

Feel the Power!

A Minnesota Laborers - Employers Cooperation & Education Trust Publication

BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES PROGRAM INCREASES DIVERSITY IN THE CONSTRUCTION TRADES

Building Strong Communities (BSC) was founded in 2021 to help promote women, people of color and veterans into the construction trades. The group's stated mission is aligning stakeholders to provide industry-driven, Apprenticeship readiness pathways into Union construction careers.

The BSC program is a 12-week, multi-trade pre-Apprenticeship preparatory program that helps give exposure and real training to enrolled candidates. Student participants will receive a variety of hands-on skills exercises and gain exposure at the various Union training centers including LIUNA Minnesota Training Center in Lino Lakes. The goal is for every BSC participant to successfully complete the program and become



registered Apprentices and begin their career in a trade that they are most excited about. BSC is a 501C3 nonprofit organization funded with support of the Minnesota Building Trades and the Fair Contracting Foundation of Minnesota.

As the BSC initiative expands, graduation results are also greatly improving resulting in more people starting careers in the various Union construction trades. On May 3, 2024, BSC held its largest graduation class in history with 167 graduates. The ceremony

recognized the collaborative efforts of various entities and included Union contractor partners who are critical in offering employment and additional mentoring. BSC also highlighted the efforts of their network of community-based organizations throughout the State of Minnesota who help refer and connect people into the program.

Rick Martagon, Executive Director for BSC has spent a lifetime in the trades and is very pleased with the success of the Building Strong Communities initiative. "Honestly, I've been around in the trades for a long time, and this Building Strong Communities program is the best thing I've ever been a part of," said Martagon. "This program is changing lives. It gives people the education and skills to make informed career choices that will benefit themselves and their families."



BSC BY THE NUMBERS

- 107** Placements in 2023/24
- 21** Union Construction Trades Involved
- 18-50** Age variance of participants
- 12-Week** Program
- Next Program Starts Feb. 2025*

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BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES...continued

In 2025, BSC will be working in partnership with the Union construction trades and North Hennepin Community College, who will provide support in interpersonal

skills training and foundational construction math. Participants can earn 4 college credits. The next pre-Apprenticeship program class begins in February, 2025 with graduation planned for May, 2025.

Information sessions for the February 2025 BSC program are already underway. Interested candidates and contractors/stakeholders may attend. For more details, visit www.buildingstrong.org or contact **Rick Martagon, Executive Director 651-253-3935** or RMartagon@BuildingStrong.org.



BSC is truly an innovative program that is eliminating barriers for some people and improving outcomes for many others who may not have considered the Union construction trades as a viable career option. The industry is always in demand for great people and BSC will continue to build bridges for people to see their future.



LECET SEEKS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With the upcoming retirement of the current Director, Minnesota Laborers-Employers Cooperation & Education Trust (LECET) is seeking an Executive Director for the Fund. The position is affiliated with LIUNA Minnesota & North Dakota and based out of St. Paul, MN.

LECET's core mission is to promote the many advantages of Union construction in the industry. This is an excellent opportunity for the new Director to continue building on the positive relationship between Union Signatory Contractors and LIUNA Members and lead the organization into the future. This

career position offers competitive pay commensurate with experience and the full Minnesota Laborers Fringe Benefit package. Interested candidates should contact **Joel Bergstrom, Orion Search Group** at **952-345-1006** or joelb@orionsearchgroup.com.

WELCOME NEW CONTRACTORS!

- American Fence Company Of Minneapolis LLC
- Blinderman Construction
- H2o Infrastructure Inc
- Mopping Man LLC
- NMC Companies
- Suemnick's Final Cut Tree Service LLC
- Waterproofing Experts

LECET Mission

The Minnesota Laborers-Employers Cooperation & Education Trust (LECET) fund was created in 1992 as a non-profit joint Labor/Management cooperation effort affiliated with the Minnesota Laborers Union. LECET aims to promote the many benefits of Union construction while addressing a number of initiatives that are of mutual benefit to both signatory Union Contractors and LiUNA members.

