

The Kansas City and Springfield, Missouri Apprentice Ready Program

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

FOR ALL MISSOURIANS



: MISSOURI :
WORKS INITIATIVE

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BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILDING BETTER LIVES

The Missouri Works Initiative was founded on the belief that all Missourians deserve the opportunity to learn skills that will lead to gainful employment, self-sufficiency, dignity, and respect. Many underserved members of our communities face obstacles to family-supporting employment.

Sponsored and supported by the Missouri AFL-CIO, the Missouri Works Initiative seeks to eliminate these barriers by connecting Missourians to the resources they need to build life-sustaining trade careers through our Apprentice Ready programs' network with organized labor, contractors, and construction consumers.

First established in St. Louis and now expanded to Kansas City and Springfield, Missouri Apprentice Ready introduces, trains, and connects participants to careers in the building trades - providing a foundation upon which they can create a successful and rewarding life for themselves and their families. This 5-week apprentice ready construction program creates an industry-recognized point of entry into the trades while creating an equitable and diversified workforce throughout the state.

“WHEN WE WORK TOGETHER, WE CAN IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES FACED BY MISSOURI’S WORKING FAMILIES TO CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE THAT PROVIDES A VARIETY OF ENTRY POINTS FOR LIFE-SUSTAINING CAREERS.”

Megan Price,
Executive Director

BUILDING CAREER PATHWAYS

The state's workforce needs are underscored by a greater need for future skilled tradespeople of all backgrounds. While many Missourians have historically lacked the traditional foundation for a successful launch into life-sustaining careers, the Missouri Works Initiative is expanding opportunities to increase participation among groups traditionally underrepresented in the construction industry.

The Missouri Apprentice Ready Program creates a pathway for underserved and underrepresented individuals to actualize financial independence via accessible training and placement into the construction trades. This 5-week, hands-on experience introduces participants to the trades and hiring opportunities with local unions who offer paid apprenticeships, with benefits, upon graduation. Additionally, partnerships with support service organizations provide connections to resources that will help with housing, transportation, and food insecurity – making it possible for students to stay with the program through completion.

In just over a month, men and women can go from unemployment or underemployment to full time employment as apprentices, earning a liveable wage with benefits as they aspire to journey-level status. As apprentices in the trade of their choice, these new workers provide vital resources to the public, increase economic growth, and enjoy a better overall quality of life.

OUR MODEL:



CLASSROOM TRAINING



HANDS-ON LEARNING



TRADE PLACEMENT ADVISING





STATISTICS

WORKFORCE NEED:

According to the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center, construction jobs are expected to grow by 9% over the next ten years, with some specific trades growing by double digits- that's over 14,000 construction job openings per year.

HIGH-PAYING JOBS:


According to the Census, the median household income in Springfield Missouri was \$41,808 in 2021 and in Kansas City it was \$60,042 in 2021. According to MERIC, The average annual wage for one construction worker is \$64,664 in 2020.

MAR OUTCOMES:

While only 6% of the construction workforce is African American, people of color comprise 41% of MAR graduates. The percentage of women graduating MAR- 24.6% in an industry where women make only 10% according to BLS data.

14,000+
 **CONSTRUCTION JOB
OPENINGS PER YEAR**

 **AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGE FOR
ONE CONSTRUCTION WORKER**
\$64,664

41 PERCENT
 **OF MAR GRADUATES ARE
PEOPLE OF COLOR**

WHERE MAR GRADS HAVE BEEN PLACED

BRICKLAYERS, LOCAL 15

CARPENTERS, LOCAL 315

CEMENT MASONS, LOCAL 518

IBEW, LOCAL 124

IBEW, LOCAL 315

IBEW, LOCAL 453

IBEW TREE TRIMMERS, LOCAL 53

LABORERS, LOCAL 264

LABORERS, LOCAL 663

OPERATING ENGINEERS, LOCAL 101

PAINTERS & ALLIED TRADES, LOCAL 533

PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS, LOCAL 178

ROOFERS, LOCAL 20

SHEET METAL WORKERS, LOCAL 36

SPRINKLER FITTERS, LOCAL 669



ABOUT THE MISSOURI APPRENTICE READY PROGRAM

The Missouri Apprentice Ready students train alongside industry experts while exploring the distinctions of each building and construction trade. Using the multi-craft core curriculum developed by North America's Building Trades Unions, the MAR program educates students in construction math, blueprint and tape measure reading, tool and material recognition, diversity

awareness, sexual harassment, financial literacy, worker wellness, construction safety (OSHA 10, first aid, and CPR/AED certification), and the history and contributions of unions. They also visit various trades' training facilities for hands-on experience with tools and materials while meeting with representatives and leaders of construction trade unions.





