

**State Electrical Construction Apprenticeship Advisory Committee  
March 10, 2014**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

NECA-IBEW Apprenticeship  
2730 Dairy Dr.  
Madison, WI 53718

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Employer/Organization</b>
Allen, Don (Co-Chair)	IBEW Local 158
Balthazor, Michael	Michaels Power
Grundahl, Carol	IBEW Local 159
Habermehl, Sylvia	Habermehl Electric
Kryzaniak, Rick	Faith Technologies (Associated Builders & Contractors (ABC))
Mielke, John	Associated Builders and Contractors
Miller, Dean	IBEW Local 388
O'Leary, Loyal (Co-Chair)	NECA-- WI Chapter
Pohlman, Mike	R.J. Nickles Electric Co.
Sokolik, Leo	IBEW Local 890
Walsh, John M.	IBEW Local 14
Young, Greg	IBEW Local 577

<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Employer/Organization</b>
Bzdawka, John	IBEW Local 494
Steiner, Rick	Steiner Electric (ABC)
Washebek, Dave	Lemberg Electric (NECA)

<b>Consultants &amp; Guests</b>	<b>Employer/Organization</b>
Anhalt, Tim	NECA-IBEW Apprenticeship & Training
Cook, Jim	Madison Area Technical College, Apprenticeship Coordinator
Harding, Burt	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Kiel, Todd	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
Morgan, Karen	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, Director
Schanke, Debbie	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Smith, Owen	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Tourdot, Kelly	Associated Builders and Contractors
Tschillard, Clay	NECA-IBEW Apprenticeship & Training
Wagner, Mike	NECA-IBEW Apprenticeship & Training
Wood, Marge	Wisconsin Technical College System

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m. by Loyal O'Leary, Committee Co-chair, in conformity with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.
2. A roll call was conducted and a member sign-in sheet was circulated.
3. The minutes of the October 29, 2014, meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

#### 4. **Old Business**

##### **a. Roster Review**

Owen Smith distributed the current committee roster, and asked members to correct or update their contact information, if necessary.

##### **b. 2014 Biennial Wisconsin Apprenticeship Conference Report**

Owen Smith reported the outcomes of the 2014 Biennial Wisconsin Apprenticeship Conference Summary, asked Members for their feedback, and explained the Bureau's plans for future Conferences.

##### **i. Summary**

Overall, the Conference was a great success, attracting the second highest Conference attendance—450 participants—despite below-freezing temperatures, and earning praise for its speakers and workshops. Unfortunately, winter temperatures forced most high schools throughout the state to close. As a result, the Expo was attended by only 50 of the more than 600 high school students who had registered.

##### **ii. Speakers**

All speakers earned high ratings from attendees, especially Governor Walker, national economist Anirban Basu and national author Mark Breslin. Governor Walker's speech earned the Conference brief media coverage in several state metropolitan news and television outlets.

##### **iii. Workshops**

Most workshops received very favorable feedback from attendees, particularly for their professional relevance. The Conference offered a series of introductory workshops on apprenticeship and key partners, such as "The Department of Public Instruction 101"; and several well-received workshops on youth apprenticeship and apprenticeship prep programs. The three most attended workshops were, "Preparing Students for Apprenticeship Programs," "Diversity in the Workplace," and "Understanding Generational Differences in the Workplace."

##### **iv. Criticisms and Suggestions**

The Conference received two common criticisms: it was held during the timeframe of year that poses the highest risk for severe cold and inclement weather; and the removed location of the Expo, a mile from the conference activities, limited the amount of time attendees could visit without missing workshops and discouraged some attendees from visiting at all.

Therefore, the most common suggestions for improvement were twofold: hold the Conference in spring or fall; and hold the Expo and Conference as unique, separate events.

Owen Smith asked the members for their responses to the Conference. A general discussion on the topics above followed. Members asked BAS to suggest to the Council holding the Conference in March or September and at new locations.

**Action:** BAS will share the Committee's suggestion to hold the 2016 Biennial Conference in March or October at either the Holiday Inn in Stevens Point or Glaciers Canyon Conference Center in the WI Dells.

#### v. Future Conferences

Owen Smith acknowledged the downside of scheduling the Conference in the first calendar quarter of the year and holding the Expo in a removed location from the main Conference area. However, he explained the factors that make the timeframe and hosting the two events together the most ideal plan.