MN LECET Board of Trustees

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Contact Us



MNLECET.org
651.429.1600 | info@mnlecet.org
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LIUNAMinnesota.org
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EXPLAINING THE WORKER WELLNESS PROGRAM BENEFIT

The new Worker Wellness Program (WWP) benefit went into effect on May 1, 2024 replacing the new Earned Sick & Safe Time law that started January 1, 2024. WWP is fully implemented in only Minnesota approved Collective Bargaining Agreements. Eligible LIUNA member participants can start accessing their benefit now, adhering to certain requirements. **The Laborer must experience a qualifying leave and enroll in the Zenith-American Solutions Participant Edge website portal to claim benefits.**

With the program being very new, Laborers should understand that their WWP benefit account is in the process of gradually building up based on hours worked contributions.

For eligible Laborer participants, all WWP benefits remain in the Laborer's WWP account until claimed or forfeited. WWP Benefits are not lost when transferring between contributing employers and there is no cap on the amount of WWP benefits that may be accrued. WWP

is a pre-taxed fringe benefit and Laborers will pay the appropriate payroll taxes upon receiving the benefit (W-2 will be issued).

Qualifying leave events include:

- Vacation
- Holiday
- Individual or another's mental or physical illness, treatment, or preventative care.
- Absence due to domestic abuse, sexual assault or stalking.
- Closure of your workplace or a Family Member's school due to weather or public emergency.
- Jury duty
- Funeral leave
- Any other reason for which a Laborer is unable to otherwise work on a normally scheduled day of work to care for oneself or another.

The Participant Edge portal will provide:

- Eligibility status
- Current WWP balance
- Contribution history
- The process to submit claims for WWP payments
- Steps to self-certify that a qualifying leave is being taken.

**24/7 ACCESS
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BENEFIT
INFORMATION**

PARTICIPANT EDGE

edge.zenith-american.com



MINNESOTA LABORERS FRINGE BENEFIT FUNDS

scan code with your mobile device camera



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EASILY ACCESS ONLINE:

EDGE.ZENITH-AMERICAN.COM

Follow the login link found on the Zenith American Solutions website: zenith-american.com

Download Participant Edge Mobile Application through the **App Store** or **Google Play**

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Minnesota LECET is pleased to announce their 2024-2025 LECET Scholarship program winners. Awarded winners each receive \$1,000 in financial assistance toward their approved construction industry related higher education degree or training. Minnesota LECET has delivered \$80,000 in financial assistance over the past 15 years to eligible candidates who have met the program requirements and plan to advance within the construction industry.

“We are proud to support these young people who are going to be future leaders in the Union construction industry,” said Shawn Braford, LECET Chairman. “One of our key goals is to help people build great careers in construction and we have steadily been doing this since 2009.”

2024-2025 Minnesota LECET Scholarship Winners

Abel Girma	Ames Construction
*Ariel Corbett	Engineering & Construction Innovations
Garrett McCall	Ames Construction
Jaclyn Jarosz	Ryan Companies US Inc
Mikaela Prochnow	PCL Construction
Nathan Weckop	Bolander
Ryan Mattson	Ryan Companies US Inc
Seth Meikle	Ames Construction

**Ariel Corbett is also a member of LIUNA Local 563*

USDOL ADOPTS STATE PREVAILING WAGE RATES

On June 7, 2024, the Branch of Wage Surveys at the Wage and Hour Division of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) adopted Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry's (DLI) commercial and highway/heavy prevailing wage rates for the building, heavy, and highway federal Davis-Bacon wage determinations. The announcement was made by Administrator Jessica Looman. This means that federal rates now reflect the labor classifications and prevailing wage rates adopted in Minnesota.

This is an important measure for the construction industry in Minnesota and for Union contractors bidding and performing federal work. In the past, the federal Davis – Bacon wage rates were surveyed so infrequently therefore causing the construction wage rates to be out of date.

