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

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GRANTS AVAILABLE TO EXPAND APPRENTICESHIP

Funding through the Minnesota Registered Apprenticeship Expansion Grant (MNRAE) is available to expand registered apprenticeships across Minnesota.

On-the-Job Training Grants
MNRAE funding of $120,000 for On-the-Job Training Grants is available. Applicants may be eligible for up to $1,000 for each new registered apprentice to a maximum of $25,000. Funds can be used to off-set some costs related to a registered apprentice’s on-the-job training experience.

Related Technical Instruction Grants
Applicants may also be eligible for up to $1,000 for each new registered apprentice, up to $25,000, through our MNRAE Related Technical Instruction Grants. These funds can be used to support start-up costs related to supplies, materials, instruction and program infrastructure of a new registered apprenticeship program.

Application requirements
To be eligible for funding, applicants must be a:
• Minnesota employer interested in starting a registered apprenticeship program and seeking to use the grant funds toward related technical instruction training.

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**APPRENTICESHIP MINNESOTA EVENTS**

**Introduction to Apprenticeship Webinars**
Join representatives from Apprenticeship Minnesota 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 an industry or community-based organization. Webinar schedule:

- April 15, 2021, 10 to 11 a.m. – Highlight on information technology
- May 12, 2021, 10 to 11 a.m. – Highlight on community-based organizations and the Department of Veterans Affairs
- June 9, 2021, 10 to 11 a.m. – Highlight on agriculture and natural resources

Visit our [news and events page](#) to learn more and register.

**National Women in Construction Week**
In celebration of National Women in Construction Week, March 8 to 13, 2021, Apprenticeship Minnesota hosted a virtual panel discussion featuring women in building and construction trade apprenticeships. Panelists shared their stories and experiences of being women in an industry where historically women are underrepresented. Representatives from Women Building Success and Building Strong Communities also discussed how their programs are connecting women to registered apprenticeship opportunities in the industry.

**Minneapolis Public Schools**
On March 18, 2021, Apprenticeship Minnesota and the Minnesota Operating Engineers Local 49 participated in the Minneapolis Public Schools monthly counselors meeting. The Operating Engineers Local 49 offered a virtual tour of their training center in Hinckley, Minnesota. Attendees were able to interact with apprentices and training center staff. An overview of registered apprenticeship was presented by Apprenticeship Minnesota staff.

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**‘Grants’ continued from page 1**

- An existing sponsor of a registered apprenticeship program in Minnesota seeking to develop new occupations or expand an existing program.
- Associations that currently provide registered apprenticeship programs with services for their cooperative members or their employers.

**Programs that have received grants include:**

- Minnesota Action Valley Council, Inc (South Central WorkForce Council)
- Finishing Trade Institute of the Upper Midwest
- Roofers and Waterproofers Local 96
- Carpenters and Joiners Apprenticeship and Journeyman Training Trust Fund
- SEIU Local 26
- Central Minnesota Job and Training Services
- Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota
- Destinations Career Academy at Minnesota Virtual Academy (Stride)

Read more and download application materials at [www.dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/apprenticeship-funding-opportunities](http://www.dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/apprenticeship-funding-opportunities). For help with technical assistance about interpreting instructions or preparing applications, contact Ruth Taylor at [ruth.taylor@state.mn.us](mailto:ruth.taylor@state.mn.us).

Apprenticeship Minnesota was awarded $1.35 million from the U.S. Department of Labor’s (U.S. DOL) Employment and Training Administration to expand registered apprenticeship programs. This initiative is wholly funded with U.S. DOL grant funds, for the purpose of the MNRAE Grant.
NEW GROUP OF CERTIFIED BUS OPERATORS RECOGNIZED

Thirty individuals were recently recognized for completing the Bus Operator Apprenticeship Program and becoming certified bus operators during socially distanced graduation ceremonies at the Metro Transit Police and Office Facility.

The program is a partnership between the ATU Local 1005 and Metro Transit and involves ride-alongs, group meetings and mentoring.

“The first year is critical, especially this past year,” said Brian Funk, deputy chief of operations. “Once you’re out there, you find out there’s more to learn, and you need a mentor to help guide you.”

The bus operator certification is recognized nationally, much like a certificate for a pipefitter or plumber. More than 100 operators have completed the program. An additional 67 bus operators are on their path to becoming certified.

“This is not a job – it’s a skilled profession,” said Alec Johnson, apprenticeship coordinator.

Amanuel Simursab, an immigrant from Ethiopia who speaks English as a second language, said he found the apprenticeship program and its mentor support invaluable.

“It feels good to have accomplished this and have a physical reminder of what I’ve done,” Simursab said.

Now hiring bus operators
Metro Transit is accepting bus operator applications with the goal of hiring 40 full-time operators by the summer of 2021. Learn more about Metro Transit’s registered apprenticeships at metrocouncil.org.

IRON RANGE ELECTRICAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION EVENT

The Iron Range Electrical Apprenticeship Program will conduct two events in Bemidji on April 29, 2021, for people interested in applying to their program.

• The first event is from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Beltrami County Workforce Impact/Downtown CareerForce, 616 American Avenue NW, Bemidji.
• The second is from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Rural Minnesota CEP/Westridge CareerForce offices, 2300 24th Street NW, Suite 106, Bemidji.

Applicants can meet with representatives from the apprenticeship program and receive assistance completing the online application.

Applicants who submit a complete application by April 29, 2021, will qualify to take the program’s aptitude test April 30, 2021, at the Northwestern Technical College in Bemidji. A passing grade is required to qualify for an interview for the program.

