FALL 2025

TRANSPORTATION TODAY WI™

→ HIGHWAY → RAILROAD → AVIATION → MARITIME → PERSONAL/RECREATIONAL → PUBLIC TRANSIT

YOUR WISCONSIN TRANSPORTATION CONNECTION

Muskego-Norway Schools' Technology Education Programs named "Outstanding" by the WTEA for 2025

Muskego-Norway Schools

The Muskego High School Technology Education program and the Lake Denoon Middle School Technology Education program were the recipients of two awards presented at the Wisconsin Technology Education Association Conference last spring: the Outstanding WTEA High School Program of the Year and the Outstanding WTEA Middle School Program of the Year, respectively.

Muskego High School Technology Education teachers Steve Brick, Joe Britt, Jeff DeGlopper, and Tom McCormick and Lake Denoon Middle School Technology Education teacher Todd Sobczyk were recognized at the WTEA Technology and Engineering Education Conference for their commitments to providing exceptional Technology Education services. We are grateful for our talented staff, the hard work and creativity of our students, and the support of our community that enables programs like Technology Education to grow and succeed.

Continued on Page 18

Driven to Succeed: Mukwonago High School's Automotive Program Accelerates Student Opportunities

Mukwonago Area School District

The Mukwonago High School Automotive Program, a cornerstone of the Mukwonago Area School District's Career and Technical Education offerings, is preparing students to shift gears from classroom learning to real-world careers with confidence and skill. With a comprehensive four-course pathway and strong industry partnerships, the program equips students with hands-on experience, professional certifications, and access to meaningful work-based learning opportunities.

Students begin their automotive journey with *Small Engine Repair*, progress to *Basic Automotive*, and then build their technical knowledge through *Automotive Service Technology I* and *Automotive Service Technology II*, both transcripted credit classes. This sequenced curriculum is intentionally designed to introduce foundational skills early and progress toward more advanced diagnostic and repair competencies.

A key highlight of the program is its ability to offer ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) Industry Credentials. These

Continued on Page 14

BUILD A CAREER WORKING WITH HEAVY EQUIPMENT

WHAT IS AN OPERATING ENGINEER??

OPERATING ENGINEERS are the operators of what is generally referred to as HEAVY EQUIPMENT: Cranes, dozers, scrapers, loaders, motor graders, tractor loader back-hoes, excavators, rollers pavers, concrete plants and mixers, compressors, pumps and much more.

GREAT WAGES & BENEFITS

HOW DO I BECOME AN APPRENTICE?

YOU MUST ATTEND one of our Information Sessions held at the Coloma Training Center located at W11584 State Rd 21, Coloma WI. Please call (715) 228-4911 to register.

Applicants are required to arrive by 8:45 a.m. There will be no entry after 9 a.m.

Contact us with any questions

Phone 715-228-4911

Email info@139training.org

www.139training.org

WISCONSIN OPERATING ENGINEERS
W11584 STATE ROAD 21
COLOMA WI 54930

STATE OF THE ART TRAINING CENTER

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PUBLISHER/EDITOR: Renee Feight

EDITORIAL: Andria Reinke

PAGE COMPOSITION: Andrew Clausen

WEBMASTER: Scott Bayerl

Please direct articles, advertising, questions or comments to:

Transportation Today WI™
PO Box 1704
Eau Claire,WI 54702
Phone/Fax 715-839-7074
www.transportationtodaywi.com

Please direct all inquiries to:
renee@transportationtodaywi.com, or
larry@transportationtodaywi.com

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Teaching Today MN™

IN THIS ISSUE

Wisconsin DOT's Highway Construction Skills Training Program Offers Path To Career In Road Construction Industry

Highway and bridge construction jobs are in demand, and these jobs are a great way to earn a living. You might wonder, "where would I even start?" A good answer is to check out the Highway Construction Skills Training (HCST) program, managed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT).

No prior construction experience is required. You may even be surprised how quickly you develop new skills. HCST is a certified pre-apprenticeship program taught by knowledgeable and passionate instructors. They will help you learn everything from the terminology to the tools, methods, math, safety regulations — even other skills like putting yourself out there, interviewing and landing your new job.

> ***Most graduates line up good-paying jobs as laborers, flaggers, ironworkers and equipment operators upon completion of training.***

The training is a six- to eight-week commitment in a hands-on environment. It includes on-site visits with construction contractors and trade unions as well as classroom instruction by WisDOT and other industry partners.

The HCST program has many connections to the construction marketplace, most graduates line up good-paying jobs as laborers, flaggers, ironworkers and equipment operators upon completion of training. Many graduates frequently talk about the experience as life-changing, and reference a sense of pride and accomplishment in their newfound work. It's also a chance to chart a stronger financial future as many opportunities start at $20-plus per hour with room to grow.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to visit wisconsindot.gov/HCST to review testimonials and find more information on upcoming sessions. Employers, as well, are encouraged to get to know the program and benefits of hiring skilled HCST workers.

HCST classes are held in Milwaukee, Racine, Madison, Green Bay, Crandon and Hayward. HCST sessions at any of the six locations are open to qualified applicants. Core service partners include: WRTP Big Step, Forward Services Corp., WisDOT's Tribal Labor Advisory Committee, Sokaogon Chippewa Community College and Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University.

> ***A chance to chart a stronger financial future as many opportunities start at $20-plus per hour with room to grow.***

Completion of the HCST program is reliant upon passing a Commercial Driver License (CDL) written exam, passing an apprenticeship test from one of the skilled trades, receiving flagger certification, and completing OSHA 10 safety training. While it may sound like a daunting list, WisDOT staff and the service providers work very hard to coordinate an effective program with experienced professionals. Instructors work with students every step of the way. To date, more than 1,000 HCST graduates have been placed with employers as laborers or apprentices.

Take action on your new career path in highway and bridge construction:

- Visit wisconsindot.gov/HCST to find application materials, an interactive tool to find a class near you and links to testimonials.
- Keep your eye out too! WisDOT Labor Development Specialists also work to promote the HCST training program at many career fairs and other outreach engagements across the state.

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

1 PHYSICAL ENDURANCE
You can tackle the elements, like working with your hands, and can work 40 hours a week.

2 PASSION FOR CONSTRUCTION
You want the satisfaction of building the road you travel on and seeing the results of your work.

3 A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE
A valid driver's license is needed to travel to training and worksites. We can also help you obtain CDL certification.

4 MATH AND READING SKILLS
You should be able to read and do math at a 6th grade level. Coursework involves construction math and terminology.

5 CAN PASS A DRUG TEST
Safety is a priority on any construction site. You will be trained to save lives in this program, and you must be clean to join.

** Participants must be 18 years or older.*

Highway Construction Skills Training

Highway Construction Skills Training (HCST) is an intensive 6-week training course taught by industry professionals. With us, you will learn the skills needed to start your career in construction:

- OSHA 10 Construction Safety
- Flagging Certification
- CPR/First Aid Certification
- Construction Math and Measuring
- Physical Conditioning
- CDL Preparation
- Plan and Blueprint Reading
- Tool Identification
- Construction Terminology
- Apprenticeship Test Preparation

See at right for contact information for HCST Training Centers

FORWARD SERVICE CORPORATION

Forward Service Corporation has been operating the HCST program since 2000 and currently has programs in Green Bay, Madison, Beloit, and Winnebago County.

1819 Aberg Avenue • Madison, WI 53704
608-216-7626 • info@fsc-corp.org • www.fsc-corp.org

Highway Construction Skills Training Centers

Contact Information:

Milwaukee Area
Kimberly McGowan
Kmccgowan@wrpt.org
414-937-3630

Racine Area
Jon Anderson
janderson@wrtp.org
262-619-6560

Northeast Green Bay Area
Ranard Morris
rmorris@fsc-corp.org
920-518-1733

Southwest Area
Lori Thompson
lthompson@fsc-corp.org
608-640-9518

North Central Tribal Area
Noel Vandiver
noel.vandiver@scc-nsn.gov

Caleb McGeschick Sr.
caleb.mcgeshick.sr@scc-nsn.gov
715-478-7633

CPA
WISCONSIN
CERTIFIED PRE-APPRENTICESHIP
SINCE 2017

As a Certified Pre-Apprenticship Program, we

- Provide a bridge to construction career opportunities for students, the unemployed and underemployed, and underprepared learners.
- Prepare students with the skills, competencies, support, and minimum qualifications to enter a registered apprenticeship.
- Prepare underrepresented populations for high-quality careers in construction.

