

Apprenticeship Section- (360) 902-5320  
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Web site: <http://www.lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/Apprenticeship/default.asp>

DATE: April 8, 2008

TO: Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council Members  
Labor and Industries' Apprenticeship Coordinators  
Washington State Apprenticeship Training Directors/Coordinators  
Interested Apprenticeship Stakeholders

FROM: Elizabeth Smith, Apprenticeship Program Manager

SUBJECT: **QUARTERLY REPORT FOR 3rd (FY) QUARTER 2008  
(January - March 2008)**

There were **17,701** active apprentices for the 12-month time period ending March 31, 2008 of which **1,916** were women and **4186** were minority.

For the time period: (January - March 2008)

- **73** individuals received completion certificates;
- **1165** individuals were registered;
- **0** committees were registered with a total of **0** occupations;
- **2** programs were registered with a total of **3** occupations; and
- **0** occupations were added to **0** existing programs.

As of March 31, 2008 there are:

- **242** registered programs, of which there are:
  - 35 plant programs;
  - 1 OJT program;
  - 103 Group-Joint programs;
  - 69 Individual-Joint programs;
  - 24 Group Non-Joint Programs;
  - 8 Individual Non-Joint programs; and
  - 2 Individual Waiver program

If you break this out to one program equals "one occupation with one committee" then there are currently **565** individual programs active as of December 31, 2007.

## General Apprenticeship Activities:

The following committees/programs/occupations were approved at the January 2008 WSATC quarterly meeting.

Equa-Chlor, LLC	new program	Industrial Maintenance Electrician Industrial Maintenance Mechanic Industrial Welder-Fabricator
Grays Harbor Fire District #2 JATC	new program	Firefighter/ Paramedic

### **L&I, Apprenticeship Section Offers WorkSource Front Line Staff Training Making the Apprenticeship Connection - A Guide to Opportunities in Washington State Registered Apprenticeship Programs**

#### **Description:**

This 2-1/2 hour training provides a comprehensive look at the Washington State registered apprenticeship training system. Presentations are tailored to show what apprenticeship opportunities are available in a given region. Attendees are provided with a variety of perspectives and information on apprenticeship in Washington State.

#### **Presented by:**

Staff from the Department of Labor & Industries Office of Apprenticeship, representatives from local apprenticeship training programs, and others

#### **Training Objectives**

- Understand the win-win relationship for customers, industry, and WIA program performance
- Discover the range of options and programs available
- See and learn apprenticeship related electronic tools and communication products
- Know the key elements necessary to make an informed, high quality referral
- Gain knowledge of immediate, paid, apprenticeship training opportunities in building and construction occupations

#### **Suggested Audience:**

WorkSource staff, Job Corps staff, K-12 counselors, advisors and CTE specialists, Tech-Prep and Prep-Work staff members, juvenile justice staff members, community college staff, and others who refer customers to training and work opportunities

#### **Logistics:**

This training is offered free of charge from the Apprenticeship Section. Interested WorkSource centers or WDAs must provide the training facility, staff release time and, if you so choose, refreshments for participants. To set up a customized training at your location contact Jody Robbins, Apprenticeship Technical Specialist, Department of Labor & Industries, Apprenticeship Section, 360-902-6412, Fax 360-902-4248, Email [rojo235@LNI.wa.gov](mailto:rojo235@LNI.wa.gov)

**Future Events:**

\*\*Please go to our On-line Calendar of Events for Details on any these activities.

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/Apprenticeship/NewsEvents/Calendar/default.asp>

