

Received this from Tim Sumner (66) and wanted to share:

Please take a minute right now to read the following from David Matsuda. It illustrates how critical it is at this moment for the alumni to demonstrate our commitment to the future of our Academy.

Aboard T/V KINGS POINTER last Tuesday night, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood stressed that he was depending on the alumni across the Nation to support his efforts to properly fund Kings Point. I have never before seen this level of commitment to Kings Point. Let's do everything we can to seize this moment. Acta non Verba.

FROM THE ACTING MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR:

Friends and Members of the Kings Point Community, I'd like to update you on a two important announcements concerning the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

In May of 2009, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood asked the Maritime Administration to assemble an independent "Blue Ribbon Panel" to review the 2008 Capital Improvement Plan prepared by USMMA, and advise the Department on the priority and efficacy of projects that should be undertaken. Five U.S. Government senior executives from outside the Department participated in the Panel. Members were selected for their knowledge of the maritime industry, management and administration of federal academic institutions, and current engineering and construction practices. They graciously accepted this responsibility and their contributions to this project have proven to be invaluable. The Panel met at length with USMMA leadership and senior administrators, toured the campus, and inspected the physical condition of the all the major facilities. Confronted with the situation of an aged facility in need of major infrastructure renovations, and capital improvements and maintenance needs that exceed available funding, the Panel, using cost and construction information validated by an independent engineering firm, reviewed twenty major projects for inclusion in the Academy's capital improvement budget for FY 2011-2020. The Panel also recommends significant changes to the way in which the Academy, and the Agency, manage capital improvement projects.

The Secretary has accepted the Panel's recommendations, and I intend to implement them. As discussed in the Panel's Final Report, the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy continues to be an integral part of our marine economy. Unfortunately, we as nation have failed to provide the funding necessary to maintain the Academy's critical infrastructure. It is a top priority of this Administration, and Secretary LaHood and I intend to work closely with Congress to provide the funding necessary to correct this, and make the Academy the jewel of the Federal academies.

The report from the Blue Ribbon Panel can be read at:

http://www.marad.dot.gov/news_room_landing_page/news_blue_ribbon/blue_ribbon_panel.htm I encourage you to review it, as well as let others know of this important work. Second, let me take this opportunity to tell you about our search for a new Superintendent at the Academy. We are currently advertising this critical civil service position and are receiving many inquiries. We have taken steps to reach out and find the very best candidates, and I ask your help in making sure all potential applicants know of the opening and the hiring process, which is detailed at: http://www.marad.dot.gov/news_room_landing_page/news_item_summary/news_item/MARAD_01-10.htm The link should be easily located directly below the announcement for the Blue Ribbon Panel report on MARAD's website. I share Secretary LaHood's vision for a renewed and revitalized Academy. The commitment shown by the Obama Administration will make sure this vision becomes a reality, but it will take your active participation as well. We will be continuing to work very diligently in the coming months to ensure the Academy is on the path to success, and, with everybody doing their part, we will get there. If I can provide further assistance or information, please feel free to contact me or any member of our USDOT/MARAD/USMMA team.

David Matsuda
Acting Maritime Administrator