



# TRAINING news

UA Education and Training Department

APRIL 2021 | ISSUE 35

## UA GENERAL OFFICERS

*General President*  
Mark McManus  
*General Secretary-Treasurer*  
Patrick H. Kellett  
*Assistant General President*  
Michael A. Pleasant

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING DEPARTMENT

*Director of Education and Training*  
James G. Pavesic

## CANADIAN TRAINING DEPARTMENT

*Director of Training*  
Mike Gordon

## UA SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES

Laura Ceja  
Phillip F. Martin

## ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Raymond W. Boyd

## ITF ADMINISTRATOR

Jocelyn Crowder

## UA TRAINING SPECIALISTS

Richard Benkowski  
Bruce Dantley  
Michael Galfano  
Randall Gandy  
Micheal Hazard  
Kenneth Schneider  
Robert Vilches

## UA CANADA TRAINING SPECIALISTS

Jamie McPherson  
Ray Lemieux

## HEALTH, SAFETY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADMINISTRATOR

Cheryl Ambrose

## ITF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### LABOR TRUSTEES

James G. Pavesic, Chairman  
Kevin Bellew, Local Union 696  
Aaron Butler, Local Union 469  
Gregory Lancette, Local Union 267  
Thomas McCarthy, Local Union 34  
Kurt Meade, Local Union 172

### MANAGEMENT TRUSTEES

Michael R. Cables, (MCAA), Co-Chairman  
Frederic Barall, (NFSA)  
Renee Fiorelli, (MSCA)  
Thomas Gent, (PHCC)  
Frank Norton, (MSCA)  
Mark Rogers, (MCAA)

## Message from James Pavesic Director of Education and Training



First off, I would like to thank everyone for all the hard work they put forth in preparation for our virtual Training Directors/Coordinators Meeting in March. We had 260 attendees sign on to participate. I think it was a great success considering all of the new parameters we had to conform to that go along with holding a virtual meeting. These virtual meetings are never easy. We all miss seeing and interacting with one another, but hopefully, with the vaccines successfully rolling out, we can anticipate getting back to normal soon.

We have a busy year ahead, but I have no doubt we are all up for the tasks at hand. I would like to introduce and welcome Robert Vilches, a long-time

<b>INSIDE this ISSUE</b>	
Diversity and Inclusion in the UA.....	p2
UA's Mobile Training Trailers.....	p3
EPRI Updates/Program Changes.....	p4
One Click Away.....	p5
Beam Me Up to the 2021 Virtual ITP Week.....	p6
A UA-Only Revit® Curriculum.....	p7
May is Mental Health Awareness Month.....	p9
New HVACR Offerings for 2021 ITP.....	p12
EPA 608 Update.....	p12
Construction Technology for the Pipe Trades.....	p13
Alignment with Nate.....	p15
A VRF Plan Comes Together.....	p16
2021 Virtual Instructor Training Program.....	p17

instructor and 19-year member of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 110 in Norfolk, VA, to the department. On March 31, Robert was brought on as a Training Specialist and will oversee the HVACR training initiatives for the UA Education and Training Department and will be taking over Rich Benkowski's duties once he retires later this year. If you need to contact Robert, his email is [rvilches@uanet.org](mailto:rvilches@uanet.org).

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the UA Education and Training Department 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.



Three Park Place • Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
Telephone (410) 269-2000 • Fax (410) 267-0382

This year will be an exciting year, with initiatives that will come out of Assistant Director of Education and Training Ray Boyd's UA Equality and Diversity Working Group (UA EDWG). We are working hard to ensure that our apprentice interview process is fair and representative of the workforce we would like to employ going forward. The Apprentice Selection Committee is going well, with 15 members from across the country. We are confident this Committee will help us pick the very best apprentices for the future. I know the Committee is prepared to work on an Apprentice Interview Manual, which we anticipate will be ready by the end of the year. We will have classes to support this manual through regional training.

As you all know, we made the tough decision to hold the Instructor Training Program (ITP) for this year virtually during the week of August 9-13, 2021. We won't have any classes on Sunday. Each individual will get an invitation to whichever classes they're in after they register. We are confident we can run 90 percent of our classes virtually. To go two years without an ITP would be a disservice to our membership. There will be a cutoff date this year for registration, so don't wait until the last minute to register or to make changes to your schedule. Registration for ITP should be available in early May.

Additionally, the ITF (International Training Fund) Board of Trustees recognizes that due to COVID-19, revenue might be down in local unions. To that end, the Trustees have approved a grant that is designed to assist each local union in having up to four students participate in the 2021 Instructor Training Program (ITP). We will be sending out additional information on this valuable grant soon.

The block party and 5K and Pub Crawl have always been important fundraisers for us. This year will be no different as we prepare to host a Virtual Block Party for you and your families to attend! The proceeds of the Virtual Block Party will go to not only organizations that we have supported in the past such as the Semper Fi Fund, but also to the servers and restaurants in Ann Arbor—through the Michigan Hospitality Workers Relief Fund—adversely affected by COVID-19. More information will be available soon. Let's all participate to support these worthy organizations.

As you cancel your hotel rooms for ITP, if you want to go ahead and book your rooms for 2022, the dates for ITP in 2022 will be August 13-19, with registration on Saturday the 13th, and classes running from the 14th to the 19th, 2022. Unfortunately, this year we will not be running the International Apprentice Contest, but rest assured, we are work-

ing on the 2022 contest, and we are looking forward to new projects and processes.

There will be a Pipe Trades Training and Technology Conference January 31 – February 4, 2022, in Orlando, FL, so go ahead and put that on your calendars. I am also planning on running a one-day Training Directors/Coordinators Meeting on the front end of that conference, so be on the lookout for information regarding that as well.

Again, I want to thank you all for continuing to work hard through the pandemic. I look forward to getting back to normal, and I know you all do too. Please continue to stay safe as we embrace the coming year. ■

---

## Diversity and Inclusion in the United Association

### Raymond Boyd, Assistant Director of Education and Training

Diversity and inclusion at this present time is a burning topic throughout our country. Companies and organizations are starting to take a serious look at how they conduct business, who they conduct business with, and what their organizations and firms look like. The United Association is no different. General President McManus has given us an opportunity to start a conversation about diversity and inclusion at headquarters.

We have the opportunity to take a look at how things are handled in our office—how we treat one another, what opportunities are afforded for growth and advancement, and how we can make a better work environment for everyone.

These are things that we can do in our local unions and training centers to start to have conversations about diversity and inclusion:

- Get **ALL** of your apprentices involved in these conversations, not just women or apprentices of color.
- Ask apprentices about the culture on the jobsite. Communication is the key, and we have to know what goes on with our apprentices, not only in the training centers, but on the jobsites as well. Things that they experience out there will directly impact whether or not they stay. For the purpose of retention, we have to create an environment where people want to stay.

Some UA locals have started mentoring programs in their training centers. These efforts build leadership skills and create a culture that supports diversity and inclusion.

We also have an opportunity at this time to take a serious look at how we are recruiting our future members. Where are we looking? How are we advertising? And, are we making sure that we're making opportunities accessible for all who want them?

We have some terrific organizations that are working throughout the country to educate young girls, women, and minorities from underserved communities on the possibilities of having a great career in the building trades. Tools and Tiaras CEO and Founder Judaline Cassidy is a major example of a UA member giving young girls an opportunity to see what a career in the trades could provide them. Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) is opening up its doors to train women for opportunities in the construction field. These are union members giving of their time to create diversity and inclusion in our organization. And, when we think of Trades Women Build Nations and all of the amazing work it does to create equality in the building trades, it's time that we all follow suit and start getting involved.

