



APPRENTICESHIP WORKS

ISSUE NO. 41 | FALL 22

SHARE THE BENEFITS OF APPRENTICESHIP

Know someone interested in becoming an apprentice? Or an employer who wants to start an apprenticeship program? Information and resources are available at apprenticeshipmn.com.

ERIN LARSEN IS NEW APPRENTICESHIP DIRECTOR

Erin Larsen is the new apprenticeship director at the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.

From 2019-2022, Larsen provided oversight for the state's work-based learning and youth apprenticeship programs at the Minnesota Department of Education.

Prior to working in Minnesota, Larsen was the assistant director of the Division of Career and Technical Education at the South Dakota Department of Education where she spent more than a decade leading career and technical education programs at both the secondary and postsecondary level.

Larsen received her bachelor's degree from Augustana University and she has a master's degree in educational administration from the University of South Dakota.



Erin Larsen, apprenticeship director

FEATURED STORIES



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6 CONSTRUCT TOMORROW, BOOT CAMP BRING STUDENTS TO TRADES



NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK, NOV. 14-20

National Apprenticeship Week is a time to highlight apprentices, sponsors, and partners with a week of showcasing registered apprenticeship programs in Minnesota.

If your organization is interested in hosting an event during National Apprenticeship Week, Nov. 14-20, 2022, let us know by contacting Jeremy Parker jeremy.parker@state.mn.us. We can promote your event on our website and social media.

More information about upcoming events will be available at dli.mn.gov/naw as details are available.



**NATIONAL
APPRENTICESHIP
WEEK 2022**

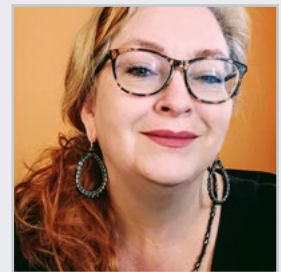
APPRENTICESHIP ADVISORY BOARD WELCOMES NEW MEMBER

The Apprenticeship Advisory Board proposes job classifications and minimum standards for apprenticeship programs and agreements in Minnesota. It also establishes policies, procedures and rules necessary to meet state law.

Dee Vazquez Sabol, the board's newest member, is executive director of Diversity Council, an organization that has spent more than 30 years ensuring that individuals, organizations and communities understand the power and potential of equitable and inclusive ecosystems.

Sabol brings experience in cross-cultural communication and change management and has worked in public affairs, strategic partnerships and public-private sector collaboration. With a special focus on social justice and equitable growth, she works on advancement opportunities for people disenfranchised by aspects of identity.

Sabol has degrees in communications, sociology, public administration and nonprofit management. She teaches and speaks about social justice coalition building, inclusive community design and authentic intercultural engagement. Her entire career has aligned with equity and inclusion efforts in the U.S.



Dee Vazquez Sabol

View more about the Apprenticeship Advisory Board at dli.mn.gov/about-department/boards-and-councils/apprenticeship-advisory-board.



ELECTIONS ARE COMING SOON ... ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE?

You can check to see if you are registered to vote in Minnesota at mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us.

You can register to vote at sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote.

INTRODUCTION TO APPRENTICESHIP PRESENTATIONS

Join representatives from Apprenticeship Minnesota at the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry to learn about registered apprenticeship and the benefits of growing and sustaining an innovative workforce. There is no cost to attend. Each month we will feature a specific industry or community-based organization.

Schedule

- Oct. 26, 10-11 a.m.: Highlight on manufacturing and Manufacturing Month in Minnesota
- Nov. 15, 10-11 a.m.: Highlight on multiple industries for National Apprenticeship Week
- Dec. 15, 10-11 a.m.: Highlight on health care

For more information about Introduction to Apprenticeship Presentations visit dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/news-and-events.

STAFF ATTEND NATIONAL CONFERENCE, HOST OUTREACH EVENTS

The 2022 National Association of State and Territorial Apprenticeship Directors (NASTAD) conference was Sept 12 to 16, 2022, in Norfolk, Virginia. Representatives from 33 state and territorial apprenticeship agencies and the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship were in attendance.

Some of the topics discussed at the conference included the expansion of registered apprenticeship programs, pre-apprenticeships, and diversity, inclusion and equity in registered apprenticeship. Next year's NASTAD conference will be hosted by the State of Alabama in fall 2023.

