

**Chief of Naval Operations  
Adm. Jonathan Greenert**

**Admiral Michelle Howard Promotion**

**1 July 2014**

**Admiral Greenert:** Wayne and Phillipa, thank you for what you've done. You've brought us a great leader and we thank you very much. You have been the wind underneath Michelle's wings. She will admit it. And we've got more work to do here, but thank you for getting us where we are. As Benjamin Franklin said...

Okay, Lisa and Mike got me, I know you say well, I saw this years ago running around the house. I don't know. It's hard to tell you, that little Connor Butler, they all said, are you kidding me? So we'll see what you say.

But honestly, as Secretary Mabus than you obviously for doing this today.

I am extremely proud and excited to be here because well, Michelle's put in a tremendous career, 32 years, mainstream, at sea, tough tours, very difficult tours. Michelle came up through the amphibious expeditionary warfare arena and came into town and did the hard jobs that needed to be done. So she is definitely ready to assume this position. There's no question in my mind there.

We know about Captain Phillips' rescue. Those kinds of things where Michelle saw an opportunity, and she grabbed it and she performed well. That's kind of all said and done.

She will bear the burden of a role model, and she is ready to bear that very well. I'm very excited about that because we need lots more women in the Navy, we need to be a much more diverse Navy and role models are important for that. So for that, I am very very excited.

I first saw Michelle up close when she was actually the military assistant for the Secretary of the Navy. Those of us kind of standing around the water cooler, flag officers, said we've got something pretty special here. After that, John Harvey asked her to do a study for us. We were having some real issues down in the fleet. We needed to get to the bottom line of why were we having readiness issues? What was happening in and among our amphibious ships? Why were they not doing well in our fleet inspections? And Michelle went down and went into the deck plate and she took upon, actually it's an old nuclear phrase, you get what you inspect, not what you expect. This officer understands that very clearly. So I am very very very excited to have her join me and be my teammate here as we move on to lead our Navy.

A terrific day. Great family. Great support. The wardroom is here. They're ready to listen and to lead from there on out.

Now let me please introduce our host of today, a great great patriot, a champion of diversity and definitely inclusion. He has brought us forward into that position where we have women in

submarines. That was kind of a hurdle, if you will or a milestone. We weren't sure how this was really going to work out. It was pretty darn different from all the others and it's worked very smoothly under Secretary Mabus' leadership.

He's been a naval officer so he knows our culture. He knows what we're about. Go back and Google it and check out the beard. It's really awesome. Seriously, he has been the Governor of the State of Mississippi and he brought that State forward in tremendous ways. He's been an Auditor General, so he's helped us in that regard. And he was the Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during a very very difficult time.

On top of all that, check the ship numbers and you'll see very very tangible evidence of where our Navy has been under his leadership and where we're going.

On top of all that, I find him to be a great boss. Talking and listening to him and understanding him, he's a thoughtler and he takes that very seriously. A seriously dedicated Southern husband, and he's a good and decent man.

So please join me in welcoming our 75<sup>th</sup> Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Ray Mabus.

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