

MARITIME ADMINISTRATION
U.S. Department of Transportation
Center of Excellence (CoE) for Domestic Workforce Training and Education

Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding – Port Hadlock, Washington

The Maritime Administration designates the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding (NWSWB) as a Center of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education (CoE) for its four-decade legacy of preserving traditional wooden boatbuilding craftsmanship while pioneering modern marine systems and composite technology. Operating from its waterfront campus on Port Townsend Bay in Washington State, NWSWB serves as a premier vocational training hub for the Pacific Northwest's maritime trades.

Operational Footprint & Assets

NWSWB provides intensive, hands-on post-secondary vocational education combining traditional boatbuilding techniques with advanced marine systems engineering.

- **Academic Degree & Diploma Programs:** Offers a 12-month Associate of Occupational Studies (AOS) Degree in Wooden Boatbuilding (90 quarter-credits) covering traditional carvel and lapstrake construction alongside wood composites (cold-molding, vacuum infusion, laminating), as well as a 9-month Marine Systems Diploma program (63 quarter-credits) focusing on marine electrical, solar, diesel and outboard engines, hydraulics, corrosion, and HVAC.
- **Industry Certifications & Professional Intensives:** Integrates American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC) certification standards into coursework and conducts 5-day non-credit Marine Systems Intensives (Diesel, Electrical, Hydraulics, Corrosion) that provide continuing education credits for working marine professionals.
- **Advanced Apprenticeship Pathways:** Operates the competitive, paid Prothero Internship program, allowing top graduates to spend additional time honing advanced trade skills and serving as instructional assistants.
- **Sustainable Infrastructure & Clean Tech:** Features dedicated waterfront workshops, a 164-panel solar array (80 kW capacity) offsetting 99% of upper campus electricity, and specialized green-tech construction initiatives including zero-emissions electric pump-out boats and modular systems.

Workforce & Regional Impact

NWSWB drives economic resilience and workforce recovery on the North Olympic Peninsula, where maritime trades account for 20% of Jefferson County jobs.

- **Student Success & Placement:** Maintains strong institutional effectiveness metrics, including a 10-year average graduation rate of 82% for traditional boatbuilding (79% employment rate) and a 95% average graduation rate for the Marine Systems diploma program.
- **Regional Industry Partners:** Supplies job-ready shipwrights and marine technicians to premier regional employers, including the Port Townsend Shipwrights Co-op, Haven Boatworks, ACI Boats, SAFE Boats International, and Schooner Creek Boat Works.
- **Dedicated Veteran Support:** Designated as a "Veteran Supportive Campus" by the

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, with military veterans consistently comprising 25% to 30% of the active student body and supported by dedicated VetCorps resources.

- **Educational Outreach & Networking:** Collaborates with local high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers to pilot adapted marine systems curricula and partners nationally with peer boatbuilding institutions (IYRS, The Landing School, Great Lakes Boat Building School) to share best practices and address nationwide workforce shortages.

Strategic Outlook

Positioned within the designated Emerald Coast Opportunity Zone, the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding continues to expand its educational capacity and sustainable infrastructure to address critical regional and national skill shortages in the marine trades. By bridging timeless craftsmanship with advanced alternative-energy propulsion and rigorous technical training, NWSWB ensures a vital, highly skilled workforce pipeline for the Pacific Northwest maritime industrial base and the nation's maritime heritage.