Outreach events

Apprenticeship Minnesota staff have been on the move spreading the word about registered apprenticeship.

During the past quarter, staff participated in numerous outreach and engagement events including:

- Aug. 30: Minnesota State Fair's Military Appreciation Day
- Sept. 6: Career Day at Fridley High School
- Sept. 22: Big Lake Schools Youth Apprenticeship and Career Fair
- Sept. 29: Construct Tomorrow in Moorhead

Register for Apprenticeship Minnesota events at dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/news-and-events.



Above, Senior Field Representatives Jeremy Parker and Meghana Shroff represented Apprenticeship Minnesota at the NASTAD conference. Below, Shroff at the Big Lake Schools Youth Apprenticeship and Career Fair.



HOSPITALITY SKILLS, COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTISE FIT WITH MISSION TO HELP PATIENTS FEEL AT EASE

Chelsea Morning was bartending when the CEO from Mankato's Open Door Health Center noticed her natural people skills, ability to listen and an easy sense of humor.

She knew that could be a comfort to her patients who are often financially struggling, underinsured or new Americans hesitant to seek health care. Open Door is among 17 clinics that are part of the federally funded Minnesota Association of Community Health Clinics (MACHC) across the state.



Chelsea Morning

Facing challenges of finding and keeping staff, MACHC decided that instead of looking for existing medical assistants, they'd look for promising candidates they could hire and train through a new one-year registered apprenticeship program they created.

"I used to serve shots, but now I'm giving shots," Morning joked. She knew that being in hospitality management and bartending wasn't a great fit schedule-wise with a young daughter at home, but landing in health care — and loving it — was a surprise.

Morning, a Chicago native and successful competitor on her school's forensics (also known as speech) team, moved to Mankato when she was offered a full scholarship at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

"I'm really passionate about health equity and social justice," she said. "I'm in a position to not only help people, but to advocate and fight for them."

The 43-year-old never considered health care when she was younger because of the math and science the profession requires. Those subjects, though, began to click and become interesting when she could apply her online learning lessons to her work at the clinic.

Like other apprentices at the statewide clinics, she

started her full-time job in January, 2022, by shadowing the clinic's staff and supporting the doctors and nurses. She completes online study modules on evenings or weekends that cover anatomy, taking vitals, doing lab work, and more, much like the training to be a licensed practical nurse.

The apprenticeship program includes a handful of in-person lab activities, as well. At the end of the year, apprentices take their certified medical assistant tests.

Morning gets compliments about how well she does with kids, but she enjoys working with a full spectrum of ages and health care needs, especially with regular patients who she can get to know. Some come to the clinic when they are temporarily financially strapped, but then keep coming back for the quality and continuity of care they get at Open Door.

Morning also has the chance to learn about cultures from around the world and tries to make each patient feel welcome by learning to speak a few words in their language. She said there are close to 20 languages they hear at Open Door Health Center with a high number of migrant workers from across Central and South America. They also have Somali, Sudanese, Ethiopian, Vietnamese, Hmong and Chinese patients.

Open Door staff also often point patients to additional services including a food pantry at the health center, and sometimes need to remind them they're not a burden.

"Their health matters. They matter," Morning assures them. Being heard and being helped can do a lot to lift the emotional worries that affect physical health — especially for anyone with chronic disorders or diseases.

"I know we're doing good things here," she said, "and when you do good, you feel good."

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

MEET MARITZA — GOODWILL-EASTER SEALS MINNESOTA PARTICIPANT

Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota (GESMN) offers a variety of career training and education courses including automotive, business, finance and construction.

The construction program is 12 weeks of training that includes job placement and interview assistance plus hands-on paid training at construction sites all while earning college credit. Maritza, a recent GESMN construction training program participant, shares below about her life and why she decided to enroll in the program.

What industry did you work in before you enrolled and completed construction training?

I was in the food service industry. I worked as a general manager at a local restaurant in the Twin Cities.

What were some of the challenges you were experiencing and how did GESMN assist?

I had recently quit my full-time job at the restaurant, and I wasn't in the best financial shape. I worked a few side jobs to help, but my rent balance was accumulating. It helped me so much that this program was free, because if it had been something I needed to pay for, I wouldn't have been able to afford it.

What kinds of projects did your class do? What did you like most about this experience?

