



MILITARY
SEALIFT
COMMAND

Seafarer's

ADVISOR

ISSUE 1 2009

Letter from the Director

Greetings,

Hope this note finds all well. At Military Sealift Command, we continue to crew our ships thereby supporting the combatant Navy as it remains underway and on mission. Our CIVMARs work diligently to meet all goals and deadlines and Military Sealift Fleet Support Command continues its efforts on behalf of CIVMARs, and their families, to support their schedules and other issues which arise while they are underway.

We continue to see success from our recruitment, staffing and crewing efforts. Our attrition rate is down to record lows. CIVMARs are actively continuing their government careers with Military Sealift Command and this is good news. They are taking advantage of internal promotion opportunities, on-the-job training and other offered training opportunities. In addition, we are reviewing employment applications and making job offers in a very timely fashion. Low attrition, combined with a decline in ship acquisitions this year, leave us with a smaller hiring goal now than in years past. But, do not let that discourage those seeking marine employment with Military Sealift Command. We will still have vacancies in a number of positions throughout the year. Please encourage those seeking employment to continue to check the website for position announcements and openings.

In addition, we are working to help those with prior military service, specifically those with sea-going experience, to take advantage of the tuition assistance programs offered to them. On our website, sealiftcommand.com/trainingSearch.php, we have highlighted schools which work with prior military personnel entitled to tuition monies under the GI Bill. It is our hope this information will help those individuals advance their training and experience in pursuit of a career as a skilled civil service mariner.

Job Fair Schedule

1/13/2009	MSC Mini Job Fair	Rocky Hill, CT
1/14/2009	MSC Mini Job Fair	New Orleans, LA
1/15/2009	MSC Mini Job Fair	Chula Vista, CA
1/21/2009	MSC Mini Job Fair	Somersworth, NH
1/21/2009	MSC Mini Job Fair	Jacksonville, FL
1/21/2009	MSC Mini Job Fair	Grayslake, IL
1/28/2009	SeaFarer Day	Houston, TX
1/29/2009	Recruit Military Career Fair	Nashville, TN
2/4/2009	MSC Mini Job Fair	Tampa, FL
2/5/2009	Recruit Military Career Fair	San Diego, CA
2/12/2009	Recruit Military Career Fair	Indianapolis, IN
2/12/2009	Odyssey Maritime Discovery Center Career Day	Seattle, WA
2/17/2009	Recruit Military Career Fair	Boston, MA
2/17/2009	Boston Military/Veteran Career Fair	Boston, MA
2/18/2009	Recruit Military Career Fair	New Orleans, LA
3/5/2009	Recruit Military Career Fair	Arlington, TX
3/11/2009	Pierce County Vets Job Fair	Tacoma, WA
3/18/2009	Tri-Base Job Fair	Jacksonville, FL

See www.sealiftcommand.com for more information on upcoming events.

Also, please find a new CIVMAR success story ...Ms. Belinda Gerber. She has found her calling with Military Sealift Command and continues to advance and take command of her career.

Thank you for your continued interest. Please look for your copy of our 2009 wall calendar in the mail. If you would like to request additional copies, please contact John Kowalik at johnk@mediacross.com.

Regards,

Phyllis B. Spano
Director,
Human Resources and Manpower
MSFSC

MSC Positions

MSC is currently hiring
for the following positions:

ENGINE DEPARTMENT

Deck Engineer Machinist
Unlicensed Junior Engineer
Pumpman

Success Story: Belinda Gerber, Chief Steward

Sometimes, things seem like fate.

For Chief Steward Belinda Gerber, a chance social gathering on the small Pacific island of Guam led her to Military Sealift Command. Six and a half years later, she couldn't be happier.

Born in the Philippines, Gerber moved to Guam from Washington state after her divorce. Although she had worked as a nurse's assistant on the mainland, she was unable to find similar work in Guam. So she took a job in the housekeeping department of a hotel and almost immediately looked for a way out.

At a party for Guam's active and growing Filipino community, Gerber noticed two unfamiliar faces and struck up a conversation. The two "new guys" worked for MSC and the descriptions of their jobs and lifestyle fascinated her.

"I started asking lots of questions, what to do, where to start to get the job," Gerber said. "The next day, they were nice enough to pick up the application form and hand it to me personally."

Gerber started out with little knowledge of the shipping industry, or life at sea in general. "But after hearing from those MSC guys about all the benefits MSC has to offer, I decided to apply so I could earn those same benefits," she said.

After obtaining her merchant mariner document, Gerber applied for – and landed – a job as a supply utilityman on board *USNS Mount Baker*.

At first, Gerber was attracted to MSC for the benefit of having a permanent and secure job. "As time and experience kick in," she said, "I now appreciate the opportunities for promotion and my ability to earn an income comparable to or greater than if I had a college degree."

She also appreciates how hard it is to find good work today – and is thankful for having found it with MSC. "The best part of my experience is having my house completely built and furnished because of the salary I'm earning, money I know first-hand can be hard to come by holding just a regular (shoreside) job," she said.

Her willingness to work hard, learn and try something new has paid off. After four tours, she has moved up through the ranks of the supply department, to 3rd cook and now to chief steward.

In her current assignment



"As time and experience kick in, I now appreciate the opportunities for promotion and my ability to earn an income comparable to or greater than if I had a college degree."

on board *USNS Rappahannock*, Gerber oversees the preparation of breakfast, lunch and dinner. She keeps track of all the supply spaces and, of course, does her share of paperwork.

Gerber said the chance to travel, and to work with a diverse range of crewmembers, has been one of the most rewarding parts of the MSC experience. "My career with MSC has helped me develop into a better person, in understanding and communicating with the crew. From different personalities and ethnicities, it has helped me learn to deal

effectively with my peers, superiors and subordinates."

"I love traveling and seeing all the different countries and places, and learning about their culture," Gerber said.

Her favorites?

"Singapore is nice, it's very clean," she said. "Plus it's close to the Philippines, so I can take time to see my son. Dubai is interesting because of the wealth there and I love Australia for the wildlife."

Gerber has thoroughly enjoyed her time at sea. She's made her ships her home and her workplace. And, especially as gas prices rise – she sees this as a huge advantage. "I don't have to drive to and from work. That saves time and money," she said.

In her spare time, Gerber said she enjoys talking and joking with her fellow crewmembers, watching movies

and simply relaxing. "I am still surprised how comfortable life at sea can be," Gerber said. "It really feels like home. I've got my own room – all of the officers do on MSC ships."

In closing, Gerber said there are two key factors that have propelled her career and which would serve any prospective mariner very well: motivation and hard work. That, and a little nudge from fate doesn't hurt,

See other MSC Success Stories at www.sealiftcommand.com

GI Bill helps CIVMARS with prior military experience pay for training

A core component of MSC's mission is to provide direct underway logistic support to the U.S. Navy fleet. In fact, many of our current CIVMARS are prior uniformed Navy and chose to pursue careers as civil service mariners because the work is so similar. Integral to the transition between these two similar careers is the need for those seeking CIVMAR employment to acquire specific maritime creden-

tials as application packages are prepared. MSC's website is a great resource to help candidates through this transition process. There is a listing of training schools, found in locations across the country, that can help prospective applicants solidify their experience. On the website, we've indicated which schools honor the GI Bill to offset tuition costs. In addition, there are some costs for acquiring a U.S. Coast

Guard merchant mariner's document which are also covered. For more information, veterans should look to Veteran's Education Assistance Program. MSC can help current or prior uniformed military members seek careers at sea.

Visit the "Training Schools" section at www.sealiftcommand.com to learn more.