



# APPRENTICESHIP WORKS

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## 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](http://apprenticeshipmn.com).

## METRO TRANSIT GRADUATES FIRST APPRENTICESHIP CLASS

Metro Transit celebrated the graduation of its first class of 29 bus operator apprentices in December 2019. The registered apprenticeship program was developed to address employee turnover and retention.

The Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1005 and Apprenticeship Minnesota partnered with Metro Transit on the initiative. There are 150 apprentice bus operators enrolled in the training and 50 mentors volunteer their time to make the program a success.

The training equips apprentices with the skills necessary to succeed in the demanding first year on the job. Metro Transit worked with Apprenticeship Minnesota to design a custom program that combined technical driving instruction with mentorship from veteran drivers.

“The training was rigorous. It was a lot to take in. But being able to talk to my mentor and ask questions took away a lot of the stress,” said Deshawn Richard, apprentice graduate. “It feels great to get that certificate; I am ready to get to work.”

## FEATURED STORIES



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## CONCRETE CHRISTMAS SHOWCASES CREATIVITY AND EXPERTISE OF DIVERSE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADE REGISTERED APPRENTICES

Concrete is not typical holiday décor. But every year close to 100 registered apprentices labor for four weeks to create a concrete winter wonderland in a New Brighton warehouse. Called “Concrete Christmas,” the collaborative, cross-union effort is part of Cement Mason-Plasterers and Shophands Local 633’s registered apprenticeship program, a three-year training program in the building and construction trades. Concrete Christmas is a food drive and chance for Local 633 to give back.

This year’s Concrete Christmas featured five cement structures and a candy-cane-colored roundabout. There’s a hockey rink epoxied with red and forest green, a golf course, two fountain walls and a 13-foot snowman holding a trowel. Stamped concrete paths connect everything together. While completing the display, apprentices use all of the materials and tools they use to build Minnesota buildings and bridges. The project provides apprentices the opportunity to master their craft in a fun, creative environment, while applying critical and conceptual skills from solving volumetric equations to reading blueprints.



John Stiffin and Ruth Taylor represented the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry at the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Council’s Career Expo in Marshall, Minnesota.

## SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA WORKFORCE COUNCIL’S CAREER EXPO

Representatives from Apprenticeship Minnesota and the Department of Labor and Industry took part in the Southwest Minnesota Workforce Council’s Career Expo in Marshall, Minnesota on Sept. 30, 2019, to share information about registered apprenticeship as a career path for students.

The highly interactive career exploration event shared career information for high school sophomores and juniors in the Minnesota West Carl Perkins Consortium of schools. Hundreds of business, workforce agency and education volunteers work to provide the opportunity for the students.



## ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL JATC BUS TOUR

Twenty students from Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis toured two apprenticeship training centers as part of a JATC bus tour on Nov. 19.

The students visited the Cement Masons, Plasters and Shophands Local 633 JATC and the Sheet Metal Workers Local 10 Training Center. At each training center, the students participated in hands-on activities and engaged with industry professionals. “Our students can only learn so much from slides and books. The learning that makes a lasting impression is the learning that starts in our finger tips,” said Catherine Ludowese, CTE instructor at Roosevelt High School.



# APPRENTICESHIP MINNESOTA CELEBRATES NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

National Apprenticeship Week was celebrated Nov. 11-15, 2019, throughout Minnesota to recognize the success of registered apprenticeship and help expand the workforce model to new industries.

At events in Duluth, Rochester and the Twin Cities, coordinated in partnership with Apprenticeship Minnesota, union labor leaders, business owners, educators, community advocates and government officials gathered to learn about the registered apprenticeship training model and develop ideas to grow the program within new industries.

There are currently more than 12,000 apprentices receiving training in nearly 200 registered apprenticeship programs throughout Minnesota.

The week began Tuesday with a speed networking session at the Southeast Minnesota Plumbers and Pipefitters Union Local 6 in Rochester. Representatives from local schools, government, businesses and union labor attended. Nate O'Reilly, president, Southern Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council, said the stakeholders who attended all want to find people good paying jobs and build the region's talent pipeline.

Apprenticeship Week celebrated Women in Apprenticeship Day with a career fair and panel discussion in Anoka, Minnesota. Representatives from dozens of businesses attended to discuss their training programs and encourage interested workers to enroll in apprenticeship programs.

