

Electric Boat and U.S. Navy ramp up hiring to build subs

By Luther Turmelle
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The U.S. Navy and Electric Boat are continuing to ramp up hiring efforts for the company's Groton manufacturing facility that are needed now and will be required in the coming years to help produce two new classes of military submarines.

The company and the Navy have launched a new initiative to boost worker recruitment across the entire state of Connecticut, rather than just the southeastern part of the state, as has traditionally been the

case. The "Hire Hartford" program is designed to build awareness of jobs in the maritime industry, as well as connect workers to training and potential employers.

The Hire Hartford program is modeled after a successful hiring initiative in Rhode Island, "Project Providence."

Project Providence led to 155 accepted offers by workers during Electric Boat's job fairs in the state in 2023 and 2024 after only having 14 in 2022. It also resulted in enrollment in Rhode Island worker training programs for jobs

in the metal trades more than doubling.

The launch of the new Connecticut hiring initiative is being played out against a consistent drumbeat of published reports that say worker shortages are putting the production timetables for new Virginia-class submarines behind schedule.

U.S. Reps. Joe Courtney, D-2nd District, and John Larson, D-1st District, were in East Hartford this week to help launch the Hiring Hartford program. Both lawmakers said while they remain confident Electric Boat can keep up Virginia-class submarine production schedule, the importance of meeting its workforce needs is key to the national security of the United States.

"We're in a strategic race," Larsen said. "Even though China has surpassed us in terms of (overall) fleet, we still maintain the edge in submarines, which gives us a tremendous advantage. But China isn't going away; they remain determined to surpass us."

Courtney said Electric Boat hired 5,300 workers last year in Rhode Island and Connecticut, with 65 percent of those new employees coming from the Nutmeg State. Through the end of June, Electric Boat has added another 2,500 workers, he said.

"If you're going to keep up that pace up, you've got to expand the radius that you hire from," Courtney said. "It's something that is at the highest urgency."

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