

Student Maritime Welding Competition & Career Discovery Event in Hawaii

On March 28, 2025, eight high schools from Oahu, Hawaii Island and Kauai were invited to compete in a student welding competition.

KAPOLEI, HI, UNITED STATES, March 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Project MFG partnered with the Hawai'i State Department of Education, Ku`i Hao, the Department of Defense, and U.S. Navy, to host a Project MFG student Maritime Welding Competition and career exploration day at the Hawai'i Carpenters Apprenticeship and Training Fund in Kapolei, Hawaii. On March 28, 2025, eight high schools from Oahu, Hawaii Island and Kauai were invited to compete.



Winners of the Project MFG Maritime Welding event
March 28, 2025

This collaborative effort was organized to raise awareness about the many local opportunities for well-paying careers in maritime manufacturing such as welding, machining, and logistics, and to allow local companies to highlight their specific career opportunities available in the community.

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Connecting students from the local community & showcasing the opportunities available right at home is an important part of our mission and one of the ways we promote the prestige of manufacturing.”

Amy Moyer, Project MFG

“Project MFG is more than a competition,” said Amy Moyer of Project MFG. “We use the competition to showcase the skills needed in today’s advanced manufacturing, but the competition and Project MFG Connect opens doors to even larger conversations about manufacturing with local students, industry experts, training programs, and even job opportunities.”

During the competition day an outreach event, a Project

MFG Career Discovery event, was held. The event reaches into the community to invite local students to learn more about manufacturing. This Career Discovery Day included booths from:

CKF Industrial Contractor, Hawaiian Dredging, Hensel Phelps, Kiewit, Nordic PCL, Dewalt, Slims Power Tools, and Airgas where participants heard from local industry experts and learned more about how each company touches the manufacturing sector in Hawai'i.

Keynote speaker Captain Joe Ring spoke about the importance of manufacturing jobs to the safety and growth of our nation. He brought all the competitors up to hold a pep rally and celebrated them for being the future of welding.

"Events like the Project MFG Discovery event is imperative for the future. We want to show potential students how challenging and rewarding manufacturing jobs are," said Amy Moyer, of Project MFG. "Connecting young students from the local community and showcasing the exciting opportunities available right at home is an important part of our mission and one of the ways we promote the prestige of manufacturing."

The Project MFG Hawaii Welding Competition featured eight schools: Waipahu High School, Leilehua High School, Hilo High School, Mililani High School, Kapa'ua High School, Pāhoa High School, Kealakehe High School, and Kohala High School.

Students raced against a two-hour clock to finish a maritime-themed challenge that tested their mastery of welding and fit-up. Once completed, the projects were judged, and the top three scores were announced. The winners of the Project MFG Student Maritime Welding Competition are:

First: Caleb Robinson from Mililani High School

Second: Sean Ibarra from Kealakehe High School

Third: Alden Delos Santos from Waipahu High School

"Providing students with real-world experience in high-demand career pathways – especially those needed here in Hawai'i – is essential to preparing them to be globally competitive and locally committed," said Hawai'i State Department of Education Superintendent Keith Hayashi. "Mahalo to Project MFG, Ku'i Hao, the Department of Defense, and the U.S. Navy for supporting this event and investing in our students' futures."

Project MFG collaborates with local communities to find ways to elevate and help raise awareness of the need for highly skilled trade professionals in the area. These events create a movement that brings together partnerships of employers, educators, and communities to inspire the next generation. This welding competition was made possible through a collaborative effort with the Department of Defense's Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment (IBAS) program, The Hawai'i State Department of Education, Ku`i Hao, and the schools that participated.

"Ku'i Hao is pleased to support the Project MFG Student Maritime Welding Competition, helping to expose students to opportunities that can lead careers in high-demand trades in the future," said Jason Chung, vice president for the Military Affairs Council, Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

and co-chair of Ku'i Hao. "Strengthening and expanding career pathways in advanced manufacturing is essential to fortifying the defense industrial base and ensuring Hawai'i's readiness in the Indo-Pacific region."

"The Project MFG Hawaii Welding Competition is another way for HCATF to reach students interested in the trades," said Edmund Aczon, HCATF executive director. "This competition allows the students to gain first-hand experience in a critical skill to become a millwright worker, where much of the work is in clean energy, a growing and important segment for the construction industry."

To learn more about Project MFG and our competitions follow us on social media. Our YouTube channel showcases some of our previous competitions and the reality series, Clash of Trades.

About Project MFG:

Project MFG is working to elevate the next generation of highly skilled trade professionals by changing mindsets, fostering community preparedness, and challenging how the critical skills needed to succeed in modern advanced manufacturing are taught. Learn more at projectmfg.com

About Ku`i Hao:

Ku'i Hao, meaning "to forge," is advancing Hawai'i's workforce by training industry-ready professionals in high-demand trades. In collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i and its Military Affairs Council, Hawai'i Defense Alliance, University of Hawai'i, and Hawai'i Department of Education, Ku'i Hao is strengthening and expanding career pathways, fortifying the defense industrial base, and securing Hawai'i's role in the Indo-Pacific region. Learn more at KuiHao.org.

About Hawai'i State Department of Education:

The Hawai'i State Department of Education serves 165,000 students, their families and communities across 296 schools on seven islands. Hawai'i public schools are dedicated to fostering graduates who are both globally competitive and locally committed. We strive to inspire learning, innovation and a collective dedication to Hawai'i's future. Learn more at hawaiipublicschools.org.

About Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship and Training Fund:

The Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship and Training Fund trains the next generation of carpenters, drywallers and millwright workers across Hawaii to become polished professionals with the top talent and skills in their trade. The state-of-the-art facilities in Kapolei, have trained more than 3,000 apprentices with 70,000+ square feet of classroom, training and studio space.

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