We must start thinking outside the box when it comes to diversity and inclusion. That includes efforts such as making sure that applicants being interviewed have the opportunity to be interviewed by someone who looks like them. When you go to recruiting missions think about taking some of your apprentices, females, minorities, and the like. If you do in-person application pickup, get some of your younger members involved so they can have a conversation with those people who are coming in while offering them some true insight on what a career in the trades is like.

We know that not all of our members will be comfortable with change, but we have to make sure that one of the biggest things we are fostering in our unions and training centers is diversity, equality, and inclusion for all. Our number-one priority is to offer the very best training to our apprentices and journeymen so they retain the skills to arrive on the jobsite well prepared, do what they're paid to do, and go home safely—regardless of what they look like, what their gender is, what their political views may be, or who they love.

The United Association is one of the best organizations in the country, but we can be better. Think about having the conversation on diversity and inclusion with your members. In the long run, it will make us a stronger union. ■

## UA's Mobile Training Trailers

**Submitted by Phillip Martin, Administrator of Certification Programs**

Very few organizations, if any, have the capabilities to provide such extensive mobile training as does the United Association. Having this ability gives the UA the opportunity to provide training to our members in the various trade skills anywhere and at any time. Here is a summary of the mobile trailers in the UA's trailer fleet: We have 14 Welding Training and Testing Trailers, five Piping Industry Demonstration Trailers, three Plumbing Service Training Trailers, two Green Sustainable Technology Demonstration Trailers, two HVAC Technician Training Trailers, and one Fire Protection Training Trailer. That makes for a grand total of 27 fully equipped trailers that are made available as the need arises anywhere in North America. As mentioned earlier, you would be hard pressed to name another organization that has invested these kinds of mobile resources for the sole purpose of enhancing the skills and opportunities for employment for the members they represent.

In order to effectively utilize and maintain its fleet of training trailers, the UA has committed to providing the necessary training to local unions on the operation and care of its trailers. What follows is a listing of the current training courses being offered by the UA:

1. Course 2011: Operation of UA Trailers. Those being: Green Sustainable Technology Demonstration Trailers, Plumbing Service Demonstration Trailer, Trades Training Demonstration Trailer, Welding Trades Demonstration Trailer, and the Pipeline Trade Demonstration Trailer.
2. Course 4009: Methods in Teaching Plumbing Service Maintenance, and Repair Plumbing Training.
3. Course 7030: Operation and Set Up of Fire Protection Trailer.

The trailers are provided to local unions upon request, whether for training classes, demonstrations to industry participants, or for career days. The following are the steps local unions need to take to request a trailer:

**Step 1:** Initial requests are made through UANet.org under quick links: Mobile Training Trailers and HVAC Mobile Trainers [https://uanet.org/training\\_trailers.asp](https://uanet.org/training_trailers.asp).

- On the trailer page, in the upper right-hand corner, there is a blue hotlink, "Submit request for trailer(s)," [https://uanet.org/dep\\_training\\_trailers\\_form.asp](https://uanet.org/dep_training_trailers_form.asp).

- On the drop-down menu beside *Trailers*, select the trailer you are requesting.
- Complete all required information and click send.
- The request is received via email.

**Step 2:** An email is sent back to the local that is making the request notifying them that their request was received and to proceed to the next step. The attached form needs to be completed and sent back within five business days.

- Once the detailed form is received, the next step is the approval from Director of Education and Training James Pavesic.
- The local is notified of the approval.

### **Step 3:** Trailer Cost Invoicing

- The ITF will invoice the local for the cost of the trailer being transported to the local union or the address of their event.
- If there is a fee assessed for a trailer going to an event at the local union's request, the fee will be the responsibility of the local union.

Responsibilities of the local union requesting the training trailers.

- Local unions are responsible to complete the inspection report with the driver when the trailer is delivered. The inspection report will be emailed to the training coordinator or the individual requesting the trailer. The inspection report is also posted on the trailer page [https://uanet.org/pdf/cert/trailers/Weld\\_Trailer\\_Inspection\\_Report.pdf](https://uanet.org/pdf/cert/trailers/Weld_Trailer_Inspection_Report.pdf).
- The local union is required to email the form to [carriek@uanet.org](mailto:carriek@uanet.org) and notify the Education and Training Department of any major issues with the trailer.
- The local union is required to make sure the equipment is put back in its original location and cleaned. The inspection report will need to be completed with the driver when it is leaving the training center/location of event.
- Power requirements for the welding training trailers are posted on the training page [https://uanet.org/pdf/dep/train/Trailers/Welding\\_Trailer\\_Electrical\\_Hook\\_Up\\_Procedure.pdf](https://uanet.org/pdf/dep/train/Trailers/Welding_Trailer_Electrical_Hook_Up_Procedure.pdf).

The UA is extremely proud of the level of training these trailers offer and is fully committed to affording the resources and the very latest in training and education to our membership. ■

## EPRI Updates/Program Changes

**Submitted by Michael Galfano, UA Training Specialist**

EPRI conducts research and development relating to the generation, delivery, and use of electricity. EPRI provides a third-party accreditation for UA members and has been affiliated with our organization since 2007. EPRI developed the Standard Task Evaluations (STEs) program. STEs are evaluation instruments used to evaluate personnel regarding their ability to perform a given task with a standardized approach. Standard Task Evaluations include task analysis, objectives, and written and performance/practical evaluations. The UA controls over 65 percent of EPRI Standard Task Evaluations. The UA Industrial Rigging, Instrumentation, and Valve Technician programs utilize the STE program. The UA successfully completed an EPRI audit in 2020, with a renewal extension until 2024. One significant change from the audit was Administrator Evaluations. EPRI Administrators must be evaluated by their training coordinators every two years by conducting a Standard Task Evaluation. I would also encourage all training directors to review the updated UA AP3 procedures on UANet.org under Certifications.

As many of you have heard, the UA plans to move away from NCCCO by the end of 2021. This will be a two-step implementation process. EPRI has developed a new Industrial Rigging and Crane Signaling (XD0313) STE. The UA is also currently developing a stand-alone UA Crane Signal Person Certification, scheduled to be implemented in the fall of 2021.

### **EPRI Industrial Rigging and Crane Signaling (XD0313):**

- Implementation date: March 1, 2021;
- 120 question written exam (37 signal-related questions);
- Performance exam, same as the previous exam;
- Implementation bulletin sent to all training directors on February 25, 2021;
- Implementation bulletin, flow charts, recertification information is located on UANet.org under Certifications/Industrial Rigging; and
- Crane signal PowerPoint® training aids are located on UAOLR under Rigging/PowerPoint Presentations/Advanced Rigging/UA EPRI Crane Signal Version 1.

### **UA Crane Signal Person Certification:**

- Implementation date: Fall of 2021;
- Replacement course for NCCCO;



- 40 question written exam;
- Computer-based, hands-on performance exam that includes match-and-function scenarios;
- Train-the-trainer course will be available for 2021 Virtual ITP; and
- More information will be forthcoming and UANet.org certifications will be updated.

### EPRI General Valve Technician:

- EPRI implemented a new 65 question written exam as of January 1, 2021;
- Updated performance exam is eight hours. Prior practical lab guide exercises will not count as satisfying the performance exam requirements.

### EPRI Advanced Valve Technician:

- EPRI implemented a new 80 question written exam as of April 5, 2021;
- New performance exam objectives will require individuals to perform multiple steps using pressure seal and air-operated valves;
- Implementation bulletin sent to all training directors on April 5, 2021;
- Advanced valve mobile gang box is available to help support training efforts;
- Request information is located on UANet.org under program documentation.

