Message from Chris Haslinger
Director of Training

As many of you are aware, the Training Department has been undergoing several changes and is revising some of its current programs along with the structure of the Training Department itself. The ITF’s Training Newsletter has become and will continue to be one of the many informative tools that members utilize as being part of our ongoing effort to provide the best-trained workforce in the piping industry.

I feel that the Training Newsletter is a vital link in providing everyone with the most up-to-date information as it becomes available. The newsletter will now be published bi-monthly and will be emailed as well as made available on the UA’s websites in a new “flash” version that resembles a page-flipping eBook.

As we move forward, we encourage you to share any information you might have or suggestions of something you would like to see added in the newsletter. Please contact the Training Department so that we may look into it.

mission statement

The mission of the International Training Fund is to equip United Association locals with educational resources for developing the skills of their apprentices and journeypersons. By thus facilitating the training needs of the membership, we maximize their employability and prepare them for changes in the industry. We are committed to making training opportunities available across North America, allowing members to acquire new skills and remain competitive in the industry regardless of geography. In this way, we are determined to meet the needs of the piping industry and enhance employment opportunities for our members, while remaining fiscally responsible to the beneficiaries of the fund.
Prerequisites to Registering for the UA/EPRI Industrial Rigging Certification Examination

By Phillip F. Martin, Administrator of Certification Programs

Several years ago, under the leadership of General President Hite, the United Association in association with the Electrical Power Research Institute (EPRI) established the Industrial Rigging Examination/Certification Program. A major emphasis of the program is the UA’s commitment to continually improve the methods of training and qualifying its members.

It is with this commitment in mind, that members registering to take the UA/EPRI Industrial Rigging Certification Examination must have completed the newly developed 40-hour UA training course on Industrial Rigging Technology. This course will ensure that individuals are trained in the planning and precautions required when lifting materials and equipment; proper and safe rigging of loads; proper applications of slings and rigging hardware; advantages & disadvantages of each piece of rigging gear; uses of rigging hardware; determination/calculations of rigging loads & equipment; proper maintenance of rigging equipment and rigging personal protective equipment.

As an alternative to attending the aforementioned training course, individuals who can provide documented evidence that shows a minimum of five years extensive work experience in heavy industrial rigging and who also successfully pass a 25 question written examination covering industrial rigging will also be considered as meeting the prerequisites for registration.

Only those individuals who have completed either one of the prerequisites as detailed above are eligible to take the UA/EPRI Industrial Rigging Certification Examination. The certification examination consists of a multiple choice written examination and a hands-on performance examination, developed under the strict requirements of the EPRI–Standard Task Evaluation Program. A score of 80% or above must be achieved on the written examination. During the performance examination individuals must plan and execute a critical lift utilizing a complicated piping assembly, perform a load inversion and load transfer. All elements of the hands-on performance examination must be completed satisfactorily to pass.

The implementation of these changes to the UA/EPRI Industrial Rigging Certification Program is a continuation of the United Association’s commitment to assure that the best trained and qualified personnel are available for all future rigging requirements in the construction industry.

The Value of National Guideline Apprenticeship Standards

By Anthony (Tony) Swoope, Consultant

On December 1, 2011 the U. S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration’s Office of Apprenticeship (OA) issued Bulletin 2012-07. The purpose of the Bulletin is to inform the OA staff and the State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA) staff, Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors and other Registered Apprenticeship partners of the criteria and process for approval of National Guidelines for Apprenticeship Standards (National Guideline Standards) and National Standards of Apprenticeship (National Program Standards).

The following are excerpts taken from the Bulletin:

Background:
National Guideline Standards

National Guideline Standards are developed by national committees or organizations, joint or unilateral, and are “Certified” by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship. The OA Administrator, based on consultation with the OA, Division of Standards and National Industry Promotion (DSNIP), signs the documentation necessary to “certify” the National Guideline Standards as substantially conforming to the requirements of Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) parts 29 and 30.

