

GRAVELY HOLDS CHANGE OF COMMAND

By USS Gravelly (DDG 107) Public Affairs

NORFOLK, VA. (July 15, 2016) – The guided-missile destroyer USS Gravelly (DDG 107) held a change of command ceremony, July 15, at Naval Station Norfolk.

Cmdr. Ted Carlson assumed command of USS Gravelly, relieving Cmdr. Alysa Ambrose of the post.

Cmdr. Ambrose has served onboard Gravelly for 38 months, assuming command since December 2014, and led the crew through its second deployment. While deployed, Gravelly safely steamed over 55,000 nautical miles and contributed to the U.S Navy by fortifying relationships with allied nations and assuring maritime safety in the 5th and 6th fleet areas of operation.

“Under her [Ambrose], Gravelly has done exceptionally well” said Capt. Derek M. Lavan, commodore of Destroyer Squadron Two Eight, “Now, exceptional performance from the crew doesn’t just happen; it requires leadership, vision, creativity, teamwork, and a lot of hard work and determination. Cmdr. Ambrose, USS Gravelly’s commanding officer, has provided all of these during her tour.”

Cmdr. Carlson takes command after serving as Gravelly’s executive officer for 17 months.

Cmdr. Carlson enlisted in the Navy in 1989 and served ten years as a Data Systems Technician. He attended San Diego State University, earning a Bachelor of Arts in History, and was commissioned through the Enlisted Commissioning Program in 1999. He completed sea tours aboard USS Thach (FFG 43) and USS Barry (DDG 52) while fulfilling leadership roles on the ship.

"Team Gravelly, I'm truly honored and humbled to be your commanding officer. Having served as your XO, I am aware of your dedication and professionalism, the sacrifices that you have made and the conditions you have endured to support and defend our great nation," said Carlson, "I know in the months ahead we will accomplish greater feats, ..., and continue to bring great honor to the Gravelly name."

During the ceremony, Ambrose spoke of her time with the crew of Gravelly to the 350 guests and crewmembers.

“The crew takes the responsibility to uphold Adm. Gravelly’s name seriously,” said Ambrose, “I could not be more proud of team Gravelly and all that we’ve accomplished this deployment. It is really bittersweet for me to be leaving, but I feel good knowing that it can’t get any better than this.”

Ambrose will report to the Navy Staff OPNAV Assessments (N81) at the Pentagon for her next tour.

Gravelly is currently in a sustainment cycle in preparation for an upcoming major maintenance period.

Gravelly proudly bears the name of Vice Adm. Samuel L. Gravelly, United States Navy. Gravelly was a man of many firsts. He became the first African-American to command a major naval warship and command a U.S. warship under combat conditions. He was also the first African-American to achieve the ranks of admiral and vice admiral and the first African-American to command a U.S. Fleet.

