

Apprenticeship/Job Training

OVERVIEW

The construction industry provides good, well-paying jobs to American workers every year. To qualify for many of these jobs, however, workers need high-quality, flexible training. Such training can lead to a lifetime career opportunity in a lucrative field. ABC believes all American workers, regardless of labor affiliation, should enjoy equal access to critical job training.

ABC's formal apprenticeship programs are registered with the appropriate federal and state government agencies and meet all federal and state requirements, including employer-sponsored classroom instruction and on-the-job training.

ABC is the primary trade association that created the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), located at the University of Florida's School of Architecture. ABC's multi-million dollar investment in training illustrates its commitment to the future of the industry. Additionally, ABC played a key role in developing the "Wheels of Learning" (now referred to as Contren Learning Series), a comprehensive, flexible craft training program for construction. The Contren Learning Series is a complete training curriculum developed by industry and education specialists to meet the construction industry's need for a skilled workforce.

Unfortunately, bureaucratic procedures impede and, in some cases, prevent contractors from offering registered apprenticeship programs. Some states even refuse to register merit shop apprentices or nonunion apprenticeship programs. Such impediments deny merit shop contractors the opportunity to pay competitive wages to apprentices on public works projects and deny apprentices much-needed work opportunities on jobs their tax dollars help fund.

Increased training is vital to the future of the construction industry. ABC will continue to work with Congress and the Obama administration to ensure construction companies' training needs are addressed.

ABC SUPPORTS

- Increased training opportunities, without discrimination based on labor affiliation.
- Continued modernization of the federal apprenticeship law known as the Fitzgerald Act of 1937, which was enacted at a time when labor unions dominated the construction market. As a result, federal and state laws and regulations tend to favor the union style of apprenticeship programs and do not accurately reflect merit shop apprenticeship programs.
- School to Career programs, which offer students a course of study that brings together academics, on-the-job learning and paid work experience—all before high school graduation.

ABC OPPOSES

- Inconsistent state apprenticeship actions that conflict with the goal of expanding apprenticeship opportunities by denying workers the fundamental right to choose to train and work in the merit shop sector of the construction industry.