

# CURRENTS

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Shipbuilders pour a 21,000-pound casting for the *Columbia*-Class Submarine Program. Photo by Lena Wallace

## Foundry Pours Large *Columbia* Casting

Newport News Shipbuilding's Foundry recently poured the largest casting for the new *Columbia*-Class Submarine Program.

General Foreman **Kevin Forrest** said the pour – which weighed in at more than 21,000 pounds – may look fairly easy, but there is a lot of work that happens before shipbuilders get to that point.

“The patternmaking, molding and pouring operations are only about 10 to 15% of the process. It's a very complex operation that has many different parts to make one casting,” he said. “Pattern, mold, melting all have to come together as one team to make this happen. It's not three or four separate organizations. It's one Foundry with different parts that work together to make it look easy to get the casting out of the back door.”

Watch a video of shipbuilders describing the process, as well as a time-lapse video of the recent pour, on MyNNS.

## NNS Holding Second Shipyard Vaccination Event

Mobile COVID-19 vaccination sites will be held Wednesday, May 26, through Friday, May 28, from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Newport News Shipbuilding. No appointment is necessary, and the sites will be at the following locations:

- Wednesday, May 26: North Yard, CMAF, first floor conference room and break area.
- Thursday, May 27: South Yard, Bldg. 4633-3, HME Room.

## CVN 79 Team Makes Process Improvement

Shipbuilders working to install flight deck hatch doors for *John F. Kennedy*'s (CVN 79) advanced weapons elevators are grateful for a new process improvement that makes their jobs safer and more efficient.

In the past, Newport News Shipbuilding's Machine Shop fabricated each hatch assembly upside down – which makes it easier to work the components that go underneath the hatch. Then, the hatch covers were assembled together. Once the assembly was ready for the ship, the hatch covers were disassembled and transported individually.

On CVN 79, shipbuilders would then work to reassemble the hatch covers, but in a less ideal position. “We're working on the hatch with it flipped in ship's position, not upside down. So now we're crawling underneath it instead of working it on top,” said **Nick Carter** (X11), who specializes in weapons elevator hatches.

Because of tight tolerances and other variables the ship introduces, shipbuilders had difficulties replicating the results from the Machine Shop. Once the hatches were assembled, strongbacks were welded across the hatch covers to hold everything in place as they were lifted into elevator trunks.

Shipbuilders involved in the process saw an opportunity for improvement.

“Knowing the capabilities of the shop and going down to the waterfront and seeing their struggles and challenges, it just made sense for us to have the Machine Shop weld these together as an assembly before they ship them,” said **Bubba Renn** (X01), a construction supervisor who spent years working in the Machine Shop before taking on his current role. “It's going to save us two or three weeks of trying to get everything lined up.”

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- Friday, May 28: Mid-Yard, Bldg. 4931-1 Assembly Room.

The medical staff at QuadMed, which operates the HII Family Health Center, will administer second shots to employees who received their first dose during the May 5-7 in-yard vaccine event. NNS employees seeking their first injection are also welcome to participate. For this group, second shots will be scheduled at the HII Family Health Center.

## CVN 79 Team Makes Process Improvement

CONTINUED FROM PG 1

M53 General Foreman **Eric Nobles** said the Machine Shop was open to the improvement idea. He said the shop would disassemble the hatch covers before shipping to allow for plates to be welded to them. However, that process has now been modified.

Each assembled hatch weighs about 20,000 pounds. Each of the ship's four weapons elevators has two hatches that will help sailors move ordnance to the flight deck. Shipbuilders are looking forward to carrying the new process forward on *Enterprise* (CVN 80) and *Doris Miller* (CVN 81).

"It's a lot better process," said **Sean Vanhorn**, an X43 makeup foreman.



Pictured from left in the front are **Chris Overstreet**, **Michael Coates** and **Keith Goodson**. Pictured from left in the back are **Bubba Renn**, **Eric Nobles**, **Sean Vanhorn** and **Nick Carter**. Photo by **Lena Wallace**



Apprentice School Director of Education **Latitia McCane**, left, and **Gilbert Adams** congratulated Youth Builders during the drive-up ceremony. Photo by **Nicholas Langhorne**

## Celebrating Youth Builders

The Apprentice School celebrated the second cohort of high school juniors and seniors to complete the Youth Builders pre-apprenticeship program with a drive-up certificate ceremony May 6.

