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## LD Christina Rupp Lights Army–Navy Gala with Elation PARAGON Supplied by Afterglow

In December, the 2025 Army–Navy Gala at the Baltimore Convention Center came alive with dazzling lighting designed by Christina Rupp, using Elation [PARAGON](#) fixtures supplied by Afterglow Lighting. The event, held ahead of the 126th Army–Navy football game, one of the oldest and revered rivalries in U.S. college football, featured a transformed ballroom complete with a main stage, dance floor, and a variety of performance elements honoring those who serve.



### A Light That Can Do a Lot

Afterglow Lighting, based in Elkridge, Maryland, is a full-service stage lighting company and was an early adopter of Elation’s award-winning PARAGON LED profile moving head. Rupp, a lighting designer and master electrician with a decade of industry experience, has worked on Army–Navy collaborations before, but this marked her first time working on the Army–Navy Gala. She frequently collaborates with Afterglow and was brought onto the project by Afterglow and the client, VPC.

“This was not your standard corporate design with a stage wash and audience wash,” she explained. “We needed lighting to transition from a formal dinner to onstage presentations, to performances by bands, cheerleaders, and dance groups, to a late-night dance party. We needed those clean stage washes and audience lighting, but also pickups, accent lighting, and vibrant



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effects while supporting other elements like walkthroughs and videos. We needed a light that could do a lot.”

### **Tailored Looks**

Rupp led the design and operation of 32 [PARAGON S](#), along with 12 [SEVEN BATTEN 72](#), and other fixtures. “I absolutely love using the PARAGONs for their diffusion features and wash aspects,” she exclaimed. “I had used them on the Johns Hopkins commencement and it kind of blew my mind. I knew I wanted to use them on future projects.”

The PARAGON’s versatility made it ideal for the Gala’s wide-ranging production needs. On stage, the designer created tailored looks with distinct colors for each service branch as the MC highlighted their accomplishments, then shifted to entirely different looks for other presentations, keeping the visuals fluid and dynamic. A full band also performed on stage, playing throughout dinner and into the late-night dance party.



A central walkway ran through the room, used by the MC, performers like the color guard, and arriving guests. “Anyone walking down it, or when the MC moved into the audience or onto the dance floor, was beautifully lit by the PARAGONs,” Rupp said.

### **Red, White and Blue**

The designer created a dynamic walk-in look with slow-moving effects, carrying a red, white, and blue theme from the national anthem into the dinner look. “It provided a calm look for dinner in colors that represented both the Army and Navy,” Rupp explained. “They really liked that look and being able to carefully frame and focus the PARAGONs to place the blue precisely in the center of the onstage scenic piece added a three-dimensional effect that was really striking.”

The SEVEN BATTEN 72 fixtures, 6-foot full-color batten wash luminaires, were used to enhance the scenic from above and below, adding depth and dimension to the look.

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## Calm Elegance to High-energy Celebration

Rupp employed the PARAGON's TruTone variable CRI engine, switching between high and low CRI looks to create a more dynamic feel, and accessed the fixture's animation wheel to create diverse looks throughout the night. At dinner, for example, she applied slow-moving animations to the walls intertwined with custom gobos, a combination that the designer says drew compliments. Then later, during the dance party, she switched to more animated gobo transitions, exploring the fixture's graphics capabilities more in depth.



The setup included an upstage truss, downstage truss, and four perpendicular trusses extending into the audience that housed the PARAGONs used extensively for pickups and accent lighting. "For any audience or band pickup, or any situation that needed some punch, I went straight to the PARAGON because I knew how simple and effective it was going to be," Rupp said.

## Afterglow

Afterglow's experienced crew played a key role in executing the design. Josh Watson drafted the plot with Rupp's advice and preferences in mind, while lighting techs Jake Myers, Galen Newell, and Ethan Cooper pre-rigged, patched, and managed the load-in.

"Afterglow was a big reason this project turned out so successfully," Rupp concludes. "They've got everything down to a science and helped out immensely. I've known Josh a long time and trust him completely, especially with fixture choice. The whole team is prepared, professional, and just genuinely kind. I love working with them."

## Afterglow Lighting Crew:

Josh Watson – Production Manager / Show Master Electrician

Jake Myers – Lighting Tech; Shop Prep & Load In/Out

Galen Newell – Lighting Tech; Shop Prep & Load In/Out

Ethan Cooper – Lighting Tech; Shop Prep & Pre-Rig



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The 2025 Army–Navy Gala was managed and designed by Chicken Scratch and executed in collaboration with VPC.



### **About Elation**

At Elation, we collaborate with leading professionals in the lighting industry to help bring extraordinary experiences to life. As a designer and manufacturer of a wide range of high-performance entertainment lighting products, we're proud to be a trusted partner to top lighting professionals and rental houses around the world. Our commitment to quality, innovation, and creative solutions has made us a go-to resource in the industry. We also offer an advanced line of lighting control products through Obsidian Control Systems, and a full range of dependable specialty effects called Magmatic. Elation serves clients worldwide through offices in Los Angeles, Mexico City, and the Netherlands. We invite you to take a closer look at [elationlighting.com](http://elationlighting.com)

For more information, contact:

#### **Elation US**

6122 S. Eastern Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90040  
USA  
Tel: (866) 245-6726 (toll free)  
Tel: 323 582-3322  
[sales@elationlighting.com](mailto:sales@elationlighting.com)  
[www.elationlighting.com](http://www.elationlighting.com)

#### **Elation EU**

Junostraat 2.  
6468 EW Kerkrade  
The Netherlands  
Tel: +31 (0)45 546 85 66



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[info@elationlighting.eu](mailto:info@elationlighting.eu)  
[www.elationlighting.eu](http://www.elationlighting.eu)

**Elation Mexico**

Av Santa Ana 30,  
Parque Industrial Lerma,  
Lerma, Mexico 52000  
Tel: +011 52 728 282 7070  
[ventas@elationlighting.com](mailto:ventas@elationlighting.com)  
[www.elationlighting.com](http://www.elationlighting.com)