



American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC)
613 Third St. Suite 10 • Annapolis, MD 21403
410-990-4460 • www.abycinc.org

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Media Contact: Shannon Aronson, saronson@abycinc.org, 410-990-4460 x105



(Photo approved for media use)

Caption: *Matthew Mardesich, the 2025 ABYC Foundation Educator of the Year*

ABYC Foundation Names Matthew Mardesich 2025 Educator of the Year

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Feb. 4, 2026) - The American Boat & Yacht Council Foundation (ABYC Foundation) has named Matthew Mardesich at Skagit Valley College in Anacortes, WA, its 2025 Educator of the Year. The annual award honors marine service technology instructors teaching in a high school, post-secondary school or within the industry.

ABYC announced the honor during ABYC's Educator Forum on January 28, 2028, a triannual online event where educators and industry leaders collaborate to support the next generation of marine technicians.

Mardesich is co-department chair and an instructor in engines and mechanical systems at Skagit Valley College, a Marine Trades Accreditation Program (MTAP) school. The college's Marine Maintenance Technology program prepares students for careers in the marine trades with a focus on marine mechanics and marine electrical systems. He is an ABYC certified technician in marine engines and fuel systems.

Altynay Trofimchuk, a student in the Marine Maintenance Technology program at Skagit Valley College, said, "He is an incredibly knowledgeable and passionate teacher who makes every class engaging and practical. When I first came to class, I had very limited knowledge. Thanks to Matt's guidance, I now feel confident working on diesel engines, drivetrains, and using power tools safely and effectively. I also successfully passed the Marine Engines and Fuel Systems exam, a milestone I couldn't have reached without his support and teaching."

ABYC Foundation accreditation director Sarah Devlin said it is not easy for teachers to receive accolades and the award is the foundation's way of recognizing the work instructors do for students and the industry.

During the forum, Mardesich accepted the award and said, "I got the best job in the world, working with Mike Beemer, Mike Reece and the rest of the instructors. We do this because it's fun and we've got a lot of passion for it."

To learn more about the ABYC Foundation's Educator of the Year award or ABYC programs supporting marine technical education, visit teachboats.org.

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Since 1954, the nonprofit American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) has developed safety standards for boat design, construction, equipage, repair and maintenance. The essential global source of marine industry technical information, ABYC's product safety standards, credentialing, education, training, and other tools help members make boating safer.

The ABYC Foundation supports the mission of the American Boat & Yacht Council, with a focus on workforce development and providing resources that create educational and lifelong career opportunities to both current and aspiring marine service technicians. To get involved, visit www.abycfoundation.org.