PARTICIPANT BENEFITS:

- » Career and life skills training
- » Support services
- » Transportation assistance
- » Industry professional mentoring
- » \$100 weekly stipend
- » Work wear (ear protection, safety glasses, hard hat, high visibility shirts, work pants, work boots)
- » \$150 tool allowance upon placement into a registered apprenticeship program
- » Trade placement advising
- » Mentoring program

EARNED CREDENTIALS:

- » Multi-Craft Core (MC3) Curriculum Credential, A comprehensive training curriculum recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor
- » Missouri Works Initiative Certificate of Completion
- » OSHA 10
- » First Aid/CPR



CIJI'S STORY

SPRINGFIELD COHORT 1 GRADUATE AND PARTICIPANT MENTOR

"As a single mom, I used to work two jobs without benefits and still couldn't afford my own place to live," says Ciji. After completing the five week Apprentice Ready Program, she is now employed full-time with Laborers 663, including benefits. Having achieved the economic stability to provide a home for her family and regain custody of her son, Ciji is no longer uncertain of the future.

Wanting to create a better life for herself and her son, Ciji didn't know where to turn until her Kansas City halfway house counselor gave her an Apprentice Ready Program flier. She quickly moved to Springfield and joined its first cohort. She was mildly concerned about being a woman pursuing the building trades, but as she made connections through the Missouri Works Initiative and United Way of the Ozarks, she grew confident in her decision. As for the physicality of the work, Ciji says the experience "...has taught me that I can work just as good as a man."

After a week of orientation, Ciji was able to visit each trade, eventually choosing the Laborers Union. "I do a lot of concrete, demolition, commercial remodeling, and job site cleanup. I like that every day I can do something different," she says.

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**IF YOU'RE OUT THERE CONSIDERING THIS
PROGRAM, JUST DO IT! QUIT PUTTING IT
OFF AND TAKE THAT FIRST STEP!**

Ciji is already looking to the future, when one day she hopes to become a foreman. She says, "I'd love to be able to work my way up the ladder—to accomplish that. My life now is so much better than the life I was living. The pay is great, I have job security, and everyday is a new learning experience. If you're out there considering this program, just do it! Quit putting it off and take that first step!"



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

GREG BURRIS

PRESIDENT AND CEO, UNITED WAY OF THE OZARKS

“Our role is to help with up front needs assessment and to assist students throughout their classroom experience by helping them overcome any barriers that would prevent their participation,” says Greg. “We connect them with hotel rooms, transportation, or other resources in our community that they need. We want everyone who starts the program to finish the program because we think it’s a game changer.”

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**I HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN LIVES CHANGED
BECAUSE OF THE MISSOURI APPRENTICE
READY PROGRAM.**

Missouri Apprentice Ready helps build community ownership by changing lives with sustainable career opportunities, which aligns with United Way’s upstream focus of helping individuals overcome the barriers to self sufficiency. “I have personally seen lives changed because of the Missouri Apprentice

Ready program. Individuals go from living in cars or couch surfing to financial independence, and we think that is amazing,” says Greg. “We help with housing, transportation, food insecurity, and whatever is necessary to keep them in class.”

One of Greg’s favorite moments in the program is graduation. “That’s when you see it all come together. Friends and family come to the ceremony to celebrate students and what they’ve accomplished. The trades are there too—not only to celebrate, but to offer jobs. These are the goosebump moments because you have people who have gone through the program showing what they can do, and the labor trades are pitching them job offers. Sometimes graduates have multiple offers to choose from when a few weeks before, they had no stable job prospects,” says Greg. “They are quickly in a position to have a level of ownership in their community and help spread hope to others, coming full circle. Helping your neighbor weaves a tighter social fabric that benefits everyone.”



DAKOTA'S STORY

SPRINGFIELD COHORT 5 GRADUATE

As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, Dakota struggled in a low paying, non-union factory job that failed to create a safe space amidst the toxic homophobic prejudices of his coworkers.

"I heard about Missouri Apprentice Ready through a friend who went through the program and got placed. When he heard how not great my factory job was, he suggested I take the class and learn a trade," says Dakota.

