



APPRENTICESHIP WORKS

ISSUE NO. 43 | SPRING 2023

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.

FEATURED STORIES



5 APPRENTICE AND MANUFACTURING READY TRAINING



8 APPRENTICES TRAIN TO HANDLE FIRE, MEDICAL CALLS

SPEED NETWORKING EVENT

Join us on April 27 for an in-person Speed Networking Event to connect apprenticeship programs with community organizations and educators to build potential working partnerships.

When: April 27, 2023, from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Where: Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, 443 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul, MN 55155

Sign up: [Register here to attend.](#)

Questions? Contact jeremy.parker@state.mn.us.

APPRENTICESHIP 101 WEBINAR

Learn about registered apprenticeship and the benefits of growing and sustaining an innovative workforce at an Apprenticeship 101 Webinar. The online events begin at 10 a.m.

June 7, 2023 – [Register here to attend.](#)

Sept. 19, 2023 – [Register here to attend.](#)

Nov. 14, 2023 – [Register here to attend.](#)

View more information at apprenticeshipmn.com.

m APPRENTICESHIP MINNESOTA

APPRENTICESHIP MINNESOTA ON THE MOVE ...

Apprenticeship Minnesota staff members are spreading the word about registered apprenticeship. During the past quarter, staff have participated in numerous outreach and engagement events including:

- Jan. 12 – Humboldt High School Career Fair, St. Paul
- Jan. 25 – Construct Tomorrow, St. Cloud
- Feb. 2 – Minnesota Rural Electric Association Winter Conference, St. Cloud
- Feb.3 – Triton High School presentation, Dodge Center
- Feb. 17 - St. Francis Middle School Career Day, St. Francis
- Feb. 27 – Elk River High School Career Exploration Fair, Elk River
- Feb. 28 – Northfield High School presentation, Northfield
- March 2 – Minnesota Department of Corrections Transitions Fair, Stillwater
- March 14 – JET-NE Minnesota Office of Job Training Career Day, Carlton
- March 17 – Central High School Career Fair, St. Paul



Pictured are DLI staff members Meghana Shroff and John Stiffin at the March 14, 2023, JET-NE Minnesota Office of Job Training Career Day in Carlton, Minnesota.

2023 APPRENTICESHIP ADVISORY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

The Minnesota Apprenticeship Advisory Board proposes job classifications and minimum standards for apprenticeship programs and agreements. It also establishes policies, procedures and rules necessary to meet state law. The board will meet at 1:30 p.m. on the following dates:

- July 13, 2023
- Oct. 12, 2023

Meetings are in person at the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry office located at 443 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul, MN 55155. View more about the board at dli.mn.gov/about-department/boards-and-councils.

TRANSLATED APPRENTICESHIP DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE

Apprenticeship Minnesota translated documents about registered apprenticeship and its benefits into multiple languages.

Additionally, documents related to wage-and-hour questions, building codes, workers' compensation and more are also available in numerous languages.

Download the documents at dli.mn.gov/about-department/about-dli/translated-materials.



KEY XYAUM UA HAUJ LWM. KOJ TXOJ HAUV KEY KOM UA TAU TIAV LUG.

Khav kom lau nyaj zoo thaum tseem kawm kom paub ua hauj lwm zoo. Nws muaj ntau tshaj li 100 txoj hauv kev rau koj xyaum kom paub ua hauj lwm rau koj xav hauv lub xeev Minnesota. Nrhav koj txoj hauv kev. Kev xyaum ua hauj lwm yeej pab lau.

RAPIDS TRANSITION UPDATE FOR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS; TRAINING SESSIONS AVAILABLE

Apprenticeship Minnesota continues to partner with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship (USDOL) to update and modernize our registered apprenticeship data tracking system. We are in the initial stages of transferring current apprenticeship data to USDOL's Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS).

The timing of the transition is dependent on the USDOL's schedule, but we aim to migrate to the new system in late May. We will contact current program sponsors regarding next steps as we get closer to launching RAPIDS.

