

U.S. Department of Labor
Apprenticeship Guide for YouthBuild Programs



Prepared for the Employment and Training Administration by
The Department of Labor YouthBuild Technical Assistance Collaborative

January 2011

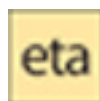


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Introduction

For centuries, apprenticeship training has produced some of the world's greatest skilled craftworkers and artisans. Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci—both products of apprenticeships—designed, built, painted, and sculpted some of the western world's most renowned art, artifacts, and architecture. Today, apprenticeship's uniquely effective approach to skills attainment continues to be an important pathway for young people into skilled work in well-paying, high-demand sectors such as construction, health care, transportation, public safety, and even the arts and architecture.



This guide seeks to increase apprenticeship opportunities for graduates of the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) YouthBuild program by:

- providing background information on DOL's National Registered Apprenticeship System;
- offering guidance in establishing and managing relationships with registered apprenticeship programs; and
- strengthening the links between local YouthBuild programs and DOL's Office of Apprenticeship state and regional offices as well as State Apprenticeship Agencies.

This guide came about as a result of the YouthBuild/Registered Apprenticeship Partnership Pilot (pilot) which was developed by DOL's Office of Apprenticeship and Division of Youth Services to educate DOL YouthBuild grantees about the benefits of registered apprenticeship programs for YouthBuild graduates. The pilot ran for nine months in 2009 and included six DOL YouthBuild grantees in five states and their respective Office of Apprenticeship representatives.

I. Apprenticeship: Definitions, Benefits, and Challenges

What is an Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeship is both a general term referring to an approach to skills training and a specific term related to the DOL's National Registered Apprenticeship System. Key features of apprenticeships include:

- one-on-one instruction and guidance from a master craftsworker;
- experiential, on-the-job learning;
- focused theoretical study to support hands-on training; and
- income growth directly linked to skills proficiency.



For YouthBuild graduates, apprenticeships may be an alternative to a four-year college degree and an opportunity to earn immediate wages.

This guide focuses on the specifics of the Registered Apprenticeship System that is administered by DOL. The Office of Apprenticeship (OA) is the registration authority for the National Registered Apprenticeship System at the federal level. The OA provides leadership, guidance, information, and technical support to employers, labor management organizations, and workers interested in developing apprenticeship programs. The OA also recognizes apprenticeable occupations and standards set by the industry, maintains records on all registered apprenticeship programs and registered apprentices, and provides program administration to the National Registered Apprenticeship System. Through the list of Apprenticeable Occupations and Terms to Complete Apprenticeship Programs (see list of Referenced Resources in the Appendix), OA has identified over 1,000 occupations—many in well-paying, high-demand sectors—that lend themselves to the apprenticeship model.

How is the National Apprenticeship System Structured?

The OA oversees apprenticeships in two ways:

1. direct federal responsibility for apprenticeship activities in 25 states; and
2. through a network of State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAAs) which exist in 25 states and the District of Columbia and have been granted recognition by the Secretary of Labor to serve as the entities for state registration and/or approval of local apprenticeship programs and agreements for federal purposes. The national OA provides technical assistance and oversight to these SAAs as well as the District of Columbia and two territories.

What Does This Structure Mean to My Program?

If you are in a state or territory with an SAA (see list below), you should contact the state or territory office. The contact information for the SAAs listed below can be found at:

<http://www.doleta.gov/oa/stateagencies.cfm>.

STATES WITH STATE-ADMINISTERED APPRENTICESHIP AGENCIES				
Arizona	Kansas	Minnesota	North Carolina	Vermont
Connecticut	Kentucky	Montana	Ohio	Virginia
Delaware	Louisiana	Nevada	Oregon	Virgin Islands
District of Columbia	Maine	New Hampshire	Pennsylvania	Washington
Florida	Maryland	New Mexico	Puerto Rico	Wisconsin
Hawaii	Massachusetts	New York	Rhode Island	

If you are in a state where OA has direct responsibility (see list below), you should contact the federal staff.

Alabama	Idaho	Missouri	South Dakota	Wyoming
Alaska	Illinois	Nebraska	Ohio	
Arkansas	Indiana	New Jersey	Tennessee	
California	Iowa	North Dakota	Texas	
Colorado	Michigan	Oklahoma	Utah	
Georgia	Mississippi	South Carolina	West Virginia	

You can find an interactive map on the OA Community of Practice that will provide contacts for each state. Please visit:

<http://21stcenturyapprenticeship.workforce3one.org/page/contact>.

How Do Apprenticeship Programs Work?