These updated revisions are essential to preserve the credibility and quality of these important certification programs. I would encourage all training directors to look on UANet.org under the Certification tabs to get the latest updates regarding our programs. Please feel free to contact me with any questions and let me know if I can be of any assistance, at [mgalfano@uanet.org](mailto:mgalfano@uanet.org) (708) 910-8411. ■

## One Click Away

### HVAC 911 Offers the UA a Virtual Gateway to New Business

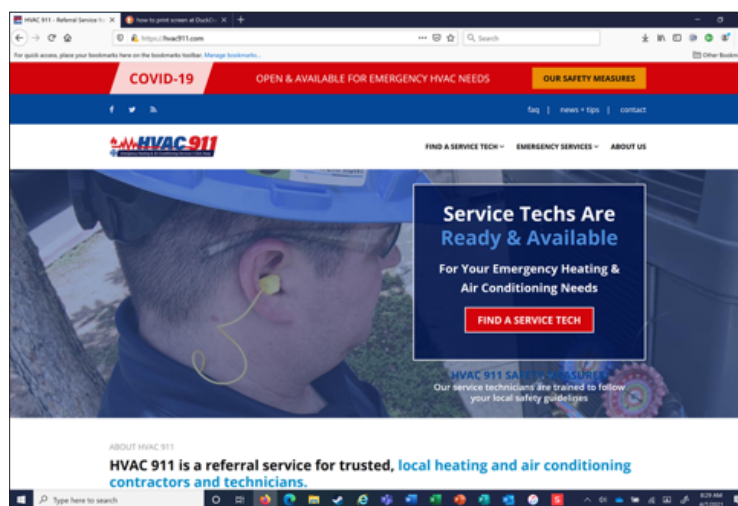
Submitted by Richard Benkowski, UA Training Specialist

Click. A service technician is dispatched to greet a new customer. HVAC911.com is ready to connect UA business

services to digital natives who expect help that is one click away. If data is the new oil, every click provides the opportunity to grow local manhours. HVAC911.com will harvest the data, monetize service teams, and increase UA market share. HVAC911.com—CLICK.

According to UA Director of Plumbing Services Tom Bigley, "Today's competitive residential plumbing and HVAC service marketplace demands an effective and targeted marketing campaign to assist in generating continuous, qualified business opportunities in the residential industry. Plumbers911 has been generating leads for our signatory contractors for over eight years.

"Many locals across the country are looking to start or expand their efforts to enter the residential plumbing and HVAC services markets. Figuring out where to begin can seem like a daunting task. Fortunately, the United Association has had the Plumbers911 platform in place to help locals enter the market and work with their signatory contractors to take back market share. We are having success, and we are looking to expand into the HVAC residential service industry as well."



Clicking on the website offers the following description:

"HVAC 911 is a contractor referral service. The contractors referred by HVAC 911 employ highly skilled, highly trained service techs who can be trusted to get the job done. They are capable of helping you with any of your heating and air conditioning needs, whether it is repairing an existing problem or replacing a unit. HVAC 911 will refer you to a reliable contractor that is here to help.

"The service techs employed by the contractors referred by HVAC 911 have gone through a rigorous training and qualification process. All of our affiliated contractors are fully insured, bonded, and licensed."

Along with communication with your local officers and signatory contractors, one can easily see that appropriate service training is the key to the success of the program. One area that will require more focus will be all heat pump product families. Now is a perfect opportunity to audit your service technician curriculum line up and prepare your technicians to be One Click Away.

UA Director of Plumbing Services Tom Bigley encourages everyone to engage with this very important UA initiative, stating, "Every UA new endeavor requires cooperation, not only within the organizations internal departments, but with our signatory contractors as well. The plumbing and HVAC directors have been directed by the General President to provide resources to our local JATCs to ensure that our membership is properly trained so that our signatory contractors have the means to be competitive." ■

## Beam Me Up to the 2021 Virtual ITP Week

Submitted by Laura Ceja, National Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator

# ITP WEEK 2021

## loading...

Cyberspace: The final frontier. Please join us for the first ever VIRTUAL ITP Week and boldly go where no UA instructor has gone before. We will explore new worlds of teaching and learning. We will learn how to look into the mind of the apprentice and different ways to reach and recruit them. We will learn how to better connect with our apprentices and improve ourselves and our students. This is the United Association's 130-year mission to recruit and develop the best-trained workforce in the universe!

ITP Week 2021 will be one small step for UA instructors, one giant leap for your apprentices!

### Course # 2100 – Adapting Apprenticeship to the 21st Century Student

For many years, Beloit College published the "Student Mindset List" to give professors a glimpse into the mind of the incoming college freshman class. Examples include: This year's class has never had a television without a remote control. Texting has always been a part of their lives. The internet has always been there.

In the course, "Adapting Apprenticeship to the 21st Century Student," Dan Fortini (UA Local 1) and Joe Bonato (UA Local 597) will guide instructors through the labyrinth that is the mind of the newly minted apprentice. They will show you tips and tricks on how to breach the cultural divide. They will also show you how to choose instruction platforms and use other online tools to help you inspire, engage, and connect with the newer-generation apprentice. No matter what your level of tech savvy is, you will walk away from this course able to implement the latest online resources and tech tools.



Dan Fortini is shown teaching his apprenticeship class at the UA Local 1 training center.

### Course # 2101 – Financial Literacy for Apprenticeship

Greg Harle (UA Local 23) lays out ways to teach your apprentices how to manage their money. You will learn best practices on how to teach financial literacy to your students in order to ensure their continued financial success at the UA and in the trades. You will be shown financial monitoring apps and other financial tools that your apprentices can use to manage their money.

Your apprentices cannot afford for YOU to miss this class!

### Course # 2103 – Utilizing ITF and UA Education and Training Department Resources to Expand Your Recruitment Efforts

General President Mark McManus addressed training directors stressing, “We have to build our bullpen.” Some training centers do not have nearly enough apprentices. So, how do you go about finding the best candidates?

Doreen Cannon (UA Local 55) and Tim Coleman (UA Local 669) will share tried-and-true methods for recruiting new apprentices, women, military veterans, and other underrepresented groups. Training directors will learn how to create customized recruitment brochures, videos, and other recruitment materials to use for in person and social media recruiting events.

All you require to enroll in this class is an interest in recruitment and the desire to expand our ranks. Training directors are encouraged to attend, but if there’s an instructor or person at your training center who would be an ideal candidate for recruitment ambassador, do not hesitate to send them to this invaluable class.



New customizable brochures for training centers

### Course # 2104 – Creating Future Leaders and Supporting Leadership Committees

Learn how to identify, support, mentor, and guide future leaders through the process of forming their own local committees. In these committees, apprentices will learn

the necessary skills to become the future leaders of the UA. This course will demonstrate how to help your apprentices establish bylaws, create a not-for-profit organization, and facilitate meetings and motivate participants.

Some of the different types of committees you may help your apprentices establish include tradeswomen committees and diversity committees. These committees will allow your apprentices to hone their leadership skills while promoting UA pride, equity, and solidarity in our membership.

These courses are all designed to help you, the UA instructor, develop our apprentices into successful journeymen. We hope you will take this weeklong journey with us, and may you and your apprentices live long and prosper at the United Association. ■

## A UA-Only Revit® Curriculum

Submitted by Kenneth Schneider, UA Training Specialist  
Written by Carlie Wagner, CADLearning

Whether I was behind a trade booth helping Ken out with popcorn duty or relaxing over a beer or two, I have had the great privilege of meeting many of you over the last few years. During our conversations, we often discussed how technology is rapidly reshaping the work that you do on a daily basis.