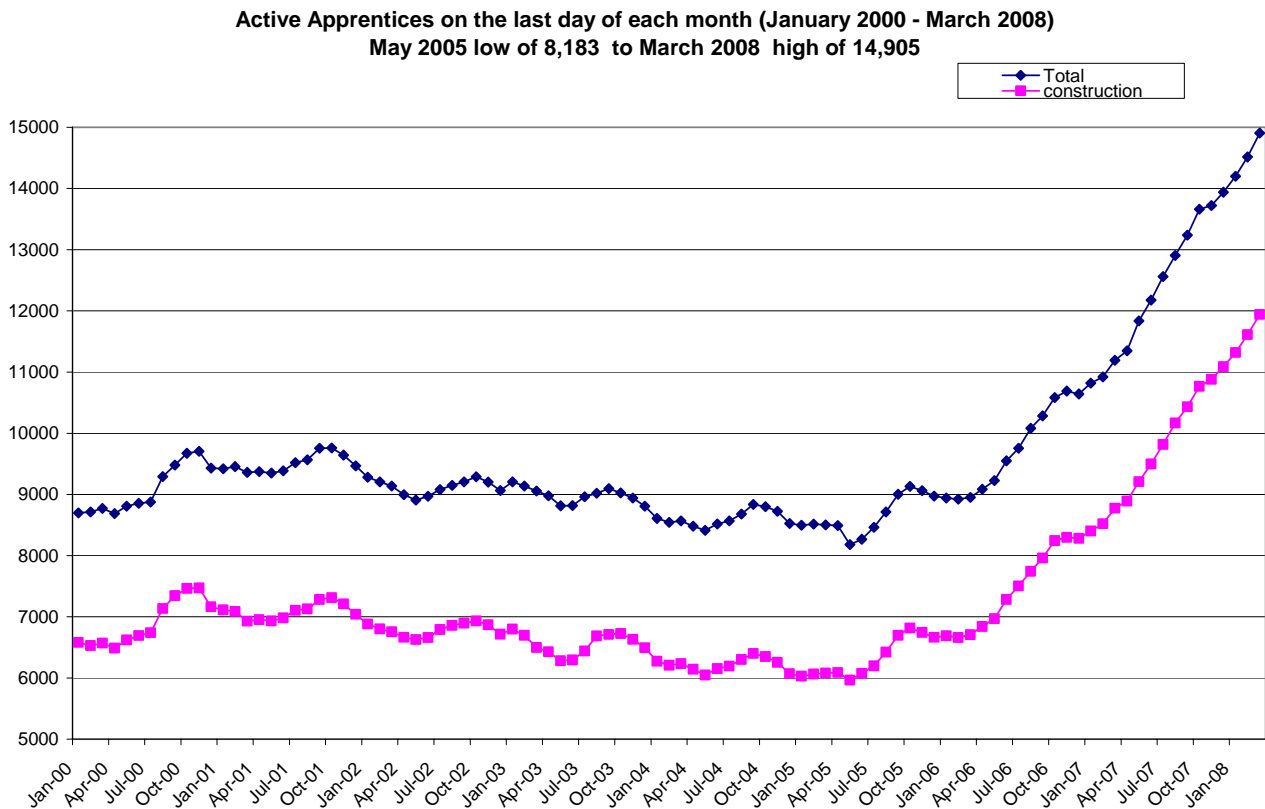
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Seeing Is Believing	April 23, 2008	Bates Technical College, Tacoma, WA
Labor Help Your Neighbor Day	April 26, 2008	Curtis, WA
Crane Day	April 29, 2008	New Market Skills Center, Tumwater, WA
29th Annual Career Fair - WA Women in the Trades - Washington	May 2, 2008	Seattle Center's Fisher Pavillion
16th Annual Women In Trades Career Fair - Oregon	May 3, 2008	NECA/IBEW Local 48 Electrical Training Center, Portland, OR
Running Start for the Trades (RSTT) Symposium	May 8, 2008	Puget Sound Skills Center, Burien, WA
<b>1st Annual Construction Safety Day</b>	<b>May 14, 2008</b>	<b>Puyallup Fairgrounds</b>
Pierce County JATC Graduation	May 16, 2008	Elks Lodge, Tacoma, WA
<b>Building Your Future Student Competition and Job Fair</b>	<b>May 21, 2008</b>	<b>MBA Housing Center</b>
Spokane Construction Career Day 2008	October 1-2, 2008	Spokane County Fair and Expo Center, Spokane, WA
King County Construction Career Day 2008	October 8-9, 2008	Enumclaw Expo Center, Enumclaw, WA
Pathways to Apprenticeship	October 10, 2008	Bates Technical College
<b>Construction Career Day 2008</b>	<b>November, 6, 2008</b>	<b>Western WA Fair Grounds, Puyallup, WA</b>

## Apprentice numbers continue on the rise (Monthly Active Totals):

This chart shows how the number of Active Apprentices (Last day of each Month) has steadily increased over the last few years.

Since the last low point of February 28, 2006 (**8,922**) there has been an **increase of 67.05%** to a total of **14,905** active apprentices as March 31, 2008. This is an increase of **5,983** active apprentices.

The chart also shows the increase in apprentices in occupations represented by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code category 47, which are Construction and Extraction Occupations.



## Program News and Related Articles

### Gov. Gregoire Announces Support for More Apprenticeship Programs

**OLYMPIA** – Governor Chris Gregoire announced her support for a plan to add more apprenticeship programs for aerospace and technology workers in Washington. The governor endorsed the plan in a room packed with hundreds at the International Aerospace Machinists (IAM) District Lodge 751 in south Seattle. Joining Gregoire in the announcement were local and national IAM leaders, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, as well as former Iowa governor Tom Vilsack.

