

HII Dedicated to STEM



Amidst a maze of colorful exhibition booths, a bustling stream of kids and parents explore cutting edge tech, including 3D printers, tablet-controlled robots, rocket testing stations, and hands on (literally!) electricity experiments.

America's largest shipbuilder, HII, is at the center of it all with a huge variety of interactive exhibit stations and lots of smiles from their enthusiastic staff. Grant Ronquillo and Kelsie Rountree (mechanical engineer and trade school coordinator for HII, respectively) both talked about the fun being at the Navy League Expo, grinning as they watched kids learn how to weld in a virtual reality simulator.

President and CEO of HII, Chris Kastner, also spoke with Seapower about HII's dedication to STEM, including a rigorous internship program. "We have a good conversion rate from our interns, especially our technical interns, because we actually give them real work to do when they come into the company," he said. "They're not just doing busy work."

But ultimately, HII's focus is on the benefit to the larger community.

"If we don't invest our communities, in STEM, and make sure we have technical talent that can work in the shipyards, then we're not doing the right thing for the community," said Kastner.