Of course, it’s not just plumbers and pipefitters who are experiencing this rapid change through technology—it is a trend we see across the industry as digital integration approaches to construction are improving workflows and outcomes, including information sharing and collaboration. These successes are leading to rapid growth, with BIM (building information modeling) now projected to grow to a nearly \$16 billion industry by 2027<sup>1</sup>. While there are several tools facilitating this change, Revit® accounts for the largest amount of market share, followed by Autodesk® cousin, AutoCAD®<sup>2</sup>.

Due to its inherent work sharing and cloud collaboration tools, Revit provides flexibility and true collaboration across various teams, offering several ways to link models. Teams can collaborate in a variety of ways, either locally or remotely. Functionality and cost metrics integrate fully in design plans, reducing development time and risk.



However, as with any robust program, achieving these benefits requires some good old-fashioned know-how. That's why the UA has partnered with 4D Technologies to build a full plug-and-play curriculum for Revit Core and Revit Piping.

### Built by UA Members for UA Members

To build the 4D Technologies UA Curriculum, we spent months with UA instructors understanding exactly what you need in a curriculum to be successful on your jobs and in your apprenticeships.

We found that the curriculum needed to be fully plug-and-play, with everything any instructor, even one new to Revit, would need to start teaching Revit in their local unions. We understood that we would have to make it impactful to students, with a wide variety of existing familiarity with the software and a number of different learning styles. We needed to make it engaging enough to keep students motivated, and we needed to provide the robust data and analytics instructors need to track students' progress.

The result is a series of 12-module curriculums with video lessons, student and instructor guides, files for hands-on practice, trade-specific and challenge exercises, and a fully gamified experience that was built specifically for this curriculum.

### Putting it to Use in Your Locals

We know that every instructor has their own teaching style, and the curriculum was designed to facilitate them all. Some of the best tips I have found from your fellow UA instructors include:

1. **Flipped classroom.** The flipped classroom reverses the traditional teaching method of an instructor delivering educational content in the classroom and assigning homework outside of class. In a flipped classroom, students watch videos on their own time. Then, during class, interactive, practical exercises are completed with the instructor providing mentorship and guidance.
2. **Tiered instruction.** Your classes are sure to be filled with some students who have worked with Revit before and others who have never touched it. By offering three types of exercises that increase in difficulty, the curriculum ensures that all users are engaged and supported.
3. **Quick demonstrations.** With quick search, instructors can find answers to student questions fast. You can even find the exact part of the video you want to

showcase by using CTRL + F, searching for key terms, and play just that exact part of the video.

4. **Gamify.** Badges, medallions, progress charts, and time markers can all be leveraged to keep students interested and working toward completion.
5. **Test first.** By asking students to take an assessment at the beginning of the session, they can concentrate on just the information they don't already know.

### Tools for Your Local

We have also rolled out a brand-new sign-up experience. Now, users are automatically placed in a portal just for their local and, if you are listed as an instructor in the UA OLR, you will receive tools to monitor your students' progress, including reporting, custom content creation, playlist sharing, and assessment building tools.

And, while we are really excited about the curriculum, it's also important to point out that everybody has access to the full CADLearning library with more than 40 Autodesk products, including AutoCAD®, Navisworks®, BIM 360™, and AutoCAD® MEP. With these libraries and these tools, you can build your own unique curriculum and share it with all the members of your local.

### Special Instructor Offer!

Available through the UA OLR > Technology for the Piping Trades > BIM/VDC > CADLearning tabs, all UA members can download the guides for free and subscribe to CADLearning to receive the 4D Technologies UA Curriculum for just \$70 per year (a \$399 value).

Also, for those of you who are planning on using CADLearning in your classrooms, we have an extra special offer. Contact us at [customersuccess@cadlearning.com](mailto:customersuccess@cadlearning.com), let us know how many students will be purchasing subscriptions, and we will provide you with one year of free CADLearning access to thank you for spreading the word.

You can begin teaching immediately, with little to no experience necessary. Right now, we are granting access to CADLearning for all UA instructors for free.

And, if you need help getting started, we are always here for you! Just shoot us an email anytime. Keep an eye out for a series of webinars soon! ■

<sup>1</sup> [Building Information Modeling Market Size | BIM Market Analysis - 2027 \(alliedmarketresearch.com\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [BIM Software: Which is the Most Popular? - UNIFI \(unifilabs.com\)](#)



## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Submitted by Micheal Hazard, UA Training Specialist

The month of May is a time to raise mental health awareness and to help reduce the stigma associated with it that so many individuals experience. Changing the culture surrounding mental health across the globe is crucial—now, more than ever. Increased stress related to pandemic conditions and its effects on mental health has magnified risk factors leading to suicide and behavioral health issues. This article provides tools and resources that can assist those who want to help but are unsure how. It can also provide a great addition to any existing assistance programs.

Chances are that many reading this article have been touched by suicide. For those people, it is clear that all of the statistics represent a real life, a tragedy, loss, or struggle. Some may have experienced a suicidal crises of their own or know someone personally who has. In either case, the willingness to take an active role in mental health awareness and suicide prevention is a great lesson in courage. It is crucial for every UA member to do their part in promoting a safe culture, raising awareness about the suicide crisis in construction, and normalizing the conversations related to mental health and suicide. According to the Centers for Disease Prevention, the construction industry has the highest risk of suicide as well as the highest number of suicides across all occupational groups. Ultimately, mental health awareness and suicide prevention must be brought to the forefront and incorporated into our industry health and safety training.

### Did You Know?

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 34 and under;
- The suicide rate in construction is 53.2/100,000—that is four times greater than the national average and five times greater than that of all other construction fatalities combined;
- Men in their early 20s through their 50s account for the bulk of suicides;
- Male-dominated industries tend to have more suicides; and
- Suicide is the fourth leading cause of death for ages 45-54.

The idea of increasing awareness of mental health within our organization may seem like a daunting task, but the risk and price of doing nothing is unacceptable. If we are proactive in creating and promoting a forum for dialogue and critical thinking that promotes help-seeking and help-giving behaviors within the workplace regarding mental health issues, we would be well on our way to making an impact to reduce the risk of suicide within our organization.

### Industry Risk Factors, Warning Signs, and Protective Factors <sup>[4]</sup>

According to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, “Risk factors may be thought of as leading to or being associated with suicide,” suggesting that people possessing the risk factor are at greater potential for suicidal behavior.

#### Biopsychosocial Risk Factors

- Mental disorders, mood disorders, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and certain personality disorders
- Alcohol and other substance disorders
- Hopelessness
- Impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies
- History of trauma or abuse
- A major physical illness
- Previous suicide attempts
- Family history of suicide

#### Environmental Risk Factors

- Job or financial loss
- Relational or social loss
- Easy access to lethal means
- Local cluster of suicides that have a contagious influence

#### Social-Cultural Risk Factors

- Lack of social support and sense of isolation
- Stigma associated with help-seeking
- Talking about suicide or death, “I wish I were dead,” or “People would be better off if I’m not around,” or “I just can’t take it anymore. I am done.”
- Has a suicide plan and the means to carry it out (note: Many attempts, especially in youth, are impulsive, so the absence of a suicide plan is not absence of risk).
- Trouble eating or sleeping
- Significant changes in behavior and/or personality
- Loss of interest in activities, work, school, hobbies, or social interactions

### Warning Signs <sup>[5]</sup>

People who are in danger of taking their own lives may try to reach out to others, sometimes directly, and sometimes indirectly. Rarely will at-risk individuals immediately volunteer the information that they are thinking of harming themselves. Instead, it is important to look for some of the following warning signs:

- Deteriorating physical appearance
- Giving away prized possessions and saying goodbye
- Increased drug and/or alcohol use
- Statements about hopelessness, or worthlessness, or feeling like a burden to others
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Obsession with suicidal means (guns, knives, hanging materials)
- Problems in school or work performance
- Chronic pain
- An inability to concentrate or remember things
- Getting one's affairs in order, paying off debt, creating a will, obtaining life insurance

### Protective Factors [4]

Protective factors can reduce the likelihood of suicide, enhance resilience, and may serve to counterbalance risk factors.