Alec Johnson is an operator instructor for Metro Transit. He also coordinates the organization's apprenticeship program that just graduated the first class of 29 apprentice drivers, with 150 more in training. He said his organization recently started the program to address a workforce shortage. The apprentices work with mentors throughout their first year to improve retention and engagement rates for new drivers.

"Rather than simply experiencing a revolving door of first-year drivers, we needed to invest more in the hiring and training to make sure the drivers had all the tools necessary to help them succeed," Johnson said. "As a result of this program, we have more quality, well-rounded employees that feel more supported and stay with us longer when they finish the apprenticeship."



"Apprenticeship isn't just about construction and skilled trades. There are employers in healthcare, information technology, transportation and many other industries that need to train their workers to replace retirees and to meet demand. We in the trades can share our experiences with others about what has worked for us, and how they can apply the model to be successful," said O'Reilly.

The next stop was the Twin Cities Iron Workers Training Center in St. Paul, where over 90 school counselors toured the center to learn more about how apprentices learn their skills.

Larry Gilbertson, president of Iron Workers Local 512 and apprenticeship program director, encouraged counselors to steer students toward a career in the trades and an apprenticeship after graduation.

"There are so many positives in apprenticeship training. Because apprentices earn money while they learn, they are not going into student debt. And when they graduate, they are ready to start working in a good paying job," Gilbertson said. "Part of what we can do through these events is to educate the counselors who work with high school students. Not everyone needs to go to a four-year college and an apprenticeship is an option for a lot of these students."

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The week culminated with a day-long Apprenticeship Summit in Duluth. Gov. Tim Walz, Duluth Mayor Emily Larson and many others addressed the Summit audience. After tours of two nearby training facilities, a panel of apprentices shared how the skills they learned during their training prepared them for their jobs. A group of area employers also discussed how they are using the apprenticeship training model to address their workforce needs.

In addition to the statewide tours, Apprenticeship Minnesota also recognized program sponsors, apprentices and community-based organizations throughout the week.

This is the fifth year Apprenticeship Minnesota has celebrated National Apprenticeship Week. The interest and excitement around the apprenticeship model is continuing to grow throughout the state, said John Aiken, director, Apprenticeship Minnesota at the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.

**“It is good to see school counselors, educators, parents, youth and community-based leaders are looking for solutions for our future to build a workforce. There are many great paths to a great career,”** Aiken said. **“Registered apprenticeship is one of those preeminent paths and I think more people are realizing its power to change lives. I see it every day. I get to watch people complete that journey and see how powerful it is to watch them stand up and say, ‘I made this, I did this.’ It’s a powerful moment in Minnesota.”**

## SUMMIT IN DULUTH NEWS

### APPRENTICESHIPS, NEED FOR MORE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS HIGHLIGHTED AT SUMMIT IN DULUTH

[duluthnewstribune.com/business/manufacturing/4771734-Apprenticeships-need-for-more-construction-workers-highlighted-at-summit-in-Duluth](http://duluthnewstribune.com/business/manufacturing/4771734-Apprenticeships-need-for-more-construction-workers-highlighted-at-summit-in-Duluth)

### NEED A JOB? APPRENTICESHIP SUMMIT CONDUCTED IN DULUTH

[cbs3duluth.com/2019/11/15/need-a-job-apprenticeship-summit-held-in-duluth/](http://cbs3duluth.com/2019/11/15/need-a-job-apprenticeship-summit-held-in-duluth/)



## MINNESOTA WORKPLACE INJURY, ILLNESS RATE REMAINS AT ALL-TIME LOW

Minnesota’s estimated workplace injury and illness rate for 2018 remains at its lowest rate since the measurement started in 1973. According to the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, the state had an estimated 3.2 OSHA-recordable nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses per 100 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers in 2018. The estimated rate for 2017 was 3.3 cases per 100 FTE workers.

The survey estimated Minnesota had 71,600 workers with OSHA-recordable nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses in 2018, compared to 72,500 estimated cases for 2017.

In 2018, Minnesota’s employment covered by the survey was approximately 2.79 million.