Foremost, the first calendar quarter of the year is when the most apprenticeship stakeholders are available. Spring is when the construction sector, the largest sector of apprenticeship stakeholders, typically prepares to return to work, sometimes as early as mid-March and public schools generally have spring break. Fall is the beginning of the academic calendar for high schools and technical colleges, and the construction trades typically remain active through October. Late fall and early winter contain deer hunting season, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Second, the few hotels that can provide all Conference accommodations are most likely to offer the state lodging rate during the off-season months. The Conference requires a large meeting space, five-to-seven breakout rooms for workshops, and at least 20,000 square feet for the Expo. Many hotels can meet the first two requirements, but very few can satisfy all three requirements.

Third, hosting the Expo and Conference as separate events on alternating years would place the Bureau in perpetual planning and fundraising cycles for the last half of each year. Conference preparations typically take at least six months, and the Bureau would be continuously asking its stakeholder base for donations.

Therefore, the Bureau will present feedback from the state committees to the Advisory Council with two recommendations: the next Conference be held in early March to maximize the potential for favorable weather without conflicting with preparations for the construction year; and the Expo in the same location as the Conference but one day prior to the opening of the Conference to maximize attendance.

#### **c. New Electrical Credentialing System, Effective April 1, 2014**

Karen Morgan distributed a legislative summary of the new electrical credentialing system, which will go into effect on April 1. The bills passed both houses, and the law is awaiting Governor Walker's signature. Both versions are exactly the same.

BAS met with representatives of the Department of Safety and Professional Services, which will administer the credentials, to discuss the effects of the new system on apprenticeship.

All construction electrical workers will need to have their license by April 1, 2014. The law does not contain a provision for waivers or delays. Therefore, BAS will proceed to inform all Construction Electrician apprentices that they must possess a license by April 1.

When the Bureau generates new apprentice contracts after April 1, a notice reminding the apprentice of a need for the credential will be generated, too. BAS ATRs will be able to print the notice at the local level. BAS will use the same procedures used by plumbers and sprinklerfitters: the apprentice must have the credential in order to work. Apprentices can obtain the license by submitting the required application and fee and providing evidence of being entered into a recognized registered apprentice contract.

The Bureau will mail a reminder notice to current apprentices to remind them that they must obtain a license before April 1 in order to continue working. The letters will be mailed towards the end of March due to programming availability.

Clay Tschillard stated that his local committees have already notified their apprentices via email and web, because they were concerned about the approaching deadline. Clay shared those communications with the Milwaukee JAC. Kelly Tourdot reported that Associated Builders and Contractors notified its apprentices, too, and had been curious what communications BAS had planned.

Apprentices are required to re-apply for the credential annually.

The Department of Safety and Professional Services maintains that it does not need to write administrative rules for new apprentices, because the requirement for apprentices to obtain the license is included in the law itself. However, they do need to write administrative rules for over a certain age (current apprentices are not excluded—only those over a certain age) and for industrial electricians, whom are excluded.

A general discussion on the requirements for and implementation of the credentials followed. Karen Morgan advised the State Committee and Local Committee members to allow some time for the transition to occur and for BAS and DSPS to implement their respective administrative systems, before making policy decisions on whether hours worked on an expired license would count, and other matters. Karen stated the BAS has an entire system set up to communicate with the local committees in order to require all apprentices to show their license before the local meeting. BAS also asked instructors to check for the license in order to raise the apprentices' awareness of the requirement, but ensured the instructors knew that they had no enforcement rights or responsibilities.

Clay Tschillard expressed concern over the annual cost to apprentices for renewing the license. He asked whether the Committee could advocate for rules to make the term of the license equal to the length of the apprenticeship. Karen Morgan stated that she would not suggest advocating for a four-year license right away, but would advise advocate for a two-year license, because the cancellation rate is high and the fees are collected up front.

Karen stated that BAS plans to revise and automate the notice that informs apprentices that they have acquired the 8,000 hours necessary to take the journey man licensure exam.

**Action:** BAS will invite a DSPS representative to the fall meeting and discuss the automated letter content internally.

#### **d. Helmets to Hardhats Update**

Karen Morgan presented an overview of the national Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) program and asked the Committee to endorse the implementation of the program in Wisconsin by adopting several modifications to the state standards.

##### i. Overview

The Department of Workforce Development supports implementing H2H in Wisconsin to streamline access to apprenticeship and career opportunities in the construction industry for veterans during a period of increase in both the number of returning veterans and the need for quality applicants to the skilled trades. Nationally, H2H is administered by the Center for Military Recruitment, Assessment and Veterans Employment (CMRAVE), a non-profit Section 501(c) (3) joint labor-management committee.