The Youth Builders program reaches out to high school students with an interest in shipbuilding careers, showcases opportunities available at The Apprentice School and provides technical skills to improve job readiness. The goal is to empower and recruit a new generation of shipbuilders.

**Gilbert Adams** (O22), the Youth Builders program lead, said five students from the first cohort of Youth Builders, which began in fall 2019, are currently attending The Apprentice School. With programs like Youth Builders and the recent announcement that the school will

begin granting associate degrees in 2023, Adams said he believes the number of students showing interest will continue to grow.

"I think our brand is getting broader exposure," he said.

Youth Builders focuses on four areas – workplace learning, e-mentoring, personal leadership and math enrichment. Program partners include local school divisions, community colleges and workforce development organizations.

York High School seniors **Cam Edwards** and **Nick Smith** were among the students honored during the drive-up ceremony earlier this month. Both have already applied to The Apprentice School.

**Edwards**, who is interested in becoming a rigger, said he already was interested in The Apprentice School before the Youth Builders program, thanks to his older brother's experience.

"This made me want to come here even more because I learned about experiences and how things work," he said. "I would strongly recommend it to other people."

**Smith**, who is interested in becoming an inside machinist, said the Youth Builders program taught him what The Apprentice School is all about and how it can line up apprentices for a successful career at Newport News Shipbuilding.

"It helps me particularly because I want to stay in the area. It helps me create a foundation," he said. "If I go to The Apprentice School, I'll have a stable job and financial situation to stay here my whole life."

For more information about the Youth Builders program, or to submit an application for the 2021-2022 cohort, visit [as.edu](http://as.edu). Under the Programs tab, select Youth Builders.



## Watch Focus NNS

The latest edition of Focus NNS features USS *John C. Stennis*' (CVN 74) arrival at Newport News Shipbuilding, an update on *Columbia*-class submarine construction and more.

## AROUND THE YARD

### VERG Seeks Volunteers to Honor Veterans

Memorial Day was created to honor military veterans who sacrificed their lives in service the nation. It's a solemn holiday, often observed through acts of service. The Veterans Employee Resource Group (VERG) is asking shipbuilders volunteer one to three hours to place flags on the graves of military veterans this weekend.

Shipbuilders are welcome to bring family and friends to participate. The group will meet at the front of Greenlawn Memorial Cemetery, located at 2700 Parish Ave. in Newport News. Flags will be placed from 7 a.m. until noon on Saturday, May 29, and they will be removed from 7 a.m. until noon on Tuesday, June 1.

Those who would like to participate should RSVP to **Michael Altrogge** (E84) via email by 2 p.m. Friday, May 28. The RSVP should include which day volunteers plan to support and how many will attend. No charge will be provided.



### Action Planning Update

Leaders with direct reports should always support and encourage meaningful conversations that lead to effective action planning and impactful results.

Initial action plans were due in Gallup Access on Feb. 2. Please note, all action plan(s) need maintenance and follow through. Log into your Gallup Access account and ensure you and your team(s) are still on track to completing your "one thing." If your action plan has been completed, you and your team(s) should be working on entering a new action that will help improve business operations within your area of responsibility.

View the State of the Team training video on MyNNS. This training provides an overview on how to effectively follow up and follow through on action plans. For any questions, reach out to the Engagement Office at [EngageNNS@hii-nns.com](mailto:EngageNNS@hii-nns.com).

### May ED&I Discussion Focuses on Navigating Through Change

The Engagement, Diversity & Inclusion offices hosted another virtual panel discussion as a part of the "Together Strong - Life Unites" Series on May 10. This month's discussion focused on navigating through change.

The panel included **Keisha Pexton**, director of Trades Training; **Veronica Speller**, Information Technology manager; **Lewis Fisher**, Production Planning and Scheduling manager; **Tom Cosgrove**, Corporate Citizenship and Government Relations manager; and **Dakota Cunningham**, a finance analyst for the *Virginia-Class* Submarine Program.

