



USS CLEVELAND
LEGACY FOUNDATION

Courtney Smrdel

Director of Operations, USS Cleveland Legacy Foundation

Courtney Smrdel is the Director of Operations for the USS Cleveland Legacy Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the future USS Cleveland (LCS 31), the fourth ship in U.S. history named for the City of Cleveland. In her role, Courtney is responsible for overseeing the Foundation's daily operations and advancing its volunteer, education and sailor support programs.



While Courtney considers the Pacific Northwest her home, she relocated to Missouri during high school. After attending Southwest Missouri State, she enlisted in the U.S. Navy in the winter of 1999. She began her career in Navy Intelligence, with assignments in Pensacola, Florida; Sugar Grove, West Virginia; San Angelo, Texas; Kunia, Hawaii; and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii where she served aboard the USS Port Royal (CG 73).

After 12 years as a Cryptologist, Courtney transitioned to a new role as a Navy Career Counselor, dedicating the latter part of her career to serving in Northeast Ohio as a hometown recruiter. During this time, she held several key roles, including Director of Onboarding, Officer Processor Lead, Chaplain Program Manager, Reserve Officer Program Manager, Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps Program Manager, Equal Opportunity Manager and Assistant Security Manager. Courtney retired in May 2021 after 22 years of honorable service.

Throughout her Naval career, Courtney discovered a deep passion for helping others, which guided her to work with underprivileged groups, adults with intellectual disabilities, traumatized youth and veterans. Additionally, her dedication to service extended beyond her military career, leading her to volunteer with organizations such as Veterans Affairs, Habitat for Humanity, Junior Achievement, The Village Network, Haven of Rest, and Akron Children's Hospital, as well as numerous food banks, local charities and churches.

Courtney holds an Associate of Arts degree from Chaminade University of Honolulu and a Bachelor of Science in Homeland Security from American Military University. She is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Executive Leadership from Liberty University and is a certified Professional in Human Resources (PHR) through the HR Certification Institute.

Courtney and her husband reside near Portage Lakes, Ohio and are proud parents to two adult daughters.

For more information about USS Cleveland Legacy Foundation:

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