##### ii. Outcomes

The outcomes of endorsing the Helmets to Hardhats program would be:

- Veterans who have completed military technical training and/or participated in a recognized apprenticeship program or related craft while in the military may be given direct entry into a civilian apprenticeship program.

The local apprenticeship committee would evaluate the military training received to ensure they receive all necessary training for completion of the apprenticeship program. Apprentice applicants seeking credit for previous experience gained outside the supervision of the program sponsor would have to submit such request at the time of application and furnish all records, affidavits and other documents to substantiate the experience. The veteran applicant will be required to meet the programs entrance requirements, including entrance examinations.

- Veterans who have completed military service but have not completed military technical training or participated in a recognized apprenticeship program or related craft while in the military may be provided special consideration for entry into the apprenticeship program by the sponsor. The veterans would have to complete the sponsor's application process and may be required to take an entrance examination.

iii. Proposed Changes to State Standards

Karen Morgan reviewed three additions to that State Standards that she proposes the Committee adopt.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Additions</b>
I. Definitions	<p>"Direct Entry:" Qualifying applicants are directly admitted into the apprenticeship program, and all pre-selection requirements remain in force.</p> <p>"Direct Interview:" Qualifying applicants go directly to oral interviews and are placed on the list, if appropriate.</p>
VII. Minimum Qualifications of Apprentices	<p>F. Direct Entry for Veterans</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Meet qualifying requirements as stated VII of these standards.</li> <li>2) Individuals must submit a DD-214 to verify military training and/or experience</li> <li>3) Local committees may elect direct entry or provide for a direct interview after entry qualifications are met.</li> <li>4) Entry of Veterans will be done without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, creed, handicap, marital status, ancestry, or sexual orientation.</li> </ol>
V. Local Apprenticeship Committee Functions and Duties	<p>D. Recommend to the BAS credit for previous experience/education in conformity with State Carpentry Apprenticeship Policy and Procedures</p> <p>Individuals selected into the apprenticeship program via direct entry and who have received training or employment in an occupation directly or directly related to the occupation in the local standards, will be award Credit for Previous Experience and will pay the apprentice at the wage rate commensurate the awarded credit.</p>

If the State Committee would approve the additions, local committees would have the discretion to adopt the changes.

A general discussion on the proposed additions and similar policies followed. All veteran apprentices must meet the basic qualifications. The direct entry language would be the most helpful in the case of a local committee that conducts oral interviews, because the apprentice would be granted immediate access to an interview. Local committees are not permitted to waive entrance requirements for veterans, and the Bureau recommends local committees keep their current testing requirements to veterans.

Although many state programs provide financial incentives to employers for hiring veterans, the Bureau is not aware of state programs that offer incentives for hiring veteran apprentices.

The State Committee did mandate previously that a veteran apprentice with similar occupational education and experience would have to be given credit, similar to procedures for transferring between local committees. However, local committees continue to grant different amounts of credit.

Karen suggested that members consider applying the direct entry language to all veterans, not solely apprentices who apply via Helmets to Hardhats. The Bureau would be willing to help local committees review paperwork from the different service branches, because the Bureau works regularly with non-traditional examples of military paperwork required for online learning.

**Action:** A motion was made and seconded to adopt the provided revisions to the State Standards to include Helmets to Hardhats. The motion carried.

**Follow-up:** BAS will research military assessments tests and bring samples to the fall meeting.

#### **e. Youth Apprenticeship Update**

The Bureau was invited by CESA 6 and Associated General Contractors to attend a listening session this month that the two organizations are sponsoring to research the creation a youth apprenticeship program in construction.

DWD is encouraging YA and registered apprenticeship to develop crosswalks between programs in manufacturing and utility occupations. Youth apprenticeships are valuable as a whole because they include an on-the-job component, which other youth programs, such as school-to-work, youth options, or co-op programs do not. YA programs also include standardized related instruction and competencies.

However, the Bureau declined, and informed the organizers that Youth Apprenticeship states youth apprenticeship programs "shall not affect any apprenticeship program that is governed by such. Furthermore, Child Labor Laws and the insurance industry may contain many restrictions on youth employment on construction sites, because the work is often performed across many areas and around many trades, which presents many safety hazards and insurance requirements.

