

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 2017

VOL. 137, NO. 18 24 PAGES

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The New London Day

## Manufacturing pipeline opens path to job at EB for career change

### Initiative now offering design-drafting training

By JULIA BERGMAN  
Day Staff Writer

Groton — David Cassenti has heard that Electric Boat will have enough work building nuclear submarines to last until 2040. He'll be 67 by then, he said, and most likely looking to retire.

"I'm looking for a career, something I can spend the rest of my working life in," said Cassenti, 44, of East Haddam, who taught math for 16 years. The last two of those years, he's worked as a substitute teacher, which hasn't provided enough income for him to support his family, he said. He has a wife and two kids.

Expanding on the success of programs designed to churn out large numbers of skilled trades workers, the Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative has expanded its training offerings to include a design and drafting program. The initiative was established by the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board in partnership with employers like EB, community colleges, technical high schools and workforce development groups.

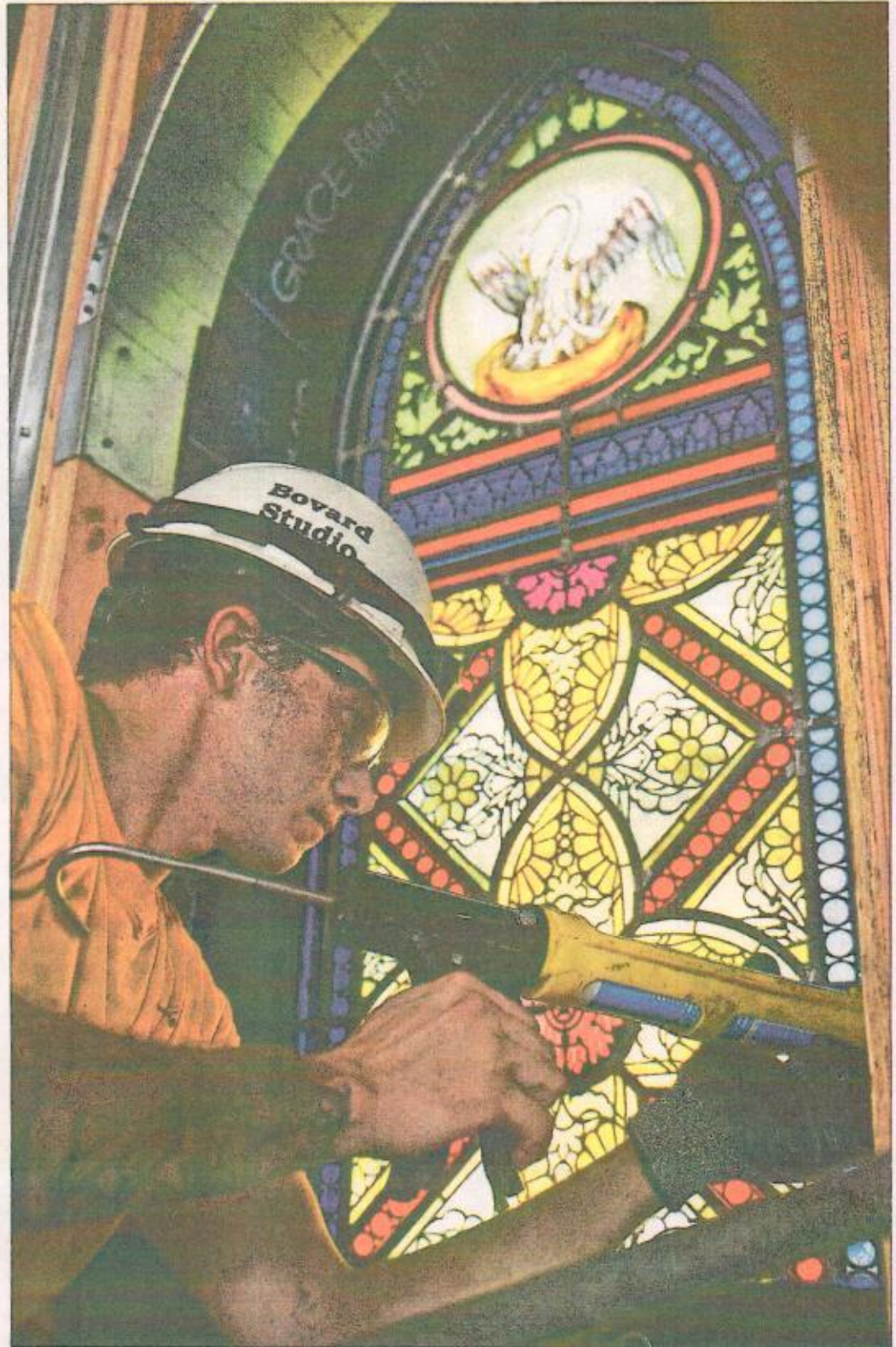
The program, which has served 164 people so far, is funded through a \$6 million Department of Labor grant. Going forward, it'll be a matter of sustaining the program from a funding standpoint, said Marjorie Valentin, associate dean of workforce and community education at Three Rivers Community College.

On Monday, 18 students of varying ages and backgrounds began the design class, a five-week, 150-hour program taking place at Ella T. Grasso Technical High School. All the students have received conditional offers to work as marine draftsmen at EB. The starting salary for a marine draftsman is in the \$17 to \$19 per hour range.

The students will learn design and drafting skills, blueprint reading, technical writing and math. But the curriculum also will include "soft skills," said Bret Jacobson, the manufacturing pipeline coordinator, explaining that students will learn what makes a good employee, something most employers describe as difficult to find.

The curriculum was designed by Three Rivers Community College,  
**SEE STUDENTS PAGE A3**

## RETURN OF A RELIC



SEAN D. ELLIOT/THE DAY  
Ross White, from Bovard Studio Stained Glass in Fairfield, Iowa, applies a caulk seal around a 19th century stained glass window panel re-installed in the new St. Michael the Archangel Church in Pawcatuck on Tuesday. The stained glass, dating to the 1880s, was removed and restored at Bovard's Iowa headquarters. The restoration included dismantling the windows and re-leading them with repairs to any cracks in the glass. The 150-year-old church is being rebuilt on its original foundation after it was condemned in 2012.

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