



Craft Learning Center Instructor Tommy Miller, right, observes Samantha Bruce. Photo by Matt Hildreth

COVID-19 Doesn't Stop Learning Centers



Despite new social distancing protocols, shipbuilders are embracing opportunities to sharpen their deckplate skills through the use of craft learning centers.

“We had to reduce our class from four to two to increase social distancing but added a second-shift instructor to increase the amount of people we were training,” said **Ryan Sparks**, X11 trades manager.

The centers give each trade the ability to reinforce what was taught in the Welding School or by foremen and validate opportunities

available for trades.

Also known as cells, the centers are being used extensively, and there are plans to add more. “Our cells are very hands-on, and we have noticed that our builders are more receptive to a hands-on environment rather than sitting through a class with little to no practical application,” Sparks said.

Spaces were repurposed in several buildings to accommodate the learning centers. This summer, NNS will receive mobile centers that will be distributed strategically throughout the yard.

CONTINUED ON PG 2

Temperature Screenings Won't Expand to Off-Yard Buildings

Newport News Shipbuilding will not expand temperature screenings to buildings outside of shipyard gates, President **Jennifer Boykin** announced in a message to shipbuilders Friday, May 22. The company began conducting the screenings at gates May 4.

“The risk of spreading the virus in our off-yard locations is inherently lower because opportunities to social distance are greater,” Boykin wrote. She noted that 25% of shipbuilders work in off-yard buildings, including some who moved to second shift and others who are telecommuting or working flexible schedules.

NNS leaders will reevaluate this decision as circumstances change and will continue to consider new approaches to protect shipbuilders. Visit nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411 to read Boykin's full message.

COVID-19 Doesn't Stop Learning Centers

CONTINUED FROM PG 1

“One of the hardships that we currently face in our training is the lack of a classroom environment on the deckplate. The mobile learning centers create an environment that can be set up as a classroom as well as a practical learning space,” Sparks said. For trades like shipfitting, the mobile center will offer a virtual reality environment that focuses on confined spaces and fire prevention. This capability allows shipfitters to enter into a “virtual” environment and experience dangers that would be impossible to place them in on the job.

“I think this is a game-changer. Virtual reality lets us see the ‘what if’ before we get into a situation on the job that asks ‘what now,’” Sparks said.

The first mobile center is expected to arrive in June. Others will continue to be delivered through October.

Volunteers Needed for NNS Blood Drives

Newport News Shipbuilding employee volunteers are needed to take temperatures and man registration and canteen tables at the American Red Cross blood drives from 7:15 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. on June 4 and 10 in Bldg. 520.

One-hour shifts are available but volunteers are encouraged to sign up for multiple shifts, if possible. Shipbuilders who are interested in volunteering should email corporatocitizenship@hii-nns.com and include building number and date and time available to volunteer.

- Before a donor can enter a blood drive, their temperature needs to be taken. Temperature guns will be provided.
- All American Red Cross staff and volunteers are required to wear masks and gloves at the drive. These will be provided.
- Social distancing is mandatory at the blood drive. All donor seating and donor beds will be at least 6 feet apart.



A shipbuilder purchases a meal from a food truck at The Rock. Photo by Matt Hildreth

Mobile Vendors Return with Modifications

Food vendors have returned to Newport News Shipbuilding, but the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way services are delivered.

Vendors are available to serve prepackaged and made-to-order meals from 10 a.m. until noon during first shift and from 10 p.m. until midnight during second shift. A calendar of vendor locations is available on MyNNS. Cafés in Bldg. 520 and VASCIC are also open for breakfast and lunch, offering prepackaged chilled and hot meals only.

“As the workforce returns, we will add locations and adjust service availability as demand dictates,” said Food Service Operations Manager **Dwain Jenkins Sr.**

In an effort to keep shipbuilders safe and expedite the dining experience, Bojangles’ and Empanada Express recently deployed contactless customer order systems. Shipbuilders can place and pay for their order at a kiosk attached to the trailer and pick up their food at the service window. Bojangles’ has a permanent daily location at Bldg. 4911, and both vendors have a mobile location that serves different areas across the shipyard.

