

# New commander takes over ‘finest shipyard in the world’

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KITTERY, Maine — Against the backdrop of an enormous American flag blanketing the windows of industrial Building 92 on Seavey Island, Capt. Daniel Ettlich on Friday became the 86th commander of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

In a change-of-command ceremony that drew hundreds, and featured speeches by New Hampshire U.S. Sens. Jeanne Shaheen and Maggie Hassan, now-former shipyard Cmdr. Capt. David Hunt handed the reins of the 219-year-old institution, which he had led since July 2016, to Ettlich.

Ettlich previously served as the military deputy for shipyard operations at NAVSEA, Washington Navy Yard, in Washington, D.C. His additional assignments included tours at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility where he served as deputy project superintendent for USS Honolulu (SSN 718) maintenance availability, shipyard docking officer, and surface ship maintenance coordinator; NAVSEA as the director of Submarine Safety (SUBSAFE) and Quality Assurance; and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard as the business and strategic planning officer and operations officer.

Ettlich joins Portsmouth Naval Shipyard off the heels of Hunt’s demonstrated commitments to workforce safety, making 2018 the year with the least injuries in shipyard history, to infrastructure investment, where he oversaw \$338 million of critical repairs and modernization, and lastly, to a colossal hiring initiative, which saw more than 2,100 hired at the yard over the last three years.

“It is a humbling and great honor to be standing before you as the 86th commander of this prestigious and historic institution,” Ettlich said during brief remarks, where he also thanked his wife, children and family members who joined him Friday.

Vice Adm. Thomas J. Moore, of NAVSEA, said Ettlich has an “impressive record of success throughout his career.”

“You have my complete confidence, you are absolutely ready,” Moore told Ettlich.

Shaheen and Hassan bid Hunt farewell, and welcomed Ettlich, whom they told both the New Hampshire and Maine federal delegations will always work to protect Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

“We’re excited to have you come aboard,” Shaheen said. “As you know, you have a great responsibility to not only to get our boats back to the fleet, under budget and ahead of schedule, but you’ll (also) oversee tremendous enhancements.”

Shaheen said Hunt's tenure capitalized on enhancement of the shipyard's layout, and the effort to increase dry dock capacity.

Hassan called Portsmouth Naval Shipyard "the finest shipyard in the world," crediting its workforce with becoming the "Navy's center of excellence."

"If there is one thing that is clear today, it is that the future is bright," Hassan said. "Each of you plays a vital role in protecting our national security."

During Hunt's three years as commander, he guided the shipyard through the planning and execution of 11 Chief of Naval Operations availabilities, and performing more than 2.2 million man-days of total workload with an annual operating budget of \$800 million. The shipyard delivered USS Oklahoma City (SSN 723) on-time and \$4 million under budget, USS Providence (SSN 719) on budget and 23 days early, USS Key West (SSN 722) on budget and 37 days early, and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Detachment – San Diego achieved a 95% on-time delivery rate.

Hunt was presented with a Legion of Merit gold star for "exceptionally meritorious conduct."

"It has been a wicked awesome tour," Hunt said, thanking his wife Cheryl and his children, calling them the "ultimate Navy family."

Hunt called the hiring of more than 2,100 workers over the last three years "an absolutely incredible feat." He said STEM outreach and "family days" were some of the highlights of his tour.

One of the most critical upcoming projects is the Dry Dock 1 superflood basin improvement, set to ensure the shipyard can efficiently dock both Los Angeles and Virginia class submarines to conduct maintenance.

"This expansion means that we are no longer a small yard," Hunt said. "We need to continue to think big. I am fully confident in the team I'm turning over to you, Dan."