For more information, contact the Apprenticeship Office at 218-722-8115 or dul_irjatc@twinportsneca.com or IBEW Local 294 at 218-263-6895.
ARBORIST APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM BLENDS SKILLS OF CLIMBING, BIOLOGY AND MACHINERY

Watch an arborist trim a 100-year-old tree, and his or her skills reveal a blend of a scientist, landscaper, lumberjack and mountain climber. They’re hired to diagnose and treat disease, remove dangerous dead and damaged limbs, climb to risky heights, and to do what’s needed to help the overstory of neighborhoods and cities play their part in a large ecosystem.

To enhance safety and deepen the skill set this trade requires, several of the Twin Cities’ leading arboriculture companies came together to develop a registered apprenticeship program. The program requires 6,000 hours, or approximately 3.5 years, of on-the-job experience in planting, pruning and removing trees as well as educational training.

Apprentices spend a week each quarter studying arboriculture at Mid-State Technical College in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin. The college worked with Apprenticeship Minnesota and the Wisconsin Bureau of Apprenticeship to extend instruction to Minnesota apprentices using their indoor laboratory areas for studying trees and biology, as well as a variety of machinery to work on trees.

“It’s a big investment on our part and [the apprentices’] part, so we want to make sure it’s a good match,” said Brent Cooper of Rainbow Treecare.

Rainbow Treecare has always had mentoring programs, but the registered apprenticeship experience has helped apprentices understand not just how to perform tree-related tasks, but why they are doing them.

“[The registered apprenticeship] seems to fast-track some of the learning, for sure,” Cooper said.

Each season brings different tasks, such as trimming oaks in the winter, spring plantings, pruning trees to keep them healthy and sturdy against storms and trying to prevent infestations such as the emerald ash borer, which is affecting many of Minnesota’s trees that replaced the ones affected by Dutch Elm disease in the 1970s.

Those interested in pursuing a career in arboriculture should have a passion for trees, enjoy hands-on work, can handle working outdoors in extreme temperatures, and mechanical aptitude. Being physically fit is also necessary.

“It’s really fulfilling,” Cooper said. “You get to take care of these trees that will be there for a long time.”

USE GI BILL BENEFITS FOR APPRENTICESHIP

Transitioning service members and veterans can use GI Bill benefits for apprenticeship training.

APPRENTICESHIP HELPS THERAPISTS WORK TOWARD LICENSE

Larry Yang knows the challenges of living in two worlds – the Hmong culture of his family and the American culture that envelops them.

Yang is one of many clinicians who have participated in Amherst H. Wilder Foundation’s mental health practitioner registered apprenticeship program. The program is structured to help registered apprentices meet state supervision requirements while providing supplemental training and materials needed for state licensing requirements.

As a Hmong American, Yang understands the barriers experienced within communities of color, such as family expectations, traditional gender roles and intergenerational trauma. He hopes his experience will inspire other people of color to pursue work in the psychology field, which is underserved statewide.

“I don’t think we’re anywhere close to meeting the demand,” he said.

“[Being a therapist is] not an easy job. I’ve seen the disparities and struggles that people have,” Yang said. “Being able to have the privilege to go on that journey [with them] and be their guide was more fulfilling.”

Yang has a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Metropolitan State University and a master’s degree in marriage and family therapy from St. Mary’s University of Minnesota – Twin Cities campus.

PLUMBING APPRENTICE ENJOYS HANDS-ON WORK AND WELDING

When he was teen in Mexico, Cristian Hernandez-Mendoza never pictured himself welding pipes for ice rinks in Minnesota.

After learning about a registered apprenticeship program from a friend, Hernandez-Mendoza submitted an application and was accepted in June 2018. He immediately began learning about plumbing and pipefitting through on-the-job training and classroom instruction.

“I didn’t know much about what plumbers do,” said the 33-year-old, now in the third year of his apprenticeship with the Rochester, Minnesota-based Plumbers and Pipefitters Local Union 6. “I’m a hands-on guy, so this job is perfect for me.”

As he works on water, fuel, gas, coolant and other lines that snake through buildings, he keeps learning new aspects of the trade, especially with specialized work in Mayo Clinic’s medical buildings that anchor much of Rochester’s downtown.

“You don’t do the same thing over and over,” said Hernandez-Mendoza, who enjoys working alongside his plumbing mentors, but also people in other trades who are always willing to offer tips and advice that help him do his job better. “You’re learning all the time. That’s what I like the most about this trade.”

His favorite project so far was the installation of a new cooling system for hockey rinks at the Graham Arena Complex in Rochester.
CELEBRATING WOMEN IN THE TRADES

By Amie Stager, Workday Minnesota

On March 11, 2021, Apprenticeship Minnesota hosted a virtual panel discussion of women in the building and construction trades. An information expo afterward included programs hosted by Women Building Success, Building Strong Communities, and Metro Workforce Region 4. Panelists discussed what it’s like to be a woman in the trades, the benefits of working in the trades, and the disparities between men and women. Women are less likely to be in an apprenticeship—only 7.2% of registered individuals in apprenticeships are women.

Breanna Henry was at the panel and is in her first year of her apprenticeship with Building Strong Communities. “They’ve prepared me for everything that I’ve faced in the trades,” said Henry. She appreciated the program’s emotional intelligence class. “If you learn people and patience, you can go really far in the trades,” she said. “Going past something with a friend and being like, ‘I helped build that, I was at the top of that building,’ that’s my favorite part.”

Women Building Success provides financial sponsorship for women in the Building Strong Communities Program. Building Strong Communities is free for those who meet qualifications.

Minnesota has seen efforts to recruit women into building and construction before. Thousands of women from around the country attended the Trades Women Build Nations conference in Minneapolis in 2019.

Continue reading at www.workdayminnesota.org/celebrating-women-in-the-trades/

APPRENTICESHIP MINNESOTA BY-THE-NUMBERS

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