The operator of an apprenticeship program is called a **program sponsor**. To register the apprenticeship program, the sponsor must meet design and administration criteria. These are called **standards**.¹ Apprenticeship programs can have different types of program sponsors:

- a single employer;
- a group of employers in partnership with organized labor (called a Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee or JATC); or
- an industry or employer association.

1. Single Employer Sponsors

When an apprenticeship program is sponsored by a single employer, generally an apprentice must remain with that employer for the term of apprenticeship in order to graduate. An example would be an apprentice employed with an electrical contractor where the apprentice's employment and work experiences are dependent on that single contractor and are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

2. JATC Sponsors

When an apprenticeship program is sponsored jointly by a group of employers and organized labor (a JATC), apprentices can continue their apprenticeships with more than one employer, which can be an advantage. For example, because a group of employers and a trade union all recognize the same apprenticeship standards, even if an apprentice becomes unemployed with one employer or contractor, his/her apprenticeship can continue easily. When that apprentice is employed by another contractor, arranged by the local union, the apprenticeship program continues seamlessly because all the employers participate in the same registered apprenticeship program. Another advantage of a JATC-sponsored apprenticeship program is that when many employers and organized labor collectively pool their resources, the training facilities and conditions of employment are of extremely high quality.

3. Industry or Employer Association Sponsors

Industry or employer associations can also act as apprenticeship training sponsors, allowing apprentices to move among employers within the industry to complete their term of apprenticeship. For example, a group of manufacturing employers may choose to train their workforce through an industry association to which they all belong. This can create more resources for the apprenticeship program as a whole and decrease the financial obligation of any single employer who may choose to sponsor an apprenticeship on its own. This type of apprenticeship program can also allow relevant occupational skills to be developed for important trades; for example, machinists setting up factory equipment.

¹ Equal employment opportunity in apprenticeship is also required; both standards and equal employment opportunity are outlined in 29 CFR Parts 29 and 30, respectively, and are regulated by DOL.

How Do I Find Sponsors in My Area?

DOL OA representatives or SAA representatives (who can be found through the links on page 3) can help connect the supply of qualified apprenticeship candidates from YouthBuild programs to apprenticeship sponsors. YouthBuild programs can play an important role by providing a reliable supply of qualified, interested apprenticeship candidates to apprenticeship sponsors, thus enhancing opportunities for program graduates.

What Are the Benefits of Apprenticeships?

Benefits to Young People

Apprenticeship offers significant opportunities for a young person who is motivated, well-disciplined, willing to make a long-term commitment to a highly structured program, and has strong basic skills.

- Through apprenticeship, the young person begins a well-defined path to advancement and income growth. Apprentices are rewarded with higher wages as mastery of their craft increases.
- Apprenticeships give entry-level workers the chance to immerse themselves in the very work environment for which they are preparing, because they receive on-the-job training in addition to classroom training. This gives their training relevance and authenticity that cannot be experienced with learning that takes place solely in classrooms or skills laboratories.
- Some registered apprenticeships may have direct articulation agreements with post-secondary institutions, such as community colleges, for academic credit. Generally, around 20 college credits are granted for completing an apprenticeship; however, some apprenticeship programs may award associate degrees upon completion or have links to other degree programs.
- Because apprenticeship is also employment, students who need to earn a living while learning can greatly benefit from this approach.

Benefits to the YouthBuild Program

There are many benefits to YouthBuild programs developing formal partnerships with registered apprenticeship programs.

- **Advanced Placement:** An apprenticeship program sponsor may accept a YouthBuild graduate and give him/her credit for time in YouthBuild, if the sponsor believes that needed competencies and prior experience justify such an advanced placement. For example, if the YouthBuild program aligns its training and curriculum with an apprenticeship program, a YouthBuild graduate may be accepted into that program with credit for up to 50% of the apprenticeship, which could mean a higher starting wage. This could mean that a qualified candidate may receive up to two years of credit towards an apprenticeship program that is four years in length.²
- **Direct Entry:** Another potential benefit of a strong formal partnership may be establishing a “direct entry” agreement between a YouthBuild program and a registered apprenticeship program. Direct entry doesn’t mean guaranteed entry. Direct entry allows for apprenticeship candidates to be accepted outside of the regular application period of an apprenticeship program, but it is not a waiver of the eligibility requirements. It can be a means to increase participation of under-represented populations in apprenticeship programs.
- **Partnerships:** YouthBuild programs can benefit greatly from pursuing partnerships with registered apprenticeship programs, even if those partnerships do not initially result in a significant number of graduates entering apprenticeship. For example, setting up an employer advisory committee, which is one of the steps outlined on page 11, is essential for any program seeking to link young people to jobs in growth sectors. Also, aligning curriculum and training with the needs of local unions, employers, and other workforce stakeholders will improve the prospects for all YouthBuild graduates, regardless of their placement. Of course, if the program does succeed in establishing apprenticeship partnerships, some of the program’s best-qualified graduates will gain the significant advantage offered by an apprenticeship and potentially advanced placement in the apprenticeship programs.
- **Credentials:** Apprenticeship partnerships can strengthen the training and credentialing at YouthBuild programs as well. Curricula currently used by YouthBuild programs include the AFL-CIO Building Construction Trades Multi-Craft Core Curriculum, the Home Builders Institute’s (HBI) PACT curriculum, and the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) curriculum.³

