

HII Celebrates 2023 Graduates of The Newport News Shipbuilding Apprentice School



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NEWPORT NEWS, Va., March 23, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) hosted commencement exercises today, celebrating 133 graduates of the company’s Newport News Shipbuilding Apprentice School. The ceremony was held at Liberty Live Church in Hampton with U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott, D-Va., NNS leadership, and local shipbuilding supporters, alongside family and friends of the graduates.

Thomasina Wright, NNS vice president of fleet support programs, and a 1986 graduate of The Apprentice School, delivered the keynote commencement address.

“Newport News Shipbuilding is the best place to be to support our national defense and become a leader,” Wright said. “Graduates, please focus on continuous learning, setting goals and priorities, and giving back to your community.”

NNS President Jennifer Boykin addressed the graduates as the shipyard’s newest leaders.

“You were chosen to complete a truly rigorous program – and you succeeded,” Boykin said. “Hold your head high, and consider your impact on those around you. Our future is brighter with you in it.”

Photos accompanying this release are available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-newport-news-shipbuilding-apprentice->

[school-graduation-2024/](#).

The Newport News Shipbuilding Apprentice School has been accredited since 1982. Students can earn academic degrees through its partnerships with institutions of higher education. Certification to grant associate degrees and confer degrees on its own came in July 2020, after the school was approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to operate as a postsecondary institution.

This year's commencement exercises marked the first time the school has conferred an associate's degree in the field of applied science maritime technology. Adam Ryan West, a welding equipment repairer, is the first to earn the degree, which became an option at the same time he was accepted to the school.

West initially chose welding equipment repair for his apprenticeship, but through his shipyard work and classroom study, he was able to expand his scope of skills to earn the degree.

"There is a satisfaction in fixing something that wasn't working," West shared. "It is an honor to be the first to earn this degree from The Apprentice School and I am thankful I get to apply what I learned every day while working in the shipyard."

Scott Sinowitz received the Homer L. Ferguson Award, which recognizes the apprentice graduating with the highest average in combined required academic and craft grades.

Sinowitz joined NNS in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in health sciences from James Madison University and currently serves as an electrician supporting the refueling and complex overhaul of the aircraft carrier USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74).

During his address, Sinowitz asked graduates to reflect on the knowledge and craftsmanship learned in their apprenticeships

that set them up for success as shipyard leaders.

“Those skills take time to develop and even longer to refine. So, while we continue to improve ourselves, I can’t emphasize enough the importance of a strong work ethic, good attitude, desire to learn, and preparedness,” Sinowitz shared. “With one another’s support, we create the culture Newport News Shipbuilding deserves.”

Replay coverage of the ceremony is available at: <https://hii.com/events/apprentice-school-graduation/>

- The following is a profile of the graduating class:
 - Fourteen graduates completed an optional advanced program, earning an associate or bachelor’s degree. The program includes coursework in subjects such as marine design, modeling and simulation, production planning and marine engineering.
 - Fifty-nine graduates earned honors, a combination of academic and craft grades that determine overall performance.
 - Two graduates completed the Advanced Shipyard Operations Program, allowing them to continue their postsecondary education, expand their experience in waterfront operations and develop leadership skills to improve the quality and efficiency of production, manufacturing and maintenance processes.
 - Forty-five graduates completed Frontline FAST, an accelerated skills training program for potential foremen.
 - Twenty-seven graduates were inducted into The National Society of Leadership Success.
 - Nine graduates completed the World Class Shipbuilder Curriculum and advance optional program with a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

- Seven graduates are military veterans or are currently serving in the armed services as reservists and guardsmen.
- Twelve graduates earned Gold Athletic Awards. One graduate, Logan David Mize, earned a Gold Athletic Award in two sports.

The Apprentice School accepts more than 200 apprentices per year. The school offers four- to eight-year, tuition-free apprenticeships in 19 trades and eight optional advanced programs. Apprentices work a 40-hour week and are paid for all work, including time spent in academic classes.

Through partnerships with Virginia Peninsula Community College, Tidewater Community College and Old Dominion University, The Apprentice School's academic program provides the opportunity to earn associate degrees in business administration, engineering and engineering technology and bachelor's degrees in mechanical or electrical engineering.