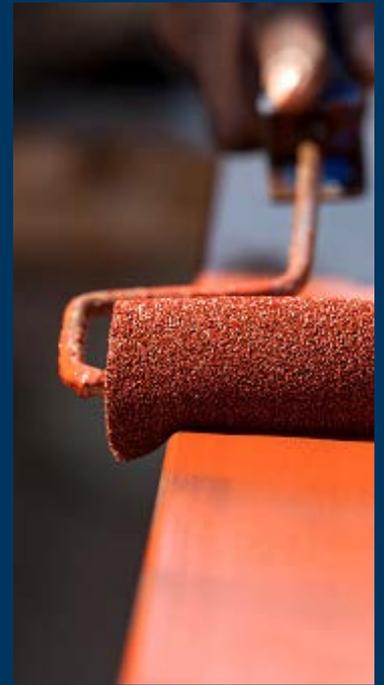
**“Although Minnesota has seen a 61% decrease in its rate of work-related injuries and illnesses in the past 22 years, even one injured or ill worker is one too many,”** said Nancy Leppink, Department of Labor and Industry commissioner. **“Every worker in Minnesota has the right to be safe and healthy at work and the right to finish their workday in the same condition in which they started it.”**

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates a national total of 3.5 million nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses in private- and public-sector workplaces for 2018, resulting in a rate of 3.1 cases per 100 FTE workers.

Read more about the injury rates at [www.dli.mn.gov/our-areas-service/research-and-statistics/survey-occupational-injuries-and-illnesses](http://www.dli.mn.gov/our-areas-service/research-and-statistics/survey-occupational-injuries-and-illnesses)

## STATE'S FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMAN UNION PAINTER SHARES THE BENEFITS OF THE TRADES WITH NEXT GENERATION

Norma Miller is the first African-American woman union painter in Minnesota. Her career path started in healthcare in New England before she moved to Minnesota in the 1990s and enrolled in an apprenticeship program.



Miller was motivated to make the most of her apprenticeship and career. She convinced instructors to let her take classes ahead of schedule so she could graduate early. She worked hard to learn to paint with both hands and perfect her craft. She even conquered her fear of heights and climbing ladders.

"There is just something about the work that drove me. I loved it," Miller said. "You learned so much during the training and as a third-year apprentice, I was able to earn a good living and even buy a house. When I finished [the training] I was able to start working right away."

Miller was often the only woman and the only person of color on the jobsite. Her experience was overwhelmingly positive. The men she worked with were professional and courteous. She is grateful to the foreman who trusted and mentored her while she honed her skills.

Miller retired from painting in 2015 and now works for the Minneapolis Urban League as a job developer. She advises people interested in a career in the trades and gets them started on the right path and prepared for success. She networks with unions and business owners to find job leads. The position is the perfect next step in her career. She advocates for the training and education apprentices receive and strongly believes in the benefits of a career in the trades. Miller said, the stability and peace of mind that comes from working in a fulfilling career and earning a steady paycheck can be life changing.

"A lot of people walk in my office and they don't know if they want to be a roofer, an electrician, an iron worker, a plumber or what. I have the tools to work with anyone who comes in the door to figure out what is the best route," she said.

Miller is uniquely qualified for the role. She shares the advice and tips she learned throughout her own career. A lot of it is common sense, but it is important.

"You can't just wake up one day and say I don't feel like coming in today. A jobsite is filled with smart, talented people who are counting on you," Miller said. "I have been through the same training and I can talk to people honestly about what to expect. I have walked the walk."

A big part of her job is connecting people. She networks aggressively to discover leads and new job opportunities in the industry on behalf of underrepresented populations.

**"Not many people look like me in the trades. It is changing, but not fast enough. Women and people of color are qualified for this work. But they don't always have the opportunities," she said. "To change that, the people who make the decisions need to see that we can do the work just as well as anyone else. The truth is we all want the same things: a home, a job that pays us a good wage and a yard for our kids to play in. It doesn't matter who you are."**



## CARPENTERS OPEN TRAINING CENTER DOORS TO OPEN MORE EYES TO APPRENTICESHIP

Nov. 15, 2019, by Union Advocate

[advocate.stpaulunions.org/2019/11/15/to-open-more-eyes-to-apprenticeship-carpenters-open-training-center-doors/](https://advocate.stpaulunions.org/2019/11/15/to-open-more-eyes-to-apprenticeship-carpenters-open-training-center-doors/)

Latesha Hayes, pictured in the yellow hard hat, and Shetara Round, pictured speaking, lead a tour of the Carpenters' St. Paul training center in November.

