

Career Opportunities

You: A Merchant Mariner?

(NAPS)—From America's rivers to the world's oceans, if it's happening on the water, chances are merchant mariners are involved.

Consider Operation Deep Freeze 2009, an annual resupply mission to the National Science Foundation's facility at McMurdo Station, Antarctica. The Seafarers International Union (SIU)-crewed *Gianella*—with many crew members having received free training at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education—delivered more than 9 million gallons of fuel needed for the coming year to operate the base's aircraft, vehicles and power plant.

Departing the West Coast in early October, stops included Pearl Harbor; Ulsan, Korea; Guam; Singapore; Diego Garcia; and Souda Bay, Crete, Greece. The vessel arrived in the Ross Sea from Fremantle, Australia, on Jan. 22 and was assisted by the Swedish icebreaker *Oden* through the shelf ice and ice channel into McMurdo.

Dramatic rescue

Mariners sailing aboard SIU-contracted NY Waterway ferries have performed more than 100 rescues since the company's founding in 1986. But perhaps none was more dramatic than the mission that occurred in the Hudson River on January 15, 2009.

The ferry *Thomas Jefferson* was the first boat on the scene after a US Airways Airbus A320 crash-landed on the river. In the moments that followed, the crew of the *Thomas Jefferson* and six other Seafarer-crewed boats pulled 143 of the 155 people from the downed aircraft to safety, including the pilot. The other 12



Wherever there's water, seafarers are on the job.

individuals from the plane were secured by other rescuers. A total of 14 NY Waterway vessels mobilized for the operation, which happened in frigid afternoon waters.

Seafarer Vincent Lombardi, captain of the *Thomas Jefferson*, said regular safety training and drills played a big part in the ensuing rescue. He also pointed out that crews routinely practice for emergencies aboard the ferries.

Job security

SIU jobs offer competitive pay, freedom in scheduling, comprehensive medical coverage for mariners and their families, a pension plan and a contract that spells out safe working conditions and benefits.

Free training is available at the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Md. Affiliated with SIU, the center's mission is to provide training for a successful career as a United States merchant mariner. For more information, visit www.seafarers.org or call (877) 235-3275.