If the Committee is serious about exploring the creation of a youth program that would teach general, basic construction skills, BAS will coordinate meeting between with members, partners and YA staff. The basic structure of youth apprenticeship is very different from registered apprenticeship, so an overview would be very helpful.

**Action:** BAS will coordinate a meeting between interested members and partners and the YA staff, preferably in the Appleton area. Todd Kiel, Associated Builders and Contractors, and Faith Technologies would be interested in attending.

#### **f. Other**

No other items were brought forth.

## 5. New Business

### a. **BAS Personnel Update**

Liz Pusch is the new Apprenticeship Training Representative (ATR) for Area 10, which includes Dodge, Ozaukee and Washington counties. Liz worked formerly as a legislative aide in Madison. She is from the Dodge, Ozaukee and Washington county area. The area was served previously by ATR Barb Robakowski.

Andrea Loeffelholz is the new ATR for Area 6, which includes Dane and Rock counties. Andrea worked formerly as a grant specialist for the WI Department of Transportation in Madison. The area was served previously by ATR Mary Pierce, who accepted a Policy Analyst position within the Bureau's Administrative Office in Madison.

Darrel Cappetta is the new coordinator of the Veterans in Piping program. Darrel was previously in the Office of Veterans services where he worked as a DVOP

Karen stated that the various responsibilities for the Department of Correction apprenticeship program, originally implemented and serviced by former ATR Barb Robakowski, will not be divided across multiple ATRs in the near future.

### b. **Advisory Council Update**

#### i. Apprenticeship Awareness Toolkit

Owen Smith walked members through the Apprenticeship Awareness Toolkit website, a one-stop resource on Apprenticeship for high school guidance counselors, teachers and staff to assist their raising awareness of registered apprenticeship among high school students and parents.

The website was created and is administered by the Department of Public Instruction.

Key content includes:

- An explanation of registered apprenticeship as well as a separate explanation of youth apprenticeship, which explicitly states it is "not the same as [registered] apprenticeship."
- Apprenticeship Salary Chart, a downloadable document that compares the potential earning of an apprentice to an individual on a four-year degree program
- Educator How to Sheet, which advises educators on classroom strategies for engaging students about apprenticeship, such as inviting industry representatives as guest speakers
- Apprenticeship Promotional Flyers, five versions, one per audience, communicate three central points to parents, educators, students, and more: apprentices earn a good wage without incurring student debt; they earn college credit, and they earn nationally recognized credentials.
- Sample Apprenticeship Pathway Program of Study, which outlines how high school general education courses and specific electives prepare students for potential apprenticeships in different economic sectors, such as manufacturing

Owen reminded members that the Toolkit is an organic, living website that is to be updated with new material as stakeholders see fit. He asked the Committee whether it preferred to publish additional material to the site.

A general discussion on the current and potential content followed. Key points included:

ii. Parents' Guide to Apprenticeship

Karen Morgan reported that the Bureau will produce a guide to apprenticeship this fall for guidance counselors to distribute during career counseling sessions with parents and students. The document will be modeled after the Wisconsin Technical College System program guide. The project was recommended by guidance counselors who attended the apprenticeship presentation by Ms. Morgan and Mr. Clay Tschillard at the Wisconsin School Counselors Association meeting this spring. The counselors specifically requested a print publication because many students do not have access to computers and/or internet, particularly in rural areas.

**c. Other**

i. Veteran Grant Opportunities

Karen Morgan distributed an informational flyer on veteran employment grants available currently through the Department of Workforce Development and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Governor Walker signed the grant program into law as part of the 2013-15 state budget, following approval by the Wisconsin Legislature.

Employers can receive a state grant of up to \$10,000 over four years when they hire a veteran who is eligible to participate. Participating veterans must meet statutory unemployment requirements and be rated with a 50% or more service-connected disability by the Federal Department Veteran Administrator rating schedule. DWDs Office of Veteran Services will identify veterans who meet the disability requirements.

The state grant is in addition to up to \$9,000 in tax credits that employers can receive under the existing federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit program for hiring a disabled person.

ii. 2013 WI Act 57

The Department of Workforce Development is drafting an emergency administrative rule to implement 2013 Act 57, the Apprenticeship Completion Award Program (ACAP). ACAP was passed in November 2013, and will be active from June 2, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Developed by the State Legislature and signed by Gov. Walker, ACAP partially reimburses eligible apprentices, sponsors and employers for partial related instruction costs. Available funding totals \$450,000.