### Latesha Hayes' career path came full circle this morning.

A fourth-year apprentice with the Carpenters Union, Hayes was one of six tradeswomen who led 33 eighth-grade girls from Roseville on a tour of the union's St. Paul training center in November. The students put on hard hats and safety glasses, worked with tools of the trade and peppered their tour guides with questions about the craft.

Afterward, Hayes, 31, remembered being at a similar event just six years ago. Her son's class went on a field trip to JA BizTown, an experiential learning lab for youth that simulates life in a city.

**"He got to play the role of a carpenter," Hayes said. "When I got a look at his benefits and wages and I had to ask if it was accurate. They told me it was and I knew I had to look into it."**

On day one of their union apprenticeship, local carpenters earn \$21 per hour with great health and retirement benefits, "even without ever having held a hammer in your hand," Scott Panek, an assistant training director with the union, told students.

That's more than Hayes was making as the manager of a local cell phone store. It's more than her fellow tour guide, first-year apprentice Shetara Round, was making at Victoria's Secret before she joined the union.

And forget swinging a hammer. Round fully admits she "didn't even know what the hell" carpentry was back then.

Round remembered, "Somebody on Facebook shared a post and was like, 'Hey, anyone interested in a career in carpentry?'" "And I'm like, 'Oh, so they lay carpets and stuff?'"

Story continued on the following page...



## TRADESWOMEN BUILD NATIONS DAY OF SERVICE AT SECOND HARVEST

As part of the ninth annual Tradeswomen Build Nations Conference, more than 140 volunteers helped pack meals to feed the hungry.

The annual conference, conducted in Minneapolis on Oct. 4 to 6, 2019, is the largest gathering of union tradeswomen in the world. The TWBNC began with community service projects in the local area and one of the projects this year was at the Second Harvest Hartland in Brooklyn Park where volunteers packed food to help end hunger.

Read more about the TWBNC at <https://nabtu.org/twbn/>



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Much has changed in the last year, as Round, 34, now works on a job site in East Bethel, building an addition to the local hospital.

**“I wish I would have done an event like this when I was their age,” Round said of the middle-school students touring her training center.**

The fact is building trades unions are doing a lot more outreach events these days – and this week, in particular. It’s National Apprenticeship Week, and unions locally and nationally are hosting open houses, tours and celebrations inside their training centers.

In recent years, with the construction industry facing a shortage of skilled tradespeople, unions and contractors have boosted their marketing and recruitment efforts. Amanda Phillips, an apprenticeship instructor with the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters, said the union is doing outreach events several times a month.

“And I can tell it’s having an impact,” Phillips said. “In their first week of training, apprentices introduce themselves and talk about how they found out about the union. It’s becoming much more prevalent that they mention they came on a tour or know someone who did and told them about it.”



The eighth-grade girls, whose tour of the training center was just one stop during a day of career exploration activities arranged by local contractors, likely won’t make their decision about what to do after high school anytime soon. But if they didn’t know a union apprenticeship was an option before today, they know it now.

“If you’re just riding past a job site, you’re like ‘oh those are construction workers,’” Hayes said “No, there are electricians, laborers, carpenters, pipefitters – and they all come from different unions to put it together.”

“It’s basically generalized as a man’s job, but women can do this too. We can do whatever we put our minds to.”  
Learn more about apprenticeship opportunities in the building trades online at [constructioncareers.org](http://constructioncareers.org).

## MINNESOTA APPRENTICESHIP BY-THE-NUMBERS

	October	November	December
<b>Sponsor Information</b>			
Active Sponsor	197	197	194
New Sponsors	3	1	0
New Occupations	3	2	1
<b>Apprentice Information</b>			
Total all Apprentices	12,542	12,309	12,150
Females	898	881	872
Minorities	2,613	2,557	2,518
Veterans	920	905	886
New Apprentices	287	108	70
Graduations	134	85	100
<b>Services to sponsors and apprentices</b>			
Information Calls	152	129	110
Community Outreach	152	129	12
Technical Visits	21	9	6
Prospective Sponsors	4	5	10