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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Chuck Parker, President | John Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer | Steve White, Director

Hope Gas and NC Airport Pitch Microgrid Concept

In September, Ullico/Hearthstone Utilities Inc. closed on its acquisition of Hope Gas, formerly Dominion Energy West Virginia for \$690 million.

Last month, the group held a meeting at the North Central West Virginia Airport, pitching a plan to build a natural gas microgrid on the airport's property.

The meeting was attended by industry officials, union workers, and economic development experts.

During the presentation, Hearthstone/Hope Gas CEO Morgan O'Brien described the microgrid concept, which is similar to a natural gas and solar microgrid that already powers Pittsburgh International Airport.

The idea would be to use natural gas from the property owned by the airport to power its own facilities with natural gas.

"The airport has development rights. We could easily be drilling gas here and using that gas to create

power for the airport here on-site," said O'Brien.

In addition to the grid, connection pipelines would also be constructed to transport excess natural

gas to other off-site markets.

Industry officials believe that having a clean source of energy on the airport's campus could help to bring other advanced manufacturing busi-

nesses to the area.

However, O'Brien said that the concept is still in its early phases, and plans are still being prepared but

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North Central West Virginia Airport Director Rick Rock discusses a plan pitched by Hope Gas to build a natural gas microgrid on the airport's property. (Photo credit: Charles Young, WVNews)

Better Wages

West Virginia Highway Construction Industry Completes Davis-Bacon Wage Survey

The Federal Davis-Bacon Survey for highway wage rates was recently completed and will be used in determining the prevailing wage on federal highway projects. The survey has been ongoing for the last few months, and it was a major project

undertaken by the crafts and the staff at the WV State Building and Construction Trades.

Since West Virginia lost our state prevailing wage law in 2016, it is even more important for our trades unions to have our wage rates recognized by

the U.S. U.S. DOL on "Davis-Bacon" projects. These wages are determined when the agency conducts a survey in a state at a time determined by DOL. West Virginia had not had a federal wage survey since 2014, and this year they decided to survey our

highway wage rates. "This is a crucial time to have our federal Davis Bacon rates updated given the federal funding coming our way due to the recently passed federal Infrastructure Bill," said Justin Williams, the new

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Nov. 14-20

West Virginia Trades Celebrate 2022 National Apprenticeship Week, Hold Planning Meeting

This month, from November 14-20 our nation is celebrating National Apprenticeship Week (NAW).

NAW is an annual, nationwide celebration where industry, workforce, education, and government leaders host events to showcase the successes and value of Registered Apprenticeship.

The Affiliated Construction Trades (ACT) have been holding tours of apprenticeship training facilities and meeting with lawmakers and public officials to educate them about the benefits of craft apprenticeship.

However, this year Justin Williams, incoming ACT Director, ex-

plains the trades are going a step further to plan for the future.

“This year, we kicked-off National Apprenticeship Week by bringing our training coordinators from every craft to the Operating Engineers Training site to discuss workforce development efforts and set strategic planning goals for the coming years,” said Williams. “It was the first time we had the group together since before the COVID-19.”

NAW also serves as an opportunity to highlight how Registered Apprenticeship, a proven and industry-driven training model, provides a critical talent pipeline that can help to address some of our nation’s press-

ing workforce challenges such as rebuilding our country’s infrastructure, addressing critical supply chain demands, supporting a clean energy workforce, modernizing our cybersecurity response, and responding to care economy issues.

Throughout the week, the U.S. Department of Labor has designated each day to highlight a specific theme. The following themes were set for this year: Monday, Nov. 14 -- Registered Apprenticeship in New and Emerging Industries; Tuesday,

Nov. 15 -- Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship; Wednesday, Nov. 16 -- Expanding Registered Apprenticeship to Underserved Populations; Thursday, Nov. 17 -- Women in Apprenticeship; Friday, Nov. 18 -- Public Service Apprenticeship and Veterans in Apprenticeship.