Additionally, to support a fast and efficient transition, Apprenticeship Minnesota is offering the following:

- Online webinar training for basic user functions as well as advanced training for annual program reviews, standards building and affirmative-action planning. View the training schedule at dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/rapids-training.
- Live Q&A office hours at DLI headquarters in St. Paul for sponsors who would benefit from in-person support.
- Micro-grant availability for sponsors that need additional help at their location to assist with the transition.

Also, to confirm the integrity of data in RAPIDS, Apprenticeship Minnesota senior field representatives will contact sponsors to schedule time to review the data for accuracy once it's transferred.

We're excited about the benefits of RAPIDS and look forward to working with sponsors as we transition to this powerful, new tool.

2023 LEAP GRANT FUNDING AWARDED

Five community-based organizations were awarded funding through the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry's 2023 Labor Education Advancement Program (LEAP) grant.

A total of \$100,000 was available for the 2023 funding cycle. This year's recipients of LEAP grants are:

- Building Strong Communities
- Goodwill Industries, Inc. (Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota)
- Karen Organization of Minnesota
- Urban League Twin Cities
- Southeast Minnesota Private Industry Council (Workforce Development, Inc.)

LEAP grants help community-based organizations increase participation of people of color, Indigenous people and women in registered apprenticeship programs. There are approximately 11,000 registered apprentices in Minnesota currently; however, women and communities of color have been historically underrepresented in registered apprenticeship programs. Recipients of LEAP grants can use these funds for outreach, education, assessment, preparation, support services, instruction, training, placement and retention activities.

Learn more about LEAP grants at dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/labor-education-advancement-program-leap-grant.

SELSETH FOCUSES ON RIDERS AND THE ROAD

After 35 years managing group homes for people with disabilities and mental illness, Michele Selseth was ready for a career change when a friend suggested Metro Transit.

While driving a bus sounded daunting, the job offered great benefits and pay, a way for her to use her extensive experience connecting with all kinds of people and a passion to brighten someone else's day.

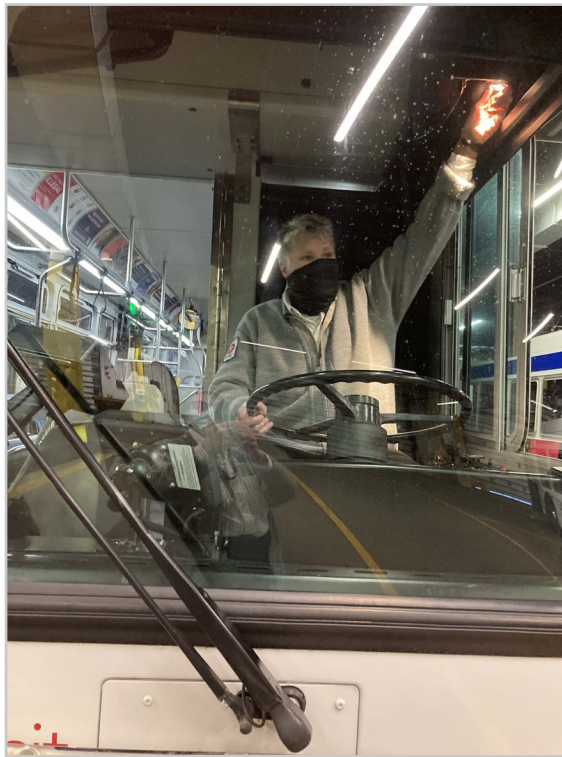
"I wish I would have done this earlier in life," said Selseth, who joined Metro Transit's Bus Operator Apprenticeship Program in July 2021. "I truly, truly love it."

She discovered her new role leans on her natural strengths, such as being able to stay calm and focused in stressful situations, whether it's a customer behaving strangely, tension between passengers or a toddler's meltdown.

"There isn't much that rattles me," she said, and helping others de-escalate emotions makes the bus-riding experience better for everyone. "You want your customers to be relaxed so you can drive the bus."

The driving was what worried her the most, but extensive training in operating the buses, learning the routes, and having supervised ride-alongs all built her skills and confidence. She says the large windows make it easier to see as you drive, the buses handle well, and she found herself enjoying that part of the job.

That doesn't mean there aren't difficult nights or days. She's had her share of teens with attitudes, backseat drivers, scuffles between passengers, and had riders who are dealing with homelessness, alcohol or drug abuse, or mental illness. One night she even heard gun shots.



