

DOLPHIN SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

Board of Directors

CAPT MERRILL H. DORMAN, USN (RETIRED)

Captain Merrill H. Dorman was born just before World War II in Boston, MA and grew up following the war in West Los Angeles, CA. He is a 1963 graduate with distinction from the U.S. Naval Academy. As an Ensign, he completed training in the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and Naval Submarine School.

CAPT Dorman earned his submarine “dolphins” while serving as a division officer in USS TECUMSEH (SSBN 628), completing five Polaris Deterrent Patrols in the Pacific. He then returned to the Naval Nuclear Power Training Unit in West Milton, NY for staff instructor duty. His department head tour was completed as Engineer Officer on USS SUNFISH (SSN 649) in Charleston, SC, followed by duty as Material Officer on the staff of Commander Submarine Squadron FOURTEEN in Holy Loch, Scotland. CAPT Dorman then served as Executive Officer in USS PARCHE (SSN 683) in both Charleston, SC, and following inter-fleet transfer through the Panama Canal, in Mare Island, CA.

In December 1978, CAPT Dorman took command of USS SILVERSIDES (SSN 679) in La Spezia, Italy, and commenced a forty-five month tour that included four extended overseas deployments. A highly successful Arctic deployment, which was highlighted by surfacing his attack submarine at the North Pole on 11 October 1981, started CAPT Dorman on an eight-year specialty assignment as one of the Navy’s expert’s on Arctic Warfare.

Arctic Operations prior to the 1980s were largely focused on exploring that remote ocean environment; but during the 1980s, the emphasis shifted to developing an Arctic Warfare capability. In August 1982, CAPT Dorman was assigned as the Operations Officer for Commander, Submarine Force U.S. Atlantic Fleet in Norfolk, VA where he was involved in the planning and analysis of numerous submarine deployments to the high latitudes. Three years later he was assigned as Director, Arctic Submarine Laboratory at the Naval Ocean Systems Center in San Diego, CA and served additional duty as a member of both the Submarine Force Atlantic and Pacific Fleet staffs.

For the next four years, CAPT Dorman was responsible for coordinating the planning and directing the execution of submarine related research and development programs throughout the Arctic. It was during spring deployments as Officer in Charge of remote floating ice camps that he supervised many exciting events that few people have the opportunity to witness. Recovery of torpedoes through up to twenty-five feet of sea ice,

escorting polar bears away from manned ice camps, and multiple submarine rendezvous at the North Pole are but a few examples.

In August 1989, CAPT Dorman returned to Norfolk and was assigned as Commander Oceanographic System Atlantic in charge of the undersea surveillance system supporting the Atlantic Fleet ASW forces. Two years later he retired from the Navy in Norfolk and joined EG&G Technical Services, Inc. as a defense contractor. CAPT Dorman's awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit with gold Star, Meritorious Service Medal with four Gold Stars, and the Navy Commendation Medal. He is married to the former Elizabeth Dabney Heald of Lynchburg, VA. They have three children and six grandchildren, all part of the Navy family. Their oldest daughter Libby is married to Captain Tim Trampenau, USN, a Surface Warfare Officer. Their son LCDR Ben Dorman, USN Ret, is a defense contractor who served twenty years in the submarines. Their youngest daughter Alice is married to LCDR Kevin Barnard, USN, a Information Dominance Officer who qualified in and served two tours in submarines.

CAPT Dorman served as president and vice president of the Hampton Roads Chapter of the Naval Submarine League for a total of seven years and has been a member of the Navy League for over twenty years. He joined the Board of Directors of the Dolphin Scholarship Foundation (DSF) in 1998 and presently serves as Secretary-Treasurer.