



Mass Communication Specialist Petty Officer 1st Class Elijah G. Leinaar was born in Sonora, Ca. and raised in Port Angeles, WA. He graduated from Port Angeles High School 1997 and in 2001 earned an Associate of Applied Arts in audio production engineering from the Art Institute of Seattle. Following the Sept. 11 terrorist attack, he enlisted in the Navy Nov. 2001.

Leinaar's first duty assignment was aboard USS Rainier (AOE 7), and in 2003 he attended Navy Journalist Apprentice School at the Defense Information School (DINFOS) on Fort Meade, Md. He later served on the staff of

Commander Navy Region Midwest and Naval Service Training Command. While reporting for American Forces Network (AFN) Sigonella, he volunteered for an individual augmentee at AFN Iraq.

After his overseas tour he reported to USS Bataan (LHD 5) and serves as Leading Petty Officer at sea during an eleven-month deployment, the Navy's longest surface deployment in 45 years. Shortly after the ship's return, he was selected for the Military Visual Journalism Program and graduated as the 2013 Military Motion Media Honor Graduate. In May 2013, he attended the Navy Instructor Training Course and reported to Navy Public Affairs Support Element West as the training manager and instructor for the command and its four detachments. He is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Television, Radio and Film at S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University.

Leinaar's personal awards include the Joint Service Commendation Medal, Joint Service Achievement Medal, Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two awards), Flag Letter of Commendation (three awards), the Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist Insignia, the Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist Insignia and various unit and campaign awards. He has earned the Chief of Naval Information Awards (nine personal and four command awards), and been recognized for significant volunteer work in his craft.