“We must be frugal with this year’s budget, but this investment is about further improving the future of our state’s economy and apprenticeship programs are a critical component in providing a skilled workforce,” said Gregoire. “Today I am proud to announce my support for a plan to invest \$3 million for apprenticeships in aerospace and new technology.” These funds are intended to develop curriculum and purchase equipment for new apprenticeship programs.

“During a recent trip to Spokane I heard from CEOs that one of their greatest challenges was finding skilled workers to help expand their aerospace businesses. That’s why I’m endorsing this apprenticeship program, to train people for those jobs,” said the governor.

“It is great to see Gov. Gregoire make investments in aerospace workers and the industry,” said Tom Wroblewski, Machinists 751 district president. “This will pay long term dividends for our competitive place in the world as we vie for these jobs in the global market.”

The aerospace industry is changing on a daily basis, further emphasizing the need for cutting edge technology to train workers. The apprenticeship program, if passed by the Legislature, will help in building and maintaining a strong workforce for the state’s growing aerospace industry and its suppliers.

House Speaker Frank Chopp and Senate Majority Leader Lisa Brown expressed their support for the plan. "A thriving aerospace industry is vital to Washington's economic future," said Chopp, "and apprenticeships are vital to a thriving aerospace industry. It's a win-win."

"Washington needs to know where the next generation of aerospace workers will come from," said Brown. "Apprenticeships allow students to earn while they learn, and encourages thousands of men and women to cultivate the needed skills that will put them on a solid career path."

The governor has been a strong supporter of apprenticeship programs. The first piece of legislation she signed into law required the use of apprentices on state public works’ projects. The governor was also one of the first governors in the nation to endorse “Helmets to Hardhats” to connect returning military veterans with apprenticeships.

As a result of these efforts, Washington State now has 14,500 men and women enrolled in apprenticeship programs--up from 8,500 in 2005

### **Governor Signs Cosmetology Apprenticeship Legislation**

On March 14, 2008 Governor Gregoire signed into law SHB 2427: An act relating to the cosmetology apprenticeship program. The bill makes permanent a statutory exemption (most recently extended by SHB 2596 in 2006) to allow individuals without a cosmetology license to work while being trained as registered apprentices under the supervision of licensed, journey level professionals in the cosmetology professions. This Bill allows for an alternative, structured and regulated pathway into the cosmetology profession through the apprenticeship program.

The Cosmetology Apprenticeship Committee secured a permanent statutory exemption under the Department of Licensing laws allowing state registered apprentices to work in the cosmetology profession. This makes permanent a pilot program for cosmetology apprenticeships operating for the past two years. Salons throughout the state now have an alternative means to employ and train someone for the industry rather than relying solely on public and private cosmetology school graduates.

Brief summary of the bill:

This bill makes permanent a statutory exemption (a pilot approved in 2004, and most recently extended by SHB 2596 in 2006) to allow individuals without a cosmetology license to work while being trained as registered apprentices under the supervision of licensed, journey level professionals in the cosmetology professions. This Bill allows for an alternative, structured and regulated pathway into the cosmetology profession through the apprenticeship program.

What is the background?

Prior to 2004, a cosmetology apprenticeship program existed in Washington State for entry-level, licensed cosmetologists. The Washington State Cosmetology Apprenticeship Training Committee (WSCATC) program, approved by the Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council (WSATC) in 1995, was intended to provide licensed cosmetologists with advanced on-the-job training in a salon. In 2003, SHB 2202 apprenticeship direct entry pilot program was created to grant a temporary statutory exemption to allow individuals without a cosmetology license to work while being trained as registered apprentices under the supervision of licensed, journey level professionals in the cosmetology profession. This statutory exemption was extended in 2006 by SHB 2596. Past legislation has required the Department of Labor & Industries to help the Cosmetology Apprenticeship Advisory Committee complete a report to the legislature.

### **IAM/Boeing Joint Apprenticeship Committee adds new apprentices**

Source: Gina M. Ames

In January 2008 the program added the first Composite Manufacturing Specialist apprentice. As of March 25 2008, 4 more apprentices have been added to this trade with plans to add more.

## Thurston sets deadline for apprentice plan

Source: THE OLYMPIAN, April 03, 2008

Thurston County commissioners said today they want to decide whether to require that apprentices perform a percentage of labor on the new jail by May 20, the date that construction bids for the \$35 million project will be advertised. Commissioners, meeting with staff, said they wanted to hear about the experiences of other jurisdictions that have apprenticeship programs. Still to be determined is the percentage of labor to be earmarked for apprentices and the size of a contract that would trigger their requirement. Commissioner Bob Macleod said the program will offer skills training for youths and create jobs for low-income and homeless residents. Contractors are working on site preparation for the jail, the Accountability and Restitution Center, at a 27-acre site at the Mottman Industrial Park in Tumwater.