- Culture that promotes the importance of safety
- Emphasis on teamwork
- Culture of employee engagement and connectedness, providing a sense of "brotherhood"
- Strong connections to family and community support
- Skills in problem solving, conflict resolution, and nonviolent handling of disputes
- Access to insurance and mental health care
- Informational support systems (buddy system)
- Leadership and supervisory training

### Tool Box Talk #1 Practicing a Conversation for Life: Notice, Ask, Listen, Support, and Follow-up

Starting courageous conversations about mental health isn't easy. We can learn the basic steps, but if we don't put them into our own language, we are likely to forget them. Let's imagine what we might do in this common scenario.

For example, you notice that someone on your team has been going out to the bar a lot after work. She or he is not always getting to work on time and seems pretty distracted.

1. Tell them you have noticed something is wrong. What types of things might you say?

2. Ask them if there are some ways that you can help.
3. Let them know that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and/or wellness coach can help them make a plan to feel better.
4. Offer to do an alcohol-free activity with them outside of work.
5. Check in with them after a few days to see how things are going.
6. Escalate intervention if there is no improvement seen in attitude or behavior. Consult with EAP or other mental health professional.

### Toolbox Talk #2: Suicide Prevention Foreman/Supervisor Presentation:

The safety of our members is crucial to our organization and will continue to be a high priority for the UA. Suicide is a major health and safety issue that we must work together to combat, not only within the workplace, but regarding our personal lives as well. The pain that leads people to take their lives is difficult to imagine. Their deaths leave families and friends grieving, and often have a huge effect on communities. Promoting mental health awareness and suicide prevention is critical to the safety of our members.

Every year, 800,000 people die from suicide globally. This constitutes one person dying every 40 seconds. The number of lives lost each year from suicide is more than the number of deaths from murder and war combined. Therefore, it is imperative that all members of the UA educate themselves and equip our brothers and sisters with the training and resources to reduce the risk of suicide in the future.

Mental health challenges, especially depression and alcohol use, are a major risk factor for suicide. Connectedness is crucial for people who might consider suicide. We know that isolation can increase the risk of suicide and, that having strong human bonds can protect people from it. Reaching out to those who have become disconnected from others and offering them support and friendship can be a life-saving act.



**The Conversation:** What should you say if you are worried someone might be suicidal?

**First:** "I've noticed \_\_\_\_\_ (list specific behaviors), and I am concerned."

**Second:** "Given what you've been going through, it would be understandable if you were thinking about suicide. I am wondering if this is true for you."

**Third:** "Tell me more about your thoughts of suicide and your distress." [LISTEN]

**Fourth:** "Thank you for trusting me. I am on your team. You are not alone. I have some ideas that might help."

**Fifth:** Suggest resources:

- 1-800-273-8255 (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline)
- Employee Assistance Program
- [www.mantherapy.org](http://www.mantherapy.org) (Man Therapy.org)
- Other local mental health resources

**CRISIS TEXT LINE |**

**Text HELLO to 741741**  
Free, 24/7, Confidential

Simple intervention conversations like these can save lives and help protect your coworkers, friends, and family members. You can't fix mental health with duct tape, but you can connect with people to help them find solutions that work.

If you or your members are interested in suicide prevention training, I've personally attended WORKING MINDS: SUICIDE PREVENTION IN THE WORKPLACE train-the-trainer workshop and found it to be very beneficial.



For more information or to locate upcoming train-the-trainer workshops, please visit <https://www.coloradodepressioncenter.org/workingminds/>

### General Resources

- Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention ([www.preventconstructionsuicide.com](http://www.preventconstructionsuicide.com))
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center ([www.SPRC.org](http://www.SPRC.org))
- American Association of Suicidology ([www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org))
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention ([www.AFSP.org](http://www.AFSP.org))
- Center for Workplace Mental Health ([www.workplace-mentalhealth.org](http://www.workplace-mentalhealth.org))
- Man Therapy ([www.mantherapy.org](http://www.mantherapy.org))
- Mental Health America ([www.mentalhealthamerica.net](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net))

- National Alliance on Mental Health ([www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org))
- National Institute of Mental Health ([www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov))
- Screening for Mental Health ([www.mentalhealth-screening.org](http://www.mentalhealth-screening.org))
- Suicide Awareness Voices of Education ([www.SAVE.org](http://www.SAVE.org))

### Training Resources

- QPR ([www.qprinstitute.com](http://www.qprinstitute.com))
- ASIST: Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training ([www.livingworks.net](http://www.livingworks.net))

### Youth, Schools, and College/Universities Resources

- Active Minds ([www.activeminds.org](http://www.activeminds.org))
- The Jed Foundation ([www.jedfoundation.org](http://www.jedfoundation.org))
- The Second Wind Fund ([www.thesecondwindfund.org](http://www.thesecondwindfund.org))
- Sources of Strength ([www.sourcesofstrength.org](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org))
- ULifeline ([www.ulifeline.org](http://www.ulifeline.org))
- Yellow Ribbon Foundation ([www.yellowribbon.org](http://www.yellowribbon.org))

### Resources for Loss Survivors

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: Loss Survivors of Suicide (<https://afsp.org/find-support/live-lost-someone/>)
- Heartbeat: Grief Support Following Suicide ([www.heartbeatsurvivorsaftersuicide.org](http://www.heartbeatsurvivorsaftersuicide.org))

In closing, I want to thank you very much for your commitment to reading this article, it shows that you care. Do not be hard on yourself if you don't know exactly what to say or do when you are confronted with someone in despair. It is important for you to know that discussing your concerns about suicide with an individual does not lead someone to attempt taking his or her own life. In fact, research indicates that the more open, upfront, and honest the communication is in creating a dialog about suicide, the more likely it is that an individual will seek the assistance that he or she needs. Let's all work together to remove the stigma of mental health and make our corner of the world one of help seeking and help giving! ■

<sup>[1]</sup> Lubin, G (2011 October 18) The 19 Jobs Where You Are Most Likely to Kill Yourself.

<sup>[2]</sup> NIOSH (2015). National Occupational Mortality Surveillance (NOMS). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Division of Surveillance, Hazard Evaluation and Field Studies, Surveillance Branch.

<sup>[3]</sup> Milner, A., Spittal, M., Pirkins, J., & Lamontagne, A. Suicide by occupation: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 203(6), 409-416. Doi: 10.1192/bjp.bp.113.128405

<sup>[4]</sup> Suicide Prevention Resource Center

<sup>[5]</sup> American Association of Suicidology



## New HVACR Offerings for 2021 ITP

Submitted by Richard Benkowski, UA Training Specialist

Every year, the ITF works to develop and deploy courses at ITP that create work opportunities for UA members. One of the challenges is to identify emerging technologies or responding to the needs of signatory contractors. This year at ITP new HVACR courses will be offered to satisfy both categories of concern. To follow are brief summaries of new classes designed to capture market share for every UA local.



### Safe Handling of Mildly Flammable Refrigerants

Once again, the HVACR industry finds itself phasing out familiar refrigerants and transitioning to new ones. While these low GWP (global warming potential) refrigerants are more energy efficient and better for the environment, it should be noted that many of them are classified by ASHRAE as A2L, or slightly flammable. This course will prepare the HVACR workforce for the safe handling and transportation of these refrigerants.

