

Navy Loses Distinguished Man of Service

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Navy News | by Daphne Cassani

KINGS BAY, Ga. - Retired master chief passed away suddenly after 56 years of naval service Jan. 2.

Retired Master Chief James Dawkins served his country with honor and commitment for 56 years – 35 of those years spent standing the watch; the last 21 spent working in the Planning Department at Trident Refit Facility (TRIREFFAC), Kings Bay. He was a dedicated defender of this nation as both a military man and a civilian employee of the Department of the Navy.

Dawkins enlisted in the Navy in 1953 beginning his career as a seaman recruit. He completed that career as a master chief, at the top of the enlisted ranks. He served in such billets as Navy recruiter, career counselor, command master chief, and force master chief. During his Naval career, Dawkins served at 17 commands both afloat and ashore, stateside and abroad; highlights include: USS Toucan (AM 387); Naval Station Midway Island; USS Grant County (LST 1174); Naval Station, Rodman, Canal Zone (Panama); USS Samuel Gompers (AD 37); Naval Support Activity DaNang, Vietnam; and USS Canopus (AS 34).

Dawkins was awarded nine service medals: Purple Heart, Navy Commendation with Gold Star; Navy Achievement Medal with Gold Star; Meritorious Unit Commendation; Navy "E" (2 Awards); Good Conduct Medal (7 Awards); National Defense Service Medal; Vietnam Service Medal; and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. He also earned the Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist qualification.

While working at TRIREFFAC, Dawkins was very active in the command's Moral, Welfare, and Recreation committee for more than five years. Other interests of Dawkins included the Naval Junior Reserve Officers [Training](#) Corps, Fleet Reserve Association and traveling abroad with his wife.

Dawkins' devotion to the United States Navy, Trident Refit Facility, Kings Bay, and his family were apparent to those who knew him.

Dawkins is survived by his wife, Maxine Dawkins of St. Marys; daughter and son-in-law, Tanya and Don Williams of Gulfport, Miss.; sons and daughters-in-law, James and Susan Dawkins of Fremont, Calif., and Terry Dawkins of Danville, Calif.; brother, Lee Howell Jr. of Fort Worth, Texas; and nine grandchildren.

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