

Northrop Grumman



Business Outcomes

- Proven succession planning: over 14% of total workforce are graduates
- Strong career mobility with 240 graduates serving in leadership positions, 70 of which are Vice Presidents
- High retention rates through growing you own: 80% after 5 years, 70% after 15 years

Employee Impact

- 2700 Postsecondary credentials earned: Journeyman
- Graduates earn a minimum of \$50,000 base salary
- Professional development and mentoring for incumbents

The Apprentice School

- Continuous operation since 1919
- Source of pipeline talent and career progression

The Apprentice School Ensures Skilled Talent Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding

More than 2,700 current employees of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding are graduates of The Apprentice School with 240 serving in leadership jobs including 70 vice presidents, directors and senior managers.

Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding (NGSB) part of **Northrop Grumman Corporation**, a leading global security company with annual revenues of \$33.8 billion and 120,000 employees spanning five business sectors is the world's leading military shipbuilder and the largest industrial employer in Virginia, with more than 19,000 employees at NGSB's Newport News Operation.

As the sole designer, builder and maintainer of the U.S. Navy's nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, the NGSB's "Yard" requires a highly skilled, technical workforce. To ensure the availability of this workforce, particularly in light of the number of retiring skilled workers, NGSB has made, and continues to make, significant investments in The Apprentice School, co-located at the Yard.

Educated & Skilled Talent Development Through Apprentice Model

In continuous operation since 1919, The Apprentice School fills the "mission critical" role for NGSB of providing a reliable source of skilled talent and future leaders in shipbuilding and repair. The Apprentice School starts with a rigorous application process requiring not only a high school diploma or GED but also U.S. citizenship and the ability to obtain a security clearance. The result in 2009 was that from a diverse applicant base, only 1 in 16 applicants were selected for participation.

However, the rewards of acceptance are remarkable, particularly in the current economic climate. New apprentices are employed by NGSB with full benefits for their entire four- and five-year programs assuring retention in the program. The starting hourly wage progresses on a schedule by term

completion and graduate earnings begin at \$50,000 base salary. Enrollment as of February 2010 was 770 with 39 percent minority and over 20 percent female, contributing to diversity goals of the NGSB.

Through its World Class Shipbuilder Curriculum, The Apprentice School offers academic instruction in 19 registered apprenticeship programs critical to shipbuilding. Apprentices can choose from in-demand careers such as pipefitter, heavy metal fabricator, maintenance electrician, welder and more. All Programs are registered with the Virginia Apprenticeship Council, recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship. Apprentice School graduates receive state government-issued journeyman credentials in their chosen crafts/trades.

PERSONAL STORY

Jerketa Holmes, 24, graduated from The Apprentice School after five years. She is now a professional industrial measurement technician, with three children, all born during her apprenticeship. Holmes was able to support herself and her children while completing her education. "It would not have been possible," she says, without The Apprentice School.

Apprentices are supported by a multilayered mentoring and development program, which is woven into the classroom and on-the-job training instruction. At the same time, apprentices enjoy many of the opportunities of academic life, including student organizations; intercollegiate sports; and professional societies, such as the Society of Manufacturing Engineers, the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, and the U.S. Jaycees.

Contact Peggy Walton with Corporate Voices to learn more about this learn and earn program or join the "Learn & Earn" Business Leadership Team at 202-467-8137 or pw Walton@corporatevoices.org

■ Academic Partnerships

The school also offers six optional advanced programs critical to NGSB in Marine Design, Modeling & Simulation, Nuclear Test, Production Planning, Cost Engineering, and Advanced Shipyard Operations. Conducted in partnership with **Thomas Nelson Community College** and **Tidewater Community College**, the advanced programs result in an associate of science degree in engineering, an associate of applied science degree in engineering technology (mechanical or electrical), or an associate of science degree in business administration. Impressively, more than 32 percent of a recent class of completing apprentices earned associate degrees as part of their apprenticeship experience.

For more information on The Apprentice School, visit www.apprenticeschool.com

For more information on Thomas Nelson Community College, visit www.tncc.edu

For more information on Tidewater Community College, visit www.tcc.edu

“The shipyard needs to hire about 10,000 workers over the next seven years to replace its aging workforce.”

— Bob Leber, Director of Education and Workforce Development, Northrop Grumman

■ Business Imperative for The Apprentice School

The stated mission of The Apprentice School includes “[t]o provide the Company with a continuous supply of journeypersons who possess the skills, knowledge, and pride of workmanship which have traditionally distinguished the shipbuilding craftsman.” This

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SECTOR: Global Security/Shipbuilding and Repair
EMPLOYEES: 120,000 with 19,000 in Newport News, VA
ANNUAL REVENUE: \$33.8 Billion

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

mission becomes critical as the nation experiences retirement eligibility of between 50 and 70 percent of current trade and craft workers in the next 10 years. According to recent research from the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University, by 2018, the U. S. will need at least 4.7 million new workers with postsecondary certificates. Clearly, the baby boomers are leaving the workplace and taking with them the skills and competencies required in highly complex, technical workplaces like NGSB.

Replacing a retiring shipbuilding workforce and training employees equipped for the escalating technological challenges of nuclear-powered shipbuilding is the business imperative that justifies NGSB’s investment of more than \$100,000 per student at The Apprentice School. With 80 percent of graduates still employed after five years and 70 percent still employed after 15 years, more than 2,700 graduates of the school are currently among the 19,000 employees of NGSB’s Newport News operation. Graduates of The Apprentice School continue to move through career lattices within NGSB, serving in 240 different leadership jobs with more than 70 vice presidents, directors and senior managers in waterfront operations, engineering and design.

■ Longstanding “Earn-While-You-Learn” Model

While The Apprentice School boasts the graduation of fifth-generation shipbuilders within families, it also has a substantial number of participants who are the first generation to attend and complete college and/or journey-level certification.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

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Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- UPS
- Marriott International
- KPMG
- Verizon Wireless
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark