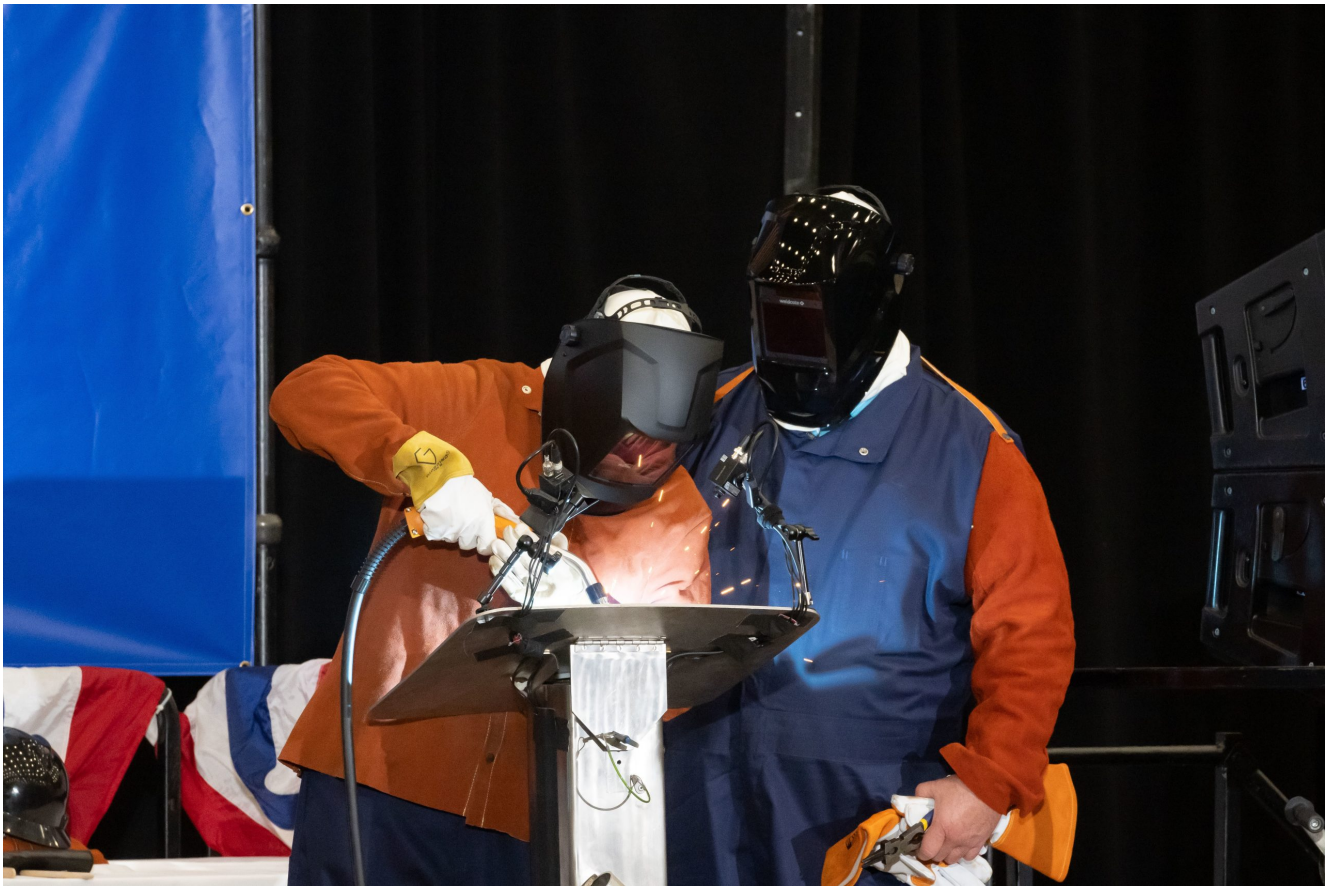
Keel Authenticated for Future USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827)



GROTON, Conn. (Aug. 27, 2025) Dr. Kelly Geurts, ship sponsor of the future Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827), welds her initials into the ship's keel during its keel-laying ceremony under the supervision of General Dynamics Electric Boat welder Robert Ray Jr. The future Wisconsin will be the second Columbia-class submarine, following the future USS District of Columbia (SSBN 826).
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GROTON, Conn. – The keel for the future USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827), a Columbia-class submarine, was laid during a ceremony on Aug. 27 at the General Dynamics Electric Boat Quonset Point facility in Kingstown, Rhode Island.

The keel laying ceremony signifies a major milestone in the life of a ship as it begins to transition from design to reality. The future Wisconsin will be the second Columbia-

class submarine, following the future USS District of Columbia (SSBN 826).

“Our ballistic missile submarines are the most survivable leg of our nation’s nuclear triad; they are the ultimate guarantee that no adversary will ever miscalculate America’s resolve,” said Adm. William Houston, Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, in his keynote remarks. “From this keel, the Wisconsin will rise—an intricate structure of power, precision, and purpose. And just as the keel bears the weight of the ship, this vessel bears the weight of our nation’s most solemn responsibility: to deter war and preserve peace through strength.”

Houston directly addressed the workforce charged with building this intricate submarine. “To our shipbuilders, engineers and suppliers: your craftsmanship makes this possible,” said Houston. “You are laying not just a keel, but the foundation of security for generations to come.”

The submarine’s sponsor is Dr. Kelly Geurts, a retired educator and military spouse. Her husband, the Honorable James Geurts, is a former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition.

This is the third Navy ship to bear the name Wisconsin. The original Wisconsin (BB-9), an Illinois-class pre-Dreadnought battleship, was commissioned in 1901 and served as the flagship of the Pacific fleet until 1903. In 1908 the ship joined the Atlantic fleet for the trans-pacific leg of the Great White Fleet and was decommissioned in 1920.

Wisconsin (BB-64), an Iowa-class battleship, was commissioned in April 1944. The ship served in combat in the Pacific, notably at the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and the final bombardments in Japan. Wisconsin was decommissioned after World War II and was later recommissioned for the Korean War serving until 1958. The ship was recommissioned once more in

1988 to participate in the Persian Gulf War before being decommissioned a final time, in 1991. The ship now operates as a museum battleship at Nauticus Berthing in Norfolk, Virginia.

The keel laying of future USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827) symbolizes the Navy's 250-year commitment to innovation and maritime dominance. From seabed to space, the Navy delivers power for peace – always ready to fight and win. This milestone marks the Navy's enduring legacy and commitment to shaping the future of maritime power.

Columbia-class submarines will replace the U.S. Navy's Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines. The Navy's ballistic missile submarines, often referred to as "boomers," serve as an undetectable launch platform for submarine-launched ballistic missiles. They are designed specifically for stealth and to provide an ensured second-strike capability forming the backbone of the Nation's strategic deterrence strategy.

For more information about Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines visit: https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2169580/fleet-ballistic-missile-submarines-ssbn/