MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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GREAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR M.E.B.A. ENGINEERS AT HANWHA SHIPYARD IN PHILLY

M.E.B.A.-contracted company American Crewing Services has increased their work at Hanwha Philly Shipyard (Philadelphia, PA). They are currently seeking resumes of 2nd Assistant Engineers and above to fill several positions in the coming weeks. These Hanwha Philly Shipyard Commissioning Engineers ensure the proper installation and operation of all systems onboard newbuild vessels. Typically, engineers in these positions trace systems to ensure check valves are installed in the proper direction, valves or pipes aren't missing, and coordinating with OEMs/vendors to ensure proper function of systems electrically and mechanically. Once the system the engineer is working upon has been deemed ready, proof that the system operates according to design standard is presented.

Hanwha continues construction of the last few National Security Multi-Mission Vessels (NSMVs) for the maritime academies and have begun work on building the "Aloha Class" containerships for Matson. They also plan to construct a series of LNG carriers and 10 medium range tankers that will be owned by Hanwha Shipping and fly the American Flag.

Of particular need are engineers with "Deck machinery experience." Those positions are especially suited for 1st A/E and Chief Engineers. The yard is seeking engineers with a strong familiarity of running a ballast system, winches, cranes etc. These are positions similar to a Deck 1AE on the Military Sealift Command ships. ACS previously reached out to M.E.B.A.'s Atlantic Coast halls to encourage members to submit resumes for these opportunities. These are 3-4 month jobs that usually come with an option to extend.

The standard work week is:
- 0600 – 1630 Monday-Thursday
- 0600 – 1430 Friday
- Saturday and Sunday are optional but encouraged and there are plenty of Overtime opportunities.

No housing is provided, but there is a $190 per diem for every day worked. This is a terrific opportunity to get experience with next-generation ships coming online in the near future and the jobs include Pension, Medical, Training, and MPB benefits. Resumes should be forwarded to

M.E.B.A. member Alex Tapia, who also serves as American Crewing Services (ACS) Vice President while cc'ing the organization's President Jerry Joseph. Alex is at alex.amercrew@gmail.com Jerry is at amercrew@comcast.net

MARITIME LABOR CALLS FOR U.S.-FLAG REQUIREMENT ON VENEZUELAN OIL IMPORTS

America's leading maritime labor unions are calling on the Trump Administration and Congress to require that any crude oil imported from Venezuela be transported exclusively on U.S.-flag vessels crewed by American mariners, arguing such policy is essential to U.S. economic and national security interests. "A cornerstone of an effective national maritime policy is gaining access to private, commercial cargoes that create steady demand for U.S.-flag vessels, American mariners, and the shipbuilding industrial base," the unions wrote in a letter to senior Administration officials. The M.E.B.A., AMO, MM&P and the SIU, which represent the majority of U.S. merchant mariners sailing in the U.S.-flag fleet, argued that aligning American foreign policy and energy needs with "Ship American" principles would strengthen the U.S. maritime workforce, reduce reliance on foreign-controlled shipping, and counter the growth of opaque "shadow fleet" tanker operations used to move sanctioned oil outside U.S. oversight.

The unions warned that current restrictions on Venezuelan oil have shifted global trade toward foreign-controlled shipping networks, including opaque "shadow fleet" tankers operating outside U.S. labor and safety standards. As a result, U.S. maritime workers and carriers are excluded from energy cargoes that could otherwise support American shipping capacity and enforcement objectives.

Requiring U.S.-flag transportation for Venezuelan crude entering the United States, the unions said, would provide reliable commercial cargo for U.S. carriers, enhance sanctions compliance, and reduce reliance on foreign vessels tied to adversarial interests. The policy could also benefit U.S. refiners designed to process heavy crude by increasing supply options and helping stabilize domestic energy markets. Maritime labor leaders emphasized that American mariners are prepared to support lawful, transparent energy trade that advances U.S. strategic interests. A copy of the letter is available on the M.E.B.A. website and can be found **here**.

TWO MORE SHADOW FLEET TANKERS SEIZED

Following a weeks-long pursuit in the North Atlantic, the U.S. seized a shadow fleet oil tanker that was recently reflagged Russian. The operation, led by the Department of Homeland Security with support from the U.S. military, culminated in the seizure of the sanctioned vessel, newly named the MARINERA, carrying Venezuelan oil. Formerly known as the BELLA 1, the tanker has been on the U.S. sanctions list since June 2024 and is described by U.S. officials as part of the "dark fleet" used to evade sanctions. The vessel was initially pursued off Venezuela last month and later observed operating in the North Atlantic near the west coast of Scotland. U.S. officials said the ship had been sailing under a false flag, claiming to be Guyana-flagged, and was subject to a judicial seizure order. Reportedly, it re-registered as a Russian-flag vessel and was renamed during the pursuit, perhaps believing that the gambit would allow them protection from U.S. seizure.