## Construction interest built from ground up

Source: The Columbian, **By ISOLDE RAFTERY, Columbian Staff Writer**, Thursday, April 03, 2008



STEVEN LANE/The Columbian  
Clark County high school students toying with the idea of working in the construction industry on Wednesday tour a construction project on St. Johns Road in Vancouver. The one week, hands-on course extends through Friday and demonstrates to students the different jobs within construction.

The naysayers were tickled pink: Teens showed up every day of their spring break, at 7:30 a.m. no less, to observe the construction industry at work.

Nutter Corporation and the Portland-based Northwest College of Construction ginned up an uncertain experiment: They would invite students for the week, morning until early afternoon, in hopes of wooing prospective workers.

“The Department of Labor has been telling us for five years that there’s going to be a shortage of construction workers,” Nutter Corporation spokeswoman Lisa Schmidt said. The students observed the county’s improvement project on St. Johns Road to extend the two-lane road to four lanes and two bike lanes. Wednesday’s lesson focused on heavy equipment and pipe-laying.

“I thought construction would be pretty boring, but it’s not that boring because of all the different jobs,” Sergei Romanenko, 17, said.

Romanenko, a Battle Ground High School senior, hasn’t decided what career he wants to pursue. One thing he does know is that he doesn’t want to be a truck driver like his father: too boring, he said.

Natalie Mendoza, a senior, is set on carpentry as a career. She divides her time between the Clark County Skills Center and Fort Vancouver High School.

“My family worked in it - my uncles, my dad,” Mendoza said. “I want to build something, and I like working with my hands.”

She, one of three girls out of 25 students in the weeklong program, placed third in carpentry at a local Skills USA competition and is headed to the state competition. She doesn't mind the boy-to-girl ratio.

“I don't care,” she said. “I get along better with guys than girls.”

Their instructors for the week were grizzled, sixty something veterans, Jerry and Gary. Jerry Clark has been working construction for 36 years. Gary Hofsommer, 68, continues to work some, but spends most of his time as an instructor.

“I wanted to give something back to the industry,” Hofsommer said. “Us older folks need to contribute back.”

Isolde Raftery can be reached at 360-735-4546 or [isolde.raftery@columbian.com](mailto:isolde.raftery@columbian.com).

## **Clover Park Technical College Starts ANEW Program**

Source: Construction Connections March 2008

Classes started March 17, 2008 for the first class of Clover Park's newly started Apprenticeship & Nontraditional Employment for Women and Men (ANEW) program in Lakewood, WA. This program joins the successful ANEW program currently offered at South Seattle Community College's Duwamish Industrial Training Center.

The ANEW program has a rich history in Washington and is nationally recognized as one of the most successful preapprenticeship training programs in the country. Since its inception in 1980, the program has trained over 2500 people in basic construction skills and job readiness.

The Construction Readiness Program is a comprehensive, 11-week, full-time training program that includes such topics as:

- Basic hand & power tool operation and safety
- Work-based learning in different trades
- Employment readiness
- Fitness & strength training
- Industrial Safety
- Basic blueprint reading
- Trades Math

Registration prerequisites for the Clover Park training program include:

- 18 years or older
- Valid WA state driver's license and reliable transportation
- TANF or WorkFirst low income eligibility
- Applicant must attend an ANEW orientation and receive an assessment

For more information on Clover Park's ANEW program, call 206-768-6671 or email [Bridgette@anewaop.org](mailto:Bridgette@anewaop.org).

## All eyes on apprenticeship

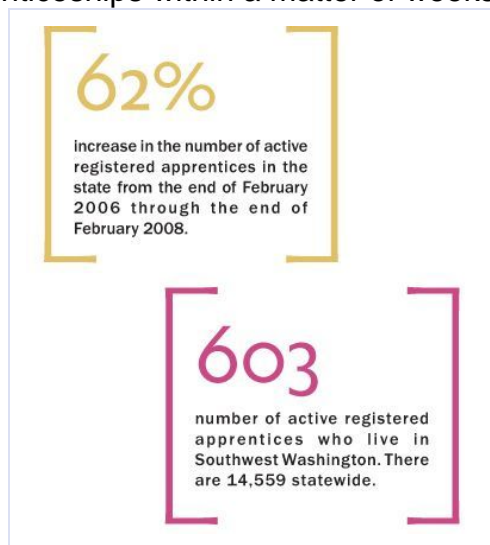
### As fears of a skilled-worker shortage grow, so has the number of apprentices statewide

BY MEGAN PATRICK-VAUGHN of the VBJ, March 7th, 2008, [mpatrick@vbjusa.com](mailto:mpatrick@vbjusa.com)

Equachlor is a 1-year-old industrial chemical manufacturer in Longview. The 65-person company has a dozen workers in its three maintenance divisions, all who came in with varying degrees of experience and educational backgrounds.