For more information on National Apprenticeship week, log on to www.apprenticeship.gov. For more information on apprenticeship opportunities in West Virginia, log on to www.wvapprenticeships.com. ■



Training coordinators from locals across the state, community and technical college representatives, and West Virginia State Building Trades leaders meet in Medina, West Virginia for the quarterly apprenticeship meeting during National Apprenticeship Week on November 14.

Microgrid Concept

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certainly could help to bring other investments.

“The airport itself becomes a poster child for economic development,” said O’Brien. “Hopefully it’s a proposal that we can bring to fruition in the future.”

West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades President Chuck Parker applauded the announcement and says the trades are

ready to take on the task of construction.

“While we know the microgrid is still in the early stages, we look forward to working with Hope Gas to make sure this plan is a successful one,” said Parker. “We are proud of the work we do, and we know they will be happy with the result, given the opportunity to build this new infrastructure.” ■

Boilermakers Local 667 Attends Pleasants County Career Fair



Matthew Kennedy (center), Training Coordinator for Boilermakers Local 667 speaks to potential apprenticeship applicants at the Pleasants County Vo-Tech All Day Career Fair.

The event, held in late November hosted high school juniors and seniors from Wood, Ritchie, and Tyler counties.

“This was a great opportunity for us to speak directly with students about how they could benefit from going through our apprenticeship program,” said Kennedy. “We are constantly looking for the next generation of Boilermakers, and events like this help us to find good applicants.”

Study: Union Apprenticeships Rival Four-Year College Degree Program Outcomes

A recent study found that a union apprenticeship in construction may provide a better path to the middle class than a traditional four-year college degree program.

The study, authored by the Illinois Economic Policy Institute (IEPI), analyzed 10 years of data from the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The analysis found on average graduates of union apprenticeship

programs in the construction industry can achieve wage and benefit levels that are equal to workers in other industries with four-year college degrees.

“...attending college is not the only pathway to the American middle class.”

Frank Manzo

Director
IEPI

“Compared with two- and four-year colleges, joint labor-management apprenticeships in construction offer a more robust training regimen and competitive wage and benefit

levels...while leaving graduates entirely free of burdensome student

loan debt,” said study co-author and IEPI Director Frank Manzo.

The study stresses the importance of the apprenticeship being run through a union in order to truly rival a bachelor’s degree.

The data showed that union construction workers earn about 32% more per year on average compared to non-union workers.

In terms of benefits, about 90% of union construction workers have private health insurance, while only 55% of nonunion workers have benefits.

“The data unequivocally shows that attending college is not the only

pathway to the American middle class,” said Manzo. “However, it is clear that the most viable such pathway in construction runs through the joint labor-management apprenticeships and the unionized side of the industry.”

With the increased income, higher contributions are also being made for federal and state income taxes. Moreover, union members are paying more on average than their non-union counterparts or those with an associate degree.

For more information, and to read the study in its entirety, log on to www.illinoiseipi.org. ■

Davis-Bacon

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Director of the Affiliated Construction Trades.

The Davis-Bacon wages apply to contractors and subcontractors performing work on federally funded or assisted contracts in excess of \$2,000 for the construction on of public buildings or public works. The act requires contractors and subcontractors to pay craft workers on these projects no less than the local prevailing wages including fringe benefits for work on similar projects in the area, as determined by the statewide surveys.

Once the U.S. DOL gave West Virginia the project timeline for the survey, a team from Affiliated Construction Trades and local trades unions began working on collecting detailed data on eligible projects and then contacted our signatory contractors to obtain certified payroll records spanning several years. Once the records were gathered by the team, the pay records were carefully reviewed to determine the “peak week” of work for each highway craft.

These wages listed were compared to the corresponding Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) to ensure that the wage rates and fringe benefit amounts matched the agree-

ments.

