

Project MFG and Weld Like a Girl Inspire the Next Generation at the 4th Annual Youth Welding Challenge

The goal of the Youth Welding Challenge is to ignite a passion for the trades among young people and to show the opportunities available to them.

YUMA, AZ, UNITED STATES, November 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On November 5 & 6, 2025, Project MFG partnered with Weld Like a Girl to host the 4th Annual Youth Welding Challenge and Discovery Event in Yuma, Arizona. This two-day event brought together 22 homeschooled students from across the Yuma region for an experience that not only focused on education but also creativity and hands-on skill development, all designed to spark curiosity and confidence in the skilled trades.

The goal of the Youth Welding Challenge is simple: to ignite a passion for craftsmanship among young people and to show them the endless opportunities available in modern manufacturing, fabrication, and engineering. The event continues to build momentum each year, offering students a unique platform to learn, collaborate, and compete while being mentored by experienced industry professionals.

"I was really excited to come back this year," a returning participant said. "Last year, my team won third place, and since then, I've taken more classes at Weld Like a Girl with Ms. Shanen. I



"Welding Warriors" – First Place Day 1



"The Wing Nut Waters" – First Place Day 2

couldn't wait to see how much I've improved and maybe even take first this time!"

During the morning Discovery Event, students immersed themselves in a variety of hands-on learning sessions that went beyond the basics of welding. They explored fabrication processes, which included MIG welding, Chop Saw, Grinding, and Plasma Cutting, through completing a project of making a butterfly. During the discovery event, mentors not only taught them a variety of fabrication processes through the hands-on project but also educated the students about career pathways in manufacturing, while discovering how creativity plays a key role in technical work. The sessions also encouraged teamwork and communication skills essential for success in any trade.

Students had the opportunity to meet with and learn from leading industry experts, including representatives from the American Welding Society (AWS), Dean and staff from Welding Warriors, and instructors from Arizona Western College. These professionals offered guidance on welding techniques, industry certifications, and the many pathways available to pursue careers in skilled trades and advanced manufacturing.

In the afternoon competition, students put their newly gained skills and knowledge to the ultimate test. Working in teams and guided by mentors, each group was challenged to design and build a project inspired by Yuma's rich transportation history. The competition emphasized collaboration, creativity, and technical precision, encouraging students to problem-solve together while creating something meaningful that also made a positive impact on their community.

Every year, the challenge supports a local nonprofit through the auctioning of the completed projects. This year's event benefited the Yuma Historical Society, and the competition theme reflected that partnership beautifully. Across two days, students worked on complementary projects, a train and a water tower, both with moving parts that, when joined together, formed a



"Weld Like A Train" – Second Place Day 1



"Weld Like Boyz" – Second Place Day 2

single cohesive piece of a water tower filling a train. The final design celebrated Yuma's deep historical ties to the railway system and its role in connecting and developing the surrounding region.

Mentors, instructors, and judges praised the creativity, dedication, and craftsmanship of this year's competitors. "It's incredible to watch how much these students can accomplish in such a short amount of time," said Mike Wedel from Project MFG. "Events like this are about more than welding or fabrication; they're about showing students what's possible when creativity meets craftsmanship. By giving young people hands-on experiences like this, we're helping them see that the trades are not just jobs, they're careers filled with innovation, pride, and purpose."

The event wrapped up with an awards ceremony recognizing teams for excellence in teamwork, creativity, and technical execution. The top 3 teams from each day received certificates to come back and take more classes at Weld Like a Girl, but the biggest reward was the inspiration students carried home, many leaving with a newfound confidence and excitement for what's next.

Day 1 Winning Teams were:

"Welding Warriors" – First Place

"Weld Like A Train" – Second Place

"The Torch Starters" – Third Place

Day 2 Winning Teams were:

"The Wing Nut Waters" – First Place

"Weld Like Boyz" – Second Place

"The Welding Pink Fluffy Unicorns" – Third Place

The Youth Welding Challenge exemplifies Project MFG's mission to elevate the next generation of skilled workers by bringing together education, industry, and community. Each year, the event continues to grow, introducing more students to the trades and showing them that the future of manufacturing is both innovative and inclusive.

About Weld Like a Girl

Based in Yuma, Arizona, Weld Like a Girl is a pioneering welding training organization focused on empowerment through education. Founded by Shanen Aranmor, the program provides an inclusive, encouraging environment where students of all backgrounds, especially women and young learners, can develop hands-on welding skills, confidence, and leadership abilities.

About Project MFG

Project MFG showcases the value of advanced manufacturing, skilled trades, and teamwork through national competitions, community events, and partnerships across industry and education. By challenging students and professionals to think critically, collaborate, and create, Project MFG is helping close the skills gap and strengthen America's manufacturing workforce.

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