The purpose of National Guideline Standards is to provide policy and guidance to local affiliates of national organizations in developing local standards for approval and registration. When local affiliates develop local standards for registration, even though the local standards may be based upon the organizations’ National Guideline Standards, they must meet all the requirements of and be approved by the Registration Agency in that State.

Minimum Criteria:
National Guideline Standards - An employer, a national committee, or a national organization requesting OA’s certification of National Guideline Standards must submit documentation that meets the following criteria:

- Have a presence in 15 States covering three (3) Regions,
• Have the potential to expand to 25 States, and
• Register a minimum of 300 apprentices.

Why is this Important for UA Apprenticeship Programs?

The International Pipe Trades Joint Training Committee (IPTJTC) developed our National Guideline Standards in partnership with the United Association (UA) and signatory contractor associations such as the National Fire Sprinkle Association, Union-Affiliated Contractors, Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors - National Association, Canadian Contractor Representative and the Mechanical Contractors Association of America. The National Guideline Apprentice- ship Standards were certified on March 31, 2011. These Standards cover 330 UA authorized training centers in 50 states with 284 registered apprenticeship programs and over 40,000 registered apprentices in the United States. The IPTJTC has committed tremendous resources to the development of curriculum, standards and certifications (including 3rd party groups). The IPTJTC work in partnership with government, education, and industry groups (private and non-private) in the development and validation of this material to assist in preparing our apprentices for a successful career in the piping industry. As you can see, we far exceed the minimum criteria for the purposes of having National Guideline Apprenticeship Standards.

As a leader in training for the piping industry which covers the occupations of: Plumber; Pipefitter/Steamfitter; Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Technician and Sprinkler in our Revised National Guidelines Standards comes tremendous responsibilities to our industry and to the public. Our programs incorporate many 3rd party certifications verifying our skillsets. This kind of validation from an outside group assures the public that we can meet industry demands and keep up with new technology and new processes.

Our National Guideline Standards provide policy and guidance to local affiliates in developing local standards for approval and registration. When local affiliates develop local standards for registration, even though the local standards may be based upon the organizations’ National Guideline Standards, they must meet all the requirements of and be approved by the Registration Agency in that State. The local standards approved by the Department of Labor’s OA staff will be reviewing the policy and guidance issues on the National Guideline Standards for local registration. For example, the term of apprenticeship could not be less or more than five years for the occupations registered in the National Standards. The local affiliates have the flexibility to develop the individual work processes to meet their local conditions.

The Future

It is important that we have consistency in the operation of our programs to ensure we keep our national recognition as a leader in the piping industry. The future depends on the training we provide to our industry, as we look at the infrastructure repairs coming in the future and projected needs for skilled workers in our industry. We will, provide this to the public in basic needs such as water and sanitation; meet the requirements of a green environment through local and state agencies; ensure construction project designers and developers that the standards we have will give them the best products at a competitive price and most important we will ensure apprenticeship remains a world class training strategy for our members. Apprenticeship will provide us a skilled and certified workforce for the future. In summary, the National Guideline Standards are a very important tool to ensure all parties in particular labor, management and government that the knowledge and skill sets for the 21st Century will be delivered by the United Association and our signatory contractors through Apprenticeship.
strict industry standards. Specialized means such as radiography (x-ray), ultrasonics, magnetic particle and liquid penetrant inspection are used to evaluate areas that are difficult or impossible to examine using the naked eye. This equipment allows the technicians to detect such things as internal corrosion or evaluate the integrity of a welded structure.

The objectives of this Council are to upgrade the nondestructive testing field through the establishment of training, qualifying procedures and through collective bargaining with the Nondestructive Testing Contractors’ Association (NDTCA). Through collective bargaining, the NDTCA and the Council will mutually establish and stabilize wages, hours and working conditions in the nondestructive testing industry so the work may proceed in an expedient and economic fashion.