### Applied Water

Water is delivered by applied systems to provide nourishment, comfort, and safety. Service technicians in every UA craft build, fill, test, commission, and assess water distributed through potable, hydronic, and fire protection systems. Program outcomes will include the ability to analyze the characteristics of water, evaluate sources of contamination, design water delivery, and basic control measures.

### Data Harvesting

Technology is changing faster than society is. What was once a convenience has become a core element of our classroom and jobsite existence. Digital natives are now at our doorstep waiting to be trained and offered into a technology-driven workforce. HVACR technicians will be offered streams of ones and zeros generated by OEM (original equipment manufacturer) equipment directly to their devices. Two questions will be answered in this course. Is it connected? Is it communicating?

## GPRO Mechanical and GPRO Plumbing

These two courses are not new to our system. Both are being reframed and relaunched to comply with many financial incentives offered by federal, state, and utility decarbonization programs. Heat pump energy performance measurements will be the focus for each of the GPRO classes. All heat pump product families will be included in the discussion. ■

## EPA 608 Update

Submitted by Richard Benkowski, UA Training Specialist, and Carrie King, Certification Manager



Last year was a milestone year for ozone layer protection in the United States. In the 30 years since Congress amended the Clean Air Act (CAA) to add Title VI: Stratospheric Ozone Protection, the EPA has worked with many partners to develop and implement flexible, innovative, and effective

approaches to phase out ozone-depleting substances (ODS) and heal the ozone layer. On January 1, 2020, the United States ended production and import of HCFC-22, a common refrigerant used in many applications including residential air conditioning (AC) systems. However, HCFC-22 may continue to be used to service existing systems for as long as necessary. HCFC-22 that is recovered and reclaimed, along with HCFC-22 produced prior to 2020, will help meet the needs of owners of existing HCFC-22 systems.

As we move forward, modern refrigerants will begin to arrive in new OEM systems. Some of the new refrigerants will be mildly flammable and create new challenges for the service industry. How does this impact the UA service technician? Will more credentials be required to be dispatched to a service truck?

The UA has been a recognized partner of the EPA for many, many years. As the EPA programs evolved, UA locals have followed to sustain our ability to capture the work. From the mid-1990s



to present day the core element has been the EPA Section 608 Technician Certification. Once earned, the credential is good for life. The use of modern refrigerants does not impact or require further testing. Additionally, no matter who the test agency is, the card is adequate for dispatch to any UA signatory contractor. Many UA locals use the UA program, and many others utilize materials and testing from ESCO, a trusted industry partner.

In the past, the UA would convert Section 608 EPA certification cards from other agencies that are approved on the EPA Section 608 certification program's listing. This practice will no longer be available as the next evolution of EPA criteria is deployed. For duplicate EPA card requests, a member should contact their LU training center as opposed to the UA Education and Training Department. The local union training center has the option of printing an online certification card and sending this to the member or placing the request through UANet.org [https://uanet.org/cert\\_data\\_query.asp?fx=NEW](https://uanet.org/cert_data_query.asp?fx=NEW). Currently, we are not mailing certification cards and advising that the local union training centers utilize the online certification card for its members.



Per the EPA, as a certifying agency, we must provide a public website that provides the member's certification, name, city, and state. There will be an option for your members to opt out and not have

their information displayed on this public site. We are in the process of developing this public website and will provide additional information to the training centers once this is ready to be released. ■

## Construction Technology for the Pipe Trades

**Submitted by Kenneth Schneider, UA Training Specialist**

Construction Technology is here to stay. In fact, the pandemic has accelerated the use of construction technology. For those who have adopted technology, you realize this

is an ever-changing market. We continue to see "new and improved" technology that portrays it will solve all of the challenges—from design to installation to facility management. The truth of the matter is, it is up to us—the technology user—to utilize technology in order to solve the problems or issues. In order to do this, we need to explore our options by polling our contractors and looking into the future to find the best path going forward. We have plans to help move all of this forward, and together, we will get there sooner and be better prepared.

One of the plans that will help us implement construction technology is the "new and improved" *Advanced Plan Reading* manual, which will be available at ITP 2021 and beyond. This year's virtual ITP will have the new 2095 Advanced Plan Reading course available. This course will incorporate construction technology by utilizing construction software into your current training and will be adaptable to the field technology your contractors are currently using or looking into for the future. This is a first step forward, but we can and will do more!

We have the training, skills, and network to sort through and implement the construction technology that will help us improve efficiency and make us even more competitive than ever before. Whether it is robotic total station layout classes, jobsite technology, mobile technology, laser scanning, Revit® training, or other construction technology courses, we have the training in place and will continue to add more. What we need is to make sure the training we create is relevant to our contractors needs and relevant to our members. Currently, we have many locals that are traveling this road alone. We believe if we collectively put our efforts together, we will be able to meet and exceed expectations. We have a plan to help the locals that have embraced change, as well as the locals that want to but do not have the resources or the time to go it alone. We believe doing this together is a better plan.

Networking is our best path forward. Together, we can and will create a better and more-connected construction technology network. The plan is to create a Technology Committee in each district. Within each district, there will be a lead for each craft. The leads will be tasked with communicating within their crafts and sharing this communication with their fellow UA-ITF Construction Technology Committee members, as well as with committee members from the other UA districts. We are working together with the MCAA Technology Committee, as well as bringing other industry partners

to the table. Below are the dates for meetings scheduled in 2021. I encourage everyone to get involved, no matter what your experience is when dealing with technology. This will result in a value-add to your programs!

These meetings are in conjunction with the UA-ITF Virtual Design and Construction Tour:

- Technology Meetings on Thursdays beginning at 9:00 a.m. local time
  - o District 1 - Sept. 30 @ LU 537 TC – Boston, MA
  - o District 2 - April 22 @ LU 440 TC – Indianapolis, IN
  - o District 3 - June 17 @ LU 72 TC – Atlanta, GA
  - o District 4 - July 22 @ LU 562 TC – St. Louis, MO
  - o District 5 - Sept. 2 @ LU 467 TC – San Mateo, CA

### Other Networking Opportunities

We are all disappointed that ITP is going virtual this year. We will miss the networking that we enjoy in Ann Arbor, MI, every year. We also know that we will be back in 2022, however, we do have some opportunities to network in 2021.

We have scheduled another VDC Tour, much like the one we did in 2020, utilizing Revit® for UA training. The class is for those who never used Revit or for those who use it daily. It is an opportunity to learn, network, and create something for your training centers' needs. This can be an apprentice project, piping project, training center upgrade, or a training tool to assist in implementing technology in your current classes. The best part about this class is it's your project. We do not have to teach you how to install piping. We just have to show you how to incorporate the tools to do it virtually. Bring your napkin sketches, your current 2D drawings, and your thoughts and ideas with you—we will help you succeed!

The Virtual Design and Construction Tour 2021 dates:

- District 1 - Sept. 28-30 @ LU 537 TC – Boston, MA
- District 2 - April 20-22 @ LU 440 TC – Indianapolis, IN
- District 3 - June 15-17 @ LU 72 TC – Atlanta, GA
- District 4 - July 20-22 @ LU 562 TC – St. Louis, MO
- District 5 - Aug. 31-Sept. 2 @ LU 467 TC – San Mateo, CA

### 3033 Trimble RTS Training

This course will focus on the Trimble® Robotic Total Station. Participants will learn about the setup, layout, and quality assurance/quality control with an emphasis on hands-on applications using the latest equipment and software. Training will include how to verify building control points and establish building control points to other levels of a structure. Participants will learn how to load layout points from a

model into the Total Station, as well as the proper method to load built points back into the model.