Panelists shared their thoughts on navigating changes. "Managing change is like playing chess. You have to think ahead," Pexton said.

Watch a video of the discussion on MyNNS. Please note: no charge is provided. Employees who watch the video must do so on their own time. Shipbuilders are invited to join the conversation on the second Monday of each month as participants learn to remove bias boundaries and grow from each others' experiences, embracing differences and impacting together through awareness, education and action.

### Debunking Vaccine Myths

**Myth:** COVID-19 vaccines can't be trusted because the process to develop them was rushed.

**Facts:** According to the Cleveland Clinic and Johns Hopkins University, many factors contributed to the fast development of COVID-19 vaccines, but no one skipped a step. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use messenger RNA or mRNA. Researchers have worked on this strategy for years. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine uses a modified common cold virus. Governments invested in research and paid for vaccines

in advance, which accelerated the work. Because COVID-19 was so widespread, and thanks to tens of thousands of volunteers, clinical trials went a lot faster than typical drug developments.

**You can help:** We want to set the record straight on COVID-19 vaccines. If you've come across incorrect or misleading information regarding vaccines, send the information to the [ideas@hii-nns.com](mailto:ideas@hii-nns.com). We'll find the right answer and might publish it in an upcoming issue.

## Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

Cases reported last week: **9**

Total cases at NNS: **3,556**

Total number of NNS employees medically cleared to return to work: **2,918**

See case details at [nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411](https://nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411).

## DATEBOOK

### MAY 26

Join Engineering & Design and **Heather Westmoreland** from the iDS Communications Team from noon until 12:30 p.m. for a Virtual Learning Session (VLS) on Organizational Change Management (OCM). Every organization will, at some point undergo a transition or change. OCM is a framework for managing the effects of organizational change by helping stakeholders through the commitment curve, applying the five work stream toolkit and reducing fear and frustration. Sign up on MyNNS. No charge is provided. For questions and concerns, email E&D Connections.

### MAY 27

Spear and Gear Toastmasters Club invites shipbuilders to meet online at 6 p.m. for the second joint Zoom meeting with Langley Toastmasters club. Hear club members speech presentations, participate in table topics and hear speech evaluations to develop public speaking, listening and leadership skills. Email [spearandgeartoastmastersclub@gmail.com](mailto:spearandgeartoastmastersclub@gmail.com) with a personal email address or contact **Michael Miller** (E37) or **Jamar Skyles** (E03) via email.

### JUNE 2

Join Engineering & Design and **Jeff Kettler** from noon until 12:30 p.m. for a Virtual Learning Session (VLS) on MyVideo. MyVideo is a content management system much like YouTube. It allows you to search, share and like videos. You can also add videos to your favorites, leave comments on videos and link videos to SharePoint sites. Sign up on MyNNS. For questions and concerns, email E&D Connections.

### JUNE 4

Join Marcus W. Robbins, Norfolk Naval Shipyard command historian and archivist, at noon for a virtual lecture titled "From Norfolk to Normandy: Ships from the Old Norfolk Navy Yard at D-Day." He will share stories of the men and women at Portsmouth's old Norfolk Navy Yard, and how their work helped take the fight "Over There." Register at [MarinersMuseum.org](http://MarinersMuseum.org).

### JUNE 10

The Spear and Gear Toastmasters Club invites shipbuilders to meet online at 6 p.m. with club members to hear speech presentations, participate in table topics and hear speech evaluations to develop public speaking, listening and leadership skills. Email [spearandgeartoastmastersclub@gmail.com](mailto:spearandgeartoastmastersclub@gmail.com) with a personal email address or contact **Michael Miller** (E37) or **Jamar Skyles** (E03) via email.

### BLOOD DRIVES

Newport News Shipbuilding is hosting the following blood drives in support of the American Red Cross. A time charge will be provided for employees who donate.

Blood drives will be held from 7:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. in Bldg. 520-6 (James River Room) on the following dates:

- May 25
- June 3
- June 9
- July 7
- July 20
- Aug. 4

To schedule an appointment, contact **Natasha Eck** or **Sunny Lee** via email.

