



News Release

Port Security Official to Receive Bronze Star Medal Ruggiero to be honored Monday at Harbor Commission meeting

January 20, 2012

U.S. Navy Commander Steve Ruggiero, the Port of Long Beach's Assistant Director of Security, will be awarded the Bronze Star Medal on Monday, January 23 for meritorious service in Afghanistan.

The commendation will be presented by Navy Rear Admiral Michael Shatynski during the 1 p.m. meeting of the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners.

Ruggiero, the Port's Assistant Director of Security since 2008 and a Navy reservist, returned home in December from an eight-month deployment to Afghanistan.

The Bronze Star is a U.S. Armed Forces individual military decoration and the country's fourth-highest award for bravery, heroism or meritorious service. Ruggiero distinguished himself through exceptionally meritorious service while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as the Afghanistan Border Military Coordinator with the Border Management Task Force, United States Forces Afghanistan, from March 27 to October 21, 2011.

"The Board of Harbor Commissioners commends Steve for his courageous and selfless service to our country," said Board of Harbor Commissioners President Susan E. Anderson Wise. "We are honored to host the presentation of the Bronze Star Medal for his service in our Board meeting."

"We are incredibly proud of Steve's extraordinary service to our country," said Port Executive Director J. Christopher Lytle. "This is a tremendous honor for Steve, his family, and the entire Port community."

Ruggiero twice moved civilians to safety under fire during a September 2011 Taliban attack on the U.S. Embassy, despite his own injuries. He led dozens of missions on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border involving significant personal risk. In addition, his exceptional problem solving, training and program management skills saved the U.S. government millions of dollars, while greatly improving border security.



"His rapid assessment and solution to numerous problems greatly enhanced the coalition effectiveness against a determined and aggressive enemy," Ruggiero's supervisors said in his Bronze Star Medal narrative. "Despite many adversities and under harsh conditions, his efforts have bolstered safe and secure commerce, a key goal in Afghanistan's development strategy."

A Boston native, Ruggiero is a highly commended U.S. Navy officer with extensive training in maritime security. He oversees day-to-day security operations at the Port and manages coordination with the various agencies charged with security at the port complex, including the U.S. Coast Guard, Customs and Border Protection, Long Beach Police and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, among others. He is a resident of Orange County.

The Port of Long Beach is one of the world's premier seaports, a primary gateway for trans-Pacific trade and a trailblazer in innovative goods movement, safety and environmental stewardship. With 140 shipping lines connecting Long Beach to 217 seaports worldwide, the Port handles trade valued at more than \$155 billion each year and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs in Southern California.

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