Jenkins said he expects other vendors to deploy similar contactless service systems in the near future. As a reminder, shipbuilders should practice social distancing, wear face coverings while in transit, and wear required PPE in production areas – even during lunch.

Prepare Now for Hurricane Season

June 1 marks the beginning of the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season, which runs through Nov. 30. In the event inclement weather threatens the region, shipbuilders should call the Newport News Shipbuilding Employee Information Phone Line at 1-877-871-2058 or check the NNS to Go app for information regarding the status of shipyard operations.

In addition to the phone line, employees are reminded of other NNS communication channels, including company email, social media (HII Facebook and Twitter pages and NNS President Jennifer Boykin’s Facebook page), NNS websites and Send Word Now.

For information about how to prepare for storms and other emergencies, visit the Virginia Department of Emergency Management’s website (www.VAemergency.gov).

Shipbuilders Adjust to Working from Home

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the day-to-day routine for all Newport News Shipbuilding employees and their families. To help prevent the virus' spread, a large proportion of the employees who have the ability to work from home are now doing so.

Katherine Harry (E63) is an engineer planning analyst who has worked inside NNS' gates for 16 years. She is thankful for the ability to work from home right now.

"I have two elementary-age children, so being home with them while they are out of school is a blessing. If I wasn't able to work from home, I wouldn't have anyone to watch them or any place for them to go."

Her husband **Jason Harry** (X71) also works at NNS, but as a construction supervisor currently executing USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH), his job does not allow him to work from home very often. There have been obstacles, but so far it has worked out for their family.

"My children have their own school work to do. Luckily they have been able to complete most of their work with little supervision, but of course I do have to explain something or assist on occasion."

Radiation Health Manager **Joe Picataggi** (E85) already had 75%

of his workforce using laptops when COVID-19 precautions took effect, so getting them set up from home was just about seamless. He and his team have found many positives to working remotely, including the advantages of WebEx.

"WebEx is a great way to communicate so everyone can see the content and share." In addition to daily WebEx conferences, Picataggi's team records podcasts using the software and posts them for internal listeners. Not only has his team been highly productive from home, some daily yard frustrations haven't been an issue. "Just look at the parking lots," he said.

Construction Supervisor **Scott Sullivan** (X62) is able to work remotely as he navigates his team through the planning phase of the *Columbia*-Class Submarine Program. He agrees that having kids at home has been a big challenge. He is used to being in the yard and around adults all day. "I'm trying to be a teacher, dad, husband, while still trying to stay focused on my tasks and meet my commitments. Overall, the experience has been much better than I thought it would be."

Sullivan admits to being reluctant to the idea of working remotely at first, but, "If working from home can help our shipyard family stay safe, then I'm all in."

Crane Completes Final Lift

Newport News Shipbuilding's green 310-long-ton Goliath gantry crane has helped build and overhaul nuclear-powered aircraft carriers for five decades. With that history, the lift of a single excavator on Thursday, May 21, may not seem particularly noteworthy – but it was.

It was the final lift the crane – built in 1969 – will perform at NNS. The crane had most recently been used for dock readiness work in preparation for the refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH) of USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74). Engineering Manager **Brian Jones** (O48) said the crane's certifications officially expired last weekend. This summer, crews will work to disassemble the crane, which will be scrapped.

The crane's successor – a 315-metric-ton Goliath gantry crane – came into service last fall.



This 2018 photo shows the crane during the dry dock portion of USS *George Washington*'s (CVN 73) refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH). Photo by Matt Hildreth

REMINDER: Verify Dependents to Keep Benefits

Newport News Shipbuilding employees who need to verify their dependents to maintain their benefits must submit verification documents by June 17.