Metro Transit apprentice Michele Selseth.

When facing unexpected or scary situations, bus operators have Transit Police as backup. Apprentices also have an experienced bus operator assigned as their mentor for everything from talking through a bad day and driving questions to advice for how to handle on-the-go peacekeeping or problem-solving.

"I'm so impressed with [the mentorship program]," she said. "They match you with a mentor whose personality fits yours."

Besides talking through challenges, apprentices and mentors can also share the satisfaction of a good day. Balancing out surly customers are the kind ones—those who might share a bag of chips or offer

a hand warmer to a hungry or cold child whose parent can't calm them down.

"For me, the biggest thing is recognizing everybody who comes onto the bus," said Selseth, who always smiles at the passengers. "I make eye contact that says, 'I'm here.' I'm going to support them and treat everybody the same. It makes a huge difference."

Selseth takes pride in getting people where they need to go and in going above and beyond with service. She chats with riders who want to talk, straps down wheelchairs, helps people using walkers and hefts heavy bags onto the bus.

"I want to be the driver who treats customers with respect and kindness. Hopefully they can leave the bus with a positive attitude—or a better attitude," she said. "If you like people, this is a great job. It changes every day, and it's never boring."

CONSTRUCT TOMORROW EVENTS

Construct Tomorrow is a partnership of union contractors and apprenticeship 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 hosted around the state each school year. Students can explore up to 15 different crafts and trades.

2023 event dates:

- April 20, 2023, Forest Lake, High School Field House
- April 26 and 27, 2023, Duluth, DECC



For more information about Construct Tomorrow visit constructtomorrow.org.

KAREN ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA OFFERS APPRENTICE AND MANUFACTURING READY TRAINING

The Apprentice Manufacturing Ready program is a partnership between Roseville Adult Learning Center and the Karen Organization of Minnesota. Now in its fifth year, the program focuses on preparing participants for a registered apprenticeship in the building and construction trades. The class is tailored for people who are not native English speakers.

The next class is May 22 to June 23, 2023. The training includes classroom and hands-on instruction and at the Roseville Adult Learning Center and the Finishing Trades Institute of the Upper Midwest.

Each week, participants will visit a union apprenticeship training center or an active construction site. During the final week, participants will have the opportunity to interview with employers. A host of supportive services are available including direct support from a job counselor and assistance obtaining a driver's license.

Participants must be at least 18 years old and have a high school diploma or GED and meet at least one of these criteria:

- is an immigrant, refugee or learning English as a second language,
- is a child of an immigrant or refugee,
- is a person of color and/or Hispanic or Latino, or
- lives in zip codes 55106, 55107, 55130, 55113 or 55119.



Download a flyer about Apprenticeship Manufacturing Ready.

Questions? Contact Sarah Shapiro at 651-300-9121 or sshapiro@mnkaren.org.

Learn more about the Karen Organization of Minnesota at mnkaren.org.

HARD WORK LEAVES LASTING LANDMARKS

BRICKLAYERS AND ALLIED CRAFTWORKERS BUILD FOUNDATIONS, FLOORS AND MORE

Like other union trades, bricklayers and allied craftworkers are struggling to find their ideal candidate: someone with energy, strength and the right skill set. It's a tough sweet-spot to hit.

"We're trying to recruit everywhere we can," said John Slama, who has been in the trade since 1984. He has taught new members in their registered apprenticeship program through the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 1 since 2016.

Fewer young people get exposed to trades and hands-on skills in schools, and fewer are learning skills with measuring, calculating and building with basic tools at home. The pay is good, but many schools tend to drive students to technology now.

Over the past decade, a renewed focus to introduce and emphasize career and technical education (CTE) to students has highlighted what is needed to be successful in programs like the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Registered Apprenticeship Program. Curriculum was developed that emphasizes skills needed in CTE occupations such as construction mathematics, measuring and much more. Today's CTE occupations are highly advanced and cutting-edge computer programs and technologies are a part of every industry and occupation.