I worked at [the Margaret House in February 2021](#) and enjoyed the program overall. Coming into the program I had some experience in construction, but it was nice to learn the basics and get hands-on experience. It gave me an opportunity to learn how to use power tools and hand tools.

How did the program help you narrow down your career decisions?

The program gave me the opportunity to figure out what I wanted to do. I originally wanted to learn drywall so I could get painting jobs, but after working on the Margaret House I realized I liked finish carpentry. The skills and knowledge allowed me to find a job and get into the Laborer's Union.

What trade did you ultimately decide to go into?

I am currently in the finish carpentry trade and started in a position on May 2 as a laborer; I joined the Laborer's Union Registered Apprenticeship program. I decided to find my career in this trade because I would be able to learn a little bit of everything.

What one thing would you tell someone who is interested in working in the trades?

Be patient, it takes time to learn and sometimes the best way to get better is by making mistakes.



Maritza took part in a 12-week construction program through Goodwill-Easter Seals of Minnesota.

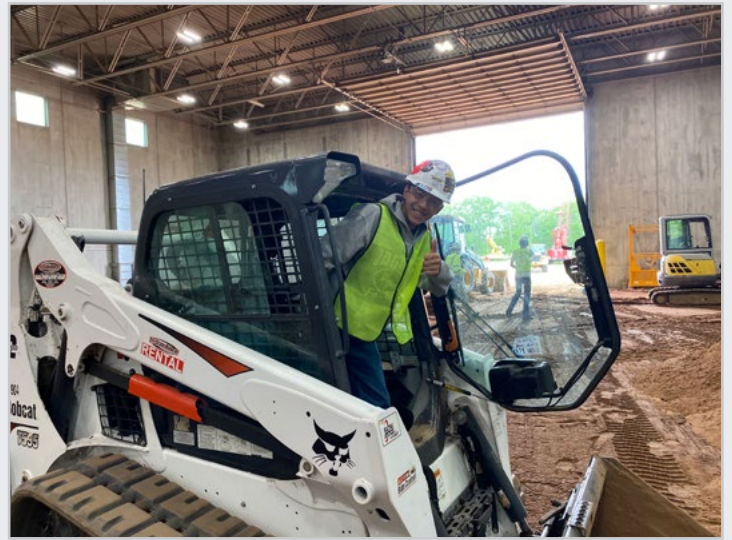
GESMN is a recipient of DLI's Labor Education Advancement Program Grant.

For more information about GESMN's employment training programs visit goodwilleasterseals.org.

CONSTRUCT TOMORROW AND BOOT CAMP CONNECT STUDENTS TO THE TRADES

When National Apprenticeship Week rolls around (Nov. 14-20, 2022) each fall, a growing number of south-central Minnesota students are eager for a field trip to Mankato.

The annual Construct Tomorrow gathering at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center hums with activities and hands-on demonstrations that give students a taste of the many building trades, such as carpentry, pipefitting, operating heavy machinery, flooring, masonry, roofing, bricklaying, heating ventilation, air conditioning, electrical work and everything else that goes into constructing commercial, industrial and public buildings and infrastructure.



Participant Carter Gieseke tests his skills with heavy machinery at the event.

The South-Central Workforce Council (SCWFC) administers job training in a nine-county area and supports the region’s employment needs. Its board of directors includes employers, labor union representatives and educational organizations.

To help introduce lifelong skills and raise awareness of trades, Heather Gleason, executive director of the SCWFC, said they have rallied to have a Construct Tomorrow event in outstate Minnesota. Building trade representatives have been supportive and instrumental in making it a fun and interactive event for kids. They also spend time talking to school counselors and educators to raise awareness of trades as an alternative to a college education.

The building and construction trades organizations also stay after school groups leave the event so that adults can also explore trade booths. They speak with many parents as well, educating them about how registered apprenticeship leads to livable, family-sustaining wages and benefits without college debt.

■ **‘TRADES’ continues on page 7**

APPRENTICESHIP MINNESOTA BY-THE-NUMBERS

	July	August	September
Sponsor information			
Active sponsors	207	207	207
New sponsors	2	1	3
New occupations	3	4	1
Apprentice information			
Total apprentices	11,253	11,389	11,333
Women	871	877	864
People of Color	2,487	2,541	2,540
Veterans	742	744	735
New apprentices	420	435	184
Graduations	119	132	87

This newsletter was funded as part of a \$3.3 million grant through the U.S. Department of Labor to support the expansion of registered apprenticeship in Minnesota.