Skill Improvement and Apprenticeship Fund

Operating Engineers 139

In today's rapidly evolving construction industry, skilled labor is more essential than ever. Recognizing this demand, our apprenticeship program has actively engaged with the Highway Construction Skills Training Program to provide comprehensive training and development opportunities for the next generation of construction workers. This partnership has not only enhanced our apprenticeship offerings but has also contributed significantly to the infrastructure development of our communities.

Our involvement in the Highway Construction Skills Training Program started with a shared vision: to bridge the gap between educational training and real-world application in the highway construction sector. By collaborating on curriculum development and training sessions, we've ensured that our apprentices receive industry-relevant skills that are crucial for success in construction jobs, particularly in highway projects.

The training program offers a comprehensive approach that includes classroom instruction and hands-on experience. This format enables apprentices to learn essential concepts such as project safety, equipment operation, materials handling, and construction techniques. By directly participating in real highway projects, apprentices can apply their skills in practical settings, solidifying their understanding and building confidence.

One of the striking features of our involvement has been the emphasis on safety training. Given the potentially hazardous conditions involved in highway construction, we prioritize equipping apprentices with the knowledge and tools to work safely. The program integrates comprehensive safety protocols into every aspect of training, ensuring our apprentices value safety as a culture, not just a requirement.

Moreover, the collaborative nature of the apprenticeship program fosters an environment of mentorship. Experienced professionals from the Highway Construction Skills Training Program serve as trainers and mentors, guiding apprentices through challenges and sharing invaluable insights from their own careers. This mentorship not only enriches the training experience but also helps apprentices build professional networks and develop crucial soft skills like teamwork and communication.

Community outreach is another significant aspect of our apprenticeship program's involvement with the training initiative. We actively participate in local career events aimed at raising awareness about career opportunities in the construction industry. By engaging with schools and community organizations, we promote the importance of highway infrastructure and inspire young individuals to consider apprenticeship as a viable and rewarding career path.

As our apprenticeship program continues to evolve, we remain committed to helping our apprentices succeed in their careers while addressing the skilled labor shortage in highway construction. The ongoing collaboration with the Highway Construction Skills Training Program enhances our ability to provide participants with the training, experience, and support they need to thrive in a critical industry.

In conclusion, our apprenticeship program's involvement with the Highway Construction Skills Training Program represents a powerful partnership focused on fostering skilled labor for the future. Together, we are building not only the infrastructure of our roads but also the future of our workforce — one apprentice at a time. We are excited about the impact this collaboration will continue to have on our apprentices, our communities, and the construction industry as a whole.

High School Students Take a Trip to the Wisconsin Operating Engineers Training Center!

Elcho School District

Three of our high school students traveled to Coloma to the Wisconsin Operating Engineers Training Center with Mr. Goeks to learn about careers in the field and apprenticeship opportunities. This was a great opportunity for our students who are interested in becoming heavy equipment operators after high school!

www.elcho.k12.wi.us

Kiel Area School District

Several students from Kiel High school visited the The WI Operating Engineers training center in Coloma WI, to learn about careers in heavy equipment operation . While there they got to play with big kid toys in the big kids sandbox . Who says learning isn't fun.

www.kiel.k12.wi.us

The Wisconsin Operating Engineers take training very seriously. Our well-equipped training facility in Coloma, WI is a tremendous resource for union members wanting to pick up new skills or brush up on the latest developments in areas like Telescopic Crane Operation, Directional Boring, Excavator Operation, and much more. It's also a great opportunity for workers with little to no experience to get a running start on their career. In addition to training, we also take our apprentices' time seriously by providing them with a generous and consistently rising hourly wage while they train.

For more information go to https://139training.org

FAST TRACK YOUR FUTURE
WITH FABTECH

Are you ready to take your love for mechanics and machines to the next level? Ever dreamed of turning your hobby into a cool career? Look no further than the **FABTECH** Training Program! We're here to make learning fun and hands-on – *just the way you like it.*

SNAP TO LEARN MORE

In just **12 MONTHS**, you'll be on the job at one of Fabick Cat's locations.

Our one-year program is affordable with eligibility for financial aid and **Fabick Cat scholarships!**

3 PATHS

With three different areas of focus, **FABTECH** can help you find the right fit for your future career.

Kick off your education with a **$5,000* tool credit** to start your career in the heavy equipment industry.

$5,000

What happens when you graduate? You'll receive a **$5,000* sign-on bonus** from Fabick Cat!

READY FOR NEXT STEPS?

Visit **www.fabickcat.com/fabtech** to learn more or schedule a tour!

** Email the Fabick Cat team at **careers@fabickcat.com** for more information about the full benefits of the **FABTECH** program.*

Careers in Highway Construction

Heavy Equipment Operator

Heavy equipment operators are responsible for running the heavy machinery used in road construction projects, such as bulldozers, graders, and excavators. This job requires a high level of skill and experience, but it can be gratifying for those who enjoy working with large equipment.

The median annual wage for construction equipment operators was $55,270 in May 2023.

Truck Driver

Truck drivers transport materials and equipment to and from construction sites. This job requires a commercial driver's license (CDL) and the ability to operate large vehicles safely.

The median annual wage for heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers was $54,320 in May 2023.

Skilled Laborer

Laborers perform various tasks on road construction sites, including digging trenches, pouring concrete, and laying asphalt. This job requires physical strength and the ability to work in all weather conditions.

The median annual wage for skilled construction laborers was $44,310 in May 2023.

Pipe Installers

Pipe installers place and repair underground pipes for water, gas, and sewer systems. This job requires physical strength and the ability to work in tight spaces.

The median annual wage for plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters was $61,550 in May 2023.

Asphalt Paver Operator

Asphalt paver operators are responsible for laying asphalt on roads, highways, and other surfaces. This job requires experience operating heavy machinery and a high level of skill in working with asphalt.

The median annual wage for construction equipment operators was $55,270 in May 2023.

Concrete Finisher

Concrete finishers pour and finish concrete surfaces for roads, highways, and other construction projects. This job requires high skill and experience in working with concrete.

The median annual wage for masonry workers was $53,010 in May 2023.

Surveyor

Surveyors are responsible for measuring and mapping land for road construction projects. This job requires a high skill level in using specialized equipment and software.

The median annual wage for surveyors was $68,540 in May 2023.

Electrician

Electricians are responsible for installing and maintaining electrical systems on road construction projects. This job requires high skill and training in working with electrical systems.

The median annual wage for electricians was $61,590 in May 2023.

Construction and Maintenance Painter

Construction and maintenance painters paint walls, equipment, buildings, bridges, and other structural surfaces, using brushes, rollers, and spray guns. They may remove old paint to prepare surfaces prior to painting and mix colors or oils to obtain desired color or consistency.

The median annual wage for construction and maintenance painters was $47,700 in May 2023.

Cement Mason

Cement masons smooth and finish surfaces of poured concrete, such as floors, walks, sidewalks, roads, or curbs using a variety of hand and power tools. They may align forms for sidewalks, curbs, or gutters; patch voids; and use saws to cut expansion joints.

The median annual wage for Cement masons was $50,720 in May 2023.

Construction Foreman

A construction foreman plans, directs, or coordinates, usually through subordinate supervisory personnel, activities concerned with the construction and maintenance of structures, facilities, and systems. They also participate in the conceptual development of construction projects and oversee the organization, scheduling, budgeting, and implementation for the life of the project.

The median annual wage for a construction foreman was $104,900 in May 2023.

Construction and Building Inspector

Construction and building inspectors inspect structures using engineering skills to determine structural soundness and compliance with specifications, building codes, and other regulations. Inspections may be general in nature or may be limited to a specific area.

The median annual wage for construction and building inspectors was $67,700 in May 2023.

LiUNA!

WISCONSIN LABORERS' DISTRICT COUNCIL

Feel the Power

THE WISCONSIN LABORERS' APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM is a comprehensive, hands-on training program designed to prepare individuals for a rewarding career in the construction industry. As part of the LIUNA Wisconsin , this program provides apprentices with the skills, knowledge, and experience needed to become skilled construction craft laborers.