Prevailing wage is the minimum hourly wage employers must pay

certain workers who work on construction and public works projects where state dollars are used to fund the construction. The prevailing wage includes the employer's cost of benefits. The Minnesota DLI sets the prevailing

wage rates to be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the county where the project is located. These are called "certified" prevailing wage rates.¹

¹ Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, www.dli.mn.gov/business/employment-practices/prevailing-wage-information, Oct, 2024.



Construction workers in Minnesota will benefit by having both state and federally funded construction projects using the same wage rate data that is updated annually.



YOUR REMINDER TO
VOTE
ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024!

If you are traveling for work or personal, consider voting early!

Vote your paycheck. Vote your healthcare. Vote your pension.

Learn about how to vote, who is on your ballot and LIUNA-endorsed candidates at MNVoterguide.org.

LIUNA VOTES
Feel the Power

LABORER SPOTLIGHT: LAURIE JOHNSON SERVING OTHERS FOR 35 YEARS



UNION HALL: LIUNA Local 563
JOINED LIUNA: 1989
RESIDES: St. Paul, MN
CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: • 35-year Career
• Former LIUNA 563 President

When Laurie Johnson retired in August, you would think she would have plans to start slowing down after a lengthy 35-year career as a Skilled Construction Craft Union Laborer. But for her, that simply is not an option. Johnson has built her life around a combination of working hard and community service and one might say she is just shifting gears.

Johnson joined LIUNA in April 1989 and never missed a day of work unless it was a planned event. At that time, the Laborers Training Center (LTC) Apprenticeship Training Program did not exist. However, as the LTC training curriculum developed, she took the opportunity to invest in herself and her future by logging over 700 training hours which she credits for broadening skills and opening the door for more work opportunities.

Johnson's career involved many industries from heavy highway work to sewer and water, and commercial building. She's built parking ramps, airports, stadiums, schools, hospitals and countless more. Her strong work

ethic and good communication abilities helped her become a Foreman for five years with Knutson Construction. "I always want to do things right, and do things well," added Johnson. "I believe that teamwork can be awesome when you are really working with people and going in the same direction."

In 2015 Johnson became an Auditor for LIUNA Laborers Local 563 in Minneapolis and on April 1, 2021, was appointed President, becoming the first female President in their 53-year history. It was one of her highest honors being deeply involved in an organization that she loves. She is an active supporter in LIUNA's community service efforts, **Serving our Troops**, the **Laborers Family Fun-Raiser**, **Laborers Local 563 Coat Drive**, disaster response assistance and more.

Johnson's passion for serving others parallels her working career. In 1990, she became involved in the Boy Scouts and now currently serves as Assistant Scout Master for Boy Scout Troop 25 and Cubmaster for Cub Scout Pack 25 in St. Paul. For 34 years, she's volunteered regularly at several scout camps using her skills for repairs and improvements to make them safer and better for the scouts. She's a wonderful example of someone who practices the Boy Scout oath "to help other people at all times".

In addition, Johnson serves as a volunteer for Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in St. Paul and as a Eucharistic Minister, helping elderly people.

In 2023, Johnson was a finalist for **Top Women in Construction**, by Finance - Commerce News. She has participated in the local **Women Building Success** organization and the national **Tradeswomen Build**

Nations conference and advocates for women in the construction trades. "When I started, there weren't as many women like there are now," stated Johnson, "Women are totally capable of doing any job in construction and can advance to leadership positions."

Johnson is not motivated by awards or recognition. "It is nice to be recognized by others, but it is not something that drives me," said Johnson. She seems to have a sense of a higher calling that the work she is doing is making life better for someone else. "We're here to support and help each other and to just be a good person."

Laurie Johnson is at her core, a highly skilled Laborer. Even more, she is a community builder. Johnson is always dependable, rock solid and willing to use her talents to help others. "I guess you can say it's in my blood," said Johnson.