After the wage records were analyzed and compared to the CBAs, the final step was to complete the required WD-10 form for each peak week, listing the project, contractor and/or subcontractors, number and type of craft worker, among other details. The group ultimately submitted over 500 forms for work completed all over the state. This data will be reviewed and analyzed by the U.S. DOL and, new wage rates will be determined, if eligible, and posted.

If a WWSBT’s affiliate CBA rates “prevails” over other market wage data that is submitted, the signatory CBA rates for the crafts will be entered as representing the market rate on federal highway projects. Once these rates are posted, local unions will be able to submit updated CBA rates to U.S. DOL, and they will update the Davis-Bacon “prevailed” rate to match the new CBAs with each update.

The results of the survey are not anticipated to be released until sometime in 2024, but when posted, could be in place for multiple years, and will help keep our signatory contractors competitive well into the future. ■

Painters DC 53 Hold National Apprenticeship Week Event



Last month, the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT) DC 53 held an event at their training center in Weston, WV to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week (NAW).

Public officials and technical education representatives were in attendance from across the state to tour the facility, and meet with apprentices, as members showcased their training site.

NAW is a nationwide celebration where industry, labor, and government leaders host events to celebrate apprenticeship programs and showcase their value to our nation’s workforce and economy.

This year, the ninth annual NAW was held from Nov. 14-20 and events were held across the state and country.

Operating Engineers Local #132 Begins Accepting Applications January 2-20

Operating Engineers Local 132 wants qualified candidates for their heavy-duty equipment operator apprenticeship program. The three-year program trains in all aspects of operating heavy equipment including bulldozers, backhoes, cranes and excavators.

"We want members to be well versed in all types of equipment," said Allen Nelson, Training Director. "We focus on safety and productivity."

Each year an apprentice spends five weeks at the training center located south of Parkersburg in Me-

dina, West Virginia.

While most of the training takes place during the winter, apprentices must complete at least 1,000 hours of paid on-the-job training to advance each year.

Interested individuals can submit an application to the program online at www.iuoe132.org or by calling 304-273-4852 from January 2-20, 2023.

In order to qualify, a person must be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or equivalent and have been a resident of West Virginia

for at least one year.

A successful applicant will have a valid WV driver's license, be physically able to perform the work of the trade and pass a drug test.

The recruitment, selection, employment, and training of appren-

tices shall be without discrimination because of age, race, color, religion, national origin, or sex and will conform to ADA regulations.

For more information call (304) 273-4852 or visit the website at www.iuoe132.org. ■

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Tri-State Trades Hold Annual Customer Appreciation Breakfast



Attendees of the Tri-State Building and Construction Trades Council annual Christmas Customer Appreciation Breakfast listen to a speaker during the event on December 3rd.

The annual event was held in Huntington, West Virginia and hosted 110 people including customers, contractors, and craft representatives from Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia.

"The annual Appreciation Breakfast is a great event for networking and fellowship," said John Holbrook, Business Manager for the Tri-State Building and Construction Trades. "It is also a great opportunity for us to say thank you to those we do business with throughout the year."

Speakers at the event included Brad Smith, President of Marshall University; Steve Williams, Mayor of Huntington; Ken Jackson, VP of Support Services Mountain Health-Cabell Huntington Hospital; James Miller, Deputy Site Director for DOE Portsmouth; Jason Pennington, Marathon Catlettsburg Maintenance Manager; Mike Tussey, AEP Director of NMAPC and Building Trades Contracts; and Nathan Nelson, Corporate Turnaround Manager for Braskem.

PKB-Marietta Trades Host Economic Development Reps



Mark Freeland (left) and Nate Beha (center back) give a tour of the WV Carpenters Union Training Center to representatives of the Wood County Economic Development Office in Parkersburg, West Virginia.

The tour, hosted by the Parkersburg-Marietta Building Trades Council, are part of a larger, ongoing effort by the Trades to educate lawmakers, public officials, and the general public about the benefits of apprenticeship programs throughout the state.