This apprenticeship combines on-the-job training with classroom instruction, giving participants a well-rounded education in areas such as:

- Site preparation
- Concrete work
- Pipe laying
- Environmental remediation
- Safety and health practices
- Highway & bridge construction

Over the course of the program, apprentices work under the guidance of experienced journeyperson while earning a competitive wage with regular increases as skills develop. Classroom training is provided through the Wisconsin Laborers Training Center, which is recognized for its state-of-the-art facilities and certified instructors.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY — Individuals must be at least 18 years of age or 17 years of age with a high school diploma. They must have the physical ability to perform the work of the trade with or without reasonable accommodations, and they must have reliable transportation.

TESTING PROCESS — Any individual entering the Apprenticeship program must be tested before starting work. Our program requires a reading and arithmetic component. Most technical colleges offer online or in-person testing options. *If you are looking to test with us, please contact our office at (608) 212-0802.* If you have a contractor or a contractor has instructed you to be tested, contact the Director of Equity and Outreach Saul Castillo, email **scastillo@liunawisconsin.org**.

Wisconsin Laborers' Apprenticeship & Training Center

55,000 Square Foot Training Center
4 Hands-On Training Bays • 8 Classrooms
35 Courses Offered

- Heavy and Highway
- Commercial and Industrial Building Construction
- Utility Construction
- Environmental Remediation
- Asbestos Removal
- Hazardous Waste Worker
- OSHA
- MSHA
- ICRA
- Pipe Fusing
- CDL Prep
- Traffic Control

Learn more about apprenticeships at **liunawisconsin.org**

Wisconsin Laborers' Apprenticeship Coordinator
Ray Wiatt | (608) 846-5768
rwiatt@liunawisconsin.org
4633 LIUNA Way, Suite 100, DeForest, WI 53532

College Opportunity — CIM Program at SDSU

If you have a child thinking about college or you know a student who's interested in a high-demand, hands-on career, there's a unique program that could be a perfect fit.

South Dakota State University (SDSU) offers a **Concrete Industry Management (CIM)** bachelor's degree program, designed to prepare graduates for leadership roles in one of the world's most essential industries: concrete construction and materials.

What is the CIM Program?

The CIM program is **a four-year Bachelor of Science degree** that blends:

- **Concrete-focused technical education** (materials, production, and construction applications)
- **Core business courses** (finance, marketing, project management, statistics)
- **Real-world experience** through internships, site visits, and industry networking

Students graduate with the practical knowledge of concrete technology and the business acumen to move into management roles. Options for minors include management and marketing, both of which are designed to enhance the student's value upon graduation.

Why This Matters for Minnesota Families

- **In-State Tuition**
  Minnesota is one of approximately 10 feeder states in the region whose residents qualify for in-state tuition at SDSU, thanks to a regional partnership, making this a cost-effective option for Minnesota students and families.
- **Industry-Specific Scholarships Available**
  Numerous scholarships are offered through the CIM National Steering Committee, the North Central region CIM Patrons, and local industry partners. These are designed to support students who want to grow their careers in the concrete or construction fields.
- **Tailored to the concrete industry**
  The CIM program prepares students to excel in roles such as:
  - o Ready-mix operations
  - o Precast operations
  - o Cement and aggregate manufacturing
  - o Construction project management
  - o Materials sales, logistics, and engineering
  - o Quality control and sustainability
- **Career-Ready Graduates**
  Students in the CIM program have high job placement rates, thanks to strong industry connections, hands-on internships, and national exposure. There are numerous professional networking opportunities with industry managers, ving graduates direct access to employers nationwide.

Key Facts About CIM at SDSU:

- Program launched at SDSU in 2021, one of only five in the U.S.
- Classes include concrete materials, construction safety, estimating, and management
- Opportunities for paid summer internships in the industry (often leading to job offers)
- CIM students participate in industry organizations, networking events, and competitions

Next Steps for Interested Students and Families:

- **Learn more online:** Concrete Industry Management Program | South Dakota State University
- **Explore financial aid and scholarship options:** SDSU offers dedicated financial counseling
- **Connect with the program faculty:** if you'd like to discuss career pathways from the CIM Program at SDSU, contact the program director, Tim Hostettler, at timothy.hostettler@sdstate.edu.

Scholarship Packages & In-state Tuition: WI, MN, ND, NE, IA, IL, CO, WY, MT, KS & MO.

South Dakota State University
Concrete Industry Management

The Bachelor of Science in Concrete Industry Management (CIM) is a future you can build on!

The Bachelor of Science in Concrete Industry Management curriculum is a broad blend of science, engineering, and business management, enabling graduates of the program to manage people and systems, and promote products or services related to the concrete industry.

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A CIM DEGREE?

- Environmental Management
- Operations Management
- Quality Control Management
- Safety Management
- Estimation/Sales Management
- Marketing Management
- Contracting Services Management
- Concrete Product Management
- Project Engineer
- Project Management
- Construction Management
- Inventory Control Management
- Cement Terminal Management
- Ready Mixed Concrete Plant Management
- Concrete Pipe Plant Management
- Precast-Prestressed Plant Management

PROGRAM PERKS

- Industry-specific scholarships help cover tuition costs.
- Patron funded travel to industry events (including the World of Concrete in Las Vegas!)
- Well-rounded business management education.
- Experiential summer work opportunities for added income and industry insights.
- Internship program ensuring real-world experience.
- Strong industry networking opportunities with leaders in the industry
- Nearly 100% job placement

Create your career path into a multibillion-dollar, global industry — Enroll in CIM today!

CIM CONCRETE INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT

Contact: Timothy Hostettler
CIM Program Director
Concrete Industry Management Program
Brookings, SD
(605) 688-6998
Timothy.Hostettler@sdstate.edu | www.sdstate.edu

Scan to Apply Now!

An Introduction to Youth Apprenticeship

A Youth Apprenticeship is a one or two year "earn while you learn" program for high school juniors and seniors consisting of work and related classroom instruction in a chosen occupation. Training is received on-the-job where the employer teaches the skills of the occupation. This is augmented by taking courses that are related to that occupation. No matter what the youth apprentice decides to do after high school, they will be more prepared for success because of their apprenticeship!

Youth Apprenticeship Occupational Programs

Youth Apprenticeship (YA) opportunities are organized into 16 broad YA Program Areas listed below. Within each Program Area are a number of more specific Occupational Pathways.

Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources Occupational Program

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) program involves careers in the planning, implementation, production, management, and processing of agricultural commodities and services.

Architecture and Construction Occupational Program

The Architecture and Construction program involves occupational careers in the designing, planning, management, building and maintaining the built environment, and in performing routing service work and related duties on utility systems.

Arts, Audio Visual Technology and Communications Occupational Program

Arts, Audio Visual Technology and Communications careers range from press operators to customer service representatives and sales. The printing industry applies creativity and technical skills to transform text and graphics into finished products.

Business Administration Occupational Program

Business pathways involve careers in planning, oversight, and organizational tasks needed to run a business. This includes directing, maintaining, and evaluating business functions essential to run effective and productive operations.

Education Occupational Program

Careers in education involve planning, managing and providing education services, and related learning support service, and other tasks associated with schools, libraries, and museums. It involves attending to children at schools, businesses, private households, and childcare institutions.

Finance Occupational Program

The financial and insurance services industry is a changing an expanding sector of the U.S. economy. Bank branch operations offer a wide range of services from internet banking, 24-hour call centers, and consolidation.

Government and Public Administration Occupational Program

In this program, students will lead and guide the work of technical staff. They might also serve as the point of contact for a client / customer.

Health Science Occupational Program

Health Science jobs include work in ambulatory healthcare, nursing and residential care, and hospitals.

Hospitality and Tourism Occupational Program

All over the world, better equipped and more lavish hotels, resorts, tours, events, and attractions are captivating even more willing travelers for business or pleasure.

Human Services Occupational Program

Students in this pathway support hairstylists in delivering client services related to personal appearance, ensuring customer satisfaction, and managing salon operations. All states require barbers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists to be licensed.

Information Technology Occupational Program

Information Technology (IT) careers are in the design, development, support, and management of hardware, software, multimedia, and systems integration. The IT industry is a dynamic and entrepreneurial working environment that has had a revolutionary impact on the economy and society.

Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security Occupational Program

Fire Protection — Students in this pathway gain skills related to fire protection and community protection. Apprentices must adhere to industry safety and security standards.

Law Enforcement — Students in this pathway gain skills related to the enforcement of laws and safety of citizens. Apprentices must adhere to industry safety and security standards.

Manufacturing Occupational Program

The manufacturing sector has grown with the use of computers, robotics, and need for green energy components.