2024 - 2025

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(Authorized Stamp Only)



Flu Shot
(Authorized Stamp, Billing Statement, or *EOB Required)



The Health & Benefit Fair
Attend the Health & Benefit Fair April 20th, 2024
(Authorized Stamp Only)



Vision Exam
(Billing Statement or *EOB Required)

Note: Only health services rendered from 4/1/24 through 3/31/25 are eligible.
*Explanation of Benefits (EOB) required and provided by service provider or health plan.

PICK 3

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All prizes provided by Minnesota Laborers-Employers Cooperation & Education Trust

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laborersclinics.org

Appointment Desk Hours:

Mon-Fri: 6:00AM-7:00PM
Saturday: 8:00AM-4:30PM
Sunday: 8:00AM-4:30PM

SAFETY DRIVEN | THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

2nd Quarter 2024 Safety Driven Quarterly Award Winners

LABORER	CONTRACTOR	LABORER	CONTRACTOR
Jerod Oleson	Bituminous Roadways Inc	Zachary Johnson	Landwehr Construction Inc
Andrew Jerome	Carl Bolander & Sons	David Herda	Michels Corporation
Justin Meyer	Custom Drywall Inc	Isaiah Gilbert	MP Technologies
Andrew Hillesheim	Gopher State Cleaning	Troy Taylor	Northland Concrete & Masonry
Ron Spry	Gordon Construction of Mahnomen	Taylor Rolloff	Park Construction
John Schneider	J M F Construction Inc	Brandon Rapinac	S R Weidema Inc
Eric Christensen	Jewell Scanning & Coring LLC	Taqee Abdul Quddoos	Sunram Construction Inc
Chad Bailey	Johnson-Nelson Masonry	Clinton Cole	Thomas and Sons Construction Inc
Jim Adair	Kelleher Construction Inc	Noah Paulson	Ulland Brothers
Dillon Hansen	Kuechle Underground Inc	Dylan Semborski	Veit & Company Inc

All winners receive their choice of a Quarterly Award prize and have been nominated by Union Contractors in accordance with the LECET Safety Driven Program rules.

APPRENTICE OF THE MONTH AWARDS

July

Alonso Hernandez

August

Jayson Degerstrom

September

Brandt Kilbourn

Note: Students are reminded that all day classes begin at 7:00 am at the LTC. Trainees must come to class dressed as if they were reporting to work at a construction site. This includes appropriate work boots, long pants and shirt. Failure to do so can result in being asked to leave and to reschedule the class at a later date.

CONSTRUCTION LABORERS TRAINING CENTER

2350 Main Street
Lino Lakes, MN 55038

(651) 653-6710

www.Ltcmn.org



October 28, 2024
Lead Supervisor Refresher Nov 01

November 04, 2024
Blueprint Reading Nov 04-08
General Construction/Flagging/Pro-10 Nov 04-08
Hazardous Waste Initial Nov 04-08
@Duluth, MN - 1097 Hall

Lead Worker Initial Nov 04-06
Mason Tending Nov 04-08
Pipelaying 1 Nov 04-14
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Nov 04-08
Lead Worker Refresher Nov 08

November 11, 2024
Asbestos Worker Initial Nov 11-14
Concrete Practices/Insulated Forms Nov 11-15
Heavy Highway Skills/MnDOT Flag Nov 11-15
@Rochester, Eagles Club

Line & Grade I Nov 11-15
Mine Safety & Health Admin/CPRFA Nov 11-13
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Nov 11-15
Scaffold Erecting Competent Person Nov 11-15
Welding/Torch Cutting Air Arc Nov 11-Dec 17
Fall Protection Nov 14
Intro to Union & Apprenticeship Program Nov 14
@Rochester, Eagles Club

