



Okies,

I am humbled and greatly honored to be the first commanding officer of PCU OKLAHOMA (SSN 802). We are the first ship to be named OKLAHOMA since the Battleship OKLAHOMA (BB-37) was lost at Pearl Harbor in World War II. Like our submarines carried the fight to our adversaries in World War II, we will carry forward the history of BB-37 and the heritage of the great state of Oklahoma. My Sailors are working hard every day alongside the thousands of shipyard workers at Huntington Ingalls Industries Shipbuilding in Newport News, VA to build OKLAHOMA and bring the ship to life through qualifications, standing watch, and testing systems.

A significant focus area for me and my Sailors is the culture we establish on OKLAHOMA. As submariners we take pride in our history and our heritage. On my previous four submarines the ties to namesake cities and states was alive and well and I want to carry on that tradition in establishing OKLAHOMA. Our command logo ties in multiple aspects of the history of BB-37 and the heritage of Oklahoma. Our ship's patch exemplifies the strength of the state, the bison, and my portion of our ship's battle cry "SADDLE UP!" The crew's response in our battle cry continues the traditions of the recently decommissioned USS OKLAHOMA CITY (SSN 723) with "THE SOONER THE BETTER!" We are focused every day to bring all those aspects together to build OKLAHOMA's culture alongside building the submarine.

My previous experiences with namesake visits makes being in command and experiencing the Commissioning Committee establishment all that more exciting. I have now visited Oklahoma twice in command and love learning about the culture and history of the state. As the Commissioning Committee plans for the celebration of PCU OKLAHOMA becoming USS OKLAHOMA my goal is to create relationships that last the life of the ship, make namesake visits for future OKIE Sailors a once in a lifetime experience, and build a culture onboard that embodies the Oklahoma Standard. Show up to Serve. Rise up to Honor. Step up to Be Kind.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaron M. Stutzman'.

Aaron M. Stutzman
Commanding Officer
PCU OKLAHOMA (SSN 802)
SADDLE UP! THE SOONER THE BETTER!