Marketing Occupational Program

Marketing is a multi-faceted, critical business function that is under-girded by such social sciences as economics, psychology, and sociology.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Occupational Program

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) careers provide thousands of career opportunities for students with an interest in math, science, and problem-solving.

Transporation, Distribution & Logistics (TDL) Occupational Program

This diverse program encompasses careers and business involved in the planning, management, and movement of people, materials, and products by road, air, rail, and water, including related support services such as infrastructure planning and management, logistics services, and maintenance of mobile equipment and facilities.

The Benefits of Youth Apprenticeship

A PAYCHECK
From day one, you will earn a paycheck for your work.

HANDS-ON TRAINING
Receive practical on-the-job training in your chosen occupation.

AN EDUCATION
You will learn from both your job and classroom related instruction.

A CAREER
Youth Apprenticeship can lead to a fulfilling, long-term career.

CERTIFICATION
Earn an industry recognized completion certificate.

How to Apply

Consider the various career options above and speak to your school counselor, teachers, and parents. Think about whether you would like to work outside or inside, with other people or more by yourself. Exploring your options and preferences will help you find a good YA program match for you!

Then find the YA Regional Coordinator in your area by going to: dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship/contacts.htm and talk to them to learn more about the program, its requirements, and benefits. Decide if a Youth Apprenticeship is the right opportunity for you, and if it is, apply!

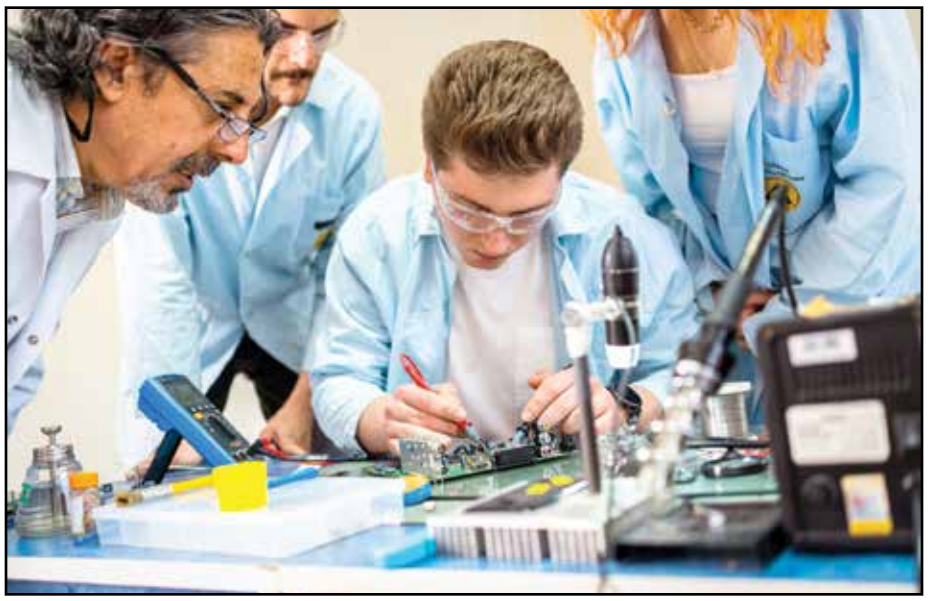
Find more comprehensive descriptions of the above programs at:
dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship/ya/applicants.htm

DWD Awards Nearly $1 Million in Equipment Grants to 18 School Districts

More than 4,000 students to benefit from training in industries where skilled workers are needed

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has awarded $978,637 in Wisconsin Fast Forward grants to 18 school districts across the state that will serve an estimated 4,281 students. The Advanced Manufacturing Technical Education Equipment grants will help schools prepare students for quality careers and address the state's skilled labor shortage.

Schools will use the funding to upgrade career and technical education training equipment and facilities. Projects include modernizing welding labs, acquiring dental and biomedical lab equipment, and launching an industrial robotics program.



Birchwood School District, Washburn County | $99,740

Funds will be used to purchase a FANUC Certified Education Training (CERT) Program to provide students with hands-on training and skill development in programming, autonomous systems, and industrial robotics. This will help prepare students for careers in manufacturing, logistics, engineering, and any field that includes automated systems.

Burlington Area School District, Burlington County | $18,972

This grant will be used to purchase a Torchmate Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Plasma Machine and accessories, which will provide students with hands-on experience in cutting-edge technologies for metal fabrication.

Cadott Community School District, Chippewa County | $100,000

The district will use funds to purchase welding equipment to enhance the technical education infrastructure for their new facility.

Elcho School District, Langlade County | $18,887

Funds will be used to purchase a welding cart with accessories, a belt sander, tool chest, and a metal lathe. This equipment will create new avenues for students by giving them exposure to CNC Milling, opening potential partnerships and youth apprenticeship opportunities.

Eleva-Strum School District, Trempealeau County | $24,625

This grant will be used to purchase metal inert gas (MIG) and tungsten inert gas (TING) welders, a plasma cutter, and a welding fabrication table which will provide hands-on training with industry-standard equipment, improve safety, and develop students' technical skills.

Ellsworth Community School District, Pierce County | $100,000

These funds will purchase advanced machine tools including Haas HKM-1 Knee Mills, Haas Minimill CNC Vertical Machining Centers, and a Haas TL-1 CNC Tool Room Lathe, which will expand student opportunities across various trade industries and empower students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world projects.

Gillett School District, Oconto County | $22,205

Funds will be used to purchase a brake press, combination belt and disc grinder, and solid metal fabrication, welding, and grinding tables, which will assist in enhancing its labs to match local manufacturing needs.

Hurley School District, Iron County | $11,850

This district will use funds to purchase a Finishing Solutions (GFS) Open Faced Spray Booth, new exhaust filters, and an Ingersol Rand Air Compressor, which will help prepare students for manufacturing careers.

Ithaca School District, Richland County | $5,154

This grant will be used to purchase a SawStop Cabinet Table Saw, SawStop Mobile Base, Spectrum 625 Plasma Cutter, and Millermatic 211 Welder, which will provide students with hands-on fabrication experience.

Luxemburg-Casco School District, Kewaunee County | $73,331

The district will use funds to purchase an Epilog Fusion Edge 24 60W Laser Engraver, Southbend Metal Lathe, and Unmanned Arial Vehicle (UAV) Drone Lab, which will expand career pathway experiences in its Fab Lab, Innovation Lab, and Metals Shop.

Mosinee School District, Marathon County | $54,000

Funds will be used to purchase a FANUC ARCMate 50iD/7L Robotic Welder and Arc Max Elite CNC Plasma System which will expand their program offerings in industrial robotics, automated welding fabrication, and precision metal cutting. These programs will help prepare students for careers in welding fabrication and automation technology and offer industry-relevant certifications and dual-credit opportunities.

Osseo-Fairchild School District, Trempealeau County | $17,101

This district will use funds to purchase a Haas TL1-1 CNC Toolroom Lathe, which will increase students' access to additional training resources and better prepare them for post-secondary training.

Pewaukee School District, Waukesha County | $85,922

This grant will be used to purchase a Laguna SmartShop Fiber Laser CBX, Tormach 1100 MX CNC mill, and Laguna SmartShop II Pro CNC router, which will increase exposure and industry-relevant skills in manufacturing, construction, and robotics that align with local and regional workforce needs.

Portage Community School District, Columbia County | $100,000

This district will use grant funds to upgrade equipment to current industry standards in their Technical Education Department, which will prepare students for advanced manufacturing and construction careers.

Prairie du Chien Area School District, Crawford County | $100,000

This grant will be used to purchase B9Creations Educational Dental Lab equipment, which will increase students' exposure to engineering careers in dental, biomedical, automation, and advanced manufacturing.

School District of Monroe, Green County | $100,000

This district will use funds to purchase equipment for expanding hands-on training opportunities in manufacturing and construction fields.

School District of Oakfield, Fond du Lac County | $12,375

These funds will be used to purchase a MakerFab CNC Plasma Table, which will upgrade the metal manufacturing lab and support Computer Aided Design (CAD) curriculum for middle- and high-school students.

Sparta Area School District, Monroe County | $34,475

This district will use funds to purchase an APT Robot Weld Cell Certification Cart, which will provide students confidence to operate similar robots and help meet the workforce demands of local employers.

From the Garage to the Classroom: How One Teacher Is Driving Success in McFarland's Tech Ed Program

McFarland School District

When you walk into the automotive tech classroom at McFarland High School, it feels more like a garage than a traditional classroom. That's by design—and it's thanks to a teacher who never expected to be here in the first place.

