs.

### Group B

First place units will receive a plaque and a flag letter from the Director of Governmental and Public Affairs.

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