



# CAL MARITIME

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## **CALIFORNIA MARITIME HONORED FOR ACTIONS IN 2008 RESCUE AT SEA**



*First Mate Bill Schmid – white helmet, and crew and cadets from the Cal Maritime Training Ship Golden Bear (helmets) tow two fishermen and their stranded single-engine boat back to the ship after finding them adrift 80 miles of the Monterey coast last August. Golden Bear crew and Capt. Paul Leyda were honored for their work in effecting the rescue.*

(Vallejo, CA – Feb. 25, 2009)... Capt. Paul Leyda and crewmembers of the California Maritime Academy's Training Ship *Golden Bear* (TSGB) have been honored with the 2008 Mary Patten Valiant Ship Award and Commendation for Bravery and Outstanding Seamanship. The honor, given by the Women's Propeller Club of the United States, was awarded in recognition of the actions of

the Captain and crew in an August, 2008 rescue of two fishermen. adrift in a small power boat some 80 miles off the coast of Monterey, CA.

When the single engine on the boat failed, the men managed to radio the Coast Guard of their plight. The 500-foot *Golden Bear* was in the area, returning home on the final leg of its four-month long Pacific training voyage with some 240 faculty, staff and students aboard. Capt. Leyda, who also heads the University's Marine Transportation Department, was assigned skipper of *Golden Bear* for this segment of the training voyage.

Contacted by the Coast Guard, he immediately ordered a new course for *Golden Bear* and increased speed to assure arrival on the scene before dark when visual location would have become more difficult. As it was, the small size of the stricken boat made it difficult to spot on radar and it was finally located when the fishermen were asked to fire flares to pinpoint their position.

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Ship's crew and senior cadets deployed the *Golden Bear's* rescue boat which took aboard the stranded fishermen and towed their disabled craft back to the *Golden Bear* where it was lifted aboard. The two men and their boat were safely returned to San Francisco.

Capt. Harry Bolton, commanding skipper of *Golden Bear*, expressed his thanks to the national Women's Propeller Club for their recognition of the seamanship skills of Cal Maritime personnel. "Most people don't realize how hard it is to locate a very small boat like this in the open ocean. Operating a boat this size with only one engine so far from shore was very risky and the fishermen were fortunate that resources were in the area to rescue them. The award recognizes the professionalism of our faculty and the importance of the intensive training we provide both afloat and ashore on all aspects of maritime safety and security."

Capt. Leyda said that while recognition is nice, he accepted the honor on behalf of his crew who truly deserved the honor for their outstanding work. He cited Chief Officer Bill Schmid - commander of the rescue boat, Deck Officer in Charge Dave Coleman, Deck Officer and rescue boat assistant commander Makala Downs, Chief Engineer Tom Mader for ship maneuvering, the deck assistance of Bosun Tom Allen, and rescue boat corps Chief Mate cadet Sam Thompson and senior deck cadet Hannah Reeves.

The Women's Propeller Club, founded in 1935, annually honors an American flag vessel that performs a rescue at sea and honors the deeds of captains and crew that save the lives of other seafarers. The Award is named after Mary Ann Brown Patten who took the helm of her ailing husband's 216-foot ship in 1856 and safely sailed her from New York to San Francisco. (She was 19 and pregnant at the time.)

*The California Maritime Academy is a unique campus of 23-member California State University system, offering degrees in international business and logistics, facilities engineering technology, global studies and maritime affairs, marine engineering technology, marine transportation, and mechanical engineering. Cal Maritime is one of only seven degree-granting maritime academies in the United States — and the only one on the West Coast. For more information, visit the Cal Maritime website at [www.csum.edu](http://www.csum.edu) or call 707-654-1000*