"I didn't go to school to become a teacher," says the auto tech instructor, Brian Hawn. "I went to school for automotive maintenance and spent years doing fleet maintenance for FedEx." After coaching football at McFarland for three years, an opportunity opened up in the tech ed department. "I was lucky enough to get this gig through an experience-based licensure program."

With help from district administrators, Hawn navigated the state's alternative licensure pathway. "They gave me a checklist of what to do and when," he says. "I started on a one-year probationary license. Now I've got a five-year license, and I'm here to stay."

The tech ed department currently includes three staff members, with Mr. Hawn focusing on automotive technology. Their program is not just about teaching—it's about building real-world skills that lead directly to employment. A central part of that is their certification through ASE, the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence.

"ASE certifies mechanics in the industry, but they also accredit high school programs. It's not easy to get certified," he explains. "When I started, our accreditation was about to expire, so we had to go through the full recertification process. We got it renewed, and that was a big deal."

The ASE offers exams to students as well, and the program boasts an impressive 70% pass rate. "Students are really engaged in these courses. They love the hands-on learning."

Students start with a freshman elective, *Intro to Tech*, and then move into hands-on classes. The auto track begins with *Air-Cooled Engines*, then *Autos 1*, where students learn practical skills like servicing brakes and tires. *Autos 2* dives into electronics and drive systems.

But it's *Autos 3*, the capstone class, that really shines.

"I'm proud of this class," the instructor says. "It's collaborative, project-based. We've done engine swaps and full rebuilds. One of our biggest projects was taking a beat-up 1985 Chevy Corvette and turning it into a 400-horsepower off-road go-kart. The kids did everything."

Typically, 18-20 students enroll in Autos 3, and each year, five to six go straight into the field, often before graduation through McFarland's youth apprenticeship program.

"That program is unbelievable. Kids earn money, get credit, and work in real jobs, all while enrolled in my class."

The department is also intentional about encouraging female participation. "We've been working to improve representation. We actively recruit female students to explore this pathway."

Much of the program's success, he says, is thanks to district support.

"McFarland has really backed tech ed. We have the tools, the space, the safety equipment—everything we need to run this program professionally. That support from the district makes all the difference."

And for this not-so-traditional teacher, the reward is in the classroom. "What a joy it is to wake up and go to work every day. 'We're doing fuel injectors today—let's go!' The kids are excited to learn. They want to be here."

In McFarland, the road from the shop floor to the classroom is paved with opportunity—and horsepower.

www.mcfarland.k12.wi.us

Driven to Succeed: Mukwonago High School's Automotive Program Accelerates Student Opportunities Continued from Page 1

nationally recognized certifications not only help students stand out in the job market but also generate alternative revenue for the district through Career and Technical Education (CTE) Incentive Grant funding. "Through equipment and monetary donations from local businesses, we are able to train our students on industry-grade equipment," said Dustin Lehman, College & Career Readiness Coordinator for the Mukwonago Area School District. "This allows us to offer many ASE certifications, which in turn brings alternative revenue back into our district that we can feed right back into the program to maintain high standards."

Hands-on experience is central to the program's philosophy. Many students participate in Youth Apprenticeships with local auto dealers and repair shops, gaining real-world knowledge and building relationships that often turn into full-time employment after graduation.

One of the strongest supporters of the program is a Chevrolet dealership in Mukwonago, which has donated tools, equipment, and other vital resources to help keep the program aligned with current industry practices. "Strong industry support from local businesses like this dealership, combined with a strong local technical college, helps us maintain a high level of rigor and ensure we provide industry-ready skills for our students," Lehman emphasized.

The program's connection with the technical college also creates pathways for students beyond high school. Automotive students earn transcripted credit, allowing them to begin college with credits already in hand. In addition, the college has generously donated multiple vehicles to Mukwonago's program to support hands-on learning.

Mukwonago students showcase their skills each year in regional competitions such as the *ADAMM Technicians of Tomorrow Competition* and the *WCTC Automotive Repair Competition*, where they consistently perform well and gain exposure to postsecondary and industry representatives.

The success of the automotive program is part of a larger tradition of excellence within the Technology Education Department at Mukwonago

High School, which was named High School Program of the Year in 2020 and received national recognition in 2021.

With strong academic instruction, powerful community partnerships, and a clear focus on industry alignment, Mukwonago's Automotive Program is building more than skilled technicians—it's building futures.

www.masd.k12.wi.us

Hands-On Learning at Holmen Auto Service

School District of Holmen

It's the start of another school day inside Holmen High School, and a few students of Ryan Ziegler's Auto Service 1 class are already hard at work helping a teacher whose tire is leaking while others spend time hunched under the hood testing car batteries.

Auto Service 1 is a semester course of 85 minutes daily, mainly consisting of juniors and seniors. These high school students are learning with professional tools on actual vehicles with real problems. Auto Service is also a dual credit class with Western Technical College and provides students with three post-secondary credits. This allows our students to earn high school and technical college credit simultaneously and receive their Auto Service Excellence (ASE) certification at the completion of the course.

In this class, students learn about these systems by repairing and diagnosing issues:

- Wheel systems and tires: mount and balance tires, tire puncture repair, tire rotation
- Brakes and ABS system: replacing brake pads, measuring thickness, bleeding brake lines, diagnosing ABS sensors
- Preventative maintenance fluid: completing checklists, fluid flush, and exchanges, customer concerns

- Charging and starting system: measuring voltage drops and amperage outputs
- Ignition system: replacing ignition wires, coils, and plugs
- Cooling system: coolant flow, thermostat replacement, coolant flush
- Fuel system: fuel volume and pressure tests, fuel filter replacement

Technology Education teacher, Ryan Ziegler, says this type of hands-on learning helps prepare students for the real world, "The students love hands-on learning," said Ziegler. "They can repeat the process until they can complete the task with little to no help from the instructor. It is awesome to see the students complete a task they thought was impossible on their own."

One group of students in the class are working on a battery testing lab. The students are learning how to load test a battery, measure parasitic drain, remove corrosion, and check physical connections to ensure a working battery. "The students walk away with a solid understanding of the basic automotive systems," says Ziegler. "All of the students learn how to maintain their own vehicle."

Another group of students is helping out a Holmen High School teacher whose tire has a slow leak. To find the leak, students have to put their problem-solving skills to the test. "The most important thing I would like them to take away is the problem-solving ability. Use the problem-solving process to simplify the problem and quickly come up with a viable solution," says Ziegler as the students dip the tire in a dunk tank to locate the leak. Finding no visible leak, Mr. Ziegler uses this as a teaching moment for his class about snow tires and how to communicate with customers. "Throughout the course sequence, students will learn how to communicate with customers and coworkers. Some of that communication is done by the use of industry software. Another way is teaching the students how to listen to customer concerns actively," says Ziegler.

A HUGE shoutout and THANK YOU to Dave Sherden for his incredible donation to the Holmen High School automotive classes!

Dave generously donated his beloved 2001 Volvo XC70 to our program as a project car for students to work on and hone their vehicle repair skills. This car will be a fantastic hands-on tool for our students as they build their knowledge and confidence in automotive maintenance.

We are so grateful for your support, Dave—our classes will make great use of this car!

www.holmen.k12.wi.us

Luxemburg-Casco's Ahnapee Automotive Program Provides Career Exploration Through Community Partnerships

Mike Snowberry,
Director of Learning Services
Luxemburg-Casco School District

Career exploration and community partnerships are two pillars of the student educational experience within the Luxemburg-Casco School District. We strive to help our students find their passion and identify potential career paths prior to graduation.

This would not be possible without the more than 60 community-partner relationships we have. With many area companies facing employee retirements in the coming years, they are happy to engage with us as they seek replacements to fill their next-generation workforce.

Meeting regularly with industry professionals also allows us to match student interests with area workforce needs.

Because of our symbiotic relationship with the local business community, Luxemburg-Casco enjoys the highest Youth Apprenticeship participation rate in the state of Wisconsin. More than half of our eligible students — 58 percent — take part. In the Class of 2025, 110 of 152 graduates were in YA.

We introduce students to the many career possibilities through hands-on experiences during a Trades Career Day each March.

A long-standing and highly popular program is Ahnapee Automotive, an educational initiative within the high school that began in the 2020-21 academic year. Students in their junior and senior years can earn college credits while also receiving credit towards high school graduation through a partnership with a nearby technical college.

