

Senior Sailor of the Year: The Keys to Success  
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In the heart of USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), there's a place that lies between the chief's mess and the aft galley. Hidden down on the fourth deck, this shop is secluded from the rest of the ship and only those that know exactly where to go can find it. Inside this shop, there's a single, wooden desk. Between the mounds of paperwork, supply orders and blue folders, a solitary sheet of paper hangs taped to the desk. A motivational poster of sorts that simply says, "God put me on the Earth to accomplish a certain number of things. Right now I am so far behind, I will never die." Now, Logistics Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Rodway McCloggan can cross an item off of his bucket list that only a few have managed to accomplish – Senior Sailor of the Year.

"I didn't think I would be selected," said McCloggan. "The competition was pretty steep. I was going up against the best and brightest in their craft. It was a very humbling experience."

Senior Sailor of the Year is a prestigious award given to the top first class petty officer on the ship. In order for Sailors to be nominated for Senior Sailor of the Year, their chain of command has to nominate them.

McCloggan's resume is nothing short of impressive. He is currently Supply Department's S-8 division assistant leading petty officer and main two storeroom's leading petty officer. Additionally, he has a list of collateral duties a mile long, to include damage control training team and Supply Department's command fitness leader.

"McCloggan is everything that his peers try to emulate," said Chief Logistics Specialist Nicki Garcia, main two storeroom leading chief petty officer. "He's one of the hardest working first classes I have ever met. That's why we nominated him."

All nominees must stand a Sailor of the Year board, comprising of departmental master chiefs and the command master chief.

"I was nervous. Even though I talked to a majority of the master chiefs on the board, it was still intimidating," said McCloggan.

The nominees try to stay calm in their dress uniforms while the board asks each potential Sailor of the year a few questions. The questions can range from military level of knowledge questions to opinion questions.

"You go in there and you try and present yourself and your division and your department," McCloggan said.

After the nominees are questioned, the board concludes and decides on one individual to receive the award.

According to Garcia, McCloggan was selected out of the seven nominees because he's the perfect emulation of the Navy's core values – honor, courage and commitment.

"He's everything you could ever want in a first class. He's everything a first class should strive to be," said Garcia. "The board made the right choice."

Despite the attention that can sometimes come with winning Senior Sailor of the Year, McCloggan has vowed not to let his success affect who he is.

"This award is a big deal," said McCloggan. "But it's not going to stop me from being who I am and it's not going to change me. Even if I wasn't selected, I wouldn't beat myself up about it because I will still be me and it is still an honor just to be nominated."

McCloggan said he plans to use his success to push his junior Sailors to be better.

"My best advice for junior Sailors is to find a mentor, emulate that mentor and strive to be better than that mentor," McCloggan said.

On paper, McCloggan mentors about six Sailors. However, according to Logistics Specialist Seaman Denise Roman, there are numerous Sailors that look up to McCloggan and wish to follow in his footsteps.

"He's the strongest leader I know," said Roman. "He's trustworthy and dedicated to helping his Sailors."

According to Roman, McCloggan represents a different style of leadership than most first classes.

"He's honest, he's humble, he's passionate and he genuinely cares about the well-being of his Sailors," Roman said.

Roman has known McCloggan for over a year and previously worked for him in the main two storeroom. Roman was selected for Supply Department's Blue Jacket of the Year and recently earned both of her warfare pins – both of which are feats she attributes to McCloggan's guidance and leadership.

"He's the reason that I know what I know," Roman said. "He's responsible for making me the Sailor that I am today."

While others attribute their success to McCloggan, he attributes his success to those around him.

"Without the experience and the technical expertise of my shipmates and without the trust instilled in me by my chain of command, this recognition would not be possible," said McCloggan. "This is a team award, not an individual award."

As McCloggan continues his work and the stacks of paper continue to pile on his desk, that single piece of paper remains. It is a constant reminder to all those buried in that storeroom between the chief's mess and the aft galley that McCloggan is nowhere near done with his bucket list – he's just one unexpected checkmark closer.