Heroes of the Harbor celebrates maritime leadership in the business, nonprofit, and corporate sectors. Individuals who have contributed to the vibrancy, sustainability, economy, education, and awareness of the New York–New Jersey harbor, its port, and the metropolitan area are honored annually by the Waterfront Alliance. The event elevates the importance of our waterways, port, and coastlines to decision makers, influencers, and municipal and state leadership.

JOIN US AS A SPONSOR TO CELEBRATE OUR 2023 HEROES OF THE HARBOR!

Make your pledge today: waterfrontalliance.org/sponsorship
DIEGO APONTE  
GROUP PRESIDENT  
MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY

We honor the work of Diego Aponte, whose commitment to decarbonization, as the head of the Mediterranean Shipping Company, the world’s largest shipping company, is an inspiring testament to the role industry can play in securing our future. By embracing green fuels and adopting green corridors, partnering with the Global Centre for Maritime Decarbonisation, contributing to trials of lower-emission fuels, rerouting shipping lanes to protect whales, creating carbon insetting biofuel deals with freight forwarders, and committing to reach net zero by 2050, Mr. Aponte’s vision and leadership serves as an example of good corporate citizenship to the maritime industry around the world.

LILLIAN C. BORRONE  
ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (RETIRED)  
THE PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

We honor the work of Lillian C. Borrone, whose vision and leadership created the modern Port of New York and New Jersey. Assuming the role of port director in 1988, she faced seismic changes in the port industry throughout her tenure, including dramatic growth and demand for containerized shipping, the emerging environmental movement, and the regional politics of the shipping industry. Ms. Borrone and the port department steadfastly navigated this difficult period, culminating in the historic 50-foot channel deepening project in 2016. Facing myriad obstacles, Ms. Borrone set forth a blueprint of the future of the harbor that is being fully realized today—just this past year the Port of New York and New Jersey handled more container volume than any other U.S. port. A thoughtful and pragmatic leader, she assembled a team of professionals across numerous and conflicting disciplines to create a forceful agenda that has truly transformed the harbor and the region. With more than $100 billion in business activity and 239,100 direct jobs created, the port is the linchpin in regional prosperity. We honor her extraordinary career encompassing decades of public service in senior policy and executive roles at the U.S. Department of Transportation, Urban Mass Transportation Administration; her advisory roles in the private sector to major companies; and her service leadership on national nonprofit boards such as the Eno Center for Transportation.
CAPTAIN ZEITA MERCHANT
COMMANDER, SECTOR NEW YORK & CAPTAIN OF THE PORT
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

We honor the work of Captain Zeita Merchant, who as Commander, Coast Guard Sector New York and Captain of the Port is responsible for ensuring the safety and security of one of the nation’s busiest and most economically important port complexes, including facilities and waterways spanning New York and New Jersey moving hundreds of billions of dollars in cargo and tens of millions of passengers annually. We honor her visionary leadership in identifying collaborative solutions to maritime threats, challenges, and opportunities using Coast Guard’s unique authorities and operational capabilities to ensure the safety, security, and sustainability of our marine transportation system. Her commitment to the resiliency of our region and country is undeniable as she serves as one of the Coast Guard’s top certified emergency managers leading large-scale, multi-jurisdictional incident responses. In addition to forward-leaning leadership and operational expertise, we honor her dedication in mentoring and developing future leaders of the Coast Guard, as well as students locally and across the nation. Her efforts are an inspiring testament to her commitment to the next generation of maritime leadership, particularly among women and people of color. And we are proud to celebrate a leader whose many honors and accomplishments include serving as a National Security Fellow at both Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, receiving the American Red Cross’s Women in Service Award, and being recognized as one of the Top Women in Transportation Who Move the Nation.

JOSEPH SEEBODE
DEPUTY DISTRICT ENGINEER AND CHIEF OF PROGRAMS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, NEW YORK DISTRICT

We honor the work of Joseph Seebode for his more than 40 years of leadership, public service, and passion to find and implement solutions for our port, our estuary, and the region. His efforts have catalyzed major navigation improvements, natural resource protection and enhancement, increased resilience, port efficiencies, and economic development. Mr. Seebode is an engineer and scientist, and the highest-ranking civilian leader at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District. His experience includes directing the Army Corps’ Regulatory Program, serving as program manager for the multi-billion dollar deepening of the Port of New York and New Jersey, developing a comprehensive environmental restoration strategy for the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary, and serving as assistant commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. He worked with The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to revolutionize processes to expedite the deepening of major port channels to 50 feet, where he championed the use of all 54 million cubic yards of dredged materials for beneficial purposes. We honor his deep experience in emergency response and his leadership during crises. He led response teams in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, after Hurricane Sandy, and during the initial phase of Covid-19, ensuring quick construction of emergency facilities. He is proud of the Army Corps’ effort early in the pandemic to ensure a deepwater berth for the USNS COMFORT, completing dredging operations on the west side of Manhattan just hours before the vessel arrived in the harbor.
SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

FLEET ADMIRAL: $50,000
- 15 tickets
- First acknowledgment during event opening remarks
- Reserved seating during program
- Provide a branded giveaway item to all attendees
- Two full-page ads in digital event program
- Three dedicated social media posts and tagged in general posts during the event
- Logo (large) included on event website in prime location
- Premier-level listing on program and digital/physical signage at gala
- Premier-level listing on invitation, press release, and other onsite and promotional materials sent to 14,000 subscribers
- Exclusive interview or article placement in WaterWire, Waterfront Alliance’s principal publication

ADMIRAL: $25,000
- 10 tickets
- Acknowledgment during event opening remarks
- Reserved seating during program
- Provide a branded giveaway item to all attendees
- Full-page ad in digital event program
- Two dedicated social media posts and tagged in general posts during event
- Logo (large) included on event website and on digital/physical signage at gala
- Priority-level listing on invite, press release, and other onsite and promotional materials sent to 14,000 subscribers

CAPTAIN: $15,000
- 6 tickets
- Half-page ad in digital event program
- One dedicated social media post and tagged in general posts during event
- Logo (medium) included on event website and on digital/physical signage at gala
- Priority-level listing on invite, press release, and other onsite and promotional materials sent to 14,000 subscribers

COMMANDER: $8,000
- 4 tickets
- Quarter-page ad in digital event program
- Tagged in general social media posts during the event
- Logo (small) appears on event website and on digital/physical signage at gala
- Listing on invite, press release, and other onsite and digital promotional materials sent to 14,000 subscribers

LIEUTENANT: $4,000
- 2 tickets
- Name appears on event website and on digital/physical signage at gala
- Listing on invite, press release, and other onsite and digital promotional materials sent to 14,000 subscribers

ENSIGN: $2,000
- 1 ticket
- Name appears on event website and on digital/physical signage at gala
- Listing on invite, press release, and other onsite and digital promotional materials sent to 14,000 subscribers

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS AND DONATIONS
- I will purchase ____ individual ticket(s) at $1,000 per ticket
- I will purchase ____ individual nonprofit partner or young professional ticket at $700 per ticket
- I am unable to attend, but wish to contribute $________

LEVEL UP TO THE CHAIR’S CIRCLE
Commit to sponsoring both the 2023 Heroes of the Harbor gala and next spring’s Waterfront Conference and receive 10 percent off your sponsorship and special recognition as a member of the exclusive Chair’s Circle.

Contact Mackenzie Pope, Senior Development Manager, for details:
m pope@waterfrontalliance.org | 212.935.9831 x106

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