Date: May 18-20, 2021

Instructors: Jason Branch & Roland Gutierrez

Location: UA Local 525, Las Vegas, NV

### 3110 DfMA and Modular Construction

In this course, we will explore Design for Manufacture and Assembly (DfMA) workflows and methods as they apply to mechanical and plumbing piping installations. The goal of this training is for our UA members to learn and understand DfMA principles, while also applying them to modular assembly techniques while utilizing the latest piping fabrication tools and technologies. Hands-on interaction with generative design, fabricated modular piping and equipment assemblies, as well as automated tools, will be utilized during the instruction. These tools and assemblies will be accessed by students within the UA Fabrication Freight Container provided on site. In addition, DfMA integration with Virtual Design and Construction (VDC) workflows, including the production of three-dimensional models for modular construction, and the application of Revit®, BIM 360™, Navisworks®, and STRATUS® software tools to modular fabrication will be discussed.

Date: June 29 – July 1, 2021

Instructors: John Russell & Diana Lee

Location: UA Local 601, Milwaukee, WI

### 3225 SysQue for Revit®

*Prerequisite:* Revit® MEP, Revit® Core, or equivalent. This training affords participants an opportunity to learn the basic features and functions of Trimble® SysQue software. The learning objectives will provide participants with the knowledge and skills to improve their use of this application in their workplaces. The objectives are met through a number of learning topics with each focusing on a key area of the lesson plan. The mode of instruction features an instructor-led learning experience that effectively combines demonstrations with hands-on practical exercises to reinforce learning. The learning objectives include: effectively navigate the application; demonstrate the ability to effectively draw with SysQue systems, including creating spools, placing supports, BOM options and effective methods of searching and updating managed content.

Date: Sept 14-16, 2021

Instructors: Tom Jernstrom & SysQue Rep.

Location: UA Local 449, Pittsburgh, PA



### 7025 Revit® for Fire Protection I

**Prerequisite:** Revit® MEP, Revit® Core, or equivalent. This Revit® training will focus on the life safety systems utilized in the fire protection industry using HydraCAD for Revit. The course is designed for the instructor who is ready to bring BIM into their training program and advance today's technology to create digital fire protection systems that are part of the sprinkler fitter training. This virtual installation course will include subjects such as sprinkler location and spacing, hanging and bracing, system components, and an introduction into hydraulic calculations.

Dates: July 13-15, 2021

Instructors: Alan Johnston w/Hydratec & Ryan Rickert (281)

Location: UA Local 268, St. Louis, MO

### 7026 Revit® for Fire Protection II

**Prerequisite:** 7025 Revit® for Fire Protection I. The course is the next step in recreating types of fire protection along with hydraulic calculations as we continue to utilize HydraCAD for Revit and all the tools available from this software. This course will provide more BIM integration into your current training, as well as exposing current clash detection options, and instruction on navigating through Navisworks. The goal of this class is to create a better understanding of the BIM workflow and the challenges faced by the detailers in the collaboration of FPS with the other trades. It will also explore the fabrication and stock listing ability of HydraCAD for Revit.

Dates: September 21-23, 2021

Instructors: Alan Johnston w/Hydratec & Ryan Rickert (281)

Location: UA Local 550, Boston, MA

I look forward to seeing many of you at these trainings. For any additional information, please contact me at [kens@uanet.org](mailto:kens@uanet.org). Be safe! ■

## Alignment with Nate

### An MOU to Support Recruiting and Licensing Submitted by Richard Benkowski, UA Training Specialist

North American Technician Excellence (NATE) is the nation's largest nonprofit certification organization for heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) tech-

nicians. NATE tests represent real-world working knowledge of HVACR systems and validate the professional competency of service and installation technicians. In December of 2007, the UA entered into an articulation agreement with NATE to establish a path for advanced placement local apprentice programs.

To date, NATE has certified nearly 100,000 technicians. It is time to modernize and align our collective resources. In the near future, the UA will launch a "Residential/Lite Commercial Service Technician" apprenticeship to support the growing number of signatory contractors in that market sector. Additionally, many of the non-signatory OEM dealers (Carrier, Trane, JCI, etc.) are looking to UA locals to satisfy the need for advanced skillsets. UA organizers are signing contractors seeking brazing certifications and safety information for mildly flammable refrigerants. Alignment with NATE will support this process and provide mutual benefit for both organizations.

Recently, Director of Education and Training James Pavesic signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NATE that will create best opportunities for increasing manhours in the service sectors. An MOU clearly outlines specific points of an understanding. It names the parties, describes the project on which they are agreeing, defines its scope, and details each party's roles and responsibilities.

Not only does this agreement in principle with NATE continue to allow advanced placement, but it also opens the door to engage NATE resources for continuing journeyman education. Many states require CEUs for compliance with journeyman licensing criteria. To that end, the ITF will add appropriate NATE modules that will satisfy compliance necessities.

"The United Association is a real training leader," said John Lanier, COO of NATE. "Their commitment to building and maintaining a skilled workforce is commendable and aligns well with NATE's mission of recognizing quality technicians. We look forward to supporting the UA as they launch their newest apprenticeship and ensuring that journeymen have advanced continuing education opportunities."

"We are excited to continue to build our partnership with the United Association on technician training and certification," said Gurminder Sidhu, NATE's Senior Director of



Business Operations. "We both recognize that rigorous, industry-supported education, training, and certification programs are the key tools to increasing the number of skilled HVACR installers and technicians."

As the programs are developed, the ITF will release the information in upcoming newsletters. For any questions or concerns, please email [richb@uanet.org](mailto:richb@uanet.org). ■

## A VRF Plan Comes Together!

### Seamless Integration of Resources to Increase Market Share

Submitted by Richard Benkowski, UA Training Specialist

In late October of 2020 at LU 636 in Detroit, MI, a true labor/management effort delivered a VRF certification opportunity for its contractors and service technicians. Business Agent Theresa C. Danko organized a tripartite event by identifying a need of her signatory contractors. As the infrastructure continues to grow throughout the USA, including in the greater Detroit area and surrounding areas, more requests are being made for the installation of VRF (variable refrigerant flow) systems. Learning to install and service VRF systems is now more important than ever for our UA members and signatory contractors to gain, and to increase and protect our market share from the non-union.



What happened next is a great example of the local business office coordinating with the local training office. Once Theresa outlined the goals for the event, she assisted delivery of critical elements with help from Jim Wilson, Director of Training, and HVACR Service Instructor Jason Blouin. To be sure, VRF training is multi-layered and incorporates resources from many entities, which includes shipment of equipment, alignment of Mitsubishi materials, securing a qualified instructor, and most importantly, filling the classroom with UA members.

Theresa describes how LU 636 integrated its industry partners with local training resources. "Putting any class together is a feat of its own, especially during COVID-19," Theresa said. "The hardest thing to coordinate is schedules,

then making sure everything and everyone is ready for when the class starts. The pieces of the training puzzle did not come together until we coordinated the arrival of the VRF skid, resources from industry partners Will Scott and his Mitsubishi colleagues, and we had the availability of UA instructor, Chuck Graham. Jason Blouin and Jim Wilson were a key part to the success of the coordination. Jason made himself available for anything that was thrown his way, which was a huge part in the success of this class. With only 15 spots available in the class, choosing the right contractors to reach out to and having the contractors choose key UA members to attend this training class was tricky because Local 636 has a lot of great HVAC signatory contractors. But in the end, we had a great group of willing and eager members attending the class."