² Although apprenticeship regulations allow advanced placement and credit, it is important to remember that the practice of accepting candidates with credit is outlined in the specific standards developed by each local registered apprenticeship program. This can be different for the licensed crafts, such as electricians, and can vary by state or program. That is why relationships with state and regional apprenticeship representatives are important—so you can learn what’s allowable in your area.

³ The Multi-Craft Core Curriculum must be delivered by the local Building Trades Council (BTC) or approved by that council. NCCER is an educational foundation that focuses on the development of construction curricula and teaching materials, while HBI operates its own construction training programs in addition to providing a curriculum called PACT. All offer industry-recognized credentials through their curricula that support entry into apprenticeships and other trade-related placements.

Benefits to Businesses

Businesses need skilled workers to be successful in today's economy, such as those available via registered apprenticeship. During most of the 4,000-year tradition of apprenticeship training, apprenticeship consisted primarily of an agreement between a master craftsworker and the family of the apprentice. Today's national system of registered apprenticeship programs is much more formalized and rigorous. YouthBuild programs can play an important role in this system and offer apprenticeship representatives the opportunity to broker partnerships that meet the workforce demands of many different industries and sectors. In some cases, the relationship between YouthBuild and its local Office of Apprenticeship can provide the impetus for creating new registered apprenticeship programs through YouthBuild sponsoring organizations.

YouthBuild-apprenticeship partnerships can create feeder programs that offer access to a large pool of youth prepared to enter apprenticeships. YouthBuild is a national program that provides educational and skills training preparation for apprenticeship for significant numbers of young people with a focus on construction, the sector with the most registered apprenticeships. YouthBuild also plays an essential role as a pre-employment training program providing substantial soft skills training, counseling, peer support, leadership development, and life skills training in addition to technical skills training and secondary education credentials.

What Are Some of the Challenges Facing YouthBuild Programs Seeking Apprenticeship Partnerships?

There are a number of challenges that YouthBuild programs should be prepared to face as they seek to establish partnerships with registered apprenticeship programs.

- In a number of crafts in the construction field, the demand for workers ebbs and flows with the economy. During weak economic times, there may be little demand for apprentices as journeyworkers themselves look for work.
- It can be difficult to put in place direct entry or advanced placement agreements with registered apprenticeship programs. Some experienced and persistent YouthBuild programs have gained such agreements after years of consistent, steady effort to build credibility and a track record of producing qualified candidates. These programs have been able to establish advanced placement or direct entry agreements for graduates by using a rigorous curriculum, building a history of placing highly qualified graduates with high retention, and by maintaining strong relationships with employers and labor organizations.
- Building relationships with apprenticeship sponsors takes time—sometimes years—but ultimately can result in many opportunities for YouthBuild participants. Be prepared for the commitment of time by staff and, perhaps, even board members that will have to be invested in this process.

II. Characteristics of Effective YouthBuild-Apprenticeship Partnerships

History with effective pre-apprenticeship programs and findings from the pilot show that successful partnerships between YouthBuild and registered apprenticeship have the following elements:

Reliability and Credibility in Preparing Graduates for Apprenticeship

Successful YouthBuild-apprenticeship partnerships are built on accumulated evidence that the YouthBuild program is a reliable partner that can train and screen young people for apprenticeship programs.



In effective partnerships, the YouthBuild program presents itself as a training program providing well-prepared students for the apprenticeship program. Employers are eager to partner with organizations that can reliably prepare and screen highly motivated candidates that are ready to take on the rigors of apprenticeship. Conversely, employers are averse to partnering with training programs that they fear will send them poorly trained candidates. The program should also keep in mind that apprenticeship training is effective for a wide range of occupations beyond construction. Partnerships and preparation with local registered apprenticeship partners could be explored in a variety of sectors. Apprenticeships do not require that the candidate already have hands-on experience in that trade.