Dakota hadn't previously considered a career in the trades because it's not necessarily the first place a gay man thinks of as a welcoming work environment. But his worries over discrimination were set at ease. "I went down to the hall and talked to my business agent and the president. I asked if the hall was going to discriminate and found that there is a whole system written in the constitution and bylaws that make sure no apprentice or journeyman is discriminated against. Working for a union or a union company, you'll have clear expectations and protection and know where you stand," says Dakota. "The fact that a union is a direct democracy that I can participate in and have some control of the

work environment is empowering."

Dakota recommends the apprenticeship-ready program to anyone who wants to make a change in their life. "The program really walks you through all the different unions. You visit each and every hall and talk with members, you get a rundown of what the job is before you apply, so you really have a clear idea of what you're getting into."

After graduation, Dakota became an apprentice with Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 178. "Providing people with basic necessities really appealed to me," he says. "Every day, I know that I'm going to be doing something that benefits the community and that the union has my back. I'm a craftsperson instead of just a worker that constantly feels he can be replaced at any moment. All of the journeymen have been professional and respectful. It's a safe place for members of the LGBTQ+ community because of the union culture. We call ourselves brothers and sisters - we're literally a family of labor."



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

ROSANA PRIVITERA BIONDO

PRESIDENT AND CEO OF MARK ONE ELECTRIC, KANSAS CITY

When approached by Rudy Chavez with the offer to become a supporter of the Kansas City area Missouri Apprentice Ready program, it was an easy yes for Mark One Electric President and CEO, Rosanna Privitera Biondo. "We had worked together previously through IBEW Local 124 and wanted to move forward," says Privitera Biondo. "It's a wonderful opportunity to help find future tradespeople in Missouri – they offer 20-plus trade opportunities!"

A trusted Kansas City electrical company, Mark One Electric believes in the Missouri Apprentice Ready program and illustrates their support by providing their local program with a space to meet and conduct training. But they don't stop there. Additionally, they give students and instructors access to necessary tools and equipment at no charge to the program.

Founded in 1974 by Rosana's parents, Carl and Josephine Privitera, Mark One has been giving back to the Kansas City area for decades. They began by servicing small business, commercial and industrial accounts and quickly developed a reputation for completing difficult jobs for demanding clients and were soon working in major plants and industrial facilities across the country. Mark One has continued

to evolve and diversify, offering an impressive scope of electrical construction services from design, build and pre-construction to underground, data/communications and specialty systems.

With over 200 employees they are considered the specialty contractor of choice for the Kansas City construction community. "We care about the people of Missouri. We want to give them opportunities to work with their hands in a good industry that has many opportunities in the construction industry," says Rosana. "This program is helping by educating people about all the opportunities that the construction industry has to offer for tradespeople. It shows them that this is a good field to work in with endless possibilities.

Mark One Electric has hosted two cohorts and always engages to support students' career readiness. They currently employ two Missouri Apprentice Ready Kansas City participants - Cohort 2 graduate John Weir and Cohort 5 graduate Naomi Alexander who are IBEW 124 apprentices. "If you're looking for a way to start a career in the union trades and gain valuable connections that carry on even after you graduate, then this program is where you want to be," says Naomi.



KESEANNA'S STORY

KANSAS CITY COHORT 7 GRADUATE

Struggling to make ends meet with her previous job, Kесеanna was hopeful when her mom shared a Missouri Works Initiative Facebook post with her. "I wasn't having the best experience at my job, so I decided to give this program a chance and it was one of the best decisions I've made in my life," she says.

The hands-on experiences with different trade experts and the fact that the 5-week program provides necessary items like PPE helped Kесеanna pave a path for success in carpentry. "Rudy and everyone involved with the Missouri Works Initiative helped me elevate and I couldn't be more grateful. This is a brilliant program from brilliant people," says Kесеanna. "I would like to build my own house one day and I'm positive this will help. This career will get me that plus more."

"It's changed my life tremendously! I went from not knowing which way to go, to having a full blown career. I'm grateful for the experience and the whole staff behind this program. I've been so in shock and emotional

since I've been on this journey. I have never earned over \$15 an hour before or been so hands on. I'm grateful for that and always will be. When I was in high school I wanted to be an architect, so to learn the ins and outs of building is an experience I'll always take with me," shares Kесеanna.

“

THIS IS A PROGRAM YOU LITERALLY

CAN'T LOSE AT. IT'S NOTHING BUT A

GOOD EXPERIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY.

If you are ready for a rewarding, life-sustaining career, Kесеanna encourages you to follow her lead. "This is a program you literally can't lose at. It's nothing but a good experience and opportunity. It's too good to pass up. If you're a hard worker and hands on, this is perfect for you and can be a huge benefit to your life."