Through successful completion of the college's Automotive Maintenance Technician (AMT) curriculum, students attain a one-year technical diploma. Upon graduation from high school, they may choose to ladder into an associate degree in Automotive Technology or a two-year technical diploma as an Automotive Technician.

Ahnapee Automotive is made possible by the more than one dozen partnerships we have in the automotive industry. Area companies support the program through investment and opportunities for hands-on student work.

Ahnapee Automotive offers four, fully equipped automotive bays with new lifts for use by students in the program, along with a tire machine and balancer, equipment to perform brake maintenance, a set of tools for each station, and an automotive lab with exhaust system.

Those students who take part in the Luxemburg-Casco AMT curriculum can become certified by the National Automotive Technician Education Foundation (NATEF) for Maintenance and Light Repair Program Standards. NATEF certification affords students with the opportunity to either enter the automotive industry workforce upon graduation or to pursue a technical degree.

A one-year AMT technical diploma is earned through the completion of 26 credits in courses that include Transportation Service Operations, Auto Service Operations, Brake Systems, Steering & Suspension Systems, Intro to Electrical Systems, Engine Repair, Engine Performance, Advanced Chassis Systems, and Transportation Welding.

The pathway into a career as an Automotive Maintenance Technician includes diagnosing vehicle malfunctions, performance of basic appropriate repairs, and recommending/conducting regular vehicle maintenance. Related, specialized careers include Automotive Electronics Specialist; Brake Specialist; Engine Repair Specialist; and Steering, Suspension and Alignment Specialist.

No matter which career track a student chooses, our ultimate goal is to ensure that our graduates become productive members of the community, making a good living. That is the ultimate partnership!

www.luxcasco.k12.wi.us

Bergstrom Technician Apprentice Program

Bergstrom's Technician Apprentice Program offers high school and college-level candidates a hands-on, in-depth experience to jumpstart their careers in the automotive industry. Participants work alongside seasoned technicians, gaining practical knowledge and valuable mentorship.

Youth Apprenticeships:

- Offered to students interested in automotive who are in their junior or senior year of high school.
- Apprentices are paired with an experienced technician for guidance and skill development.
- Apprentices receive paid working hours during the program.
- Skills learned while on job correlate with competencies set by the school to allow work to qualify as class credit.

College Apprenticeships:

- Offered for team members who are enrolled in an automotive or collision degree program at a local technical college
- Tuition Reimbursement of 50% of tuition each semester and additional post-graduate reimbursement available.
- Apprentices are paired with an experienced technician for guidance and skill development.
- Apprentices receive paid working hours during the program and a structured raise schedule each semester.

This program is an excellent opportunity to gain hands-on experience, earn while you learn, and set the foundation for a successful career in automotive technology. One of Bergstrom's students who recently went through this program and graduated reflects on their time in the program fondly. We asked Gerardo to share his experience in the program and how his time correlates into his personal life and what his daily life as a collision repair technician looks like.

For Gerardo, the most rewarding part of being an auto body technician is the ability to work at his own pace while knowing he's making a meaningful contribution to the community. Being part of the Bergstrom team has been especially fulfilling for him, as he values the unique bond and approachable nature of his colleagues, something he believes sets the team apart.

Before joining Bergstrom, he studied Auto Body Collision Repair at FVTC and graduated in May 2022. His instructors played a significant role in shaping his career, helping him secure his position at Bergstrom. In just 2½ years, he advanced from a recent graduate to a flat-rate collision technician, a milestone he's particularly proud of.

Outside of work, he has a passion for snowboarding, which he considers his favorite winter activity. His admiration for his father runs deep, as he credits him with instilling the values of hard work and determination that have guided his career. These principles, along with a strong work ethic, have helped him navigate the ever-evolving automotive industry, where learning never stops.

A typical day in his role begins with setting up and organizing his workspace to prepare for the challenges of the day. Whether working on a minor dent or major structural repairs, he carefully plans each job to ensure efficiency and precision. Staying busy and accomplishing important tasks keeps him motivated, and he encourages those interested in the automotive field to stay focused and set clear goals. His biggest career lesson so far has been understanding how quickly vehicles evolve, making continuous learning a key part of his success.

With his drive and dedication, Gerardo continues to make an impact in his role at Bergstrom, helping customers get back on the road while growing as a skilled technician.

Muskego Norway School's Technology Education Program Focuses on Preparing Students for Career Success Continued from Page 1

Muskego High School's Technology Education program is a cornerstone of career readiness, ensuring students have the skills, certifications, and experiences necessary for success in an ever-evolving workforce. Through cutting-edge curriculum, hands-on training, and integration of industry-recognized credentials, our program fosters informed decision-making and prepares students for both post-secondary education and direct entry into technical fields.

This strong foundation begins well before high school. At Lake Denoon Middle School, students are introduced to essential principles of design, engineering, and technology through engaging, project-based learning. By the time they reach high school, they've already developed a core understanding of problem-solving, collaboration, and technical literacy. Together, Lake Denoon and Muskego High School create a seamless, aligned experience that supports students in building a clear vision for their future and taking the first steps toward meaningful, career-aligned pathways.

Comprehensive Course Offerings

Our program is built on a robust sequence of courses that align with career pathways in *Engineering, Architecture & Construction, Product Design & Fabrication*, and *Transportation & Logistics*. Students begin their journey with foundational courses and progress toward specialized studies, engaging in real-world applications of technology, design, and engineering principles. Offerings include:

Engineering Pathway (Project Lead the Way — PLTW)

- **PLTW Introduction to Engineering and Design** (9–12)
- **PLTW Principles of Engineering** (10–12)
- **PLTW Civil Engineering & Architecture** (10–12)
- **PLTW Digital Electronics** (10–12)
- **PLTW Engineering Design & Development** (12) — A senior capstone course where students solve real-world engineering problems with industry mentors.

Building Trades & Construction Pathway

- **Introduction to Building: Fundamental Framing** (9–12)
- **Electricity & Plumbing** (9–12)
- **Interior Trim & Flooring** (10–12)
- **HVAC** (10–12)
- **Roof Framing & Exteriors** (10–12)
- **Foundations & Masonry** (10–12)

Product Design, Development, & Fabrication

- **Intro to 3D Printing & Design** (9–12)
- **Intro to Fabrication Woods, Metal, plastic** (9–12)
- **Fabrication & Design I** (10–12)
- **Fabrication & Design II** (10–12)

- **Fabrication Entrepreneurship** (11–12) — A student-run business venture where participants develop and market their own products.

Transportation & Automotive Technology

- **TC — Auto Technology I** (10–12) — Introduction to automotive systems, including basic diagnostics, maintenance, and repair, with hands-on experience in a shop setting.
- **Advanced Autos — Engine Servicing** (11–12) — Covers engine disassembly, inspection, and reassembly, focusing on internal components and performance optimization.
- **Advanced Autos — Engine Performance** (11–12) — Explores fuel systems, ignition timing, emissions, and diagnostic procedures to maximize engine efficiency.
- **Advanced Autos — Suspension, Brakes, and Drivetrain** (11–12) — Hands-on training in steering, suspension systems, braking components, and powertrain mechanics.
- **Advanced Autos — Electrical and Electronic Systems** (11–12) — Focuses on vehicle electrical systems, including wiring, sensors, diagnostics, and troubleshooting advanced electronics.

Building Future-Ready Students: Certifications Embedded in Muskego's Technology Education Program

At Muskego High School, *Technology Education* is more than just hands-on learning—it's a direct pathway to career readiness. Our department remains committed to staying at the forefront of industry advancements, continuously integrating new technologies into our curriculum to ensure students leave with both the skills and certifications that make them workforce-ready. By embedding industry-recognized credentials into our courses, students graduate with tangible qualifications that give them a competitive edge in their chosen fields.

Fabrication & Design Pathway: Automation & Welding Certifications

With the rapid evolution of *Industry 4.0*, the demand for skilled workers in automation and advanced manufacturing has never been greater. Muskego's *Fabrication & Design* pathway provides students with hands-on experience using CNC machines, laser cutters, robotic automation, and welding technology. To ensure career readiness, we embed certifications directly into our program.

Automotive Technology: ASE & NC3 Certifications

The *Automotive Technology* pathway is designed to prepare students for careers in the fast-changing world of transportation technology. Students in this program graduate with ASE Entry-Level Certifications, validating their skills in vehicle maintenance, diagnostics, and repair. Additionally, we offer four NC3 (National Coalition of Certification Centers) certifications, giving students industry-recognized credentials in specialized automotive systems. These certifications ensure our graduates are prepared for careers in dealerships, service centers, and technical fields immediately upon graduation.