Rigorous Industry-Responsive Skills Training and Soft Skills Training

Any effective employment training program provides rigorous skills training in up-to-date, industry-specific technical skills along with basic transferable skills. Successful YouthBuild programs equip students with the soft skills needed to form good work habits and prepare students. Both union and non-union employers sponsoring registered apprenticeship programs look for individuals who have spent time learning soft skills, such as basic employability training related to attitude, behavior, expectations, and motivation.

Engagement with Apprenticeship Representatives to Recruit Employers

YouthBuild programs that engage their regional OA and SAA representatives are able to bring new and often hard-to-reach employers in as advisors. This allows the program to draw on a broader range of relationships that results in more apprenticeship opportunities for graduates. Successful partnerships typically include an active OA or SAA representative playing a facilitative role among the partners.

Long-Term Contact with Employers Through Advisory Committees

Employer advisory committees comprised of apprenticeship representatives, employers, industry experts, labor organizations, and other workforce development stakeholders provide valuable advice and feedback on the technical industry standards and inform the overall curriculum and soft skills training. OA representatives can be instrumental in the creation of these committees, can provide input to the YouthBuild board and director, can become community advocates for YouthBuild training, and can offer critical support for qualified YouthBuild graduates who are interested in entering registered apprenticeship programs. The committees can also help the YouthBuild program build credibility as a high-quality employment training program, whether or not the goal is apprenticeship.

Realistic Expectations

Successful programs include apprenticeship partnerships as part of a wide array of graduate placement strategies since it may be appropriate for only some of the YouthBuild program's most motivated graduates, and it may be available only in limited sectors in particular geographic regions.

Examples of YouthBuild–Apprenticeship Partnerships

- In Massachusetts, YouthBuild Boston and YouthBuild Just-A-Start work closely with their state apprenticeship office, a partnership developed during the pilot project. The State Apprenticeship Director (who is a staff member of the SAA) is helping these programs strengthen existing union relationships toward creating pathways to apprenticeships by working with the apprenticeship representative and the two YouthBuild programs to make connections to the construction field. They have created a Memorandum of Understanding with a major construction company in the area to have that company mentor YouthBuild students and advise the YouthBuild programs on their curricula.
- YouthBuild Providence in Rhode Island has union representatives affiliated with the JATCs present to its students information about registered apprenticeship so students have the tools to decide if apprenticeship is right for them. The program also asks union representatives to serve on its advisory council. Through its partnership with Building Futures, which was created by YouthBuild Providence, YouthBuild graduates have access to a direct entry agreement with 17 JATC apprenticeship programs.
- Portland YouthBuilders in Oregon has a direct entry agreement with the Carpenters and Laborers apprenticeship program. The YouthBuild program recommends students who have achieved the highest level of performance in their construction program.
- In Georgia, the DOL OA State Director is working to create a new registered apprenticeship program with Metro Atlanta YouthBuild's sponsoring organization, Cobb Housing, Inc. This effort, begun during the pilot, is intended to create a bridge from YouthBuild into the apprenticeship program.

While the number entering registered apprenticeships is small relative to the overall number of YouthBuild participants, this number is steadily increasing. While they may take a long time to develop, once established, these partnerships with registered apprenticeships reap solid results that greatly benefit YouthBuild graduates.

III. Getting Started: Establishing YouthBuild-Apprenticeship Partnerships

These suggested steps toward establishing a YouthBuild-apprenticeship partnership are based on learnings from the pilot.

Call or Visit Your OA Regional or State Representative or Your State Apprenticeship Agency Representative

You can use the links on page 3 of this guide to find your state contacts. Establishing a relationship with local, state, and federal apprenticeship representative(s) is important to a program's ability to capitalize on the partnerships and associations that these offices have with sponsors and registered apprenticeship programs.



Arrange a Program Tour for Your OA or SAA Representative

Inviting your local apprenticeship office representative to observe a YouthBuild program in action is a good way to give them first-hand knowledge about the value of YouthBuild to local registered apprenticeship programs. Such first-hand knowledge helps the OA or SAA representative guide YouthBuild programs by engaging particular employers and representatives of registered apprenticeship programs in the area.

Orient the YouthBuild Staff to the Apprenticeship System

It is essential that the entire YouthBuild staff understand the local apprenticeship system. Your apprenticeship representative can help with this process and orientation. OA and SAA representatives bring a wealth of information about the national system, along with knowledge about local apprenticeship opportunities.

Learn About the Jobs in Your Area

Before cultivating apprenticeship partnerships, it is important to carefully assess economic conditions that are affecting your community to ensure that YouthBuild is responding to market needs and trends. Determine what sectors are adding or losing jobs. Work with your OA or SAA representative or the workforce system to inventory all existing apprenticeship programs, employment training programs, and community college programs to identify where there might be gaps. The foundation for success for YouthBuild programs rests in being prepared to match employer and market needs with student interests and abilities.