The action drew sharp criticism from Moscow, which said the tanker was operating lawfully in international waters and accused the U.S. and NATO of disproportionate military attention. Russian state media aired footage purporting to show the tanker under surveillance, while flight tracking data

indicated increased U.S. military aircraft activity in the region, including maritime patrol and refueling aircraft.

In a separate action on Wednesday, U.S. authorities intercepted another vessel operating in waters near the Caribbean. According to defense officials, the ship, identified as the SOPHIA, was boarded after it was suspected of involvement in unlawful activity. The U.S. Coast Guard led the interdiction and was in the process of escorting the vessel to the U.S., where a final determination on its disposition will be made. Administration officials framed the seizures as part of a broader effort to cut off revenue streams linked to criminal and extremist networks. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said the operations were intended to disrupt financing connected to narco-terrorism, while Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth characterized the unauthorized transport of Venezuelan oil as theft from the country's citizens and warned that similar enforcement actions would continue against shipments lacking U.S. approval.

SMALL GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR LABOR MEDIATION PANEL

A federal judge in New York has blocked the Trump administration's effort to gut the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS), marking the second court ruling to halt actions aimed at effectively shutting down the labor mediation agency. FMCS was effectively dismantled by Elon Musk's "Department of Government Efficiency" (DOGE), shaving the agency's 220 employees down to 12. FMCS, created in 1947, plays a central role in mediating collective bargaining disputes and preventing work stoppages, particularly in healthcare and postal services. The agency formerly handled roughly 15,000 employer notices annually and appointed thousands of arbitrators each year.

U.S. District Judge Arun Subramanian ruled that the administration failed to justify its decision to drastically reduce the agency's operations and that the move violated federal law requiring FMCS to actively work to resolve labor disputes. The ruling stems from a March executive order directing FMCS and several other agencies to scale back to the minimum level required by law. In response, FMCS limited mediation services to large disputes, placed more than 90% of its workforce on administrative leave, and closed all field offices. Judge Subramanian found those steps conflicted with Congress's mandate that the agency use its "best efforts" to help unions and employers reach agreements, rejecting the notion that doing nothing could satisfy that obligation.

The New York decision follows a similar ruling by a federal judge in Rhode Island, which the administration has appealed. The case was brought by 17 labor unions, including the AFL-CIO and the American Federation of Teachers, in *American Federation of Teachers v. Davis*. At the time of the filing, AFSCME President Lee Saunders noted, "FMCS helps to mediate thousands of collective bargaining agreements and other disputes, ensuring workers are paid fairly while commerce and services continue to flow. The agency's meager $55 million budget – which accounts for less than 0.0014% of the overall federal budget – generates more than $500 million in annual savings for our economy. Shutting it down helps only billionaires like Elon Musk and his anti-union friends, who want to take away workers' voice on the job."

MSC CIVMARS MAKE DRAMATIC RESCUE IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

The civilian crew aboard the Military Sealift Command vessel USNS CESAR CHAVEZ began their new year with a dramatic rescue of three distressed fishermen in the South China Sea. The MSC Lewis & Clark-class vessel is crewed with M.E.B.A., MM&P and SIU civilian mariners. Leaning on their training, they rallied and worked together to facilitate a text-book rescue.

On New Year's Day around noon, sharp eyes on watch aboard the CHAVEZ caught the first sign of trouble - a disabled fishing vessel drifting helplessly in open water. A few days before, heavy seas had flooded their engine, silencing it and leaving them adrift far from help. They had been surviving for 4 days on strictly rationed food and water, uncertain if rescue would come - until the CHAVEZ appeared on the horizon.

When the floundering vessel was spotted, CHAVEZ crewmembers notified the bridge immediately, and within moments a rigid-hulled inflatable boat was racing toward the stricken craft. Three Filipino fishermen were brought safely aboard the MSC cargo ship, where the vessel's medical team conducted thorough evaluations and confirmed all were in good health. Philippine authorities were notified without delay. U.S. officials coordinated closely with the Philippine government to ensure the fishermen's safe return home. The rescue was made possible by disciplined, vigilant watch-standing and decisive action by the crew - qualities essential to life at sea. While CESAR CHAVEZ routinely carries out logistics and resupply missions in support of the U.S. 7th Fleet, this operation underscored a timeless maritime truth: readiness and professionalism save lives when the ocean shows no mercy.