To standardize the basic foundation of experience and training within the maintenance department, the company has spent the last three months developing a four-year apprenticeship program for each of the division occupations: industrial maintenance electrician, industrial maintenance mechanic and industrial welder fabricator.

Equachlor is in the final stages of drafting the program, and at least seven workers will begin their apprenticeships within a matter of weeks, said Vice President of Operations



David Ravander.

“The primary reason for us was that we got to develop a program where we say ‘This is what it means to be a journeyman,’ ” he said. “In doing that, it allowed us to bring in some of the people with less experience and give them a way to get up to that journeyman status.”

The company isn’t alone in taking note of apprenticeship programs, which are attracting much attention these days – more so than in the past, said Ed Madden, Southwest Washington apprenticeship consultant for the state Department of Labor and Industries. “The heart and soul and tradition of a registered apprenticeship is that you know best – you know your needs,” he said.

### Gaining speed

In the last two years, there has been a 62 percent increase in the number of registered apprentices statewide, and recently, Gov. Chris Gregoire called further attention to the issue when she announced the intention to invest \$3 million for apprenticeships in aerospace and new technology.

The funds are intended to develop curriculum for such programs and purchase equipment for new apprenticeship programs, with the goal of building a stronger workforce for the state’s aerospace industry and its suppliers.

And increasing apprenticeships is one of the state's top educational goals, said Rep. Deb Wallace, chair of the House Higher Education Committee who also serves as co-chair of the Workforce Development Council for the Pacific Northwest Economic Regional



Council.

They play a vital role in the state's focus on aiding career development and job-skills education, she said, and on top of the \$3 million aerospace commitment, the state pledged \$2.8 million to fund 300 apprenticeships.

"Companies are already having a difficult time hiring skilled workers," Wallace said.

"Apprenticeships are intended to help employers hire skilled workers, and they're a way for people to actually have quality jobs."

Keeping a supply of skilled workers is the key advantage to employing apprentices, said Charley Ebel, contract administrator for Vancouver-based Nutter Corp. Nutter is part of the Oregon-Columbia Laborers Joint Apprenticeship Training Council, of which Ebel is chair of the laborers committee.

"With the baby boom generation getting older, there are more people retiring from the construction field than joining," he said. "It allows us to train unskilled workers to become skilled journeymen so we keep a skilled workforce for the next 15 to 20 years. We train



them so we have a skilled workforce to pull from."

Many apprenticeships to family-wage jobs, Wallace said.

"We've seen so much growth in the service sector, which primarily provides low-income jobs, and anything we can do to help employers stay in business and help the people of Washington is a pretty good deal," she said.

Expanding the use of apprenticeships is also part of the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council's strategic plan, said Project Manager Brandi Stewart-Wood.

"We're trying to help job seekers become more aware of apprenticeships as an option and help sponsors get better referrals to their programs," she said. "They're like any other employers – they want the best-qualified candidates."

To increase awareness, the SWWDC has instituted a series of tours of area apprenticeship training centers for workforce development professionals.

## Developing from within

Moving forward, Ravander of Equachlor said the company sees its burgeoning apprenticeship program as a means of developing and improving its workforce from within.

“We’ll bring people in and allow them to move into different specialized maintenance skills and professions through our company rather than hiring outside,” he said.

Several of the maintenance workers currently hold journeyman certificates, and others have various levels of experience and training, so they will complete the program at different times.

The downside?

“It’s more work for us,” Ravander said. “But we see it as a worthwhile trade-

off.”



Each quarter, the company must submit progress reports for each apprentice and track their hours.

Most of the classroom training will be through Lower Columbia College in Longview, and be supplemented with training from specialized private vendors.

Upon completion of a program apprentices are credentialed to work in their occupation and can go anywhere in the country to do so, Stewart-Wood said. However, apprentice retention has been an issue in the past.

### **Not only for the trades**

Contrary to popular belief, not all apprenticeship programs require a hardhat – a growing number don’t, Madden said.

For public works projects – construction jobs that include public money – building trades employers are legally required to pay their journeyman-status workers a prevailing wage. Apprentices, however, can be paid less, creating an incentive for employers, he said.

But the public sector, including the cities of Vancouver and Ridgefield, Clark County, C-Tran and public schools districts, all have apprenticeship programs.

Educational Service District 112’s Southwest Washington Childcare Consortium has two apprenticeship positions with the possibility of a third. One is an entry-level position for a child care assistant getting credits to teach, and the other is for a teacher to become an administrator.

