



Captain Justin Vanden Heuvel
Commanding Officer
Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star
United States Coast Guard



Captain Justin Vanden Heuvel became the 29th Commanding Officer of CGC Polar Star in June 2026.

Captain Vanden Heuvel is a third-generation Coastguardsmen hailing from San Diego, California. Designated a permanent cutterman since 2002, he has served in U.S. Coast Guard Cutters *Hamilton*, San Pedro, CA, *Point Hobart*, Oceanside, CA, *Hawksbill*, Monterey, CA, *Haddock*, San Diego, CA, *Aspen*, San Francisco, CA and *Oak*, Charleston, SC. He has commanded the Coast Guard cutters *Line*, Bayonne NJ, *Joshua Appleby*, Saint Petersburg, FL, *Frank Drew*, Portsmouth, VA, *Aspen*, San Francisco, CA, and *Resolute*, Saint Petersburg, FL.



His first operational tour ashore was at Station Channel Islands Harbor, Oxnard, CA where he served as a Motor Lifeboat Coxswain. He has completed three staff assignments including: Chief of the Chief Warrant Officer Professional Development Program at the Leadership Development Center (LDC) in New London, CT leading curriculum, evaluation, and officer transition training for 800 newly commissioned warrant officers. He was also assigned to Personnel Service Center's Enlisted Personnel Management division where he served as the inaugural Chief of Enlisted Evaluations Branch (EPM-3).

Captain Vanden Heuvel reports to USCGC *Polar Star* after serving as the LDC's School Chief of Command & Operations where he led curriculum, evaluation, and training of 5 C-Schools, including Prospective Commanding Officer/Executive Officer Afloat (PCO/PXO), Prospective Operations Officer Afloat (POPS), Command Assignment Preparatory Training (CAPT), Boat Forces Command Cadre (BFCC), Bridge Resource Management (BRM), and the Aviation PCO/PXO preparatory course. In this role, he trained and prepared more than 2,500 leaders (Afloat & Ashore) assuming the responsibilities of command.

Captain Vanden Heuvel's military decorations include five Coast Guard Meritorious Service Medals, five Coast Guard Commendation Medals, and the Department of Transportation 9-11 Medal.