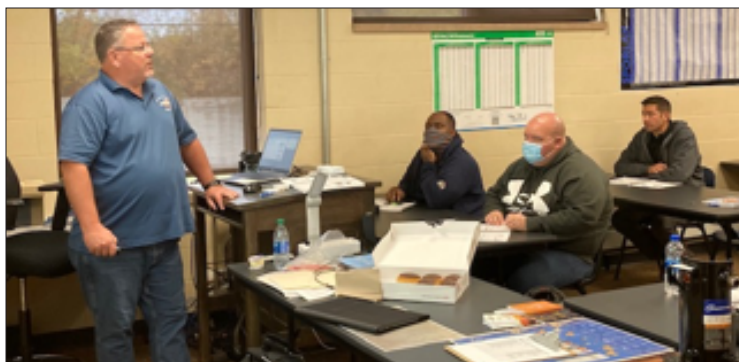


Theresa connected with ITP instructor Chuck Graham to present the course and satisfy the certification criteria with Mitsubishi. Financial support was secured with Andy Peters of VRF Technologies. Another long-time Mitsubishi affiliate, Tim Firestone, attended to co-present with Chuck Graham. Theresa enlisted Carrie King, ITF staff, to manage the movement of the Mitsubishi equipment to LU 636 so that it could be wired and set up for the class.

As October 26th approached, many of the puzzle pieces fell into place. The members who attended received their credentials and were dispatched to install, start, commission, and maintain Mitsubishi variable flow systems.

After three great days of class, a lot of great information was given and absorbed. The 15 Local 636 members are now Mitsubishi VRF trained. When any class with that much information comes to an end, the attendees are excited and nervous at the same time. They were also excited for the opportunity that was given to them, but nervous as they have to do it in "real life." As Local 636 contractors are bidding on more VRF jobs, they feel confident that they have the right tools in place, not only to install, but to service VRF systems as well because of the knowledge that our members received from

instructors Chuck Graham and Tim Firestone. With the help of Mitsubishi and Jason Blouin, Local 636 Training Center is in the process of mirroring the UA VRF training skid. The Local 636 VRF training classes will be available to not only Local 636 members, but to all UA members. Chuck Graham stated he would be willing to come back to Detroit to teach VRF classes. The excitement and energy that came from this class and is continuing is incredible. Every day, we compete against non-union with this Mitsubishi VRF class. It gives our members of the UA one more tool in their tool belt to gain, increase, and maintain our market share.



Well done LU 636 and thank you Theresa Danko for your effort to connect contractors, UA training, and industry partners that will benefit UA members! ■

## 2021 Virtual Instructor Training Program

**Submitted by Cathy Merkel, UA Registrar, Dr. Marilyn Donham, WCC Dean of Skilled Trades Training, and Jocelyn Crowder, ITF Administrator**

The COVID 19 pandemic has impacted nearly all aspects of our lives. Education and training have been particularly hard hit. Moving the 2021 Instructor Training Program (ITP) to a virtual format was a difficult decision. The Instructor Training Program is the crown jewel of the UA Education and Training Department, and we take pride in showcasing the country's finest building trades education.

While many individuals have been vaccinated, and in some areas of the country COVID numbers have dropped, the situation is volatile and changes daily. The decision to move

the program to a virtual platform is disappointing but necessary to ensure our members safety and health.

Together, with Washtenaw Community College, we are working hard to provide the best training possible using a virtual platform. Virtual ITP will include many of our applied and technical courses, including welding courses, rigging, valve, and medical gas, to name a few.

Registration for ITP will run as it has in previous years. There will be a link on UANet.org that will lead training directors/coordinators to Virtual ITP Registration. **Registration will open around the second week in May, with a hard registration cutoff date the first week in July.** Local Union business managers and training directors/coordinators will be notified by UANet email when registration is open.

The Education and Training Department and WCC will be providing preparatory classes in remote learning, Blackboard®, and Zoom. These classes are considered mandatory as Blackboard and Zoom knowledge is required for virtual classroom instruction. Each course will be available on different days and times to accommodate instructor schedules. Students will also be required to take a Blackboard and Zoom course. All courses are provided via Zoom.

If your training center is open and a safe, socially distant learning environment can be provided, **we strongly encourage your instructors to attend virtual ITP from your training center.** Participating from a local union training center will ensure a stable internet connection, as well as assistance from other instructors if needed.

In addition to the daily courses, we will also have the events that bring us together, including a virtual Ann Arbor Block Party and 5K to benefit the Semper Fi Fund, and the servers and restaurants in Ann Arbor through the Michigan Hospitality Industry Employee Relief Fund, as well as the Union Sportsmen's Alliance event. Stay tuned for more information on these unique events.

### ITF Grant

Finally, as mentioned in the notification letter for 2021 Virtual ITP, an ITF grant will be available to every U.S. local education fund. The ITF Board of Trustees have approved to grant \$3,000 per instructor who participates virtually, up to a maximum of four instructors or \$12,000. The grant money is to be used to cover instructor wages, as well as any other costs that may be associated with your instructors attending virtual ITP. Additional information on how to request the grant and its guidelines will be sent by email after registration has opened. ■





Re: UA Local 250- Weld Shop  
Attn: Ben Clayton

3/11/2021

Dear Mr. Clayton:

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank the UA Local 250 team for the support which Universal Plant Services, Industrial Services of CA. received for the Valero Wilmington- Heavy Oils Major Turnaround in 2021. The ability to use the Local 250 Welding Shop for the Welder Performance Qualifications was extremely important to us as a contractor for multiple reasons, some of which I have listed below for reference.

From a Safety perspective, all of the members from Local 250 were familiar with the weld shop and respective HSE/PPE requirements. The Local 250 team also worked diligently to ensure the safety of our Supervision and QA/QC's when at the shop. We feel that this helped to support the ability for over 82% of the welders who were qualified, to complete their certification in less than half of the time allotted. The weld shop was setup perfectly for streamlining the welder performance qualifications with plenty of weld bays and both destructive testing and non-destructive testing was readily available. Scheduling was easy with all of the welders showing up on time for each qualification. Communication was clear and concise, housekeeping was maintained consistently, and the entire process was extremely efficient and well managed.

Additionally, Jonathon and Alejandro were a pleasure to work with and were more than accommodating for us. They supported our company with the utmost professionalism, provided support with everything that was required, supplied recommendations on where we could source our weld coupons, gases, consumables and more. Also, they were willing to work with whatever schedules were required for getting the qualifications done quickly and safely.

We appreciate the support and look forward to working with Local 250 for any future projects in Southern California.

Best Regards,

Ben Howard  
Director of Operations  
Universal Plant Services of California

Universal Plant Services of California • 4460 Highway 225 Deer Park, Texas 77536 • 281-694-6000

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING DEPARTMENT OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Debbie Walburn  
Suzanne Ellis

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (VIP)

Nicole Jeup

#### CERTIFICATION DEPARTMENT

Carrie King, *Office Manager*  
Kristyn Ivey  
Angie Sterling

#### CURRICULUM COORDINATOR

Agatha Wolyn

#### IPTJTC BOOKSTORE

Dianne Lash, *Office Manager*  
Peggy Jarrett  
Darlene Lee  
Jay Meadows  
David Parmenter

#### ITF COMPTROLLER

Matthew Robertson

#### ITF FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Helen Holmboe  
Tammie Parezo  
Kathy Walker  
Tracy Webster

#### INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR

Lauren Friedman

#### PUBLISHING

Noreen Moucheron

#### RECRUITMENT

Kiva Straser

#### REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

Cathy Merkel, *Registrar*  
Tyler Masengale