

NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development Celebrates National Apprenticeship Week

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 16, 2021

TRENTON –

November 15-19 is National Apprenticeship Week, and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) is celebrating alongside business and trade organizations throughout the state, including attending events with the American Training Center, International Union of Operating Engineers Local No. 825, Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory and Ideal Institute of Technology.

NJDOL also announced that the department distributed \$9,064,854 in Fiscal Year 2021 through four grant programs that support the growth of Registered Apprenticeship programs across the state.

The grant funds included: Growing Apprenticeship in Nontraditional Sectors (GAINS), which awarded \$3,112,633; NJ Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJ PLACE 2.0), which awarded \$1,073,785; Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE); which awarded \$3,385,273; and Youth Transitions to Work (YTTW), which awarded \$1,493,163. In total, 29 contracts have been awarded under these program funds, contributing to the recruitment of 1,565 apprentices.

The suite of apprenticeship grants strengthens Governor Murphy’s New Jersey Apprenticeship Network, an initiative that seeks to make the Garden State a leader for apprenticeship programs nationwide and provide options for all New Jerseyans to build meaningful careers across a wide range of employers.

Since Governor Murphy took office in January 2018, 545 new Registered Apprenticeship programs have been created in New Jersey – an 89% increase – and on-boarded 8,747 new apprentices. The state currently has 8,957 active apprentices in 1,156 programs. Notably, under the Murphy Administration, apprenticeship grant programs funded by the state have more than doubled the number of women in registered apprenticeship programs in this state.


“Apprenticeship programs are a critical component to recovering our workforce from the pandemic, as well as to continue building our talent pipelines for emerging industries, like the wind-energy sector being established right here along our coast,” said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo. “We’ve taken the earn-while-you-learn model perfected by the building trades and opened it to a wide variety of positions – from computer systems analysts, pharmacy technicians, human resources employees, water treatment plant operators, and even programs that further fusion energy research.”

The mission of the **Growing Apprenticeship in Nontraditional Sectors (GAINS)** program is to promote the expansion of United States Department of Labor (USDOL) approved Registered Apprenticeship programs to support better-paying careers and advanced credential attainment. The program seeks to develop new and existing apprenticeship programs and create Registered Apprenticeship programs in high-growth industries.

The GAINS grant program has provided unprecedented opportunities for women and people of color, with more than two-thirds of GAINS grantees being females or minorities, which is twice the average among all apprenticeship programs in the state. Women account for 48 percent of GAINS apprentices, greater than five times the statewide average. Currently, more



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than half of GAINS apprentices are in the health care sector, including the Registered Nurse Residency program at Rutgers University, and the state Department of Health’s Perinatal Community Health Worker and Certified Nursing Assistant programs.

The **NJ Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education (NJ PLACE 2.0)** program, which debuted in January 2020, is designed to provide financial assistance for students participating in a USDOL Registered Apprenticeship program while the apprentice is simultaneously enrolled in a degree program. The “Degree Apprenticeship” model promotes a new approach to solving the workforce needs of employers and job-seekers by further integrating work-based learning with post-secondary education. Student apprentices can earn college credits and an apprentice wage simultaneously – thus removing the difficult choice between working to support themselves or attending classes to advance their careers.

Programs include carpenter, electrician, and elevator repair tracts at Thomas Edison State University, as well as an operating Engineer program with International Union of Operating Engineers Local No. 825, which uses prior learning assessments and credit evaluations to help apprentices attain a college degree.

Pre-apprenticeship programs funded through **Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE)** provide education and training that prepare participants for either placement into a Registered Apprenticeship program, into a post-secondary college or occupation-specific career training program, or into the workforce. PACE programs must have a documented partnership with at least one Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor. Together, these programs expand career pathways with industry-based training and classroom instruction, leading to better-paying positions and advanced credentials. Programs funded in FY21 span a variety of sectors, including health care, manufacturing, and information technology.

PACE programs provide tools such as job readiness, essential skills, and occupation-specific training. In addition, PACE funding can be used to offer stipends to participants to offset costs of supportive services, such as childcare and transportation. The PACE program was developed primarily to help alleviate economic barriers that hinder upskilling.

The goal of the **Youth Transitions to Work (YTTW)** program is to recruit, screen, and facilitate effective transitions of high school juniors, seniors, and Out of School Youth (ages 16-24) to high-skill, high-wage employment in labor-demand occupations, with long-term career potential and opportunities for occupationally relevant lifelong learning, thereby motivating youth to greater success in secondary and post-secondary education.

Funded programs are to establish YTTW programs in new apprenticeship occupations or industries, link secondary education and higher educational institutions to existing USDOL apprenticeship programs, reactivate registered programs not currently in use, and increase the number of high school graduates entering Registered Apprenticeship programs in New Jersey. FY21 funded programs include such occupations as culinary arts, construction trades, Certified Nursing Assistant, physical therapist aide, diesel mechanic, stagehand technician, and carpenter.

NJDOL plans to announce Notice of Grant Opportunities for a new round of GAINS and PACE funding later this week.

To see current notices of grant opportunity, please visit: <https://www.nj.gov/labor/research-info/grants.shtml>

For more information on the New Jersey Office of Apprenticeship, please visit: <http://apprenticeship.nj.gov>.

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