



Olympic Gymnast Tours Guam Submarine



Photo By Seaman Jonathan Perez | 180110-N-PK553-145 PITI, GUAM (JAN.... [read more](#))

PITI, GUAM

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SANTA RITA, Guam (Jan. 11, 2018) – Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Asheville (SSN 758) hosted three-time gold medal Olympic gymnast Gabby Douglas for a shipboard tour at Naval Base Guam (NBG), Jan. 10.

Douglas, who came to Guam as part of a USO tour, jumped at the opportunity to tour Guam's newest submarine. Capt. Paul Pampuro, Asheville's commanding officer, greeted the gymnast upon her arrival.

"It's a huge honor just being able to come out here [to tour Asheville] and for everyone to welcome me with open arms," said Douglas.

Lt. j.g. Caleb Mazzola, a junior officer assigned to Asheville, led the tour and discussed the capabilities of the submarine as they walked topside before heading into the submarine's control room, living quarters, torpedo room, machinery room and mess decks.

"I just finished qualifying in submarine warfare two days ago and became eligible to lead tours," said Mazzola. "When I first heard we would be hosting Gabby Douglas' tour, I was so excited! I was watching in 2012 when she won her Olympic gold medal. This was my first time leading a tour of our submarine, and to have been able to lead Gabby Douglas and show her what we do was an honor."

Douglas was asked to be the first signature on a torpedo hoist side bar in Asheville's torpedo room. The side bar will be signed by the submarine's crew then preserved with a clear coat of paint, becoming a part of the boat's heritage until its decommissioning.

"It's definitely amazing to see everything behind the scenes and meet a lot of the [Sailors]," said Douglas. "I appreciate the military so much."

Douglas was invited to the bridge to get a view from the top of the sail before departing the submarine. Following the tour, Master Chief Culinary Specialist (Submarines) Simeon Yeboah, Asheville's chief of the boat, presented Douglas with a submarine ball cap, plaque and welcome aboard packet that included a photo of the submarine personalized by the commanding officer.

"It was an honor to meet Gabby Douglas," said Yeboah. "We're happy she had the time to be able to tour the Asheville. She was very pleasant to have on board."

The gymnast posed for photographs and signed autographs with Sailors and family members before leaving the pier.

"My daughter Justice practices ballet, but she's seen Gabby Douglas on TV," said Fire Control Technician 2nd Class Pablo Flores, a Sailor assigned to Asheville. "I was able to get a signed picture from her before she left the boat, I can't wait to take it home. I'm sure my daughter will be very happy when she sees it."

Many other fans had the opportunity to meet Douglas at Molly McGee's Irish Pub on NBG earlier in the day during a meet and greet organized as part of the USO tour.

"My daughter Athalia was first in line to meet her at Molly McGee's," said Lt. Junior Graciano, assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron 15. "She's also a gymnast and was very excited to meet and talk with Gabby Douglas. She signed [Athalia's] leotard, which we are going to get framed along with her picture."

Douglas began her USO tour in Guam and will finish out her tour in Hawaii and Los Angeles. She has close ties with the military, as her father, grandfather and grandmother served in the Air National Guard.

Asheville is assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron (COMSUBRON) 15, which is located at Polaris Point, Naval Base Guam in Apra Harbor, Guam, and consists of four Los Angeles-class attack submarines. The COMSUBRON 15 staff is responsible for providing training, material and personnel readiness support to these commands. Also based out of Naval Base Guam are submarine tenders USS Frank Cable (AS 40) and USS Emory S. Land (AS 39). The submarines and tenders are maintained as part of the U.S. Navy's forward-deployed submarine force and are readily capable of meeting global operational requirements.

For more news from Commander, Submarine Squadron 15, visit our official CSS-15 website at <http://www.csp.navy.mil/css15> and our official Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SubmarineSquadron15/>.

Are you interested in taking orders to Guam? Want to learn more about the duty station and life on our island? For more information, check out the 'Go Guam!' website at <http://www.csp.navy.mil/go-guam/> and download the '1st Fifteen' checklist.

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Syrenthia Rice · Works at U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Gabby is such a young role model. I love her

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