**Rear Admiral Jack Buono, Superintendent, United States Merchant Marine Academy,**

**Change of Command Address, 9 November 2018**

Thank you all for being here today. Before I address the Regiment, I would like to recognize and thank Secretary of Transportation, Elaine Chao and Maritime Administrator Admiral Mark Buzby, for their confidence in me and for providing me the opportunity to serve our midshipmen and our Academy.

*[Editor’s note: Multiple welcoming comments to attending guests omitted for brevity]*

To the Regiment of Midshipmen, my shipmates, I am truly honored to come aboard today. You are here because you are committed to developing the greatness that lies within you and I am committed to helping you get there.

Greatness is not born of easy times, nor is it the product of complacency. Greatness is born from personal challenge and the courage to overcome adversity.

Our Academy has navigated through turbulent waters over the past few years. NOW HEAR THIS: whether in regimental formation, in our classrooms or in athletic competition, leadership is NOT about standing taller than your shipmates. Leadership is about helping your shipmates stand taller than yourself. ANY act of disrespect towards a shipmate is an act of disrespect towards the Regiment. Similarly, any act of support and encouragement towards a shipmate, is an act of support and encouragement towards us all.

Many great people, including Presidents have said that among the five federal service academies, Kings Point is the best kept secret.  While that may have been so, on this our 75th anniversary year, we shall be a SECRET NO LONGER!

Each of the 5 federal service academies graduates commissioned officers with academic degrees, but Kings Point is the ONLY federal service academy who’s graduates also earn a license as an officer in the United States Merchant Marine. Kings Point is also the ONLY federal service academy awarded a battle standard in recognition of the 142 midshipmen who gave their lives in service to this country.  Should THAT remain a best kept secret?

As winter approaches and many Americans enjoy an enviable standard of living in the warmth of their homes, they seldom think about the Mariners hove-to in the Gulf of Alaska in the face of punishing winds and mountainous seas, delivering energy to protect and serve the economic security of our nation. Should THAT be a best kept secret?

As the waters of the Mississippi rise above her levies and swift currents shift navigational channels and, as the going gets tough, WE continue to deliver. Should THIS be a best kept secret?

Across oceans to keep our military supplied and through pirate infested waters WE sail.

Regardless of the risks we face, whether by force of nature or those imposed by warring nations, WE deliver. Should THIS be a best kept secret?

In peace and in war, over the past 75 years, the men and women who walked through Vickery Gate before you, forged a tradition we call Acta Non Verba. YOU are the backbone of the United States Merchant Marine and from this institution exemplary leaders go forth to do what few will ever comprehend or appreciate as you serve to protect our economic prosperity and national security.

From the war rooms to the board rooms of this great Nation, Kings Pointers each and every day, continue to uphold the tradition of Acta Non Verba.

In War time, in Peace time, EVERY time, WE deliver.

WE ARE the United States Merchant Marine Academy!

God bless Kings Point!

God bless the United States of America!