Asbestos Supervisor Refresher Nov 15
Asbestos Worker Refresher Nov 15

November 18, 2024
Asbestos Supervisor Initial Nov 18-22
Blueprint Reading Nov 18-22
General Construction/Flagging/Pro-10 Nov 18-22
Heavy Highway Skills/MnDOT Flag Nov 18-22
Mason Tending Nov 18-22
Pipelaying 1 Nov 18-22

Rigging & Signaling Qualified - 24 Hr Nov 18-20
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Nov 18-22
Intro to Union & Apprenticeship Program Nov 21
Intro to Union & Apprenticeship Program Nov 21
@Online Training

November 25, 2024

Air Sampling Nov 25-26
CPR/First Aid Nov 25
Gas Fusion Nov 25
Hazardous Waste Refresher Nov 25
Torch Cutting Demo Safety Nov 25-26
Aerial Lift Training Nov 26
Excavation Confined Space Nov 26
Lead Renovator Initial Nov 26-27
Mine Safety & Health Admin Nov 26
Dingo Training Nov 27
Fall Protection Nov 27
Vacuum Trailer Training Nov 27

December 02, 2024

Asbestos Inspector Init Dec 02-04
Blueprint Reading Dec 02-06
Blueprint Reading Dec 02-12
General Construction/Flagging/Pro-10 Dec 02-06
Hazardous Waste Initial Dec 02-06
Line & Grade II Dec 02-06
Pipeline Technology/MnDOT Flagging Dec 02-06
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Dec 02-06
Asbestos Worker Refresher Dec 06
Mine Safety & Health Admin Dec 06
@Virginia, MN - 1097 Hall

December 09, 2024

Concrete Practices/Insulated Forms Dec 09-13
Pipelaying 1 Dec 09-13
Plaster Tending Dec 09-13
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Dec 09-13
Scaffold Erecting Competent Person Dec 09-13
Supervisor Training & Education Program Dec 09-13
Torch Cutting Demo Safety Dec 09-10
Rigging & Signaling Qualified - 24 Hr Dec 11-13

LTC ANNOUNCES NEW GPS TRAINING PARTNER

In 2025, the Laborers Training Center will be offering new training utilizing the Sitech Northland Trimble Global Positioning System (GPS) staff trainers and equipment. Sitech Northland will provide LIUNA member trainees with the latest equipment and training to succeed in the field with a basic or advanced understanding of how to effectively operate the equipment.

The course consists of understanding how GPS works, set up procedures, and hands on aspects of working with GPS in real world applications. Training will also include importing and exporting job files, staking points, layout process and quantities for exporting and importing

materials. Prerequisite for this course offering is completion of both Line & Grade 1 and 2. Members shall contact the LTC registration office to reserve a spot at 651-653-6710.

**SITECH NORTHLAND TRIMBLE
GPS COURSE DATES AT THE LTC**

Feb 10 – 12, 2025

March 17-19, 2025

May 5-7, 2025

November 10-12, 2025



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RIBFEST RAISES \$60K FOR MILITARY MEMBERS & FAMILIES

The 2nd Annual Yellow Ribbon Ribfest hosted by the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council raised another \$60,000 to benefit Minnesota National Guard service members, families and military veterans on September 21 in Arden Hills, MN at the 34th Infantry Division. LIUNA Local 563, LIUNA Minnesota & North Dakota and LECET are major supporters.

The Ribfest event featured 25 competitors who are all associated with the trades, friends of Labor or Yellow Ribbon Companies. Over 1,000 attendees enjoyed ribs and special treats, live music, with Ryan Companies US Inc., "Pork Lift Certified" Team taking home Grand Champion honors. The Laborers Training Center

"Union Crew BBQ" Team won the People's Choice award.

"In many ways, those of us in military and you in organized labor have something in common," said Minnesota National Guard Army Colonel Eduardo Suarez. "We all reach a point in our careers that the best decision we ever made was joining, whether it was the military or a trade union."

Proceeds raised go to benefit Building Strong Communities (Article on page 1) to support programs and events for deployed service members families, like materials and resources for home repairs completed by Union trades people at no cost to the military family.