ACAP will be administered by the Bureau, as directed by law. BAS may reimburse the apprentices, the employer and the sponsor—whichever incurred the cost—a maximum of \$1,000 for up to 25% of the tuition, book, materials and other course fees directly associated with related instruction. An apprentice is eligible when he or she successfully completes either the one-year calendar anniversary of the contract start date or the entire apprenticeship program within the ACAP performance period.

Karen Morgan reported several key considerations and requirements for implementing the program. First, it will be a learning experience for the Bureau, and BAS will pay close attention to any lessons learned. Second, the Bureau will rely on the local level to make the final determination of eligibility, especially for the one-year anniversary. If an apprentice is eligible, the reimbursement will go to the party that incurred the cost. Split reimbursements can be made if more than one party incurred expense. Last, ACAP explicitly excludes

apprentices and sponsors in public service occupations, because apprenticeship is funded through state taxes.

The Bureau plans to present performance data to the Legislature after the program concludes in the hopes that the program is continued in subsequent fiscal years. ACAP is projected to be used extensively by apprenticeship stakeholders, because similar funds available through the SAGE Grant (2011-2013) were disbursed entirely. Ideally, all funding will be disbursed before the performance period concludes, which would show a high need for additional funding.

A general discussion on the history and implementation of the program followed. Key questions and points include:

iii. Wisconsin Apprentice Website

WisconsinApprentice.com is a privately owned and operated website that culls and collects news articles relating to apprenticeship from multiple news sites into a single blog format. The owner created the website as a public service to apprenticeship, and approached DWD to sponsor the site, but DWD declined. The Bureau is sharing the website with state committees because it may be a useful information tool and because the website address is close enough to the Bureau's website address, wisconsinapprenticeship.org, that stakeholders may inadvertently confuse the two.

iv. Jerry Gross, former BAS employee in charge of state committees, passed away in late February.

**6. WTCS Update**

Marge Wood reported that WTCS and the Bureau will hold a joint-meeting between WTCS apprenticeship staff and BAS staff on June 4 at Fox Valley Technical College.

State Committee members are welcome to attend the Technical Skills Attainment for the Construction Electrician programs to be conducted on April 4 at Madison Area Technical College.

Todd Kiel and Jim Cook were involved in the youth apprenticeship discussions with CESA 6. Todd Kiel reported that the colleges and CESA 6 disagreed on a common direction for the program. The Green Bay Chamber of Commerce runs youth apprenticeship programs in manufacturing, and carries the appropriate insurance, but it is unknown if they would support or be able to sponsor a similar program in construction.

Todd Kiel indicated that he was called by AGC and CESA 6 in our area to set up some form of construction youth apprenticeship. Green bay chambers run the youth apprenticeship programs, and they carry their own liability insurance, which works in manufacturing, but no sure if works in construction sector.

**7. Electrical Apprenticeship Program Participants**

As of March 10, 959 apprentices and 244 employers were active in the program. The apprentice total is lowest from 2004-2012. The employer total is the lowest since 2004. The participant data included a newly formatted participant report and a brand new 10-year historical report. Both are produced by WEBi, the new reporting software acquired by BAS.

Owen Smith stated that BAS will be adding a nine-year historical average and annual +/- comparison against the average for greater comparison of annual totals. Owen asked members for suggestion on additional features. Members suggested women and minority totals, active employers by committee, and completion and cancellation rates. Owen stated that the data is substantial and complex enough to warrant separate, individual reports, which are located on the BAS website.

**8. The next meeting date** is tentatively scheduled for Monday, October 6, at 09:30 a.m. at the NECA-IBEW Apprenticeship Office in Madison.

**9. The meeting adjourned** at 12:10 p.m.

#### **10. Follow-Up Items**

*As a result of these discussions, the following will occur:*

- i. BAS will share the Committee's suggestion to hold the 2016 Biennial Conference in March or October at either the Holiday Inn in Stevens Point or Glaciers Canyon Conference Center in the WI Dells.
- ii. BAS will bring a DSPS representative to the fall meeting and discuss the automated letter content internally
- iii. BAS will research military assessments tests and bring samples to the fall meeting.
- iv. BAS will coordinate a meeting between interested members and partners and the YA staff, preferably in the Appleton area. Todd Kiel, Associated Builders and Contractors, and Faith Technologies would be interested in attending.

*Submitted by Owen Smith, Program and Policy Analyst*