

Blue Tech By the Bay

EXPLORE EXCITING
MARITIME CAREERS



In May 2025, the [Port of Bellingham](#) partnered with [Career Connect NW \(CCNW\)](#), along with the [Working Waterfront Foundation](#), [Working Waterfront Coalition](#) and the [Northwest Maritime Apprenticeship](#), to organize the Blue Tech by the Bay maritime career exploration event on Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at the Fishermen's Pavilion in Bellingham, WA. Seeing a need for programs to promote careers in the maritime sector, the Port of Bellingham worked with Career Connect NW to take their traditional job fair and adapt it to the model used for CCNW's successful WAVE TourSM and ECHO TourSM events which promote careers in the construction trades and healthcare sectors.

The students who participated in Blue Tech by the Bay were given an evaluation survey at the conclusion of the event so that we can gather their feedback about their experiences. Students could provide their contact information to receive more information about careers in the maritime sector.

Media Coverage

- NWESD Press Release: [Regional event brings students together to explore careers on the water](#) by Mary Powers
- [Blue Tech by the Bay Highlight video](#) – coordinated and filmed by Andrew Silverman with the Port of Bellingham

Please see the following Spring 2025 Blue Tech by the Bay statistics snapshot:

Regional Participation

- **Length of event:** 1 day
- **Number of schools/programs attended:** 15; 12 high schools and 3 community transitions programs
- **Counties represented:** All High Schools in Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties were invited to participate
- **Number of students that attended:** 146

Student Demographics

- 46.6% of students identified as BIPOC
- 31.9% identifying as Hispanic
- 4.3% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 6.9% Two or more races/ethnicities
- 5.2% African American/Black
- 6.0% Asian
- 0.9% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 39.7% of the students surveyed identify as female – 10% higher than the industry average for Maritime careers
- Grade-status of attendees included:
 - 6.9% were Freshmen (9th grade)
 - 22.4% were Sophomores (10th grade)
 - 34.5% were Juniors (11th grade)
 - 20.7% were Seniors (12th grade)
 - 7.8% were identified as a part of a community transitions program

Student Evaluations

- **Number of student Event Evaluations received:** 116 (79.1% of attendees)
- **Knowledge gained and future interest in maritime careers:**
 - 76.7% of student survey respondents indicated that their knowledge of careers in the maritime sector increased.
 - Of those who indicated that their knowledge increased, 86.5% indicated an increase of 2 points or more when evaluated on a 7-point scale.
 - 41.4% of students surveyed opted to be contacted after the event and provided their contact information to learn more about careers in the maritime sector.

Hands-on Presentations were provided by:

1. All American Marine
2. Bellingham Yacht Club
3. Commercial Fishermen from various companies
4. Drayton Harbor Oyster Co.
5. Northline Foods
6. NW Explorations
7. Oyster Creek Canvas
8. Port of Bellingham – Engineering Team
9. Port of Bellingham – Environmental Team
10. United States Coast Guard
11. Washington Sea Grant
12. Washington State Ferries (2 stations)
13. Zodiac Schooner

In addition to the presenters listed above, all students participated in a Resource Fair highlighting training options for careers in the Maritime sector and community resources to support their pursuit of that goal. These resources included college programs, apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, military options, as well as financial and career support programs.

Sponsorship

The Blue Tech by the Bay event was made possible through financial sponsorship from the Port of Bellingham and the NW Center of Excellence for Maritime & Manufacturing Technology. Additionally, participants received tote bags, generously donated by Washington Sea Grant and Seattle Marine Bellingham.

Organization and Support

The Port of Bellingham convened, planned, and facilitated the Blue Tech by the Bay event, coordinating all facility logistics and day-of supports. They partnered with Working Waterfront Foundation, Working Waterfront Coalition and Northwest Maritime Apprenticeship to coordinate presenters and Resource Fair participants, while Career Connect NW spearheaded the organization of school district attendance and necessary paperwork including post-event evaluations for students, volunteers, presenters and school coordinators.

For more information about the Blue Tech by the Bay event, please contact Kori Olsen (korio@portofbelllingham.com) with the Port of Bellingham, Donovan Tate (dtate@nwesd.org) or Mary Powers (mpowers@nwesd.org) representatives of the [Career Connect NW \(CCNW\)](#) team hosted at the NWESD 189.