Building Trades: Career-Connection, Safety & Construction Certifications

To prepare students for the skilled trades, our *Building Trades* pathway integrates multiple certifications that are highly valued in the construction industry. Students earn Career Connections Certifications, OSHA-10 Certification, and First Aid & CPR Certification.

Work-Based Learning and Career Readiness: A Pathway to Youth Apprenticeship and Career Success

Beyond the classroom, Muskego's *Technology Education* program provides students with invaluable real-world experiences that bridge the gap between education and industry. Our goal is to align students with career-based learning opportunities that propel them toward high-demand fields while giving them a head start in their professional journeys. By embedding *Youth Apprenticeships* into our programming, we create direct pathways for students to gain paid, on-the-job training while still in high school—springboarding them into successful careers upon graduation.

Connecting Students with Industry Through Work-Based Learning

Muskego High School has developed strong partnerships with local businesses and industry leaders who are eager to mentor and train the next generation of skilled professionals. These partnerships provide students with opportunities for:

- **Youth Apprenticeships** (YA) — A structured, state-supported program where students gain paid industry experience while earning high school credit.
- **Internships** — Short-term, career-aligned experiences that expose students to professional environments and expectations.
- **Job Shadows** — Opportunities for students to observe and engage with industry professionals, helping them make informed career decisions.
- **Dual Credit & Certifications** — Students can earn both high school and college credit while obtaining industry-recognized certifications, accelerating their career readiness.

CONNECT Academy: A Gateway to Hands-On Career Exploration

Muskego's CONNECT Academy plays a vital role in facilitating these career experiences, allowing students to align their coursework with practical, hands-on applications. Through CONNECT, students:

- Work directly with employers in their chosen career pathway
- Earn high school credit while gaining real-world work experience
- Build professional networks that lead to future employment opportunities
- Explore career fields to make informed post-graduation decisions

Muskego Technology Education Program Is A Launchpad for Career Success

Through career-based learning, embedded certifications, and access to state-of-the-art training facilities, Muskego High School provides students with a springboard to high-paying, in-demand careers. Whether pursuing college, technical training, or immediate entry into the workforce, our students leave with the knowledge, skills, and hands-on experience necessary to thrive.

By continuously strengthening our connections with local industry partners, we are creating a sustainable talent pipeline, ensuring that Muskego graduates are not just career-ready, but career-prepared and career-proven.

www.muskegonorway.org

School District of Janesville Drives Student Success with Automotive Program

Chris Maedke, CCTE Coordinator
School District of Janesville

The School District of Janesville is excited to share information about our Automotive Program, a multifaceted pathway available to students at Joseph A. Craig High School and George S. Parker High School. This program provides a route for students interested in the high-demand automotive industry, combining hands-on learning, college credit opportunities, and real-world career experiences.

The program is a sequence of four courses, guided by experienced instructors, Mr. Wright at Craig High School, and Mr. Dettman at Parker High School.

- **Automotive 1: Small Engines:** This foundational semester course is open to all grades. Students learn about the basics of transportation, getting their hands dirty by disassembling, diagnosing, and repairing small 4-stroke gasoline engines.
- **Automotive 2:** Focusing specifically on cars, this course teaches students about all vehicle systems, from brakes and suspension to ignition and fuel. A highlight is the opportunity for students to perform basic maintenance on their own vehicles.
- **AS Automotive 3:** This year-long course expands on previous knowledge, diving into engine processes, electrical systems, and an introduction to auto body work. This course is the first of two that offer Advanced Standing credit through our partnership with Blackhawk Technical College.
- **AS Automotive 4:** The capstone course for juniors and seniors, this year-long class focuses on advanced topics like total electrical systems, emissions, engine diagnosis, and detailed mechanical repair. A required contract project challenges students with a long-term, real-world task, preparing them for the demands of the workplace.

Credentials and Real-World Experience

In addition to academic credit, students in the program can earn valuable industry certifications, including S/P2 Automotive Safety, ALI Lift training, and multiple Snap-On certifications. These credentials provide a competitive edge and demonstrate a student's commitment to the field.

Beyond the classroom, our students have multiple opportunities for work-based learning. They can participate in job shadowing, cooperative experiences, or a formalized Youth Apprenticeship. The program also encourages students to join the Craftsman with Character pre-apprenticeship program, a semester-long experience that combines immersive job shadowing and mentorship with character development.

Students can also join SkillsUSA, a national Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO), which provides opportunities for leadership development and skill-based competitions.

The automotive program is more than just a series of classes; it's a launchpad for

future success. It provides students with the skills, knowledge, and connections to thrive in a dynamic and essential industry.

You can follow the district's Career & Technical Education/ Work-Based Learning program Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/people/SDJ-Career-Technical-EducationWork-Based-Learning/61566486997586

janesville.k12.wi.us

ASE Certification at Whitewater High School

Students who take the automotive classes offered at Whitewater High School can earn ASE certification in addition to learning auto mechanics and shop-based skills.

"The ASE certification is a nationally recognized certification and an industry standard for most mechanics in the industry," according to teacher, Justin Buntrock.

He described the exams taken by his students as "very content heavy on theory and automotive repair skills and knowledge."

Buntrock said he steers his students toward achieving the ASE certifications because, "it's just a really good opportunity to get a foot in the door to start a career in the automotive field," further describing the certifications as "a good resume builder."

Among the students who take his classes, he said, "some will go into the workforce or will go to school for an automotive career, and the ASE certification is an almost guaranteed in."

Still, he said, not every student who takes automotive classes is planning a career in the industry, but those who take his classes and earn certification will have opportunities to save money because they will be able to perform some of their own work on their vehicles.

"It benefits them in real-world life," he said, adding that he likes to say: "life skills and career readiness."

The ASE provides both, he said.

While all of his students are given an opportunity to take the ASE exams, not everyone passes them, he stated. Students can try again any time before June.

Some students are drawn to the certification opportunities because they are likely considering a career in the field or have automotive backgrounds in their families.

It's a history that Buntrock shares.

A new automotive teacher

Prior to joining the Whitewater High School staff, he served for five years as an automotive shop teacher at the Fort Atkinson High School.

He made the move because he saw an opportunity to become involved with program development, which, he said, offered some rewarding challenges, and the school had a larger automotive shop.

While serving in the School District of Fort Atkinson and in an earlier interview with Fort Atkinson Online, Buntrock said his interest in the automotive industry was nurtured by his father, whom, he said, wanted he and his brother to have self-sufficiency when it came to their vehicles.

"My old man was a mechanic for about 15 years before I was born … He taught me about mechanics," Buntrock said in the earlier interview.

Buntrock said his brother chose a career in the automotive field, but he was drawn to teaching.

As an automotive instructor, he said, he found a way to use both sets of skills.

As a teacher, he noted, he finds helping students develop a career path equally as inspiring as giving them the ability to become self-reliant.

Supporting the tech ed program

Along with supporting his students, Buntrock said he wanted to embrace an opportunity to develop tech ed programming.

Within the Whitewater Unified School District, he said, he was impressed by the level of support for the tech ed program, and for embracing opportunities brought through the ASE certification process, which, he noted, can help support his automotive classroom budget.

He made reference to the "Carl D. Perkins: Strengthening CTE (career and technical education) for the 21st Century Act," which, according to information found on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website, was re-enacted in 2018 and set in motion in 2019 to serve as a mechanism used to establish regional pathways, increase the rigor of work-based programs, improve student performance through focused activities and support, and expand nontraditional occupations, among other goals. The federal program is grant-based and facilitated at the state level.

Buntrock described opportunities made available through the program as "substantial."

Information about the program as presented on the DPI website is here: https://dpi.wi.gov/cte/carl-perkins.

Growing the program

Looking at the success of the high school's tech ed program, Buntrock said he arrived at a time of change, and while a foundation was in place, he saw room for growth.

As a teacher who is newer in the district, Buntrock said he has spent time building relationships and rapport with his students, and he and the other teachers have worked together to grow the department into a place through which they can "give our students the best learning opportunities we can.

"We are on the right track," he said.

Within the tech ed environment they have collectively envisioned, Buntrock said, the focus is on safety, while offering a "creative, career-oriented and life-skills-oriented area for growth."

