

# THE NEXT GENERATION...

Fabrication work for the new USS IWO JIMA (LHD 7) began at Ingalls shipyard on September 3, 1996, and the ship's keel was laid on December 13, 1997. She was launched on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2000. USS IWO JIMA (LHD 7) was christened by her sponsor, Mrs. Zandra Krulak, in Pascagoula, Mississippi on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2000. The commissioning crew moved aboard in April of 2001, and made the ship's maiden voyage (accompanied by more than 2,000 World War II veterans—many of them survivors of the Battle of Iwo Jima) on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2001. She was commissioned a week later in Pensacola, Florida on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Shortly thereafter, the ship and crew began an accelerated Inter Deployment Training Cycle, which tested virtually every system onboard in realistic combat conditions. Together with the 26<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), USS IWO JIMA (LHD 7) completed a record-setting extended combat deployment from March 4<sup>th</sup>-October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

# Ship's History

