

Change of Command - SSN796

Back in December, a new CO took command of the submarine New Jersey, Cmdr. Steven Halle (r) replaced the outgoing CO, Cmdr. Jared Smith (l), who has since left the Navy to move into the private sector. We wish Cmdr. Smith well in his future endeavors. While Cmdr. Smith wasn't CO for very long, we certainly appreciate his support for the USS New Jersey Veterans, Inc. He attended our 2022 reunion with his wife and daughter. He spoke to us after our memorial service on the fantail of the Battleship and was the keynote speaker at our banquet. I received an email from the XO, LCDR Nick Tuuk, informing me of the Change of Command, and that he has turned over with LCDR Andrew Hutchison as XO. LCDR Tuuk was my contact for inviting the CO to our 2022 reunion.



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Please join me in welcoming Commander Steven A. Halle to the USS NEW JERSEY (SSN 796). CDR Halle grew up in Lake Villa, Illinois and enlisted in the Navy in 1999. He was selected for the Nuclear Enlisted Commissioning Program during his initial training and attended the University of Illinois starting in 2001. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering and was awarded a commission in August of 2004. Upon completion of initial nuclear and submarine officer training, his first operational assignment was onboard USS OHIO (SSGN 726) from 2006 until 2009. He then attended Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California and earned a Master of Science in Applied Physics. He served on USS MISSOURI (SSN780) as the Weapons Officer from 2012 until 2015 and conducted the maiden deployment to European Command (EUCOM). He then served as the Naval Submarines School's Weapons Officer until early 2017. He was then assigned as the Executive Officer onboard USS HARTFORD (SSN 768) where he completed ICEX 2018, a Surge Deployment, and EUCOM Deployment. He most recently served as the Submarine Non-nuclear Enlisted Community Manager in Millington, Tennessee before reporting to PCU NEW JERSEY (SSN 796). He is authorized to wear the Meritorious Service Medal (2 awards), Navy Commendation Medal (4 awards), Navy Achievement Medal (2 awards), and other unit and personal awards.

Good luck to all four of these fine naval officers,

Bob Dingman, President