With the QCC/USA, the UA and Boilermakers unions hope to organize technicians and trainees in the field of quality control throughout the U.S. These workers ensure the safety and reliability of everything from river dams to airplanes to piping systems. They conduct tests on materials and parts that can weaken over time and they work in diverse fields and industries with a variety of state-of-the-art technologies.

A number of NDTCA contractors became signatory to the QCC/USA Nondestructive Testing Agreement when the council was formed in November 2001. The QCC/USA also received a boost from its Canadian counterpart, as many QCC/USA contractors are active in both Canada and the U.S., or are interested in expanding their work into the U.S. Both unions are now recruiting trained workers in hopes of representing a substantial portion of America’s 70,000 NDT technicians. The new council hopes to be as successful as its Canadian counterpart in establishing and stabilizing wages, hours, and working conditions for NDT workers.

Words of Wisdom for Apprentices

From Phillip Martin, Technical Administrator of Certification Programs

The following was sent in from Local 50 Toledo, Ohio. The author of the text was Brother Bill Monaghan, Retired Training Director for Local 50. Bill wrote this over 30 years ago and it has stood the test of time...

Welcome to the Real World of Apprenticeship

You have been selected to enter the Plumber-Pipefitter Apprenticeship Program in the near future. Because the Joint Apprenticeship Committee has put its faith in your future and because many training dollars will be expended on your behalf, certain levels of performance and personal development will be expected of you. You must always remember that you are the apprentice and therefore must recognize your place in the overall scheme of things. Sometimes you may feel slighted or that you have more knowledge of the subject at hand than the person who is your supervisor. Many times this may be true; however, you are the apprentice and you will probably be treated as an apprentice. There is nothing personal in this kind of treatment—it is just the way it is and has been since the feudal times. Please keep in mind that the person who is now your supervisor paid his/her dues in this very same system. How he/she treats you may be a reflection on the way he/she was treated as an apprentice. After all, apprenticeship is the entry level to a very exciting and financially rewarding career. If you cannot accept and cope with the challenges to come, there is no shame in backing away now before you enter into such a program. Once started in this program—you will be expected to perform or you will be removed from the apprenticeship rolls.

“Tips on How to Cope”

- Always think about what you are doing. Look before you leap. You must understand a task before you can do it well.
- Safety is a must in the construction industry. Do not put yourself or others in jeopardy by an unsafe move.
- Keep in mind that someday you will be the Journeyman (if you survive apprenticeship) and that you may end up the supervisor’s supervisor. Treat others as you want to be treated.
- Be dependable and prompt in work and school. No one wants an employee who cannot make it to work and ON TIME.
- THINK AHEAD; Try to anticipate what the next move is. Have materials and tools ready. You can never be faulted for foresightedness.
- If you see someone who needs a hand—Lend it!! Don’t have tunnel-vision; be aware of your surroundings at all times. Take care of the old timers.
- NEVER just stand around waiting for something to do. Look for things to do even if it is only cleaning up or busy work. “Nothing-to-do” should not be in your vocabulary.
- When in school, you will be scheduled in subjects you may not want to take (or think you do not need). We, not you, will be the judge of that. All you need to do is your very best in whatever is set before you. If your best is not good enough, we will notify you.
- Always remember that you are an important and integral part of a much bigger picture. You may find it hard to believe at times but you are important to your employer, your union, your industry and your country. You are in this for the long run—for you and your family’s future.
How Bad Do They Want It?

Mark Breslin, Breslin Strategies, Inc.

A young man that is dating my daughter is currently studying at the Fire Academy. It is his intent to enter the fire services as a career, and his experience provoked some thoughts I would like to share. He reported to me that in the first semester, the level of difficulty in the course is designed to eliminate more than half the students. In addition to this, starting in 2013, a student who graduates the program, who does not obtain a job within one year of graduation, loses the credit attained by attending and must repeat the entire program. Obviously, this process answers the question for the Fire Departments in California: How Bad DO They Want It?