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

JUSTIN MCCARTY

PRESIDENT OF THE SPRINGFIELD LABOR COUNCIL PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS LOCAL 178

After being modeled on the successful BUD program in St. Louis, the Missouri Works Initiative brought the Missouri Apprentice Ready program to Springfield in 2021. "The MO AFL-CIO gave a presentation at the Springfield Building Trades meeting. I remember after the meeting all the trades were very interested in this program, and being able to help those who may not know how to enter the construction trades, or who may not know about an apprenticeship," says Justin. "The Missouri Works Program is a great way to explore different trades and discover which one is the best fit for you. This 5-week program provides essential safety training and detailed information about multiple trades, giving you a chance to learn and understand their unique characteristics."

Justin's family has been in the plumbing and pipefitting industry since 1913. "I am a 5th generation Local 178 member, but I initially struggled with the idea of pursuing a career in this field. Eventually I recognized that my current job was not a sustainable career that could support a family and finally decided to pursue

an apprenticeship. I began as a helper for a shop, doing tasks like sweeping floors, delivering materials, and assisting Journeymen in their work." Justin was eventually accepted into the apprenticeship program, marking the beginning of his career in the field. "The benefits, such as retirement, health care and continuing education have been great. Nowadays, I take pride in driving my children around and pointing out buildings, proudly yelling, 'I helped build that'."

"As the President, I want to recognize that the hardworking men and women of the Springfield Central Labor Council are the backbone of our organization," says Justin.

"We are constantly seeking new ways to improve our relationship with our communities and members. We collaborate with other groups to identify ways to build a better community and work with local elected officials to set policies that benefit everyone without hurting the working class. Ultimately, we all share the same goal of creating a better future for our families and community."



TAKE THE FIRST STEP!

“IF YOU’RE LOOKING FOR A WAY TO START A CAREER IN THE UNION TRADES AND GAIN VALUABLE CONNECTIONS THAT CARRY ON EVEN AFTER YOU GRADUATE, THEN THIS PROGRAM IS WHERE YOU WANT TO BE.”

**Naomi, graduate
apprentice with IBEW 124**

WANT TO PARTNER?

Do you want to partner with us in serving or employing students in Kansas City or Springfield? Find out how your organization can make a difference in the lives of Missourians by contacting the MAR coordinator for your community today!

WANT TO BE A MAR STUDENT?

You can have a life-changing, life-sustaining career in the building trades, and we can help you get there. Our Apprentice Ready Program provides you with the opportunity to explore a variety of skilled trades by giving you hands-on experience in the field so that you can choose your perfect fit.

If you are 18 years of age or older, eligible to work in the United States, and meet Military Selective Service requirements, you can apply for the Kansas City or Springfield Apprentice Ready Program at moworksinitiative.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE MAR COORDINATOR FOR YOUR AREA!

Kansas City MAR Coordinator

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816-806-1840

Springfield MAR Coordinator

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417-763-7343

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Supporters

Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development • Associated General Contractors of Missouri • Full Employment Council - Kansas City • City of Springfield, Department of Workforce Development • United Way of the Ozarks • Community Partnership of the Ozarks • University of Missouri Extension • United Way of Greater Kansas City • Springfield Building and Construction Trades Council • Greater Kansas City Building and Construction Trades Council

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Emily Martin, Chief Operating Officer, Guarantee Electrical

Steve Morrow, President, Springfield Building and Construction Trades Council, Bricklayers Local 15

Ralph Oropeza, President, Kansas City Building and Construction Trades Council

The construction training team includes, among others:

Bricklayers Local 15 Joint Apprenticeship Training Program • St. Louis-Kansas City Carpenters • Regional Council Apprenticeship Program • Construction Craft Laborers Joint Apprenticeship Training Program • Heat & Frost Insulators, Local 27 • International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 124 Joint Apprenticeship Training Program • IBEW, Local 53 Tree Trimmers Apprenticeship Program • Iron Workers Joint Apprenticeship Training Program • Operating Engineers Local 101 Joint Apprenticeship Training Program • Plumbers & Pipefitters Joint Apprenticeship Training Program • Sheet Metal Workers Joint Apprenticeship Training Program • Cement Masons Joint Apprenticeship Training Program • International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District 3 Training Program • Roofers Training Program • Elevator Constructors Training Program • Sprinkler Fitters Training Program • Boilermakers Training Program



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