As he looks toward the future of the Whitewater High School tech ed department, he said: "I'm most excited about the opportunities I know I can provide my students through the support of the administration and the district."

Now, over a year in, he said, he feels connected to his students.

"Everything feels good, and strong," he said.

Congratulations to Whitewater High School Technology Education teacher, Mike Fellin, for receiving the 2025 WTEA Spirit Award!

Each year, the Wisconsin Technology Education Association recognizes educators and industry professionals who demonstrate exceptional service and dedication to technology education.

Well done, Mike!

whs.wwusd.org

This is part of a larger article by Kim McDarison for the Fort Atkinson Online. Reprinted with permission.

Freedom High School Collision Repair

Freedom High School

Freedom High School has been teaching collision repair since 1972. FHS has long been known for solid teaching of collision repair fundamentals and turning out well prepared students who have excelled in the industry. Retired instructor Bob Abitz put FHS on the map with over 35 years of success stories and dozens of shop-owning former students who got their start at Freedom High School. This year, FHS was able to add the crowning achievement of ASE accreditation to the program's accolades. Current instructor Jay Abitz (Bob's son) says FHS has been teaching these same entry level skills for over 50 years, but it was the new Collision Repair Fundamentals certification that finally fit the bill for FHS. For many years we have taught basic entry level skills of dent repair, primer and paint applications, plastic repair, welding, and removal/installation of parts. We pair that with a basic mechanical repair background and our students can enter the industry as well-rounded, entry-level technicians. Many of our students have gone on to be technicians, shop managers, front office, and many business owners as well. FHS collision repair has always had excellent support from administration, the community, and the local industry, everyone was on board for making the accreditation process a success. Supporters from the ASE foundation and the WATDA's Brent Kindred put on an accreditation celebration in May!

The ASE accreditation process is a lot of work on the front end, but our state Education Manager Aaron Troxell really helped to break down the process. Aaron's guidance in organizing our documents really helped push me across the finish line. I had worked towards this accreditation over the last few years. Once the collision repair fundamentals option became official, it took about 1 year of steady work to align our curriculum, tests, and outcomes to the ASE task list and standards. We already met and taught the majority of the standards and tasks, but calling them out and making it clear where they took place and how they were assessed accounted for the majority of the work.

FHS currently offers 6 auto classes: auto 1,2,3 and Auto Body 1,2,3. To meet the required classroom hours, the standards and tasks are spread across those 6 classes. While teaching basic maintenance and light repair in the auto classes, collision fundamentals are included at the same time. Tasks such as remove and install (R&I) of parts, is a task that fits well in a standard auto class. Students may be doing oil changes, tire rotations, and TPMS sensors, and at the same time R&I a door, mirror, door handles, ect. The auto body classes contain the main skills of dent repair, plastic repair, welding and refinishing. Students even get an introduction into ADAS systems and some structural topics as well.

One concern for Jay Abitz during the process was tools and equipment. The program while being well supported is still part of a small school and community. It can be difficult to replace tools and equipment and stay up to date. However, FHS has built a sufficient collection of the basic tools and equipment needed, the only specialized equipment is the paint booth and refinishing department which Jay works to continually update.

The accreditation could not come at a better time. FHS is currently under construction by way of a district wide referendum. The automotive program will be one of the main benefactors of this 64 million dollar project! FHS is building a state of the art 12,000+ sq ft brand new auto shop, more than doubling the current space. New equipment like lifts, point of use tools, and more space for cars and storage, FHS is making an investment in the future of this program! Expected to be completed in the fall of 2026, FHS will capitalize on space, equipment, tools, and accreditation to better serve its students and introduce many young minds to the automotive industry!

freedomschools.k12.wi.us

HSRA Introduces Wisconsin High School Students to Motorsports

The High School Racing Association (HSRA) was started in 2020 as a way to provide youth with an economical and realistic opportunity to enter stock car racing and keep younger generations interested in the sport. Additionally, we strive to expose students to automotive and motorsports careers that are out there.

The HSRA features all high school-aged drivers between 14 and 19 years old in competition throughout the summer race season (June - September). Racetracks across Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois currently host events, and race teams can choose how often and where they want to race.

Auto racing is a sport that allows for comprehensive learning through automotive and related fields. Not only are students able to have fun and participate in positive sportsmanship, but they have the opportunity to develop many hands-on skills, communication and marketing through the process and are exposed to trade careers too. Not all students want to run or throw a ball.

So what does it mean for school districts?

High schools across Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois have been making history as they make auto racing a letterable sport for their students. This is not a requirement, but an amazing way to show support!

As we strive to get more schools and automotive programs involved and on board, school districts and their students can benefit from HSRA in many ways:

1. Fostering Skill Development: A High School Racing team provides students with a unique platform to develop their driving skills in a controlled and supervised environment. It allows them to learn valuable lessons indiscipline, focus, and teamwork while dialing in their driving abilities (not on the highway!).
2. Promoting Safety and Responsibility: By offering a structured racing program within a racetrack setting, we can instill an emphasis on safety and responsible driving practices among young participants. This division provides training and guidance to create responsible racers — skills that can carry over to everyday road use.
3. Encouraging STEM Education: Motorsports is an ideal opportunity to engage students in science, tech, engineering, and mathematics education. The integration of practical applications can make STEM subjects more relatable and exciting for students.
4. Scholarships and College Pathways: This experience can open doors to college scholarships and career pathways in motorsports, automotive, engineering, etc. Students who excel in the division have been afforded scholarships from supporters of HSRA to benefit their education through technical and trade schooling.

Per the HSRA rules, students must paint their cars with their school colors and/or incorporate their school mascot on the car. So school districts are receiving recognition by these students competing. and racers are representing your school with respect and integrity.

Schools do not need to sponsor any races. They do not have to hire any event workers or officials.

High Schools With Current Students Participating

Melrose-Mindoro High School
Royall High School
Whitehall Memorial High School
Minooka High School
Portage High School
Tomah High School
Evansville High School
Norwalk Ontario Wilton High School
Home School
Sparta High School
Prairie Phoenix Academy
New Lisbon High School
Romeoville High School
McFarland High School
Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau High School
Lomira High School
West Salem High School
Luther High School
Northfield High School
Sycamore High School
Parkview High School
JWP High School
Harlem High School
Slinger High School
Waseca High School
Bangor High School
Oswego East High School

If schools are unable to provide equipment/hands-on support for their students, racers can still compete in HSRA. It's important for schools to want to find a way to recognize any student that may be involved in sports even if they are not WIAA-sanctioned sports, and so many schools have been able to recognize their students through athletic letters or pins.

We understand safety is of the utmost importance to you. There are safety requirements that must be made to the race cars before drivers are allowed to compete. Safety is not optional! Racers and crew members sign waivers and minor releases at each track and run under the track's insurance. Schools are not liable.

How we're making this realistic for students . . .

In an effort to keep these student athletes at an amateur status, HSRA drivers do not receive a monetary purse. Instead, HSRA racers are awarded trophies and provided benefits, such as discounts at track and division sponsors, scholarship opportunities, etc. Entry fees for HSRA drivers and crew are kept minimal at each participating race track.

HSRA racers compete for individual points against drivers at all other HSRA tracks for national and state championships. We also crown a school champion, and that school is presented with a traveling trophy.

As students need support with resources, we work diligently to connect them to those able and willing to help in the motorsports and automotive communities.

Contact: Jonathan Eckelberg, HSRA Series Director - jon@highschoolracing.org or 608-769-3903.

highschoolracing.org

A STOCK CAR RACING SERIES JUST FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

- ✔ Less expensive way to become a race car driver!
- ✔ $30 Membership gets drivers into all HSRA races all season!
- ✔ Compete against high school racers from other schools and other states!
- ✔ Have a chance at scholarships, trophies and awards.
- ✔ Potential to earn high school athletic letters and school awards!
- ✔ Currently there are 40+ high school students racing HSRA from 18 high schools across Wisconsin and Illinois.

Current race tracks hosting the HSRA division

Grundy County Speedway

LaCrosse Fairgrounds Speedway

Madison Int'l Speedway Oregon, WI

The Track Chateau Speedway Lansing, MN Est. 1956

Slinger Speedway World's Fastest 1/4 Mile Oval!

Tomah-Sparta Speedway

Elko Speedway

HSRA High School Racing Association

For rules, full schedules and more head to
highschoolracing.org

Questions? Contact the HSRA Series Director
Jonathan Eckelberg
jon@highschoolracing.org | 608.769.3903

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