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USS Ronald Reagan Wins Third Battle “E” Award

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SAN DIEGO – Sailors assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) won the Battle Efficiency Ribbon, or Battle “E” award February 10, 2010.

Vice Admiral Thomas Kilcline, Commander, Naval Air Forces (CNAF) awards the Battle “E” annually to two carriers; one in the Atlantic Fleet and one in the Pacific. The award is a tribute to the superior battle readiness of the aircraft carrier that receives it.

“To say that I’m impressed and incredibly pleased is an understatement.” said Captain Ken Norton, Ronald Reagan’s commanding officer. “This is yet another testament to a very impressive crew.”

Since 2006, Ronald Reagan’s first year of eligibility for the Battle “E,” the ship has won three of the past four years, winning in 2006, 2008 and now 2009.

“A lot of people take it for granted,” said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (SW/AW) Victor D. Ibarra, physical therapy technician in Ronald Reagan’s Health Services Department. “I’m impressed by the back-to-back. We’re probably one of the first carriers to do that.”

To win the Battle “E,” an aircraft carrier must win a number of departmental awards CNAF uses to grade efficiency.

Ronald Reagan's Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD), for example, earned the Black "E" maintenance efficiency award for the third consecutive year.

"There is a minimum qualifier we have to meet in order to be in the running," said Master Chief Petty Officer Kurt W. Schweiger, Ronald Reagan's AIMD Maintenance Master Chief. "It's based on our safety, our Aviation Maintenance Inspection (AMI) results, how you support your air wing, and how many parts you are fixing and putting on the shelf."

Each of Ronald Reagan's departments is evaluated by similar criteria. Ronald Reagan's Health Services Department is evaluated on the performance of Ronald Reagan Sailors in such areas as mass casualty triage and the ability of Sailors to act as stretcher bearers during General Quarters.

"It takes a team effort to make it happen," said Ibarra, who has been a part of all three of Ronald Reagan's Battle "E" awards. "This is where you see it pay off."

First-time Battle "E" recipients aboard Ronald Reagan are proud to help continue the ship's tradition of excellence.

"We work pretty hard," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuel) Airman Voun J. Brown. "I didn't realize we'd won it three times. It shows the dedication everyone has to make our command stand out."

USS Ronald Reagan is currently undergoing a planned incremental maintenance period (PIA) and is currently moored in its homeport of San Diego.