Assess the YouthBuild Program’s Curriculum, Credentials, and Graduates

One of YouthBuild’s most effective selling points is the strength and relevancy of the program’s curriculum and credentials. From the employer’s perspective, YouthBuild can offer training that the employers themselves cannot provide and this is what can make a partnership appealing. YouthBuild’s first task in any partnership is to sell apprenticeship programs and employers on the strength of the program through producing exceptional graduates and high-quality apprenticeship applicants. YouthBuild’s skills training should culminate in an industry-recognized credential (e.g., NCCER or HBI or completion of the Building Trades Multi-Craft Core Curriculum). Also, completion of an educational credential (GED or diploma) is essential. Credentials related to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training, first aid, driving, specific technology, and basic employment readiness are also important. In the construction field, in addition to a driver’s license, reliable transportation is important.

Build a Relationship with the Local Building Trades Council (BTC)

The building trades operate through local networks that require local relationships between the YouthBuild program and the BTC. Bring the Executive Director of the BTC to visit the YouthBuild program, negotiate a linkage with its regular apprenticeship programs, and utilize the Building Trades Multi-Craft Core Curriculum, if possible.

Establish an Employer Advisory Committee

Employer advisory committees provide a structure for employers to offer their industry expertise and give input into the curriculum that YouthBuild is using to increase soft skills, basic skills, and entry-level technical skills. OA and SAA representatives can assist the YouthBuild program in developing strategies to reach out to potential advisory committee members and can provide an orientation to the committee and to YouthBuild staff on registered apprenticeships.

Be Prepared to Invest in These Steps Over Time

The process of creating a strong training program, connecting with OA and SAA representatives, establishing an employer advisory committee, and building a relationship with your local registered apprenticeship network will help create a path toward registered apprenticeship. Organizations that are successful in this venture have made the necessary investment in relationship building and have addressed obstacles and challenges along the way. It is a process that inevitably takes more time than anyone anticipates at the beginning but can eventually lead programs to establish not just better connections with apprenticeship programs, but a broader and stronger set of placement opportunities in lifelong career paths for YouthBuild graduates.

Conclusion

Labor market trends and employment statistics indicate that greater levels of preparation are required for today's young people to be able to successfully access opportunities that pay living wages and can withstand the pressures and labor market changes inherent in our global economy. Registered apprenticeship programs should be a part of the portfolio of opportunities available to YouthBuild students. We hope this guide will help YouthBuild programs take the first steps in building effective platforms and connections to registered apprenticeship as an important pathway to learning and work opportunities for YouthBuild graduates.

Acknowledgements

This guide was informed by the experiences of DOL's Office of Disability Employment Policy as shared through its tool kit entitled *Youth with Disabilities Entering the Workplace through Apprenticeship* and the lessons learned from the DOL YouthBuild/Registered Apprenticeship Partnership Pilot.

Appendix

Resources Referenced in the Text

Alphabetical List of Apprenticeable Occupations and Terms to Complete Apprenticeship Programs:

http://ybhandbooks.org/files/tools/List_Apprenticeable_Occupations.pdf

Listing of Additional Resources

Youth with Disabilities Entering the Workplace through Apprenticeship:

www.dol.gov/odep/categories/youth/apprenticeship.htm

Career Begins with Assessment:

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/career-planning-begins-with-assessment>

The U.S. Department of Labor maintains a Web site for apprenticeship at:

www.doleta.gov/OA

Information on state apprenticeship agencies can be accessed through the DOL site or through the National Association of State and Territorial Apprenticeship Directors' Web site at:

www.nastad.us

CareerOneStop:

http://www.acinet.org/certifications_new/cert_search_occupation.aspx

CareerOneStop – Certificates available by occupation:

http://www.acinet.org/acinet/certifications_new/cert_occ_menu.aspx

C-Tech:

<http://www.c-techtraining.com>

Department of Labor:

<http://www.dol.gov>

Department of Labor - Office of Disability Employment Policy Home Page:

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/>

Department of Labor - Women's Bureau Home Page:

<http://www.dol.gov/wb/>

Department of Labor - Employment and Training Administration Home Page:
<http://www.doleta.gov>

Employment Readiness Scale:
<http://employmentreadiness.com>

Jobs for the Future:
<http://www.jff.org/>

National Center for Construction Education and Research:
<http://www.nccer.org>

National Work Readiness Credential:
<http://www.workreadiness.com>

Public/Private Ventures:
<http://www.ppv.org>

Workforce3One:
<http://www.workforce3one.org>