

Connecticut Students Compete in Maritime Welding Competition & Career Discovery Event

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

GROTON, CT, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than 150 Connecticut and Rhode Island students got an up-close look at careers in manufacturing and defense yesterday at the Maritime Welding Competition and Career Discovery Event sponsored by Project MFG, General Dynamics Electric Boat, and SENEDIA-The Alliance for Defense Tech, Talent, and Innovation.

Supported by the Maritime Industrial Base, Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment Program, as well as esteemed guests from the U.S. Navy and U.S. Congress, this event showcased 24 students from six local schools: Bristol Technical Education Center, Chariho Regional High School, Howell Cheney Technical High School, Ella T. Grasso Technical High School, Tourtellotte Memorial High School, and Westbrook High School. During the competition, students competed head-to-head in a 2-hour challenge to demonstrate their welding and fabrication skills essential for shipbuilding.



Student competes in Groton 2025 Maritime Welding Competition



First Place - Spencer Johnson from Howell Cheney Technical High School

At the end of the competition, Spencer Johnson from Howell Cheney 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. Jered Minick from Chariho Regional High School and Thomas Maznicki from Howell Cheney Technical High School came in second and third place, respectively. Nicholas Doherty from Ella T. Grasso Technical High School was awarded an honorable mention for their efforts. The first and second place winners were invited to further compete in a National Championship for Maritime Welding in June at Ferris State University in Big Rapids Michigan.

In addition to the Project MFG Maritime Welding Competition, the event—hosted at Ella T. Grasso Technical High School—featured a Career Discovery Event, a networking and informational fair showcasing the work of and potential employment opportunities from regional suppliers in the submarine shipbuilding and defense manufacturing industry.

General Dynamics Electric Boat, a key sponsor of the event, also helped to connect students to the defense manufacturing industry through their inflatable submarine classroom and an advanced manufacturing trailer through their partnership with EASTCONN.

“As our nation’s first and finest submarine builder, we’re hiring at historic levels to build the submarines the U.S. Navy needs now and for decades to come,” said Mark Rayha, president of General Dynamics Electric Boat. “It’s a great time to become a shipbuilder and pursue a rewarding, life-long trade career. Events like this are a great opportunity for Electric Boat to build its workforce and for students to take the next steps in securing their futures.”

“This is the third year that SENEDIA has partnered with Project MFG for this hands-on career



Second Place - Jered Minick from Chariho Regional High School



Third Place - Thomas Maznicki from Howell Cheney Technical High School

Honorable Mention - Nicholas Doherty from Ella T. Grasso Technical High School

Project MFG, a national organization focused on building the manufacturing trade workforce of tomorrow, hosts events like this all over the country. "In a region where defense constitutes a \$119 billion economic impact, 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 this 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, 5 May, at the Providence Career and Technical Academy.

ABOUT 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.

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. Visit www.projectmfg.com for more information.

ABOUT GENERAL DYNAMICS ELECTRIC BOAT:

General Dynamics Electric Boat, established in 1899, has established standards of excellence in the design, construction and lifecycle support of submarines for the U.S. Navy.

ABOUT CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND CAREER SYSTEM: Through exemplary trade and academic programming, the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) prepares high school students and adult learners to meet the skilled workforce needs of Connecticut employers. CTECS operates 17 diploma-granting technical high schools, one technical education center for grades 11 and 12 and adult learners, and two aviation maintenance technician training programs. CTECS serves approximately 11,500 full-time high school students in over 30 Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. In addition, over 3,000 adult learners take part in day courses, and evening apprenticeship and extension courses.

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