

# Connecticut Students Compete in Maritime Welding Competition and Explore Career Opportunities

*Project MFG, SENEDIA, and Electric Boat Partner to Deliver Hands-on Technical Education and Workforce Development to Connecticut Students*

GROTON, CT, UNITED STATES, April 30, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than 100 Connecticut and Rhode Island students got an up-close look at careers in manufacturing and defense yesterday at the Maritime Welding Competition and Career Exploration Event sponsored by Project MFG, General Dynamics Electric Boat, and SENEDIA-The Alliance for Defense Tech, Talent, and Innovation.

With 24 students competing from six area schools, Lucas Ubrowicz from Ella T. Grasso Technical High School took home top honors in the welding competition portion, during which the students were timed and judged on their ability to weld a miniature submarine. Spencer Johnson from Howell Cheney Technical High School and Parker Slaugenhaup from Chariho Tech came in second and third place, respectively.

In addition to the competition, the event—hosted at Ella T. Grasso Technical High School—featured Project MFG Connect, a networking and informational fair attended by 100 Connecticut and Rhode Island students showcasing the potential employment opportunities from regional suppliers in the submarine shipbuilding and defense manufacturing industry.

General Dynamics Electric Boat, a key sponsor of the event, extended offers to six students in attendance. In addition to the Electric Boat talent acquisition team’s efforts, GDEB also helped to connect students to the defense manufacturing industry through their inflatable submarine



Lucas Ubrowicz from Ella T. Grasso Technical High School took first place, Spencer Johnson from Howell Cheney Technical High School came in second, and Parker Slaugenhaup from Chariho Tech came in third place

classroom and an advanced manufacturing trailer through their partnership with EASTCONN.

“We build the world’s most capable submarines and deploy the most innovative technology available to give the U.S. Navy the tools they need to protect our national defense. We take that responsibility seriously, and that means finding, training, and employing the most skilled and dedicated workforce possible,” said Kevin Graney, president of General Dynamics Electric Boat. “Electric Boat’s ranks have grown significantly since 2020, and events like this allow us to stay competitive in continuing to build our workforce.”

“SENEDIA’s support of submarine shipbuilding and defense manufacturing workforce development is the bridge between supply chain companies looking for top talent and the people looking for high-wage, high-growth, high-demand careers that make a difference. That work starts early, and this partnership with Project MFG ensures that we are capturing the interest and imagination of the kind of smart, skilled, and energetic young people we want filling the jobs of tomorrow,” said Tim Fox, director of operations at SENEDIA.

“Our network of schools and our incredible educators are acutely aware of and aligned to the current needs of industry, including maritime manufacturing, which has a rich history in Connecticut. We ensure that our programs are not only engaging students and getting them curious and excited about a potential career in the trades, but also empowering them with both the technical and soft skills necessary to be successful in industries like defense,” said Dr. Ellen Solek, executive director of the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System.

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The young people attending and competing in today represent the next generation of, welding and machining. We’re proud to help develop their skills as they pursue rewarding careers in the industry.”

*Ray Dick, founder of Project MFG*

Project MFG, a national organization focused on building the manufacturing trade workforce of tomorrow, hosts events like this all over the country. This is the first year the

competition and workforce development opportunity has come to Connecticut.

“In the backyard of Electric Boat’s Groton operation and in a region where defense constitutes a



Students were timed and judged on their ability to weld a miniature submarine

\$119 billion industry, it made perfect sense for Project MFG to come to Connecticut and engage with the students here,” said Ray Dick, the founder of Project MFG. “The young people attending and competing in today’s event represent the next generation of submarine shipbuilding, welding, machining, logistics, and more, and we’re proud to help seed their interest, develop their skills, and build their confidence as they pursue a pathway to rewarding careers in the industry.”

Next week, Project MFG, General Dynamics Electric Boat, and SENEDIA will take the competition and employer fair to neighboring Rhode Island, with a similar event on Monday, 6 May, at the Providence Career and Technical Academy.



Project MFG Career Discovery, a networking and informational fair attended by 100 Connecticut and Rhode Island students showcasing the potential employment opportunities from regional suppliers in the submarine shipbuilding and defense manufacturing industry.

**ABOUT PROJECT MFG:** Project MFG shines a light on the need and opportunities for skilled trades by focusing on the development of new talent to provide a path forward for individuals and our country. As an integrated workforce development and recruitment effort, Project MFG collaborates across communities, the private sector, and government to expand the U.S. industrial base workforce.

SENEDIA, the alliance for defense tech, talent, and innovation, is a catalyst for thought leadership, technical innovation, and workforce development. SENEDIA connects, convenes, and partners across the industry to support talent, innovation, and growth. For more information on SENEDIA, please visit [www.SENEDIA.org](http://www.SENEDIA.org).

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