

# SMALLTALK

about big ideas

## Built to Last

**By Jennifer Boykin**

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“The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.”

I get inspired by quotes and sayings like this. And I have found that the fewest words oftentimes say the most.

This quote got me thinking about the lasting impact we all make – on our families, our communities, through volunteerism and in our daily work.

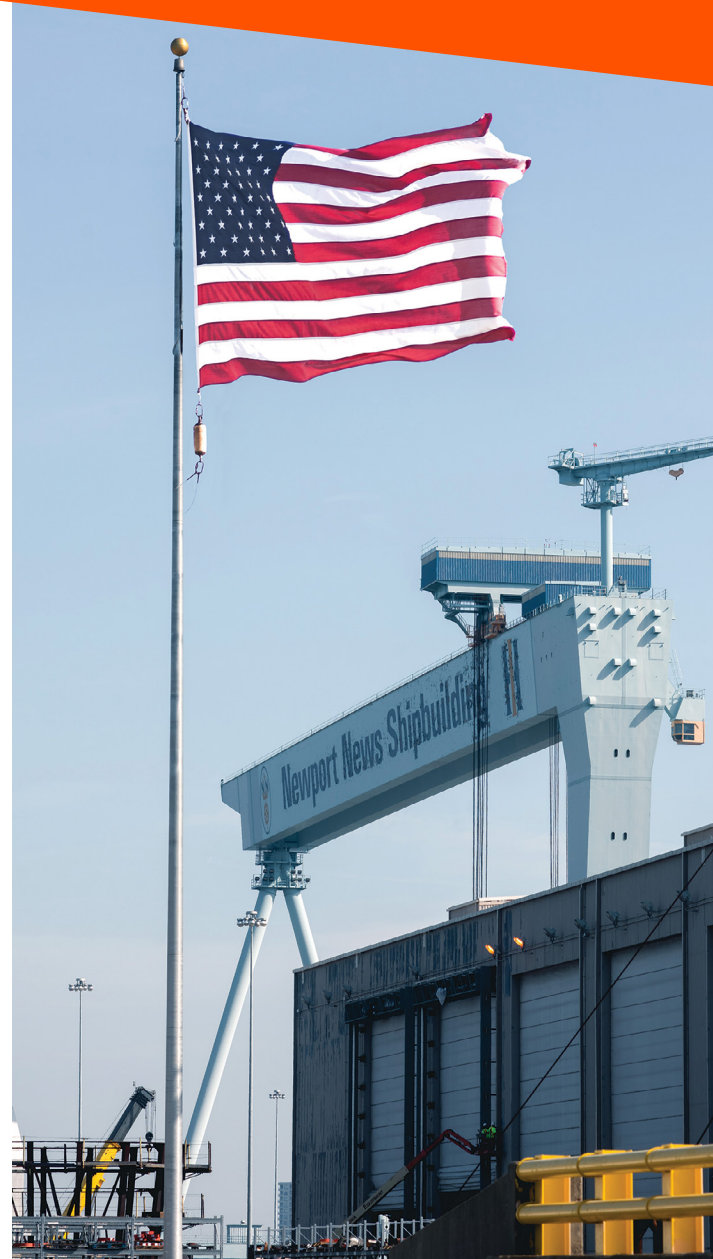
Each day when I come to work, I walk through the “hall of presidents” – painted portraits of past shipyard presidents. Homer L. Ferguson, our president who started The Apprentice School 100 years ago this week, is featured just outside my office and serves as my daily reminder of the importance of innovative thinking with a focus on people. Just outside my building stands our company’s very first ship – Hull No. 1, the mighty tugboat *Dorothy*. History comes to life for me, and I am reminded of the great responsibility I have – that we all have – to build something that outlasts us, just as generations of shipbuilders have done for 132 years.

Our responsibility extends well beyond the shores of the James River and the borders of Newport News. I am reading the book *Freedom’s Forge* and it reminds me of the role we had in liberating Europe and winning World War II. Today, we continue to build our country’s readiness, and our work impacts the entire world.

Our ships have been called the “great equalizers” by Navy leadership. They say it is our submarines, our aircraft carriers and the ships our sister shipyards build that keep our adversaries awake at night. Think about that for a moment. We are responsible for delivering the most important warfighting tools the world has ever seen.

As we celebrate our nation’s freedom on Independence Day, I want you to reflect on the critical way you serve our country. And because we, as shipbuilders, are humble people, I’d like you to watch our newest [“I Build, We Build” video](#) featuring our fellow shipbuilder Kristoph Lucas. His story reminds us that shipbuilders are not only experts in their respective crafts, they also exemplify a passion to commitment, quality, safety, community and country.

I am proud to lead the American shipbuilders of Newport News – 24,000 strong – who work hard every day to build the ships that keep our great nation the land of the free and the home of the brave. Happy Independence Day!



The “I Build, We Build” campaign highlights contributions our shipbuilders make each day to our national defense. This month we are featuring shipbuilder Kristoph Lucas, who demonstrates in his work a passion to commitment, quality, safety, community and country. Watch Kristoph’s story on MyNNS, and if you know someone who you think represents Newport News Shipbuilding well, please let us know at [Communications@hii-nns.com](mailto:Communications@hii-nns.com).