“What’s really different about our program is that we fit into nontraditional areas of apprenticeship – we’re not the trades and our apprentices are mostly women,” said Jada Rupley, associate superintendent of children, youth and family services.

Setting up a program is regulation and paperwork-heavy, but Rupley said apprenticeships have been a way for the organization to improve the quality of early learning programs.

The apprentices complete their coursework at Clark College.

“It’s the best way I know how to take theory and put it into practice and make those classroom courses relevant,” she said. “I see it as a great training tool that we probably underuse in some sectors.”

## **'THE ORIGINAL FOUR-YEAR DEGREE'**

Registered apprenticeship dates back to the 1930s with the advent of the National Apprenticeship Act, and there are two basic components of all state-registered apprenticeship programs — a set number of paid, on-the-job training hours, and at least 144 clock hours of classroom training or related supplemental instruction per year. To reach nationally recognized journey-level status, apprentices must complete at least 2,000 hours of on-the-job training.

Employers, employee groups or industries sponsor and design, operate and register their own programs based on their industry needs.

Programs are approved by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council and are registered with the Washington Department of Labor and Industries. Some may also be registered with bordering states' bureaus of labor and industries or with the U.S. Department of Labor.

"We provide the sponsor with a structured method they help develop — we provide the skeleton and help fill it in, but you bring it to life," said Ed Madden, Southwest Washington apprenticeship consultant for the state Department of Labor and Industries.

If sponsors choose training classes offered at Washington colleges, the state will split the cost of tuition. Who pays the other half is up to the sponsor, Madden said.

And if apprentices are unpaid during the classroom instruction component, L&I will cover their worker's compensation insurance.

Other than that, apprenticeships are truly industry-sponsored, Madden said.

"I think people are becoming more aware of apprenticeships," said Brandi Stewart-Wood, project manager for the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council. "There has been such a push around college and getting a four-year degree, so apprenticeship doesn't get talked about as much. It is a training tool — some call it the original four-year degree."

## **State falling short on labor needs in trades, high tech**

Source: By Amy Rolph, P-I Reporter, Seattle Post-Intelligence, March 26, 2008, 206-448-8223 or [amyrolph@seattlepi.co](mailto:amyrolph@seattlepi.co)

Educators and labor leaders painted a woeful picture of the obstacles facing Washington's work force Wednesday.

Public education is failing to adequately prepare high school graduates to enter college or vocational training, they said at a roundtable discussion. And others added that the U.S. is educating talented immigrants but failing to keep them in the country, which can motivate a company to outsource work.

The discussion was part of a series of meetings that Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., will attend across the state this week to hear from community leaders about work force needs. Wednesday's meeting at the University of Washington was the third of five similar events and included more than 15 representatives from local businesses, colleges and labor groups.

State labor leaders lamented that young people don't seem interested in traditional trade work such as construction or plumbing -- and many singled out the decline of vocational training in the schools for that apparent apathy.

"We have got to get more young people into our skilled trades," said Rick Bender, president of the Washington State Labor Council.

In her opening remarks, Cantwell beat those labor leaders to the punch, signaling that she was aware of the shortage of trade workers.

"To me, it is imperative that we put the apprentice program on steroids," Cantwell said.

In the past two years, the state has seen a 62 percent increase in registered apprentices. But employers report that an aging work force coupled with a rapidly increasing need for skilled workers will still mean a devastating shortfall in just a decade or two, especially if economists are right that "green initiatives" will create new construction and energy-related work.

Several labor advocates said public schools need to emphasize to students as early as elementary school that the trades are a viable career path. The downsizing of career education (especially in the Seattle school district, one panel member said) has some students thinking it's a university education or nothing, labor leaders complained. And representatives of local powerhouse companies told the senator Wednesday that to remain competitive with overseas firms, the federal government has to help them retain foreign-born talent. Scott Pitasky, general manager of human resources at Microsoft, cited visa reform as his chief priority.

In the computer science field, more than half of the workers are born in other countries, he said. But immigration laws make it difficult for some potential tech workers to stay in the country after their visas expire. Jean Floten, president of Bellevue Community College, urged Cantwell to look at a system the Canadian government is considering, where foreign-born college students would earn a green card upon graduation. "Finding a way to keep them in our country is very important," she said.

Others argued that more resources should be spent educating Washington state residents to take those jobs. And when it comes to the trades, some indicated that immigrant workers could pose a significant threat to the work force by undercutting union rates and taking jobs away from locals.

Dave Johnson, executive secretary of the state's building trades council, said that constructing roads, putting up buildings and similar work can't be outsourced. "But you can in-source the workers," he said. "That's what we want to avoid."