It is hard work, but it's the kind of work that builds or restores community landmarks such as the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul, the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis, Allianz Field (Minnesota United FC), Huntington Bank Stadium (home of the Gophers) and the National Sports Center in Blaine. The work often lasts for generations.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, construction is expected to grow by about 6% through 2030 — a gain of about 400,000 new jobs. At the same time, there is a wave of union members preparing to retire.

Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 1 has close to 3,000 active and retired members with about 2,100 of them still actively working. "One hundred people retired last year, and a big part of our membership is in the 52- and 53-year-old range," Slama said. "There will be a lot of new openings even without more work."

To help introduce prospective members to the trade while also scouting for promising candidates for the apprenticeship



Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 1 are recruiting a new generation of apprentices to the trades. (Photo from bactraining.org)

program, the union usually offers a six-week pre-apprenticeship training each spring. It's an introduction of skills such as tape-measure math and hand-eye coordination and a look at the wide-ranging skills needed for what's nicknamed the trowel trades.

Pre-apprenticeship participants get a feel for the different specialties within the wide-ranging trade. Brick- and block-layers often build the foundation or first floors of a building, usually working outdoors and sometimes on scaffolding. Tile finishers and terrazzo specialists, who work with a poured composite material, are more often working indoors. Pointer-cleaner-caulkers (PCC) specialists remove and restore mortar in the joints that hold together brick and stone walls.

The pre-apprenticeship also is a chance for contractors to find new hires for the season. They look for candidates who show up early, are willing to learn, and can be dependable. Those who are hired become apprentices with starting pay ranging from \$43 to \$51 an hour that includes a benefit package, depending on the specialty.

"Eight-five to 90% of those participants who finish [the pre-apprenticeship] will get hired," Slama said.

Apprentices also need to attend a minimum of 144 hours of annual skill-building, known as related technical instruction, at the training center. Finishers, tile setters and terrazzo specialists have about two years of training, while bricklayers need up to four.

■ **'BRICKLAYERS'** continues on page 7

■ 'BRICKLAYERS' continued from page 6

Classes can include overviews about how to read blueprints and work with a job foreman to dial into specifics of the specialties. Apprentices who live in greater Minnesota or the Dakotas can complete their required classes via remote learning or through multi-day trainings in the slower winter work season. Once classes and on-the-job requirements are met, craftworkers advance to the journeyworker level and higher wages.

New technology is helping to make some of the work easier with troweling machines, laser measurements, forklifts, mobile scaffolds, 3D project models, better and quicker troubleshooting, and even maximizing workday efficiency thanks to weather radar apps.

In all construction occupations, innovations have been brought forward that assist craftspeople to work more efficiently and safely. One such innovation is the up-and-coming Masonry Unit Lift Enhancer (MULES), which takes much of the weight of materials off a person's shoulders, back and hips.

Slama said the most successful candidates look beyond the trade's income and benefits and embrace the chance to be outdoors and doing physical work all day. He's seen college graduates and second-career candidates in his classrooms after they found out they didn't like passive or desk-bound work. Many discover the more hands-on, tangible tasks of allied crafts to be more satisfying at the end of the day.

"There are a ton of opportunities," he said. "You have to work for it, but it's a great living."



The Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers offer a six-week pre-apprenticeship training to introduce individuals to their trade. (Photo from bactraining.org)

Learn more about the Minnesota/North Dakota Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers at bactraining.org.

APPRENTICESHIP MINNESOTA BY-THE-NUMBERS

	January	February	March
Sponsor information			
Active sponsors	208	208	208
New sponsors in development	40	49	64
New occupations	0	0	1
Apprentice information			
Total apprentices	10,886	10,817	10,621
Women	846	845	831
People of Color	2,483	2,499	2,446
Veterans	705	696	686
New apprentices	246	128	103
Graduations	83	82	63

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.

APPRENTICES TRAIN TO HANDLE FIRE, MEDICAL CALLS

Tight-knit firefighting-EMT team shares a 'heart of service'

When St. Paul firefighter and EMT Jodie Carroll looks back, she sees some of the experiences that helped her get to where she is now: childhood years working on a central Minnesota farm, competing in every team sport from track to basketball, raising her three daughters mostly on her own and being dedicated to fitness as a personal trainer for many of her parenting years.