TRADES' continued from page 6

"We've gotten great traction from [Construct Tomorrow]," Gleason said. "We've had over 1,000 students who come to the event."

With feedback from schools and counselors, and funding from the Minnesota Registered Apprenticeship Expansion grant, the SCWFC also developed a two-week summer South Central Construction Trades Boot Camp that exposes high school students to various construction trades.

Through the boot camp, "if students liked what they saw at Construct Tomorrow, they'd have the opportunity to dig a little deeper," Gleason said.

That digging can be literal, as well, with the chance to pilot a backhoe and to move the earth behind Mankato West High School or take a field trip to the Operating Engineers Local 49 training site in Hinckley with its fleet of supersized highway-busting and road-building machinery and cranes.

Each day at camp is dedicated to a different trade through a hands-on activity. One day might be building a wooden bench to take home, followed by others that let them fabricate a metal toolbox, wiring a wall for a light bulb or laying bricks. In June 2022, they even prepped, poured and finished a cement pad for bleachers for the Mankato West High School softball field.

"Every day is something different, and every day is hands-on," Gleason said.

Sometimes students surprise themselves with what they're good at. One young woman discovered she had all the right instincts and skills for making the metal toolbox and decided to specialize in welding as her future career.

Schools, too, are paying attention and working to bring back or expand hands-on learning, such as shop classes. New Ulm School District opened a Career Technical Education Center in the fall of 2021 to better prepare students intrigued by building, manufacturing and industrial trades—especially after events such as Construct Tomorrow or the summer Boot Camp.

"I've definitely seen in a change in activities and programs," Gleason said. "There's been a resurgence."

"Every day is something different, and every day is hands-on"

Heather Gleason, executive director, South-Central Workforce Council

CONSTRUCT TOMORROW EVENTS SCHEDULE

Construct Tomorrow is a partnership of union contractors and training centers in Minnesota created to give high school students in Minnesota hands-on exposure to registered apprenticeship opportunities in the construction trades. Events are conducted around the state each school year. Students can explore up to 15 different crafts and trades. For more information visit constructtomorrow.org.

Oct. 18, 2022	Eveleth	RRCC Event Center
Nov. 3, 2022	Rochester	Mayo Civic Center
Nov. 16, 2022	Mankato	Mayo Health Systems Event Center
Dec. 7, 2022	Brooklyn Park	Heritage Center
Jan. 25, 2023	St. Cloud	River's Edge Convention Center
Feb. 23, 2023	Hinckley	Grand Casino
March 2, 2023	Shakopee	Canterbury Park
April 20, 2023	Forest Lake	High School Field House
April 26-27, 2023	Duluth	DECC

APPRENTICESHIP PREPARES FIREFIGHTERS FOR ST. PAUL

NEW REGISTERED APPRENTICES LEAN INTO ON-THE-JOB

LEARNING AND SPECIALIZED TRAINING TO HANDLE FIRES, ACCIDENTS AND RESCUES

When your job duties may include finding and rescuing a kayaker or swimmer in the Mississippi River, helping someone who's injured on a river bluff, extracting residents from an apartment fire, or containing a blaze with hazardous materials, it requires serious physical stamina and years of learning technical skills.

For the St. Paul Fire Department, a three-year registered apprenticeship program for firefighters plays a pivotal role in preparing them to meet the city's unique needs.

While many fire departments focus solely on firefighting, St. Paul's department handle emergency medical services (EMS), as well. With 15 stations in seven wards, St. Paul has about 430 firefighters, help staff, 21 fire apparatus, 15 advanced life support ambulances and three basic life support ambulances, said Roy Mokosso, deputy chief and public information officer.

"We're right around 60,000 calls a year," he said. "The run volume has significantly increased." EMS calls rise the most year-to-year, which follows national trends. Anyone who applies to be a firefighter must complete EMS training first.

Applicants also need to be prepared and patient for a stringent application process required by the fire department, which is part of the International Association of Firefighters Local 21.

"There's a window [for applications] about every five years," Mokosso said. Applicants take a written test with a variety of questions covering math and reading comprehension, along with personality questions. Those who pass the written test move on to the physical testing.



