



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT - REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM **The Grass IS Greener on the Other Side**

By

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The New York State Turfgrass Association, on behalf of the green industry, provides educational opportunities, networking, advocacy and policy development, research support, youth outreach and career development, while advocating for environmentally responsible management.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2022 Industry Outlook

- Presently Over **250,000** Technicians Supervisors, Managers, etc.
- Predicts in the next 10 years over **55,000** career opportunities will be created per year
- A much-touted statistic is that nearly **99%** of graduates who earn a certificate, or a degree are successful in securing full time employment right out of an Apprenticeship or degree program—few industries can rival that success rate!

NYSTA's workforce development initiative will offer Registered Apprenticeship for golf courses, sports turf, and turf businesses in New York State. The program will help NYSTA employer partners find and secure talent for specialized skilled positions as there is a significant shortage of industry trained and educated professionals. NYSTA has developed a strategic partnership with **Tyler Bloom Consulting** to create statewide apprenticeship program for the turfgrass industry.

The goal of this project is to provide a career pathway for job seekers throughout New York State for golf courses, sports facilities, athletic fields, lawn/landscape, and other turf-oriented businesses. The outcomes will help create better paying jobs, increase access to continued education, career readiness training, and support recruitment initiatives to underrepresented communities.

Continued funding through our **TESF annual grant** request has and will enable us to translate the program for primarily Spanish speaking individuals, the development of a Pre-Apprenticeship programs offered at New York State high schools that have Agriculture Education and are FFA chapter schools and assist with continued marketing efforts.

Two registered apprenticeship programs have been developed and submitted to the New York State Department of Labor-Workforce Development office for approval and certification.

- Groundskeeper II-Golf Course & Sports Field technicians
- Turf Equipment Technician

These programs will offer a formal on-the-job training program (4,000 hours), plus additional education, and certificates (144 hours) from the following related instruction cooperators over a 2-year period:

- OSHA-10 Certification
- GCSAA Assistant Certificate - Environmental Stewardship
- GCSAA Assistant Certificate - Leadership and Communication
- SFMA Sports Field Turfgrass Science Webinars
- NY State Pesticide Applicator's License
- NYSTA Webinar Series
- 15-college credits from SUNY-Delhi in turfgrass management, soil science, etc. towards an AAS degree.
- Penn Foster Automotive Service Technician Certificate –

Groundskeeper II Apprentices (Golf Course and Sports Field) will receive 4,000 hours of on-the-job training including competencies in the following areas:

- Small engine and diesel engine equipment operation
- Pesticide usage, safety and record keeping
- Golf course and sports field preparations
- Project management skills in drainage, slope, sodding
- Tree management care
- Irrigation philosophy and best management practices
- Horticulture and landscape installation and management
- Soil management
- Pest management



Equipment Technician Apprentices will receive 4,000 hours of on-the-job training including competencies in the following areas:

- Small engine and diesel service
- Computer literacy for record keeping and documentation
- HVAC preventative maintenance service
- Four stroke engine service and repair
- Welding and fabrication
- Mower set up and service



Summary

NYSTA Apprenticeship Program is a State and National Occupational Credential. Completion of the program results in a state and nationally recognized credential which guarantees to employers that:

- Trained individuals are qualified for the job through training and educational programs. Individuals complete a combination of on-the-job training, classroom instruction, and professional development to earn a Certificate of Completion in Apprenticeship, awarded by the NYS and U.S. Department of Labor.
- The certificate is commonly referred to as a journey worker credential. The apprentice is extended the privilege of earning income as a full-time employee while he or she learns a skilled craft.

The NYSTA Apprenticeship Program:

- Connects motivated workers with experts in the turf industry.
- Provides comprehensive training to advance skills and qualifications on a state and national level.
- Builds a trusted workforce of turfgrass professionals.
- The apprentice works with a mentor for 4,000 hours or more where knowledge is acquired by the apprentice.
- Apprenticeships are a partnership between the employer who offers on-the-job training, the apprentice works for the employer with the support of NYSTA.
- Apprenticeship programs have been used by many industries for attracting and training employees for decades.
- There has been a resurgence in the importance of apprenticeship programs.

The Apprentice Program is an investment, remember that growing your staff and the turfgrass management profession is an investment. It will take both time and money. Use some of your recruiting budget or your marketing budget to help. Your employees are your biggest investment. Keep in mind, participating and developing as many of these recruiting activities is essential to your success. Information on the apprenticeship program should be a constant in your recruiting. The continued success of our profession depends on all of us promoting the benefits of turfgrass management and the profession.

What Are the Benefits of Becoming a NYSTA sponsored Apprentice?

1. Hands-on career training provided by an experienced mentor with additional classroom and “on-line” training offered at no charge.
2. An education and the potential to earn college credit paid for by your employer.

3. An opening to a successful long-term career with a competitive salary, and little or no educational debt.
4. A paycheck from day one, guaranteed to increase as you master new skills.
5. A certification you can take anywhere in the United States, opening doors for re-location.

What do Apprentices do?

1. They create and maintain safe and beautiful playing surfaces where people can play, compete, and enjoy.
2. More specifically they study to be turfgrass professionals trained in a variety of skills
3. Not everyone has what it takes to become a turfgrass management apprentice. These apprenticeships are reserved for those who enjoy the outdoors and like working with their hands. They are for those who relish working as part of a team and take pride in seeing a project completed... those who aren't afraid of hard work or rolling up their sleeves to get a job done. They are for men and women who don't want to stay in the same job.

For more information visit the NYSTA website at

<https://www.nysta.org>