I am keenly interested in this question relative to apprenticeship. I have training professionals on both sides of the discussion providing me input. Some like me are 100% behind the establishment of rigorous professional guidelines for intake, evaluation and performance. Others relate that if we make it too difficult we may lose many good prospects who will migrate to the open shop community of interest. While I understand these concerns, I am much more concerned with the idea of making a 25 year commitment to someone that I am not sure is fully and totally ready for the challenge of our industry.

Union construction cannot be a filler job. It is not the place of economic last resort. It is not for those who cannot figure out what else to do, or those being pushed off mom and dad’s couch. No, today it is for the rough diamonds. Those who possess a desire and discipline to make something better of themselves. Those who can understand that the polishing of their skills, attitudes and work ethic over a four or five year period is really only the first stop on their route to a lifetime of self development.

After a close examination of programs around the US and Canada, I have spent the last year in conjunction with two PhD experts, in the field of employment assessments, to dial in the attributes associated with success in the union construction industry. It has been, and continues to be, a fascinating analysis. What is very clear is that common elements keep repeating themselves; situational problem solving; capacity to work in a team environment; understanding of and willingness to work very hard; self discipline; resilience; killer visual, spatial or mechanical aptitude, and a lot more. As I work toward the development of a best practices tool, the most interesting of all is the “hunger” or “desire” or “passion” factor.

I was never the smartest in any of my studies. I was the guy who would look for the smartest, or most experienced, guy in any situation and make myself as damn useful as possible to them. Then, simply put, I would outwork everyone else. I think nearly every reader of this article was probably much the same as me. So this is the future for us. It has to be a mix of many attributes, but we cannot compromise by allowing the marginally committed to enter a system built on pride and performance. We cannot be afraid to demand a lot from our apprentices early (or even before indenture) – while at the same time, giving them the encouragement and empowerment that will feed that hunger. To compete in the future, were it up to me, I would push in all my chips, not on just a skilled workforce, but on one that is ambitious and focused and hungry. All I want is the right answer to the question, “How bad do you want it?”

Regional Training Course Catalog Developed for Your Resource in Training

The Training Department under the new direction of Chris Haslinger, Director of Training, developed and launched for the first time, a Regional Training Course Catalog on Monday, February 13th. It is the goal and responsibility of the International Training Fund to provide instructors with training resources to assist local union Business Managers and Training Directors/Coordinators as well as assisting our contractors in preparing their apprentices and journeymen for work in their specific trade of the piping industry. This catalog was created and designed as a resource in scheduling courses offered at various local unions within the five districts, in addition to courses offered at the Great Lakes Regional Training Center and online. The courses are listed by district for easier navigation, but you may register for a course in any district that meets your schedule.

The Regional Training Course Catalog has been mailed to all local unions and training centers this week, but it can also be viewed by going online to uanet.org under UA Info – Training – Regional Training, for up-to-date information.

Under “Quick Links” are various formats of viewing this catalog. Our newest format is the “Flash” version that resembles a page-flipping eBook and is listed for both PC format (Flash) and Mac format (Mobile). In order to view Flash, you must download the Adobe Flash Player. If you do not have the Adobe Flash Player, select the Course
Catalog (Without Flash). Also listed under Regional Training are Web Resources that are available and will help in planning your training needs.

A complete listing of these courses is available through the UA Members Portal at https://uanet.org/members/course_schedule.asp. These courses are catalogued by course name, number, format, date, location, and instructor. Each course name is a link to the description for that course as well as information about the Credential Form, which must be completed by the local union Training Director/Coordinator. To view and complete the form for a specific course, click on the icon at the end of the row. You will receive confirmation of your registration. Do not make any travel plans or other arrangements until you receive this confirmation.

Two dates have recently been added for Course 276/UA276 Methods in Teaching Orbital Tube Welding held at the Great Lakes Regional Training Center. The dates are May 14-16, 2012 and October 15-17, 2012. Go online for additional information regarding these courses.

The Training Department will continue to strive to create new ways to promote classes that are being offered. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Training Department.