She needed every bit of strength and fortitude to get through the physical performance test to become a firefighter/EMT. While wearing more than 50 pounds of gear, applicants lug 58 pounds of hose up five flights of stairs, pull a charged fire hose 75 feet, lift and drag a 175-pound mannequin for 100 feet, heft a 47-pound exhaust fan 150 feet, then simulate a forced entry by straddling a 150-pound steel beam and sledgehammering it until it moves five feet.

"I'm super proud," Carroll said of not only passing the test, but breaking the former women's record along with another female applicant testing that day. "At [age] 44, that was quite a feat."

As she turned 48 in August 2022, she had wrapped up her three-year registered apprenticeship program with the department, where she was the oldest member of her class. She made it through a grueling fire academy before moving into on-the-job learning with 24-hour shifts every other day for eight days, followed by four days off. In addition to her job, she had weekly apprenticeship classes and training, and annual physical tests to pass.

Apprentices generally fill in where needed at St. Paul's 15 stations. Once they've finished their apprenticeship, they can apply for a permanent home at a station. Carroll was accepted to join Squad 3 of Task Force One at Station 1, which specializes in heavy technical rescue situations that may involve rope climbing, getting into trenches or confined spaces and difficult accidents that require careful, but quick responses.



St. Paul firefighter and EMT Jodie Carroll.

"I was incredibly blessed and humbled to be appointed to the squad," said Carroll, who's eager to learn from the more seasoned members. "Everyone has a heart of service. It's amazing the bond that we're already building."

Firefighting and EMT work was never on her radar as she was busy raising her daughters, but a former deputy chief told her about the fire department setting up at a women's expo. That gave her the chance to run saws, try on the gear and climb up the ladder rig.

"I just remember thinking, 'This is it!'" she recalled. She especially enjoys using tools for rescuing people or getting trees or rubble out of the way.

She always liked fixing things and using equipment on a childhood farm near Onamia. She enjoys the constant training, as well.

"I'm in the best shape of my life," she said.

Because St. Paul Fire Department also handles the city's emergency medical calls, its firefighters also are EMTs. The first time Carroll saw someone die during a medical call, was the same day she saw another person saved by CPR. She watched the woman's skin color go from a deathly pallor to a healthy blush as her heart began pumping blood through her body once again.

"I get chills just thinking about it," Carroll said. "Every time you save someone's life it's incredible."

The emergency nature of the job and surprises along the way can be emotionally challenging, though. One call to save a 6-month-old baby was successful, but it rattled Carroll to see an infant who looked just like her second-oldest daughter at that age.

■ **'FIRE' continues on page 9**

■ 'FIRE' continued from page 8

After being out on a tough call, firefighters can lean on a peer support, and they also try to gather at the station's kitchen table to talk through and process difficult experiences.

The more uplifting days usually include community events, such as National Night Out. Carroll said kids' eyes light up, and parents show appreciation to see her among the male firefighters. When at events or on calls, people often are drawn to firefighters who look like them and understand the nuances of their culture.

Carroll hopes to encourage more diversity within the department, and that begins with reaching out to more kids and introducing them to the skills they need to be on a squad. The department is restarting its Explorers

Program for kids ages 14 and older that introduces them to firefighting. There is also a Pathways program that trains high school graduates in emergency medical services.

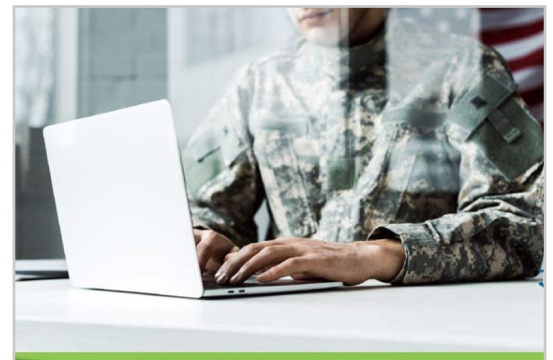
Some future firefighters might be like her and unable to consider the intense service career until later in life, and that's OK, too.

"I really believe everything happens when it's supposed to happen, and I'm completely humbled and grateful to have this opportunity," said Carroll, whose daughters had watched her break the women's record in the physical performance test. "To get here and to be able to show my girls that you can do anything you can put your mind to — it's amazing."

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

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