

Project MFG Hosts Providence Maritime Welding Competition, Advancing Workforce Pathways in Shipbuilding & Manufacturing

PROVIDENCE, RI, UNITED STATES, April 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On April 15th, Project MFG, in collaboration with key national and regional partners, successfully hosted the 2026 Providence [Maritime Welding Competition](#) at the Providence Career and Technical Academy, bringing together students, educators, and industry leaders to highlight career opportunities in submarine shipbuilding and advanced manufacturing.

Supported by the Submarine Industrial Base, the Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment (IBAS) Program, and the Providence Office of Career and Technical Education, the event

underscored the importance of aligning education with industry needs. Strategic partners including [SENEDIA](#), The Alliance for Defense Tech, Talent, and Innovation, and [General Dynamics Electric Boat](#) helped create a dynamic environment focused on workforce development and talent pipeline growth.

“This event reflects what’s possible when education and industry come together with a shared mission,” said Mike Wedel, the competition lead with Project MFG. “We’re not just showcasing talent, we’re actively building the future workforce that will support critical manufacturing sectors and national defense.”

The competition featured 18 students from six technical and vocational schools across Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and beyond. Participants demonstrated high-level welding skills in a competitive environment designed to mirror real-world industry standards.



Winners of the 2026 Providence Maritime Welding Competition stand on stage with industry partners and organizers at the Providence Career and Technical Academy, celebrating student achievement and workforce readiness in advanced manufacturing.

Championship Finalists included:

1st Place: Maria Sical, Providence Career and Technical Academy

2nd Place: Hayley Clemm, Warwick Career and Technical Center

3rd Place: Kyle Smith, Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School

In addition to the competition, the event featured a large-scale career discovery experience, where 247 students engaged directly with 18 companies and organizations spanning manufacturing, defense, and education sectors. This hands-on exposure provided students with valuable insights into career pathways and direct connections with potential employers.

Participating organizations included Guill Tool & Engineering, Proterial Cable America, SENEDIA, General Dynamics Electric Boat, New England Institute of Technology, SkillVeri, and MassMEP, among others—demonstrating the breadth of opportunity available within the regional manufacturing ecosystem.

Participating schools included Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School (MA), Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School (MA), Cranston Area Career and Technical Center (RI), Providence Career and Technical Academy (RI), Warwick Career and Technical Center (RI), and Coventry High School (RI).

“The energy in the room from students, educators, and employers alike shows the growing momentum behind skilled trades,” Wedel added. “These students are stepping into high-



A competition judge reviews a student welding project at the 2026 Providence Maritime Welding Competition, providing hands-on evaluation and guidance alongside industry professionals.



A student competitor welds inside a designated booth during the 2026 Providence Maritime Welding Competition, while a judge monitors equipment and performance to ensure quality and safety standards.

demand, high-impact careers that are essential to our economy and national security.”

The Providence Maritime Welding Competition is part of Project MFG’s 2025–26 national season, which aims to elevate skilled trades through competition, career exploration, and direct industry engagement.

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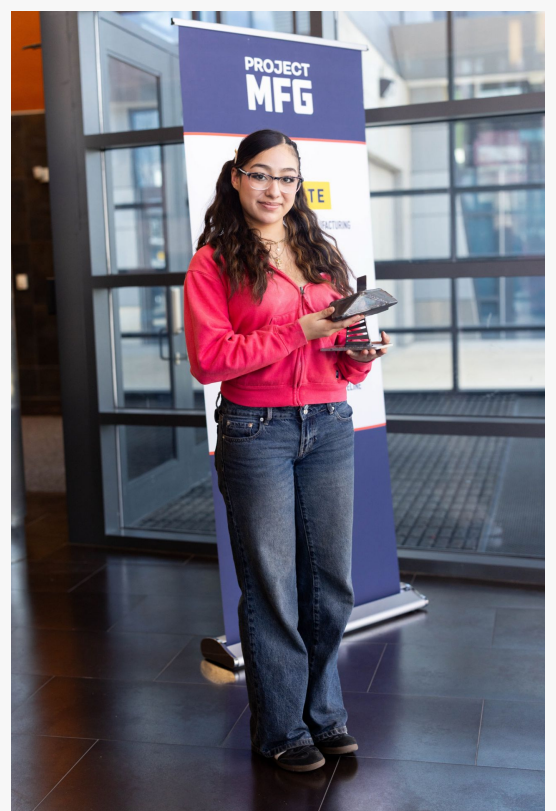
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A student competitor performs a precision weld during the 2026 Providence Maritime Welding Competition, demonstrating technical skill in a high-demand trade.



Maria Sical of Providence Career and Technical Academy, first-place winner of the 2026 Providence Maritime Welding Competition, poses with her award in front of a Project MFG display.

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