Employees subject to verification should have received a letter in the mail with details on acceptable documentation and the submission process. Documents may be submitted online through

UPoint at www.hiibenefits.com, by fax or by mail. Failure to verify dependents by June 17 will result in the cancellation of benefits on July 1.

For questions regarding dependent verification, call the Huntington Ingalls Benefits Center at 1-877-216-3222.

DATEBOOK

MAY 28

Join the Spear and Gear Toastmasters Club and 16,400 Toastmasters members around the globe for a virtual meeting in response to the current pandemic. The club's mission is to help shipbuilders gain the benefits of effective communication and leadership skills. It provides a safe environment to learn and practice those skills. The virtual meeting begins at 5 p.m. To participate or to learn more, contact **Sheila Carter** (X72) or **Jamar Skyles** (X44) at spearandgeartoastmastersclub@gmail.com from your personal email address.

JUNE 2

The L.E.A.R.N. Program and the Asian Shipbuilders Including All Nationalities (ASIAN) employee resource group are hosting an after-work presentation with **Keisha Pexton**, director of Learning and Workforce Development, via WebEx from 3:30 until 4:30 p.m. The event is open to all employees by reservation only. Sign up on the L.E.A.R.N. website on MyNNS. For questions, contact **Tanika Vasquez** (E08) at 688-7916, **Chris Porro** (E47) at 534-0332, or email LEARN@hii-nns.com.

JUNE 11

Join the Spear and Gear Toastmasters Club and 16,400 Toastmasters members around the globe for a virtual meeting in response to the current pandemic. The club's mission is to help shipbuilders gain the benefits of effective communication and leadership skills. It provides a safe environment to learn and practice those skills. The virtual meeting begins at 5 p.m. To participate or to learn more, contact **Sheila Carter** (X72) or **Jamar Skyles** (X44) at spearandgeartoastmastersclub@gmail.com from your personal email address.

JUNE 25

Join the Spear and Gear Toastmasters Club and 16,400 Toastmasters members around the globe for a virtual meeting in response to the current pandemic. The club's mission is to help shipbuilders gain the benefits of effective communication and leadership skills. It provides a safe environment to learn and practice those skills. The virtual meeting begins at 5 p.m. To participate or to learn more, contact **Sheila Carter** (X72) or **Jamar Skyles** (X44) at spearandgeartoastmastersclub@gmail.com from your personal email address.

Shipbuilders Can Help HII and SmartPath Donate to United Way

Huntington Ingalls Industries has partnered with SmartPath, the company's financial education benefits provider, on a special donation project for the United Way of the Virginia Peninsula and the United Way of South Hampton Roads.

For every employee who completes SmartPath's COVID-19 financial resiliency quiz, HII and SmartPath will make a donation to United Way. The quiz gives suggestions and resources for short-term and long-term COVID-19 financial questions. To participate, visit www.joinsmartpath.com/hii and take the three-minute quiz by May 31. All information provided to SmartPath is confidential.

SEEKING SHIPBUILDERS

Visit www.buildyourcareer.com to search for the latest NNS job openings.

Job Title	Req Number	Dept.	Location
Construction Supervisor 2	525	X01	Newport News
Contract Administrator 3	474	O19	Newport News
Cost Estimating Analyst 3	527	O19	Newport News
Designer 1	464	TBD	Newport News
Entry-level Fitter	306	X11	Newport News
Entry-level Marine Painter	489	X33	Newport News
Electrical Engineer 2	179	TBD	Newport News
Experienced Structural Welder	484	X18	Newport News
Manager Production Planning and Scheduling 2	543	X47	Newport News
Software Engineer 2	203	TBD	Newport News

Employees are encouraged to use the "Current HII Employees" portal to apply. The company continues to offer cash bonus awards for referrals to select positions, visit www.huntingtoningalls.com/careers/refer-a-friend for more information.

