Dear Classmates,

We have finalized details of the dedication ceremony for our gift of the Monument to George Washington. The installation is complete and it is quite an impressive display. Better yet, Academy leadership has fully embraced the significance of our gift and is already taking action to integrate Washington’s role in the founding of our service into the Academy culture, both academically and in Cadet orientation and training. The ritual we proposed in our original gift proposal has been approved for us to incorporate in the unveiling ceremony. This is planned to be an all class participation event. Our hope is that the ritual becomes a long standing tradition for newly commissioned officers at the Academy, symbolizing linkage of their commission to Washington, Hamilton and Yeaton. Fred Schmitt will review the plan for the ritual following the Thursday evening reception and dinner at the Mystic Marriott. A brief recap of the history and how we intend to initiate the ritual is provided below:

Bob Pokress’s excellent narrative in *The Bulletin* (August/September 2018), “It is George Washington’s Coast Guard (and It’s George Washington’s Coast Guard Academy, Too!)”describes the historical basis for our class’s 50th anniversary gift. Bob cites several critical and pivotal actions by Washington which set the stage for Alexander Hamilton’s launching of the Revenue-Marine in 1790 and which also helped build the foundation for the subsequent establishment of the School of Instruction of the Revenue-Cutter Service in 1876, the predecessor institution of today’s US Coast Guard Academy.

With the Academy’s support, we hope that during Commencement Week, each newly commissioned officer will approach and individually salute the Washington statue with the simple words **“Reporting for Duty Sir.”** This gesture, coupled with the bronzed replica of Hopley Yeaton’s commission near the statue, will complete the symbolic linkage of the present day Officer Corps to Washington and Yeaton.

Fred Schmitt will introduce the tradition and ritual to the crowd during the ceremony on Friday. Following Fred’s lead, we will initiate the tradition by asking each member of the Class of 1969 attending the dedication to stand and salute the Washington statue. We will hold the salute during a C-144 flyover, courtesy of Air Station Cape Cod. After the flyover, you will be prompted with “Ready-Two” and asked to be seated again.

All class members unable to attend the ceremony are requested do the same at some point during the homecoming/reunion festivities or when they next visit the Academy. We’re hopeful the dedication ceremony format will allow all other Coast Guard officers present to salute the statue immediately following the class’s initiation.