

Air and sea

Embry-Riddle's Coast Guard alumni brave ocean and sky to serve and protect America

Despite being the smallest armed service branch of the United States, the U.S. Coast Guard serves a large mission. As the nation's front-line agency for enforcing laws at sea, the Coast Guard protects the coastline and ports, preserves the marine environment and saves lives every day of its service.

Embry-Riddle alumni have established a strong tradition of service in the Coast Guard. Whether in the water or flying above it, our alumni have built distinguished careers protecting our shores and the airspace above them. Here are three of their stories.

SEMPER PARATUS—'ALWAYS READY'

His missions may look like scenes from TV or the movies, but Lt. Clay Clary ('00, DB) is no Hollywood actor. He prefers working in the real world. That's why he chose the U.S. Coast Guard. "I knew I wanted to serve our country and help people," Clary says. "When I learned about the real-world missions that the Coast Guard does, I knew it was what I wanted to do. It gives me a great sense of satisfaction when I accomplish real challenges and save lives every day."

During his first tour in Los Angeles, Clary flew for drug enforcement operations off the coast of Central and South America. "Two of my deployments were like scenes straight out of *Miami Vice*. We were chasing bad guys as they were trying to throw drugs out of their boat to get rid of evidence," Clary says.

Today, flying an HH-65 Dolphin helicopter for search-and-rescue missions based out of Atlantic City, N.J., the stakes are just as high. In January, Clary was one of the first responders to the US Airways jet that landed in New York's Hudson River.

During another recent emergency off the Delaware coast, a 60-foot barge was taking on water in Category 1 hurricane conditions. "It was absolutely the worst weather I've ever flown in," Clary recalls. "It took three attempts to lower our rescue swimmer onto the boat and successfully pull up the crew members." And he wasn't even finished that day. Almost immediately after the Delaware mission, he and his crew had to go back out to rescue a sailboat passenger off the coast of Maryland. "The weather had worsened by this point, and I had to be very careful that the wind downdrafts didn't make us collide with the 20-foot waves below us."



Clay Clary ('00, DB)

When he's not flying over water, Clary is protecting the airspace around the country's capital as part of one of the Coast Guard's newest missions in Homeland Security. "We are ready to respond to anyone who violates the airspace around the capital," he says. "It's just another way the Coast Guard is always ready to protect our country."

Clary credits his education and pilot training at Embry-Riddle for preparing him to respond to the Coast Guard's daily challenges. "The depth of knowledge I received at Embry-Riddle gave me the background and skills for going into the military," he says. "I am grateful for my education because it prepared me to be an all-around professional pilot."



Capt. Stephen Goldhammer (Ret.), USCG ('73, WW)

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

At age 11, Capt. Stephen Goldhammer (Ret.), USCG ('73, WW), knew he wanted to follow in his father's footsteps and join the U.S. Coast Guard. After completing the U.S. Navy Flight Training through the Coast Guard Aviation Cadet program, Goldhammer received his wings and commission on the same day. His father pinned the wings onto his uniform and, for the next

By Ashlee (Fiser) Ilg ('03, DB)



Photo by Chris McGrath/Getty Images

Clay Clary ('00, DB) was one of the Coast Guard rescuers on the scene in January when US Airways flight 1549 made an emergency landing in the Hudson River. The Airbus 320 crashed shortly after take-off from LaGuardia Airport en route to Charlotte, N.C. All 150 passengers survived.

year and a half, they served the country alongside each other, doing search-and-rescue missions, training flights and oil pollution patrols based out of Brooklyn, N.Y.

“It was a real treat to be stationed and flying together,” Goldhammer says. “As far as I know, it was the only time a father and son flew together in the Coast Guard’s history.”

Over the next four years of working 65 hours a week and flying the Sikorsky HH-52A amphibious helicopter and Grumman HU-16E amphibious aircraft on active duty every fourth night, Goldhammer knew he wanted to further his education.

“To get promoted to higher ranks in the Coast Guard, I had to have a college degree. It was always in the back of my mind that I would someday finish my education,” Goldhammer says. “The opportunity came at just the right time.”

The “right time” came when his wife, Marilyn, saw an ad in the local newspaper for a new program offered by Embry-Riddle at its Miami-Homestead Campus. Goldhammer quickly enrolled in the Aeronautical Science program and spent the next two years attending class when he could between flight duties. “It was difficult for me to attend all of my classes, but my professors offered a special arrangement,” Goldhammer says. “If I missed a class, I was able to get a cassette tape recording for 50 cents, and I took the exams when my schedule permitted.”

Today, as a retired Coast Guard aviator, Goldhammer spends time teaching his own children the lessons and values he learned from his father. “I am always teaching my kids the value of education. It takes hard work, but the piece of wallpaper you get is worth it.”

AN ADVENTURE AT SEA

When Stephen Stoll ('91, WW) enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard in 1969, he was chasing his dream of being a firefighter. “I always

wanted to be a firefighter but instead I enlisted in the Coast Guard,” he says.

Stoll began his career stationed in Norfolk, Va., on a ship that had just returned from Vietnam. For the next two and a half years, Stoll worked with the National Weather Service personnel on the ship. “I did weather observations and oceanography out in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean,” he explains.

After his stint in the Coast Guard, Stoll spent the next five years realizing his dream of being a firefighter in Maryland. Then, at age 30, he had the opportunity to return to the Coast

Guard. “I’d reached a pivotal point in my life,” Stoll says. “I had the opportunity to become a lieutenant at a new fire department or return to the Coast Guard. I chose the Coast Guard.”



Stephen Stoll ('91, WW)

That choice led to a career of great adventure. From sailing across the equator to do research in Antarctica, to responding to a wide variety of harrowing emergency missions, Stoll used his weather forecasting skills to help pilots accomplish search-and-rescue, drug intervention and secret service missions. “When pilots go out, they must have precise

weather data to make their rescue successful,” Stoll says. “It was very exciting to be connected with the group who makes those phenomenal rescues.”

Along the way, Stoll earned his Master of Aeronautical Science degree from Embry-Riddle in just 17 months—with a 4.0 GPA while working full time and raising three children.

“It was a very demanding time, but I was preparing myself to retire from the Coast Guard to pursue other areas,” Stoll says. “My education at Embry-Riddle really enhanced my understanding of and appreciation for the entire aviation industry.”

With his new degree in hand, Stoll retired from the Coast Guard and was hired by the National Weather Service, where he moved “pretty quickly” to become a general forecaster. “I’m sure I wouldn’t have been promoted without my master’s degree,” he says.

He moved to Montana and put a new twist on an old dream by working in fire and weather meteorology. Part of his duties includes traveling all over the country to provide weather forecasts to firefighting crews who are involved in major wildfires.