Building a Future

New Skill Builders Program Introduces Minorities and Women to Careers in the Construction Trades

Story By Mike Flenniken

Reprinted from the November/December 2011 issue of New Skill Builders

In 2007, Kelvin Houston was making a $13 an hour as a patient transporter at the University of Chicago Medical Center when a church friend told him about New Skill Builders, an initiative designed to encourage minorities and women to enter construction trades in Chicago. Earlier this year, Houston became the first graduate of the program to earn union journeyman status. It wasn’t easy, but Houston has completed a journey from working at a job to having a promising career with limitless possibilities.

Linda Hannah, director of New Skill Builders, is optimistic that Houston will be the first of many.

Begun about 10 years ago by former Mayor Richard M. Daley, Skill Builders was revamped and reintroduced as New Skill Builders in 2005, Hannah said. Two years later, the program received a state grant to expand and open a 12,000-square-foot workshop that it now shares with the nonprofit organization Chicago Women in Trades.

The program helps Chicago residents find employment and succeed in the construction industry through a 13-week skills assessment and skill-building curriculum.

“If you can imagine someone who has an interest in going into the construction trade, but not knowing the process, not having experience, we’re able to get them in, introduce them to the trade, and that’s what we do,” Hannah said. “We don’t teach, we introduce them, and as a result of that they’re able to have a much better understanding of, for example, the difference between pipefitters and plumbers.”

Houston’s journey began when he was fast-tracked through the 13-week curriculum and into a hybrid-welding program. His first step was to take a welding class at the Local 597 training center in Mokena, Ill. Houston worked the night shift at the hospital from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., and then went straight to class from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. After finishing the 16-week class in 11 weeks with perfect attendance, he became a second-year apprentice. He completed the apprenticeship in June and became a journeyman.

Houston also received the Local 597 training center’s Jerry F. Miller “Dedication to the Craft” award at graduation.

“He’s a superstar all across the board,” Hannah said.

Will Best Jr., one of Houston’s instructors at the Pipefitters Training Center in Mokena, called Houston a “really hard worker” who was “dedicated to the pipefitters program.” Best said Houston has a bright future ahead of him, and applauded the program for giving students an opportunity they wouldn’t normally have – or even know about.
“They get to see what’s out there and then they get to see what interests them the most, and then they get training on that,” Best said. “They get training on how to do interviews, something that they probably had never done before, so all around, I think it’s a great program.”

Houston may be the first New Skill Builders graduate to earn journeyman status, but he certainly isn’t the first to complete the program. Hannah said about 300 residents have taken the curriculum, with 55 going on to apprenticeships (and others are on an apprenticeship waiting list). Funding is now being sought to help continue the initiative, she said.

Hannah said while a number of people have gone through the curriculum and decided a career in the construction trades may not be a good fit for them, the important thing was exposing minorities and women to those career possibilities.

“That’s one of the advantages of people coming through an apprenticeship preparation program,” she said, “that it’s better for them to know at that level that this is not a good fit rather than going in, becoming an apprentice and taking a seat that someone else who wants to finish would take.”

Hannah added that historically minorities have had a lack of understanding of the process and an attitude of “There’s no need to apply if they’re not going to let us in.” Programs such as New Skill Builders help people on both sides understand that some of the best and brightest members of society are being left behind, she said.

“If we want to rebuild this country, we want to be inclusive and make sure that the reason people are not in is because they don’t want to,” Hannah said, “not because they don’t know how or they’re not being prepared properly.”

Houston is overjoyed by the bright future that awaits him.

“I’m 26 years old and, honestly, I have a career,” he said. “Now I can go anywhere in the United States. And that’s the most exciting thing about it. I can do anything in the States and this will follow me. I’m a UA-certified pipefitter. I can work in refineries; I am union, a hard-working young man. So I’m happy about that. Very happy.”

