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# Number of NJ Apprentices Tops 8,000 As Labor Department Welcomes New High-Tech Trainees

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 3, 2019

**PLAINSBORO** – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) welcomed four apprentices to the Princeton Plasma Physics Lab (PPPL) on Tuesday, as the total number of New Jersey apprenticeships surpassed 8,000, a new high for the Murphy administration.

The PPPL apprentices entered into a four-year on-the-job training program with a signing ceremony witnessed by Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo; U.S. Department of Energy Under Secretary for Science Paul Dabbar; CEO of the NJ Economic Development Authority Tim Sullivan; PPPL Director Steven Cowley; Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker (D-16), who heads PPPL's Office of Communications and Public Outreach; and others from PPPL and Princeton University.

A tour of the lab – a world-class center for fusion energy research that is part of the Department of Energy – followed.

The apprentices will train as mechanical and electrical technicians and attend classes at Mercer County Vocational Technical Schools. While their specific jobs will be determined at the end of the program, they will be part of a team seeking to develop fusion energy as a clean, limitless, and safe method of generating electricity.

"A stronger and fairer economy starts with developing career pathways for employees and a strong talent pool for employers," said Governor Murphy. "The growth of apprenticeships is a testament to our unwavering commitment to continue investing in our people, which will strengthen our workforce and economy over the long-term."

"Because of the commitment of PPPL to apprenticeship, these new apprentices will be mentored in careers that are rewarding, cutting-edge, and vital to our country's future energy needs," said Asaro-Angelo. "In my mind, there is almost no industry sector that cannot benefit from an apprenticeship program, and today's ceremony at a high-tech research lab proves the point."

"Apprenticeship programs offer participants hands-on experience that prepares them for real-world career opportunities," said Sullivan. "Governor Murphy's increased focus in this area is helping to ensure the state's talent pool keeps pace with the demands of the high-growth sectors targeted by his plan for a stronger and fairer New Jersey economy."

"We are proud to offer this innovative and important program, which will give talented young people excellent on-the-job training and mentorship at a national laboratory," said Steven Cowley, PPPL director. "They will help us carry out our mission of developing fusion as a clean, safe and abundant source of electric energy. It is indeed a grand technical challenge that could potentially change the world, and we are excited to be part of the state's innovation economy envisioned by the governor."

The apprentices will be the first to take part in PPPL's high-tech fusion energy apprenticeship program. The apprentices are: Robert Bongiovanni of Hamilton, Aaron Floyd of Lawrenceville, Kevin Purdy of Allentown, NJ, and Sheehan Twomey of Princeton. Most attended vocational school or have some technological experience. One has a bachelor's degree in business, another has an associate's degree in liberal arts.



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NJ adds jobs in July; 7th consecutive months of gains. [nj.gov/labor/lwdhome/...](http://nj.gov/labor/lwdhome/)

Aug 19, 2021



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As of the latest reporting, more than \$33 billion in unemployment benefits have been sent to Garden State workers. With federal benefits set to expire on September 4, we encourage everyone to check your email and visit [MyUnemployment.nj.gov](http://MyUnemployment.nj.gov) for updates and available resources.



At PPPL, they will receive competitive pay and benefits, 8,000 hours of on-the-job training, and related classroom instruction. They will be eligible for full-time employment after completing the program.

These apprentices will join the ranks of 8,021 registered apprentices currently active in New Jersey, an 18 percent increase since Governor Murphy took office. There are currently 855 Registered Apprenticeship programs in the state, a 39 percent increase since January 2018, which further demonstrates the far-reaching capabilities of apprenticeship to train the state's future workforce to meet businesses' needs.

For more information on the Labor Department's New Jersey Apprenticeship Network, please go to: <https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/apprenticeship/index.shtml>.

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