**14058, John Caskey**

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, let me offer my congratulations for every cadet here for completing your training and graduating today. Each of you has worked hard and given your best effort and that shows as you graduate today. I know that the superintendent of the Academy, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, is proud of each and every one of you, as are your family and friends. You can also be proud of each and every one of your shipmates as you graduate today.

Today I have the special privilege to award three 1st class cadets a very special award. These cadets served this summer aboard NOAA research vessels. For that service they will receive NOAA Corps Director Ribbons for exemplary service, and upon graduation they will become Ensigns in the USCG. This is a special honor for these cadets because this is the first time this recognition is being awarded to cadets. These cadets have truly given above and beyond what is expected of them and I’m quite sure they will continue that level of commitment as they continue their service for their country.

The NOAA and the USCG have a history of working together and this is yet another success story between our two services. The NOAA Corps officer accession program has been fully integrated with the USCG’s Officer Candidate School for more than two years and this is one more accomplishment for them. These are very exciting times. As we work together we can accomplish great things.

With the accomplishments of these three cadets the rest of you can see the possibilities for you as you plan your careers. This is one of many opportunities for you. This is also one more way to strengthen the partnership between the NOAA and USCG.

Both of our services have an honorable history serving our country. Young people have been given the opportunity to receive good training, opportunities for service and challenges they couldn’t imagine in any other career. With the two services combining their efforts that enlarges their opportunities for service and training as well as career options.

For those of you who are still underclassmen, I encourage you to pour your all into your training. I challenge you to step up and seek out further challenges. We know you have the ability. We look forward to celebrating your accomplishments as you progress in your career. I hope that you will be certain to extend your congratulations and continued support to your classmates who receive their awards today.

To the cadets receiving their awards today, I express my heartfelt gratitude for your success in completing the requirements to earn this award. I know the extra work and responsibility that you shouldered in order to earn this award and you have done so with excellence and with honor. You have also done so with eagerness to serve. Those traits, combined with your skills and abilities, will serve you well as you continue your career. It is truly an honor to present you with this award today.