Local Union 354 Business Manager Tim Custer writes the following:

“UA Instructors’ Justin Forni and Dave Marland are the ultimate professionals. Justin and Dave taught more than this new welding procedure, they taught the class about market share, craftsmanship, safety and more importantly UA pride.”

After the training seminar was complete on January 12th, there were approximately 50 guests that came to see and learn about the new Tip Tig Welding process. Guests were representatives of power plants, contractors, contractor representatives and Local UA members.

The owners of the plants were extremely excited to see that they would be able to receive quality welds with fewer man-hours; the contractors were encouraged that with this new technology they would be able to more competitive giving them the upper hand in the bidding process. Members, while realizing that there will be man-hours lost utilizing this new weld procedure, were excited that this will bring more market share back to organized labor and the UA.

At the conclusion of the festivities, Justin, Dave and I discussed what could have been done differently to produce a better product. After much deliberation, we came to the conclusion that you cannot improve on perfection. Brother Forni and Brother Marland are assets to the UA which was exemplified during this week.
Chris Haslinger,
Director of Training

Prior to becoming the Director of Training in January, Brother Haslinger was a training specialist, working on apprenticeship training programs throughout the United States and Canada. Projects under his guidance included green energy curriculum development, coordination of sustainable technology programs, energy audits and retrofits, utilizing technology, HVAC evaluations, and labor history. Brother Haslinger also served on various boards and technical committees. Brother Haslinger served his apprenticeship as an HVAC technician with Local 50 in Toledo, Ohio. He was an instructor at the Piping Industry Training Center of Local 50 prior to becoming the assistant training coordinator at the facility before eventually moving on to the UA’s Training Department. He also worked as an instructor at Washtenaw Community College, where he taught environmental technology in HVAC. Brother Haslinger has an Associate’s degree in industrial training, a Bachelor of Arts degree in labor education, and a Master’s degree in business administration. He also recently received his LEED Green Associate certification.

Congratulations Terry Urbanek on Your New Position with the UA

Brother Terry Urbanek has been named International Representative and is assigned to the General Office.

Brother Urbanek served a five-year apprenticeship with Pipefitting and Sprinkler Fitting Local Union 120 in Cleveland, Ohio. Upon becoming a journeyman, Brother Urbanek worked as a foreman, area foreman, and superintendent. In 1980, he became an instructor at Local 120. He gave 16 years of service as his local’s training director. In 1998, Brother Urbanek was elected president of Local 120. Brother Urbanek served on the Ohio State Apprenticeship Council for 16 years, including service as chairman for nine years. In 2006, he joined the UA’s Training Department as a training specialist, and within six months he became the Assistant to the Director of Training for the UA.

Brother Urbanek has served on several local, state and national committees, including the UA Native American Initiative. He also serves as advisor to General President Bill Hite on the U.S. Manufacturing Competitiveness Initiative. He is also a staffer for the U.S. Trade and the President’s Export Councils.

Eric L. Packard,
ITF Administrator

Eric began his career in 1984 as a fire sprinkler fitter apprentice with Road Sprinkler Fitters Local Union 669. In 1996 Eric took on the duties of an instructor for Local Union 669 JATC in the southwest region of Ohio. In 1998 Eric was hired as the Director of apprentices for Local Union 669 JATC in Columbia, Maryland. He graduated in 2003 from the UA Instructor Training Program, as a certified instructor. He graduated in June of 2004 with a BA in Labor Education/Labor Studies from the George Meany Center and also an AAS degree in Industrial Education from Washtenaw Community College in August, 2004. Eric served as a principle member on several NFPA committees. Prior to coming to the UA he served as Secretary to the International Pipe Trades Joint Training Committee. Eric came on board as a Training Specialist with the International Training Fund in October of 2007 and was assigned to the UA Training Department. While serving as Training Specialist, Eric served as the Training Departments fire sprinkler training advisor. He also managed UA University, VIP database, Accelerated Welding database, preformed ITF grant investigations and other duties as assigned. Eric became the International Training Fund’s Administrator in December of 2011 and manages the day to day operations of the fund.

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