



# THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR J. KEVIN STITT

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## GOVERNOR STITT ANNOUNCES U.S.S. OKLAHOMA, NEW U.S. NAVY NUCLEAR SUBMARINE

**OKLAHOMA CITY** (May 28, 2024) - Governor Kevin Stitt revealed the creation of the U.S.S. Oklahoma Commissioning Committee to build a 29th Virginia Class, Fast Attack Nuclear Submarine in collaboration with the U.S. Navy and Newport News Shipbuilding. Carrying Tomahawk Missiles and MK-48 torpedoes, the U.S.S. Oklahoma will home 132 sailors, 18 officers, and feature advanced stealth capabilities to make it virtually undetectable in water.

**“I couldn’t be more excited to have Oklahoma so well represented in our nation’s Navy,”** said Governor Stitt. **“I’m grateful to Director Slavonic and the committee members for their leadership. Not only will this submarine represent the patriotic, God-fearing culture of Oklahoma, but it will symbolize our commitment to innovation, security, and the men and women who protect our country. It’s an honor to help bring her to life.”**

The submarine is being built in Groton, CT and Newport News, VA. The traditional keel laying occurred August 2, 2023, and the christening will occur late 2025 or early 2026. After a year of sea trials, the commissioning ceremony, where the U.S. Navy officially accepts the submarine in her fleet, will be in mid-2027. The U.S.S. Oklahoma already has a sixty-man crew training and overseeing the boat’s construction.

**“The citizens of Oklahoma should take pride in knowing the U.S. Navy decided after 80 years to have another navy vessel named ‘Oklahoma.’ Not since the battleship U.S.S. Oklahoma, which was sunk by the Japanese when they attacked our naval fleet at Pearl Harbor, has a ship or submarine borne the name Oklahoma,”** said executive director of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs Greg Slavonic. **“429 sailors and marines lost their lives that fateful day– second most to U.S.S. Arizona. The new Oklahoma submarine will project power, keep our sea lanes open and ensure freedom for every Oklahoman and our nation.”**

The makeup of the commissioning committee will be U.S. Naval Academy graduate and Naval Seabee Rocky Goins as chair, retired Commander Tucker McHugh as treasurer, and executive director of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs Greg Slavonic, amongst others. Governor Stitt, Senator Lankford and Senator Mullin will serve as honorary chairs. Molly Slavonic serves as the vessel’s official sponsor. As one of their first acts, the committee hopes to develop scholarship opportunities for the Oklahoma sailors to further their education, even while serving underwater.

**“It is difficult for young sailors to further their education when they may be underwater for months at a time without internet,”** said Goins. **“We have had initial and productive conversations with Oklahoma Chancellor Allison Garrett and Secretary of Education Nellie Sanders to see if our Oklahoma colleges can develop programs that our sailors can take with them on their cruise to further their development. This could be a game changer for them if we can create a program which the Navy will approve.”**

Commander Aaron “Okie Skipper” Stutzman, Captain Select of the U.S.S. Oklahoma, plans to have crew members visit Oklahoma regularly to embrace the “Okie spirit.” Commander Stutzman is enthusiastic about the committee’s interest in expanding the sailor education program and exploring opportunities with the Navy.

**“To make all of this happen in a first-class manner, we will be relying upon Oklahoma’s generosity in sponsorships for this historic event,”** said Commander Stutzman. **“We want the crew to know that our state will support them during their commissioning and beyond as they protect our shores and sea lanes.”**

The commission’s website can be found [here](#) and their Facebook page can be found [here](#).



Pictured: Rocky Goins, Lynn Flinn, Lt. Chase Syring (USN) , Governor Kevin Stitt, Master Chief Christian Vanlaar (USN), Commander Jon “Hugh” Tucker, USN (Ret.) and Rear Admiral Greg Slavonic, USN (Ret.).