

HII Celebrates 2024 Graduates of The Newport News Shipbuilding Apprenticeship School



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NEWPORT NEWS, Va., March 29, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) hosted commencement exercises today, celebrating 77 graduates of the company’s Newport News Shipbuilding Apprenticeship School. The ceremony was held at Liberty Live Church in Hampton.

Virginia State Sen. Louise Lucas delivered the keynote commencement address.

“The technical skills you acquired here will serve as a foundation upon which you build your career,” Lucas told the graduates. “The leadership lessons learned in The Apprenticeship

School and in the shipyard will open doors to roads you might not have ever imagined.”

NNS President Kari Wilkinson addressed the graduates as the shipyard’s newest leaders.

“You have each signed up for an incredible, important mission,” Wilkinson said. “You literally build freedom for our nation, and I’m proud to stand beside you in doing so. You have honed your craft, demonstrated your dedication, and play a critical role in the stability of our nation. You are heroes, as well as teammates.”

Founded in 1919, The Newport News Shipbuilding Apprentice School has been accredited since 1982 by the Council on Occupational 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.

Photos accompanying this release are available at: <http://hii.com/news/hii-celebrates-2024-graduates-of-the-newport-news-shipbuilding-apprentice-school/>.

A majority of this year’s class joined the Apprentice School in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the school significantly reduced normal enrollment.

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

Johnson joined NNS in 2018 as a pipefitter working in the new construction aircraft carrier program. In 2020, he was accepted into The Apprentice School. Today, he is a pipefitting instructor at the school, teaching students who are pursuing the same path he chose.

During his address, Johnson asked graduates to reflect on the perseverance and dedication that defined their apprenticeships and that set them up for success as shipyard leaders.

“Today is proof that we are strong, capable, and can accomplish anything if we refuse to give up,” Johnson shared. “But this isn’t the finish line; it’s actually just the beginning. So as you step into your next chapter – whatever that may be – remember what you’ve learned.”

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

The following is a profile of the graduating class:

- Twenty graduates completed an optional advanced program, earning an associate or bachelor’s degree. The program includes coursework in subjects and fields such as marine design, nuclear testing, production planning, supply chain, metrology and marine engineering.
- Thirty-six graduates earned honors, a combination of academic and craft grades that determine overall performance.
- Forty-one graduates earned an Associate of Applied Science degree in maritime technology.
- Thirty-seven graduates completed Frontline FAST, an accelerated skills training program for potential foremen.
- Twenty-four graduates were inducted into The National Society of Leadership Success.

- Eight graduates completed the World Class Shipbuilder Curriculum and advanced optional program with a perfect 4.0 grade point average.
- Six graduates are military veterans or are currently serving in the armed services as reservists and guardsmen.
- Thirteen graduates earned Gold Athletic Awards.
- Two graduates are former presidents of the Apprentice School Student Association.

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

For more information about The Newport News Shipbuilding Apprentice School, please visit www.as.edu.