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NAMEPA Conference Looks Back to Move Forward Industry Leaders Promote Accountability and Training as Keys to Success

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On October 26, 2017, the Annual NAMEPA Conference and Awards Dinner was attended by over 200 delegates predominantly representing the United States, Mexico, and Canada. These representatives were joined by others from Australia, Cyprus, Greece, Curacao, Puerto Rico, and many Caribbean nations.



The conference marked NAMEPA's tenth year of educating the public on environmental stewardship while furthering the maritime industry's commitment to protecting the environment.

The industry has weathered the recent shipping recession with strength, dignity and resilience. The character of the industry was evident through the enthusiasm and dedication of the speakers and attendees onboard the Hornblower Infinity at Pier 40 in New York City.

The title of the conference: Back to the Future of Maritime, followed a distinctive timeline beginning in 2007, the time of NAMEPA's inception, and concluded with a presentation on tools for a sustainable future by young Naval officers. A reoccurring theme of the day was environmental disruption as a necessary challenge to growth in the maritime industry. Further discussion delved into the intersection of environmental changes and the maritime industry. Specifically, how population growth, digitalization, and changing patterns of trade, result in reactionary regulatory changes such as the Ballast Water Convention, Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (VIDA), and the reduction in the global sulphur cap slated for 2020, thus impacting many aspects of the maritime industry.



As the focus of each panel moved from the past into a discussion of current practices, speakers touched on the industry's accountability. The finding that educating the industry today, such as training in new technologies, may be required to prompt a shift towards a more environmentally conscious industry was clear across the panels.

Compliance with regulatory schemes in environmental protection was another common theme. Speakers opined a healthier, happier seafarer onboard a vessel makes for a safer ship. On the topic of technological

changes on board vessels – should seafarers have cellphones and cellular access – presenters were eager to identify that vessels must keep pace with trends on land.



The keynote speaker of the conference was Clay Maitland, Chairman Emeritus of NAMEPA and recipient of the 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award. Clay urged all attendees to be the voice of reason in the changing political climate. Arguing that it is the duty of the maritime industry to speak up for the environment.

Rounding out the event, senior leadership of NAMEPA's Award winners presented their perspective on the future of maritime. Commentary on the future of maritime regulation, the projected financial wellbeing of shipping and shipbuilding, and how best to implement strategies that increase social responsibility and good practices inspired a lengthy question and answer session.

The overarching message of the day was evident: the industry must become a cohesive unit, able to link all aspects of maritime industry together, to become as environmentally responsible as the future requires. NAMEPA, whose vision is rooted in the desire to facilitate a trend of cohesiveness is delighted by the participation of all attendees. The future of NAMEPA's vision is possible- and inevitable- with the continuing contribution and dedication of each of its members.

For more photos and videos, go to <http://www.namepa.net/annualconferenceandawardsdinner>.



The North American Marine Environment Protection Association (NAMEPA) is a marine industry-led organization of environmental stewards preserving the marine environment by promoting sustainable marine industry best practices and educating seafarers, students and the public about the need and strategies for protecting global ocean, lake and river resources. Visit us at: www.namepa.net

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