

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Future Jewelers Academy Expands Access to Jewelry Career Pathways Through Brooklyn Navy Yard's Weld and Wear Workshop

Free, hands-on program supported by NYC Her Future connected young women and their families with creative and skilled-trade career exploration



BROOKLYN, N.Y. –

Future Jewelers Academy helped bring jewelry education and career exploration to the Brooklyn Navy Yard through Weld and Wear, a free, two-part workshop held August 8 and 15, 2026. The program welcomed 16 participants, including young women and their family members, for hands-on instruction in welding, jewelry fabrication and design.

The Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation hosted the workshop in partnership with Future Jewelers Academy and Michelle Greene Sculptures,

with funding and support from NYC Her Future, an initiative of the NYC Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice led by Founding Executive Director Nathifa Forde. Weld and Wear was part of the Navy Yard's workforce development programming, which connects local talent with skills and career opportunities across its industrial ecosystem.

Across the two sessions, participants explored how industrial skills and creative expression can intersect. Michelle Greene Sculptures led the welding portion, introducing foundational safety practices and TIG welding as participants created jewelry displays. Future Jewelers Academy developed and delivered the jewelry-making curriculum and provided the materials for the second portion of the program.

During the Future Jewelers Academy session, participants created keychains by sawing brass metal sheets from hand sketched designs that had sentimental meaning to mother/guardian and daughter and hand sculpted rings or pendants using silver clay, they were invited to add gemstones or design a piece that provided full self expression. The beginner-friendly projects introduced participants to jewelry-making processes while giving each person a finished piece to take home.

"Experiences like Weld and Wear give participants the opportunity to discover skills and career possibilities they may not have previously considered," said Malyia McNaughton, president of Future Jewelers Academy. "By combining hands-on instruction with creativity and community, we can help more young people see a place for themselves in the jewelry industry through workforce development and the skilled trades. And this particular workshop we also had the opportunity to share this wonderful industry with mothers and guardians who may be interested in a career pivot or creative outlet. Seeing the guardian learn a new skill while assisting their young person with their technique or vice versa in real time was both inspirational and emotional. You could see the bonds being deepened as new memories were created that

they will truly cherish. It reminded me of the deep significance jewelry can provide as a tangible memory and in this case metal.”

The workshop combined two priorities central to Future Jewelers Academy's work: expanding access to workforce development opportunities and enriching communities through shared, hands-on learning. The



intergenerational format allowed participants to explore unfamiliar tools and techniques alongside someone they knew, strengthening confidence and connection as they learned together.

Future Jewelers Academy welcomes jewelry professionals, subject matter experts, community organizations and other partners interested in supporting future programs. To learn more or explore ways to get involved, visit futurejewelers.org or contact info@futurejewelers.org.

About Future Jewelers Academy

Future Jewelers Academy, an initiative of BIJC Education Fund Inc., provides hands-on education, mentorship and workforce-development opportunities that introduce students and emerging talent to careers throughout the jewelry industry. Through school-based programs, extended learning, adult workforce readiness and community partnerships, Future Jewelers Academy helps build more accessible pathways into the field. Learn more at futurejewelers.org. Future Jewelers Academy also recognizes Greenwich St. Jewelers for its generous support in celebration of the company's 50th anniversary. Future Jewelers Academy is proudly sponsored by Jewelers Mutual, Jewelers of America and the JCK Industry Fund.

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Photos by Benjamin Ahadzi courtesy of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation

Confirmed Public Sources

- Brooklyn Navy Yard official release: <https://www.brooklynnavyyard.org/bny-weld-and-wear-workshop/>
- Brooklyn Eagle coverage: <https://brooklyneagle.com/410203/brooklyn-navy-yard-weld-and-wear-workshop/>