

An Interview With Longtime Supporter, Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo, D-Guam

The congresswoman from Guam has been a supporter of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps since 2003. In February she graciously sat down for an interview with us, which was comprised of questions sent in by our cadets and volunteers from Guam.



Petty Officer 2nd Class
Sheamus Strantz,
NLCC

Q: How long have you been working with and supporting the Sea Cadet program in Guam?

Bordallo: The Sea Cadet Corps provides a unique opportunity for our youth to become civically engaged and the programs instills important life lessons among its cadets. I have been proud to support the Sea Cadet Corps since I was first elected to Congress in 2003, and have worked with

my colleagues to protect federal funding for this program. In particular, when I became the Ranking Member of the Readiness Subcommittee I took a leadership role in fighting for the program's annual funding. I believe that youth who participate in this program learn strong moral principles and demonstrate strong values as good citizens enthusiastic in serving their communities and our nation.



Apprentice Cadet
Lanz Estrella, NLCC

Q: What do you like most about being a Congresswoman?

Bordallo: Representing the people of Guam in Congress is a distinct privilege, and I am humbled by the continued confidence my constituents have placed in me to serve them. I am entering my seventh term in the House of Representatives, and I continue to advocate strongly to ensure that

Guam's issues and concerns are addressed. We have many challenges on Guam, but we continue to make progress on these issues. It's a difficult undertaking, but it is also the most fulfilling aspect of the job that motivates me to continue to serve Guam and our people.

Q: What do people in D.C. typically ask about Guam?

Bordallo: When I first came to Congress, there were many who would visit or call my office who would ask where Guam is. Thankfully, due in large part to Guam's growing importance in the Asia-Pacific region, I do not hear that question as often as I used to. Today most people in Washington have an understanding of Guam and the role we play as part of

the American family. Mostly, people ask about Guam's culture and history, and I am always happy to share my views and promote the unique and vibrant heritage of the Chamorro people and the diversity of our community.



Petty Officer 3rd Class
Cali Strantz, NLCC

Q: What is it like being a female Member of Congress?

Bordallo: Women in Congress bring important perspectives when we discuss and debate policies that affect our country. As a female Member of Congress, I work diligently with my colleagues to protect values and perspectives that promote equal pay and equality, provide our children with a

quality education, protect the environment, and keep our communities safe, both at home and abroad. One of the most important aspects of my job is working together with my colleagues, and as a woman, that means being able to reach across party lines on issues that are important to my constituents.

Ensign Joe Strantz, NSCC: How often do you sponsor Guam-based students in their applications for admission to one of the U.S. service academies?

Bordallo: One of the requirements for a student to attend one of the service academies is receiving a nomination from either their Member of Congress or another qualified source. I have nominated very talented and bright individuals from Guam to the academies each year that I have been in office, and I am very proud of those who have gone on to attend and graduate. We have had a strong track record of cadets and midshipmen who have gone on to be successful officers in our armed services. The process for obtaining a nomination from my office usually begins in November when I begin accepting applications. My office is ready to help students who are interested in receiving a nomination, and we work closely with them to ensure that they are able to compete with other candidates nationwide. I have made it a priority to encourage students on Guam to seek admission to the U.S. service academies. We have a strong record of public service in the military on Guam and that is aided, in part, by Guam students being admitted to the service academies.



Petty Officer 3rd Class
Gavin Whitt, NLCC

Q: What advice can you give Sea Cadets who are interested in attending Annapolis or one of the service academies?

Bordallo: My advice would be to stay focused on school and remain active in the Sea Cadets Corps. It is important to maintain academic success while being involved in extracurricular activities that will help prepare

you for the academies. Attending the academies is physically, mentally and academically challenging, and they look for students who are well rounded and demonstrate the potential to be successful.

Q: How much of the year are you required to be away from Guam and in Washington, D.C.? What do you miss most about Guam when you are working in D.C.?

Bordallo: Congress's schedule keeps me in Washington for a majority of my time. I try to make it back to Guam as much as possible, primarily during the longer District Work Periods. Further, as a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I often travel to military installations abroad. I always meet servicemen and women from Guam stationed at these bases; I am so proud of their service and always look forward meeting with them.

I miss being with our people and meeting with my constituents. Guam is such a close community, and the culture and beauty of the island is unmatched anywhere else. I am always able to connect with anyone I meet in Guam, and there is always some link that I am able to make, whether through a relative or mutual friends, that makes anyone from Guam feel like family.



Seaman
Tomoya Tisdale, NSCC

Q: What needs to happen for Guam to become a state?

Bordallo: In talking about possible statehood, we must recognize that Guam must first resolve our political status with the United States and decide for ourselves how we want to be affiliated with the U.S. I have long held that this is the most important long-term goal for our people, and

there has been some progress over the years to move us close to this goal. I have supported efforts to provide federal resources to assist the Government of Guam with this endeavor, and I will continue to support efforts to make a political status vote a reality. I hope that we will be able to resolve this issue in the coming years; but I do understand the very personal viewpoints this issue has among our community.

Q: What is your favorite local food? Do you have a favorite place to eat on Guam?

Bordallo: I cannot pick just one! When I am on island, I really just love going to a fiesta and eating a traditional fiesta plate.

Lt. Cmdr. Cecilio Gonzales, NSCC: Do you think it is possible that a new naval ship will be named USS Guam one day?

Bordallo: We do have a high-speed transport ship named the USNS *Guam*. I have spoken to the Navy about naming another ship after Guam. While I understand that there are many considerations that go into naming our ships, I would certainly welcome naming one of the active surface fleet ships the USS *Guam*.



Seaman Apprentice
Daniel Villanueva,
NSCC

Q: What advice can you give high school students who are looking to become leaders in their communities?

Bordallo: I would encourage anyone interested in public service to find what they are passionate about and get involved in something that nurtures their interests. There are so many organizations and people advancing a cause or working to improve the community, and they are

always looking to for people to share in their work. Before I entered public office, I volunteered with numerous organizations where I made lifelong friendships. I still keep in touch with many of these individuals and they were really the foundation that sparked my interest in serving in public office.



Bordallo and National Headquarters staff member, Kate McIlvaine, discuss the Sea Cadet program in Guam. The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps has a strong presence on the island with two active Sea Cadet units and a League Cadet Training Ship. (Photo: Adam Carbullido)