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

Tidewater Community College –
Portsmouth, Virginia

The Secretary of Transportation redesignates Tidewater Community College (TCC), incorporating the Portsmouth Campus and Skilled Trades Academy nodes, as a Center of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education (CoE). TCC Portsmouth functions as the central administrative and operational headquarters for TCC's Engineering, Maritime, and Skilled Trades Pathway, housing the TCC Apprenticeship Institute, the Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) Apprentice Program, and the Skilled Trades Academy.

Operational Footprint & Assets

• **Skilled Trades Academy (STA):** Operates a dedicated 32,000-square-foot facility equipped with 30 specialized welding booths, 10 marine coatings training modules, 5 pipefitting modules, and a dedicated shipfitting laboratory. The facility features advanced industrial assets including automated spraying and blasting equipment, a plasma arc welding machine, and heavy rigging equipment.
• **Mobile Training Fleet:** The Skilled Trades Academy operates two fully equipped mobile welding laboratories deployed directly to regional shipyards for on-site workforce instruction.
• **Portsmouth Campus Welding & HVACR Complex:** Features 40 main-campus welding booths, dedicated welding classrooms, 2 HVACR instructional labs, and flexible space for maritime technologies.
• **AWS Accredited Test Facility:** Holds official designation as an American Welding Society (AWS) Accredited Test Facility for structural steel and pipe code qualification.
• **Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) Academic Center:** Provides dedicated, co-located space for apprentices to complete academic related instruction on-site during normal working shifts.

Workforce & Regional Impact

• **First-in-State Multi-Employer Apprenticeship Sponsor:** Operates as Virginia's first higher education institution registered as a multi-employer group apprenticeship sponsor, delivering structured tracks in shipfitting, welding, electrical implementation and controls, inside machining, outside machining, blasting, and coating with full wraparound academic and financial support.
• **Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) Integration:** Provides technical instruction for ~200 new NNSY apprentices annually across a four-year program. Between 2017 and 2026, NNSY apprentices earned over 1,000 Trade Technician Career Studies Certificates. Additionally, TCC delivered 160 hours of customized upskilling to over 40 incumbent NNSY employees in 2025.
• **Virginia Ship Repair Association (VSRA) MTT Output:** Delivers non-credit Marine Trade Training (MTT) in welding, shipfitting, pipefitting, sheet metal, and coatings, serving 391 students in 2025–2026 with a historical hiring rate exceeding 90%.
• **Port of Virginia Workforce Upskilling:** Partnered with the Port of Virginia to deliver

customized safety, mechanical, electrical, and fall protection training to over 250 port employees during baseline monitoring.
• **Regional Consortium Leadership:** Serves as an Executive Steering Committee member of the Hampton Roads Maritime Training System (HRMTS) to align programs with employer demand and strengthen the shipbuilding talent pipeline.
• **Pre-Apprenticeship & High School Pipelines:** Participates in regional high school CTE dual-enrollment pathways, historically enrolling over 30 Chesapeake secondary students annually in pre-apprenticeship welding.

Strategic Outlook

TCC Portsmouth anchors regional defense mobilization, operating as a direct classroom extension for Norfolk Naval Shipyard and regional ship repairers. Its expanded Skilled Trades Academy, mobile welding fleet, and AWS Accredited Test Facility allow rapid surge training for structural welders, pipefitters, and marine coaters during naval vessel repair emergencies and fleet overhaul backlogs.