



# Sea Cadet will represent U.S. in Hong Kong

## 17-year-old Sierra Slobodecki selected for Sea Cadet exchange program

May 26, 2014 | 3 Comments

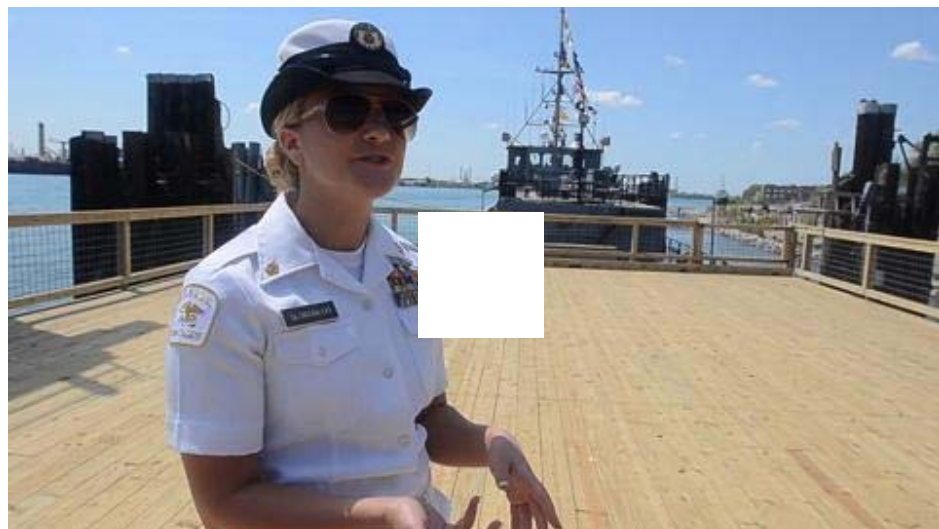
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Local Sea Cadet to represent the United States in ...: Chief U.S. Naval Sea Cadet, Sierra Slobodecki, of Goodells, with the F.C. Sherman division, talks about going to Hong Kong for the Sea Cadet exchange program, and her duties aboard the Grayfox, Sun, May 25, in Port Huron.

Written by  
**Beth LeBlanc**  
Times Herald

A 17-year-old Goodells girl will represent the United States in Hong Kong this summer.

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U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Chief Sierra Slobodecki will travel to Hong Kong as part of an International Exchange of Sea Cadets.

"She's wanted to do this ever since she joined the program when she was 11 or 12," Sierra's mother, Charlotte Slobodecki, said.

Sea Cadets are youths ages 13 to 17 who participate in leadership and seamanship training.

Sierra Slobodecki is a member of Port Huron's F.C. Sherman division, which trains on the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet ship Grayfox.

A junior at Port Huron Northern High School, Sierra also is a varsity competitive cheerleader, varsity swimmer and student at Blue Water Middle College.

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Watch a video interview with Sierra Slobodecki at [www.thetimesherald.com](http://www.thetimesherald.com).



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U.S. Naval Sea Cadet, Sierra Slobodecki, of Goodells, talks about her training aboard the Grayfox on Sunday along the River Walk in Port Huron. / ANDREW JOWETT/TIMES HERALD

Sierra's trained throughout the United States with the Sea Cadets, but this will be her first time traveling outside the country.

"I'm so excited for her because it's a dream that she's had ever since she was young," Charlotte Slobodecki said. "It's something that she's worked very hard for."

Sierra said she joined the Sea Cadet Corps when she was 12 years old because she was interested in [learning](#) to SCUBA dive.

Since then, she has done SCUBA training in Florida, medical training in Chicago, and SEAL training in Battle Creek. She is now a chief for the F.C. Sherman Division.

"It really offers great leadership for everybody," Sierra Slobodecki said. "...It [helps](#) them to become motivated."

When she graduates next year, Sierra wants to attend the Great Lakes Maritime Academy in Traverse City.

Sierra said she's made good friends through the sea cadet program, and hopes to meet more through her travels to Hong Kong.

"The people you meet are lifelong friends, and they don't let you down," she said.

Sierra Slobodecki and another sea cadet from California will be the only Sea Cadets representing the U.S. in Hong Kong this summer.

"I'll be doing a lot of sightseeing and learning about the Hong Kong culture as well as learning about other cultures," from cadets representing seven other countries, she said.

Lt. Todd Dunn will escort Sierra to Hong Kong for the program.

Dunn said the exchange program is a chance for Sea Cadets to [learn](#) about other cultures and participate in nautical training and teamwork development exercises with cadets from the United Kingdom, Sweden, Canada, Singapore, South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong.

Nearly all of Sierra's expenses will be paid for through the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps.

Dunn said spaces in the exchange program only are offered to Sea Cadets with an outstanding record.

"They've shown leadership [potential](#)," Dunn said. "The idea is that learning now at an early age, these cadets will go on into leadership positions."

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