## Good pay, steady work, few takers as young people spurn the trades

Source: By Amy Rolph, P-I Reporter, Seattle Post-Intelligence, March 23, 2008, 206-448-8223 or [amyrolph@seattlepi.co](mailto:amyrolph@seattlepi.co)



Marine carpentry students Frank Worsham, left, and Steve Guiling put the finishing trim on a boat during a class at Seattle Central Community College. (Karen Ducey / P-I)

The average construction worker is well into his 40s, and unless something changes to make the fresh-from-prom set take a sudden interest in framing and drywall, that work force is just going to keep getting older.

In an industry where retirement tends to come early and knowledge is passed down on the job, that trend presents a potentially paralyzing problem -- especially as demand for workers continues to rise.

Crews will be at a loss for skilled workers. Buildings might not go up so quickly. So-called "green initiatives" could falter.

And the young people who passed up those opportunities? Unless they managed to land that desk job at Microsoft, they might have missed out on a chance to make a comfortably upper-middle-class living, some industry experts say.

The shortage isn't confined to carpenters -- it extends to plumbers, stonemasons, electricians, cabinetmakers, welders and a list of other trades that were once sought after. What has some educators and employers puzzled is that many of those professions offer the chance to make upward of \$50,000 right away. But they say a negative perception of the trades coupled with a mounting push for college education has dealt the professions a hard blow in the United States.

Nettie Dokes, manager of Seattle City Light's apprenticeship program, calls apprenticeships "the other four-year degree." (An apprenticeship, often regulated by unions, is a period of on-the-job training that typically lasts one to five years. After that, workers graduate to higher journeyman-level wages.)

Dokes worries how her quickly expanding crews of linemen will be able to retool technologically without new blood coming in.

Years ago, she would hire 20 apprentices every year. Now she has spots for almost 60, and can't guarantee those will be filled.

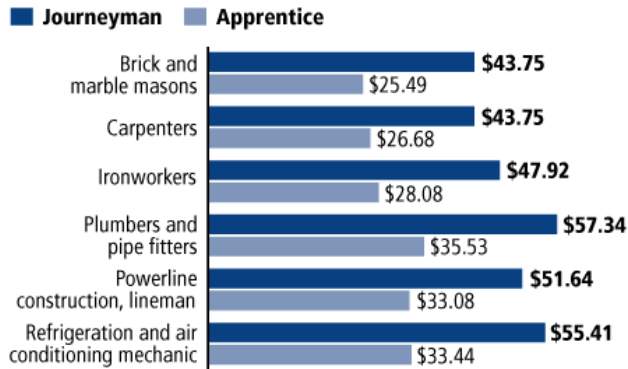
"Historically here, from even a biblical time, a parent sent their child to apprentice with a skilled trade individual," Dokes, said. "Here for us, after World War II, we made a shift where all of the focus and energy was based around a four-year credentialed program."

## HELP WANTED: TRADE WORK

Some educators are puzzled that young people seem to be forgoing careers in the trades and the wages that come with those careers.

### Hourly wages for trade work

Non residential jobs in King County, 2008



NOTE: Apprentice wages shown reflect starting wages. Apprentice wages are adjusted based on hours of experience.

Source: Washington State Department of Labor and Industries

SEATTLE P-I

The state's community and technical colleges have thousands of students in trade programs.

Enrollment in work force training at the technical and community colleges, which includes some apprenticeships, reached nearly 60,000 five years ago, but has slowly fallen since then. However, the Department of Labor and Industries reports that more than 17,000 workers were in apprenticeships at the end of last year, and that they have been steadily growing through the years.

Still, industry officials say the community colleges and apprenticeships aren't keeping up with demand. And those programs often attract older students, who will end up having shorter working lives.

In Washington, apprentices for state projects can start out earning more than \$30 an hour, according to Labor and Industries figures.

"It's not like the college system where you go to college and sit in class -- these folks are out there working in the field," said Halene Sigmund, who oversees apprenticeships for the Bellevue-based Construction Industry Training Council. "They're all making family living wages."

### The 'misfits'

At Seattle Central Community College's wood construction program, boatbuilding instructor Gordon Sanstad tallied the construction industry's woes as he led a tour through the Central District facility. Cabinetmaking, boatbuilding and carpentry -- the program's three emphases -- are fields dominated by "what we call the gray-hair set," he said.

And they're industries where local demand is high.

Even his students are older than you might expect, he said. The average age of those enrolled in the wood construction program is 34.

Sanstad led the way through sawdust-covered workrooms where students labored over projects such as half-scale models of stairs and the naked ribs of what will one day evolve into boats.

