



Workforce Development, Inc.

Skilled Construction Craft Laborer Training

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) has launched a Skilled Construction Craft Laborer short-term training. This four-week training is possible because of a grant received from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and is being taught in conjunction with trainers from the Laborers Training Center. There are 12 people enrolled in the class, four women and eight men.

The first two weeks of the training began Monday, May 7, cover Essential Skills, and are being taught by Jim Althoff (WDI YouthBuild Coordinator/Instructor) and Ed Duda (WDI Career Planner). During informational sessions, employers and contractors shared the need for this type of soft skill training. Jim and Ed have a theme of the day that covers key topics such as the importance of a positive attitude, attention to detail, reliability, enthusiasm, and critical thinking. The second week they will work on tools of the trade, following directions, verbal communication, taking initiative, and teamwork. Additionally, there are sessions on math as it relates to construction; as well as time spent creating a cover letter and resume, followed by interviewing skills, and a chance to practice those newly-acquired interviewing skills on one another.

On Monday, May 21, those same students will transition over to the Laborer's Local office. During those two weeks, they will be in the capable hands of experienced union laborer trainers and have a number of different experiences. On Tuesday, students will board a bus at 6:00 am that will take them on a road trip to Lino Lakes, Minnesota, a northern Twin Cities suburb. They will spend the day touring the 44,000 square foot Laborer's Training Center and see apprentices engaged in a number of hands-on activities that include concrete placement, demolition, environmental, hazard material handling, general construction work, landscaping, mason tending, pipe laying, sewer and water, and specialty construction. Students will spend another morning touring different job sites around Rochester and meeting those different contractors. Another afternoon, contractors will interview students for potential employment at the end of the training. Students will also complete an OSHA 30 certification and attain a flagger's card.

One goal of this program is to give persons from barriered populations access to a short-term training in a high-demand career that pays a family-sustaining wage. A second goal is to provide skilled employees to contractors, from both the horizontal and vertical building arenas, who have been having a difficult time finding both the quality and quantity of labor they need in order to complete their projects.

A second, four-week laborers class will be offered again starting in mid-July. If you have someone who may be interested in this training, please have them contact Susan Boehm at susanboehm@workforcedevelopmentinc.org or 507.512.0494.