### JUNE 11

Join the Apprentice Athletic Club for the 16th annual F. Farrell Sanders Builder Backer Golf Classic at Ford's Colony Country Club. All proceeds benefit Builder athletics. The cost is \$85 per individual or \$340 per foursome. Entry fee includes green fee, carts, range balls, virtual scoring, lunch, and Builder Backer gift. Contact **Mark Tomlin** (O22) at 757-303-8947 to sign up through May 28. Check in 30 minutes prior to 8:30 a.m. shotgun start. Go Builders!

### JUNE 14

The Engagement and Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) offices invite shipbuilders to join their monthly ED&I Together Strong Life Unites Panel Discussion Series: Creating a Path from Hope to Change from 4:30 until 6 p.m. via Zoom. Panelists include **Juanita Bivens, John Witherspoon, D.A. Wolkowich, Carlos Moulds** and **Emmylou Mosley**. This event is open to all NNS employees. No charge will be provided. Register on MyNNS.

### JUNE 16

NNS Spear & Gear, Newport News Shipbuilding's online company store, will host a pop-up sale from 6 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. outside Bldg. 520. All items – including a wide variety of company-logoed apparel, products and merchandise – will be 50% off marked prices. Shop online 24/7 with free shipping at [www.nnsSpearAndGear.com](http://www.nnsSpearAndGear.com). Please note: the 50% off sale applies only to items at the pop-up, not items in the online store.

### JUNE 26

Newport News Shipbuilding and BayPort Credit Union are sponsoring the Peninsula Relay For Life Drive-Thru Luminaria Event from 6:30 until 9:30 p.m. at Hampton Roads Academy. Luminarias will be lit to honor cancer survivors and caregivers or in remembrance of those lost to cancer. These flames burn during the event to serve as a reminder of the purpose of Relay For Life. Luminarias will be \$10 for one bag or \$25 for three bags. Visit [www.RelayforLife.org/NNS](http://www.RelayforLife.org/NNS) to donate, register or join our team.

### SHARE YOUR STORY

The Relay For Life committee is looking to share shipbuilder stories. If you have a short story about your experience or a family member's experience with cancer that you do not mind sharing, please contact **Shakira Outlaw** (O55) or **Jenn Cherry** (O22) via email to have your story featured in *Currents*.

## Register for SHIPs Network's Discussion Group

Shipbuilders interested in engaging in a professional development opportunity or having a one-on-one with a vice president now have a chance. SHIPs Network is proud to announce its first "Discussion Group with a VP."

Register to have a chance to participate in this opportunity with **Susan Jacobs**, vice president of Human Resources and Administration, as she hosts a discussion group on the book "The Advantage" by Patrick Lencioni. This book was hand selected by NNS President **Jennifer Boykin** to review with her executive staff.

The discussion group will be held over a period of time during which participants will read and discuss the book with Jacobs. This opportunity comes with a commitment to complete the book. Register on MyNNS by June 1 as 10 registrants will be randomly selected on June 3 and invited to participate on June 10 at 4 p.m. via Zoom.

Those selected will receive an email notification, as well as instructions on how to receive their free copy on the book. All selected registrants are expected to read the first two chapters prior to the June 10 start date.

### SEEKING SHIPBUILDERS

Visit [www.buildyourcareer.com](http://www.buildyourcareer.com) to search for the latest NNS job openings.

Job Title	Req Number	Dept.	Location
CNC Machinist	5083	M53	Newport News
Database Administrator 3	4175	O67	Newport News
Engineer 3	6270	O05	Newport News
HII-Mechanical Mech Tech C3 (Fitter)	5854	N960	Newport News
NDT Production Trainer 1	4234	O38	Newport News
Nuc Qual Inspector 2 (2nd Shift)	5923	O39	Newport News
Nuc Qual Inspector 3 (3rd Shift)	5929	O39	Newport News

Employees are encouraged to use **MyHR** or the "Current HII Employees Job Search" button at [www.buildyourcareer.com](http://www.buildyourcareer.com) to apply. The company continues to offer cash bonus awards for referrals to select positions, visit [www.huntingtoningalls.com/hii-careers/refer-a-friend](http://www.huntingtoningalls.com/hii-careers/refer-a-friend) for more information.