



Organization of Black Maritime Graduates

www.obmg.org

2017 Newsletter



Jan 9, 2017 – Knicks Basketball Get Together - A great time was had by all of the 35 people who attended.



Feb 23, 2017 – SUNY Maritime Cultural Club Black History Month Dinner – The OBMG Scholarships are awarded



Honoree & Keynote Speaker Captain Allan Michael, the first African American Captain with Circle Line Yachts in New York City, shared his experiences as a Captain of New York Circle-Line Sightseeing cruises for 37 years. He also spoke on how being a student of Aesthetic Realism helped him overcome some of the racial disparity challenges that he faced. Since retiring he has become an art photographer.

He displayed some of his photography work. www.allanmichaelphotography.com



Guest Speaker Keith Lawrence, the 1st African American California Maritime Academy Deck graduate, shared the challenges that he faced as described in his book, “Memoirs of an African American Navigator.”

The OBMG purchased copies of the book which he signed for cadets and attendees.

The OBMG Board also presented a special gift to Admiral Alfulitis and SUNY Maritime College. The OBMG board of directors contracted with Commodore Wilbert McKinley, founder of Teach Fleet (www.Teachfleet.com), to build a LEGO Replica of the proposed new training ship and support vessel "Empire State VII". The model is 5'-6" long, which is approximately 1 to 100 size scale and used about 5,000 LEGO pieces. It took Mr. McKinley about 3 months to build. We are very thankful that Commodore McKinley undertook this remarkable build for us and the Maritime College Community.



The OBMG, with your help, awarded \$24,000.00 this year to deserving students. In addition, we handed out twenty five (25), 10.6" Android tablets, donated by our friends and supporters, the Masters Mates and Pilots Union (MMP). We also gave away to all in attendance the book "Memoirs of an African-American Navigator", written by guest speaker Keith Lawrence (the first African American to graduate from California Maritime Academy Deck Department).



20 tablets were generously given to thanked and the cadets by MM&P. Norman.



Graduating Cultural Club President Constansa Torrejon was congratulated by the club members and Club Advisor Ms. Pat Norman.



As always, fun was had by all with great food, great music and lively conversation.



April 3, 2017 - Marine Society of the City of New York Annual Dinner



The OBMG was awarded the Distinguished Service Award, along with Tom Merrell, President of General Dynamics (a regular OBMG Donor).



In addition, the Marine Society pledged a generous annual donation to the OBMG.

Captain Tim Ferrie, President Marine Society; Captain John DeCruz, President NY Sandy Hook Pilots and Mr. Clay Maitland, President International Registries made the presentation to the OBMG

April 22, 2017 - Philadelphia Maritime Day - The OBMG Sponsored Commodore McKinley and Teach Fleet.
 OBMG Board Member Captain Kevin Barrow and son assisted at the booth



May 8-June 22-Aug 11, 2107 – SUNY Maritime SST 2017

Board Member Sean Carswell shipped out as Engineering instructor for the 1st 45 days. Board Member Captain Howard Wyche shipped out as Deck instructor for the 2nd 45 days. Captain Wyche treated some cadets to a lunch while in the Canary Islands.



Oct 1, 2017 - Delaware Coast Day – The OBMG Sponsored Commodore McKinley and Teach Fleet’s Interactive Exhibit.



Oct 13, 2017 - FSMAA Ancient Mariner Golf Outing - Pelham Bay and Split Rock Golf Courses



OBMG Board Member Captain Howard Wyche, member Chief Engineer Sterling Pearson attended the Alumni Association Golf Outing, joining Reverend Victor Rapp ‘68.

The OBMG continues its support of the Fort Schuyler Maritime Alumni Association by purchasing a tee sponsorship.



Oct 14, 2017 – SUNY Maritime Homecoming – OBMG Tailgating



Oct 22, 2017 OBMG Mentoring BBQ

Once again, the Cultural Club gathered at the Cook residence. Great food, Tumble Towers and Corn Hole were followed by mentoring presentations from maritime industry and other industry professionals.



Presenters were Sun Yang, Yang Ming Port Captain; Captain Allan Michael, retired Circle Line NYC; Forest Herndon, Maritime Emergency Response Educators; Edmund Williams, Williams Electrical Mechanical and Petroleum Marine Group; Herb Lottier, Northwestern Mutual financial planner.

SUNY Maritime graduates Kyron Cooper, Naval Architect; Sterling Pearson, Chief Engineer and Captain Art Sulzer, Maritime Education Specialist also attended to mentor the cadets.

Jan 23, 2018 – New Era Academy Baltimore toured NY Harbor School & SUNY Maritime College



After many months of preparation with Dick Fredricks (NEA President), Captain Robert Cook assisted the New Era Academy (NEA) and representatives from the Baltimore County Public School System Career and Technology Education (BCPSS CTE) with a long day of tours and presentations from the New York Harbor School and SUNY Maritime College. Lecturer Sean Carswell and Instructor Amie Carter (OBMG Board Members) made presentations at SUNY Maritime College. The goal for NEA, with the support of Congressman Elijah Cummings, is to create a better Baltimore High School maritime program.

In attendance were Captain Robert Cook, Dick Fredricks (NEA Foundation president), Dr. Booker (NEA principal), Capt. Michael Crye (NEA Director Trans Tech), Regina Breitmeyer (NEA maritime instructor), Dr. Enyinnaya Iweha (BCCC Dean), Dr. Tonja Ringgold (BCCC Vice President), Stanley Wolfe (BCPSS CTE), Nikole DeVito (BCPSS CTE), Pat Perlucke (Steering Committee chair), Michael Middleton (Cherry Hill Development Corp), Carleen Lyden Walker (NAMEPA Executive Director), Kristen Allen (Sagamore Development representative), Michael Wicklien (videographer)

“Quiet Strong” by Cynthia Byrd Conner

A book based on the life of Master Chief Boatswain's Mate Sherman Byrd, the First African American Explosive Ordnance Disposal Diver <http://www.quietstrong.com/book.html>

OBMG Board Member and SUNY Maritime graduate, Dr. Louis Burgos introduced the OBMG to the inspiring story of MCBM Sherman Byrd. The OBMG awarded a scholarship in his honor at the 2012 Black History Month Dinner with his family in attendance. His daughter, Cynthia Byrd Conner has written a book about her father entitled “Quiet Strong”. Captain Robert Cook was honored to be asked to write a review for the back cover. In addition, Mrs. Byrd Conner has generously pledged to donate a percentage of the book sales to the OBMG Scholarship Fund.