NMC GETTING READY TO LAUNCH NEW LOOK ONLINE PORTAL

Mariners have expressed enthusiasm for the National Maritime Center's (NMC) announced makeover of its website which will add a new online Application Submission and Additional Information Portal (ASAP). The new look is scheduled to be up and running on Monday January 26, 2026. The transition to the new website will begin Friday, January 23, 2026, and users will experience a period of system unavailability during this transition.

NMC issued a release detailing the changes and offered advice for those who will make use of it. They note that the new "ASAP" system will be fast and convenient and will be used for the submission of Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) applications and Medical Certificate (MC) applications. You will also be able to use the system to upload supporting or additional documents for existing MMC or MC applications. A tutorial is available on the NMC website for mariners to familiarize themselves with the new process.

ASAP will be the primary method for submitting applications and additional documents for new and existing applications to the NMC. Submission options such as e-mail or fax will be significantly limited and eventually discontinued as part of this transition. As far as the redesigned website, NMC says there will be improved navigation and layout, clearer "How to Apply" guidance and easier access to credentialing information and customer support tools. These improvements are being implemented "to simplify the process, reduce waiting times, and give you more control over your documents. For more information, visit the NMC website."

MARAD TO LEAD DEEPWATER PORT LICENSING OVERSIGHT

The U.S. Department of Transportation has shifted primary oversight of deepwater port licensing from the Coast Guard to the Maritime Administration, a move intended to speed approvals and reduce regulatory delays for energy infrastructure projects. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said the change will help streamline environmental reviews and support lower domestic energy costs. Under the new structure, MarAd will manage the licensing process established by the Deepwater Port Act of 1974, which governs the construction, operation, and decommissioning of offshore ports used to import and export oil and natural gas beyond U.S. territorial waters. The agency will also take the lead

on National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) reviews and related environmental compliance. The Coast Guard will continue to play a key role as a cooperating agency, retaining responsibility for safety, vessel and facility design, construction standards, and operational oversight. Officials said the realignment supports the administration's broader energy policy goals by accelerating project timelines while maintaining environmental and safety protections.

LCA WARNS OF ICEBREAKING SHORTFALLS ON THE GREAT LAKES

The Lake Carriers' Association says early winter conditions are already disrupting Great Lakes shipping, while both the U.S. and Canadian Coast Guards have fallen short on icebreaking support. Rapid ice formation coincided with annual buoy removal, sidelining key U.S. Coast Guard assets, including the heavy icebreaker MACKINAW, and delaying assistance to commercial traffic. According to the association, the Canadian Coast Guard has not deployed any icebreakers on the Great Lakes this season. Canadian icebreakers remain assigned to the St. Lawrence Seaway, while another is out of service, even as U.S.-flag ships calling at Canadian ports continue to pay icebreaking fees. Ice-related delays are being reported at major choke points, including Duluth, the St. Mary's River, the Straits of Mackinac, Green Bay, and western Lake Erie ports.

Lake Carriers' Association President Jim Weakley warned that unreliable winter navigation threatens domestic supply chains, particularly for steel production. He called for greater Canadian participation, an additional U.S. heavy icebreaker, and replacement of aging U.S. icebreaking tugs to ensure year-round reliability on the Great Lakes.

NEXT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*
Friday, January 9 – **Honolulu**@1100
Monday, February 2 – **Boston**@1200. **Seattle (Fife)**@1300.
Tuesday, February 3 – **CMES**@1430; **Charleston**@1400; **Houston**@1315; **Oakland**@1230.
Wednesday, February 4 – **Jacksonville**@1300; **New Orleans**@1315; **Online HQ "Town Hall" Meeting@**1300 **(No Voting) – Register by emailing** mebahq@mebaunion.org
Thursday, February 5 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@**1230; **NY/NJ@**1300; **Norfolk@**1300; **Tampa@**1300.
Friday, February 6 – **Honolulu**@1100

------FINISHED WITH ENGINES------

M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.

The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; mebahq@mebaunion.org. Website: www.mebaunion.org For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram. The Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School can be contacted at (410) 822-9600 or www.mebaschool.org. M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or www.mebaplans.org