A video outlining the physical performance testing for St. Paul firefighters is available at stpaul.gov/departments/human-resources/jobs/firefighter-information.

The physical portion tests agility, strength and endurance — all needed when wearing heavy gear, hauling equipment and often using a breathing apparatus. Of those who test well, veterans and people living within the city limits get priority. When the department has openings for 14 to 18 firefighters, they hire them together and run an intense 14-week academy with skills and training similar to boot camp with the military.

Registered apprenticeship program

Once candidates complete the academy, they can begin a three-year apprenticeship program. It combines on-the-job training through full-time work of firefighting with weekly off-duty related training classes that run for four hours. Classes cover topics such as construction of buildings, how engine and ladder companies work, how rescue squads function, understanding the science of fires, emergency medical services, how to safely contain hazardous materials, and more.

The apprenticeship also continues the physical training for carrying heavy gear and tools into 300- to 400-degree temperatures and still be able to breathe.

"You can't do that in 14 weeks," Mokosso said. A partnership with Century College lets apprentices get college credit for many of the classes. Apprentices can earn degrees in subjects such as fire science, emergency medical services and public safety.

■ 'FIRE' continues on page 9

■ 'Fire' continued from page 8

Firefighters can also specialize in technical rescues, water rescues and aviation rescues for remote areas. Some of the increasingly diverse department can speak other languages and help bridge cultures with St. Paul's Somali and East African, Hmong, Hispanic, Russian and other communities.

"The biggest push the department has had is recruiting a diverse workforce that's reflective of the community," Mokosso said, and that includes more women. The national percentage of female firefighters is 4%. St. Paul is at 7%.

One of their ways to encourage diversity is hosting EMS academies that pay high school graduates from underprivileged communities within St. Paul to complete basic training. That allows them to apply for basic life support positions with the department. They can move up to the firefighting ranks, which pay about \$53,000/year — roughly \$22 to \$25 an hour, plus benefits — for apprentices if they meet the qualifications.

The department has had 300 graduates from the EMS academies in 13 years. Some have gone into law enforcement, firefighting, health care or EMS careers, with a few continuing their studies to become doctors.

Mokosso didn't grow up wanting to be a firefighter, but he was a military police officer in the Marines and then a civilian police officer until a friend talked him into joining the fire department. Shifts run for 24 hours at a time, living at the station, followed by a day off at home. After eight days of being on/off, firefighters get four days off.

"I fell in love with it," Mokosso said, citing the camaraderie, teamwork and the satisfaction of helping to save a life or bring a new life into the world. "[Delivering a baby] is absolutely amazing and something you don't forget."

It isn't an easy profession, mentally or physically, he said, but most firefighters are able to retire with their pension and benefits at age 55. They also have the bonus of tight-knit relationships that come with living together with fellow firefighters at the stations and experiencing events both harrowing and exhilarating. Together, they're professionally and compassionately helping people through what's often one of the worst days of their lives.

"There's pride that comes with that," he said, and fellow firefighters can become like a second family. "It's pretty awesome to work as part of a team."

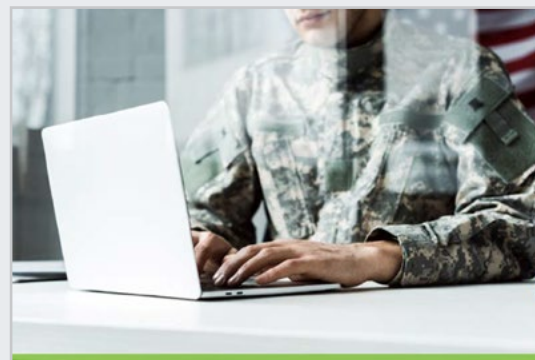
"The biggest push the department has had is recruiting a diverse workforce that's reflective of the community."

**Roy Mokosso, deputy chief,
St. Paul Fire Department**

G.I. BILL BENEFITS CAN BE USED FOR APPRENTICESHIP

In addition to helping with costs related to attending college, G.I. Bill benefits can be used while training in a registered apprenticeship or other on-the-job training.

The G.I. Bill offers veterans up to \$10,000 to use while in school or training and businesses can receive up to \$2,000 as an incentive to hire veterans. Benefits can also be used for licensing and certification, including fees for required continuing education and others related to maintaining employment.



More information

dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/gi-bill-benefits-and-apprenticeship