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Thanks For Reading the Navy Compass

Lake Champlain Sailor of the Year proud to serve in Fleet Week kick off

STORY AND PHOTO BY MC2 ALEXIS R. BROWN
Navy Compass Staff

Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (SW) David Vasquez is proud of many things.

He is proud to be the father of a 12 year-old son and an 11 year-old daughter — proud to be a positive influence in junior Sailors' lives and also proud to serve in the United States Navy during Fleet Week San Diego.

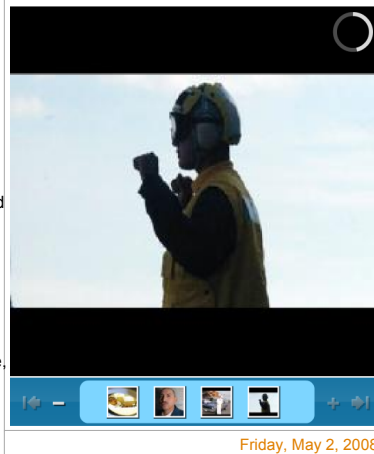
The USS Lake Champlain (CG 57) Sailor of the Year said in the past, he has participated in other Navy celebrations on the west coast such as the Seattle Sea Fair and San Francisco Fleet Week. Being able to play a part in the kick-off event, the Sea 'n Air Parade, for Fleet Week San Diego May 3 gives the Huntington Beach, Calif., native a boost of pride for his ship, Navy and country.

"I will be manning the rails on the Champlain during the Sea 'n Air Parade and looking out to the people standing along the harbor front watching us," said Vasquez. "This is the first time that I will be in the parade with the ship," said Vasquez. "I will be in my dress uniform and I feel honored and proud."

Vasquez added he will be looking sharp. The 10-year veteran has served aboard the Lake Champlain since October 2005. He plans to make the Navy a 30-year career, retire, and become a government employee.

What he enjoys most about his job aboard the Champlain is that it is never the same for him. "There is always something new and happening," Vasquez said. "I also enjoy interacting with Sailors junior to me that remind me of how I was growing up." Vasquez describes those Sailors as young and wild. "I was like that. I didn't have a father figure in my life and didn't have much direction," added Vasquez. "I like telling them how I made a change and how they can get the most from their naval career."

His philosophy for the Navy and life is, "Don't waste a day," he said.



Friday, May 2, 2008

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