Tours, he said, are starting to be a bigger part of his job. At least once a week he leads a group of high school students through the facility, hoping they'll find appealing the prospect of steady work that can't be easily outsourced.

The young students who enroll are often "misfits who can't fit in anywhere else," Sanstad said.

"If they aren't going to the university, what are they going to do?"

Nicole Lundheim paused from working on a half-finished small racing boat to talk about how these days people "don't want to get dirty." The 32-year-old grew up watching her grandfather and father work on houses -- construction is in her blood.

That's not the case with everyone, she said.

"We're in a technological era," Lundheim said. "People aren't exposed to it. I was exposed to it, but I was unique."

Sanstad and other instructors back that theory up. Forty years ago, the program didn't need to have introductory classes for students to learn the basics of construction -- how to operate tools and keep all their fingers at the same time. Now, the course is mandatory.

Frank Worsham, a 52-year-old student, came late to boatbuilding after a career at Boeing -- so he's all too familiar with the aging tendency of the trades.

"I've thought that if I ever did it over, I would do this when I was younger," he said as he bent over a half-finished dinghy. "I don't understand why young people aren't doing these things."

The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates there will be an 18 percent increase in the need for plumbers and pipe fitters from 2004 to 2014. During that same time, demand for carpenters and painters will increase 13 percent, and the need for electricians will go up 14 percent.

Demand for heating, ventilation and air conditioning mechanics and installers will swell 27 percent during that time, according to the bureau's data.

Some economists speculate that "green initiatives" championed by government and corporations will create millions of jobs over the next 10 years, some of which would be technician positions or renovation work.

### **Image problem**

Problems related to aging work forces haven't gone undetected. Late last year, Gov. Chris Gregoire announced "Running Start for the Trades" grants for 14 school districts, hoping to promote pre-apprenticeship training for students.

That was part of the latest push to mobilize young people toward the trades -- a drive that might be working. In the last two years, the state has seen a 62 percent increase in registered apprentices, said Elizabeth Smith, apprenticeship program manager for the state's Department of Labor and Industries.

But the average ages in apprenticeships still tend to border 30 -- evidence of what Smith and others call "the 10-year drift." After graduating high school, young people apparently work elsewhere before finding their way to the trades.

"I don't know why it is -- I just know that we see it, and we're working on changing it as well as we can," Smith said.

Some educators think schools are at least partly to blame for the diminishing interest young people have in the trades. They complain that WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning) scores have taken top priority over elective classes -- music and art

along with the trades -- and students don't get to see their career options in the same way they used to.

"We live in tech-central," said Cal Pygott, who leads Bothell High School's construction program. "Every parent thinks their student needs to go to a four-year school. But not every student needs to, wants to, or has the grades or ability to go to a four-year school." Pygott heads the school's "Construction Academy," which allows high school seniors to complete the first year of construction apprenticeship before graduation. After watching the drop-off in trades-related training years ago, Pygott says he's slowly seeing programs like his re-emerge.

But beyond lack of support from high schools, Pygott said the trades face another problem that can't be remedied by lobbying the Legislature: The industry has an image problem.

Until parents and students stop thinking of construction workers as "some big guy with a beard" who "swears a lot and drinks beer," he said that industry is likely to have a hard time recruiting.

But Pygott thinks parents, students and school districts are missing the big picture: job security.

"We import all or most of our clothing, all or most of our consumer electronics, more and more of our food -- our automobiles are either made overseas or owned by overseas companies," he said.

"But we cannot import our highways. We cannot import our bridges. We cannot import our skyscrapers or our infrastructure."

#### **WHERE TO LEARN ABOUT BUILDING TRADES**

These area schools offer training in building trades:

**Seattle Vocational Institute:** building trades pre-apprentice programs.

**South Seattle Community College:** building trades apprentice for such crafts as ironworkers, electrical workers, painters and bricklayers.

**Seattle Central Community College:** cabinetmaking and fine woodworking; carpentry; marine carpentry and boatbuilding; and wood construction.

**North Seattle Community College:** HVAC

#### **ON THE WEB**

To learn about apprenticeship programs in Washington, check this site provided by Labor and Industries: [goto.seattlepi.com/r1314](http://goto.seattlepi.com/r1314)

For apprenticeship programs at these colleges:

- South Seattle Community College: [dept.seattlecolleges.com/duwamish/art.htm](http://dept.seattlecolleges.com/duwamish/art.htm)
- Renton Technical College: [www.rtc.edu/Programs/Apprenticeships](http://www.rtc.edu/Programs/Apprenticeships)
- Lake Washington Technical College: [lwtc.edu/future/programs/apprenticeships](http://lwtc.edu/future/programs/apprenticeships)