

Apprenticeship **PA**

COLLABORATIVE AND EXPO

TOWNHALL **BRIEFS** 2023

WHAT'S WORKING |
WHERE ARE THE ROADBLOCKS |
WHAT'S NEEDED |



WHY APPRENTICESHIPS

CRAFTING OPPORTUNITIES, DELIVERING SOLUTIONS

Apprenticeships provides tangible opportunities for Pennsylvania students, jobseekers, and workers to find and keep sustainable employment and for Pennsylvania employers to find and keep skilled talent. Pennsylvania's strategic priorities to invest in and expand apprenticeship is critical. The ability for a worker to be employed with access to sustainable wages and growth potential, while ensuring they have the right skills and abilities to effectively perform their duties is the basic principles for apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship is a "win-win" talent development strategy that crafts opportunity and delivers solutions to jobseekers, workers, and employers.

“

An apprenticeship is a fast track to a good-paying, stable job – and an effective way to build a crucial talent pipeline that connects high schools to our workforce. I pledge to continue to be a strong partner in our collective efforts to build the best, most highly-trained workforce in the country – and create real opportunity for people across our Commonwealth.”

- Governor Josh Shapiro, ApprenticeshipPA 2023 remarks

”

At the heart of ApprenticeshipPA Collaborative & Expo is to showcase innovative models of apprenticeship and sharing of resources and 'know-how' to design and sustain programs. In 2023, a key component of ApprenticeshipPA were Townhalls to hear from apprenticeship experts, interested parties, and stakeholders to provide insight into:

- *What's working well with apprenticeships in PA?*
- *What roadblocks or barriers exists for expanding apprenticeships?*
- *What action steps should be taken 'next' to support the expansion of apprenticeships in PA?*

This brief summarizes the Townhall discussions and serves as a source of insight from employers with particular emphasis on the manufacturing industry, educators & training providers, labor organizations, workforce development professionals and apprenticeship experts.

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APPRENTICESHIP IN PA

BY THE NUMBERS FY2024



16,487
Active Apprentices



\$19.25
hourly wage (avg.)



402
NEW Apprentices



7.77%
Veteran



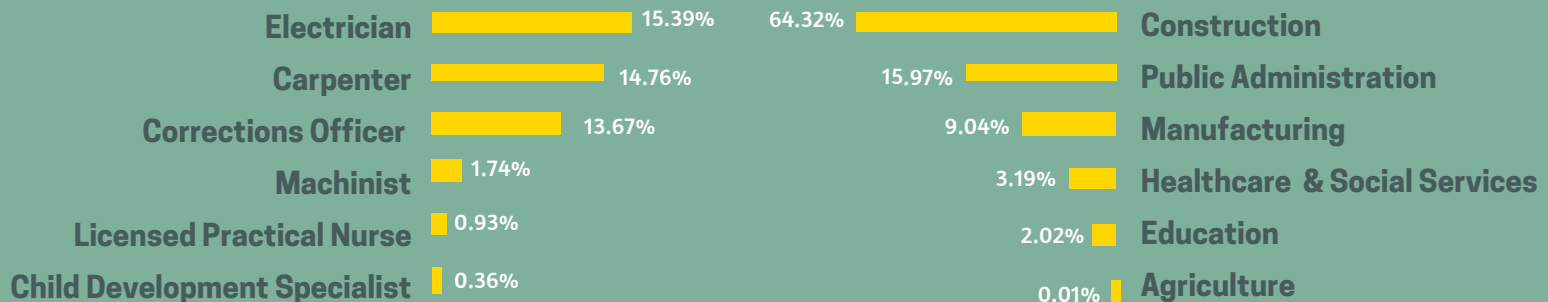
11.40%
female



1.02%
Individuals with
a Disability

12-18 Months
New Program
Approval Time
(avg.)

Industry & Occupation Concentration (Active Apprentices)



10th
National Ranking
for Active Apprentices

Top 3 Neighboring State Comparison

Active Apprentices		New Apprentices	Wages (Avg.)
OH 23,088		OH 636	NJ \$22.93
NY 19,769		PA 402	NY \$22.65
PA 16,487		NJ 324	PA \$21.28

POLICY LANDSCAPE

WHAT'S WORKING

Political Momentum

- Interest from the federal government, the Governor's office, and the PA legislature in Earn & Learn and skilling up the workforce
- Grants and training funds from the state. More public investment means less money coming out of employers or workers pockets
- Industry driven strategy for funding workforce development

Public Interest Growing

- Employer interest in tapping into training funds and developing non-traditional apprenticeship models that fit employer needs
- Worker interest in career pathways, mentorship opportunities, and access to earning while learning/skilling up
- Inclusivity and accessibility to nontraditional students is perceived positively

Accessibility of Agency

- PA being a SAA presents opportunity to sit in on council meetings
- Navigator program trains people to develop apprenticeship programs

WHAT'S NEEDED

Funding

- Seed funds for the development of programs (before registration)
- Investing in support services to address barriers to employment

Policy & Practices

- Customizing policies and standards to meet different industry needs - a one size fits all approach does not work
- Streamline registration process
- Diversifying assistance. Provide staff capacity based on industry rather than region

Transparency and Access

Publicly Accessible Information on:

- Existing Pre- & Registered Programs: Where Are They? What Industry & Occupation?
- In Process: Applications Under Review and Timelines with ATO; what's the ideal processing time?
- Council: What's Approved? What's Not? What's the Workload? and related benchmarks

ROADBLOCKS & BARRIERS

Potential Workforce

- Age, bias, and discrimination exists in human resource practices, and work-places
- Clearances, aptitude tests, and standards may be barriers to potential apprentices
- Barriers to workforce entry exist and wrap around services are limited

Buy-in

- Employer buy-in is lacking. Limited capacity to work through the 1-3 year long registration process
- Perception of if a registered apprenticeship is worth the upfront effort compared to other earn and learn models and funding streams
- Wage requirements and salary thresholds for employers may be too high.

Administration & Design

- Workforce shortage impacts number of journeyman required for program
- Paperwork and tedious processes deter employers from developing programs
- ATO's capacity to assist in registering new programs in the initial development stages
- Silo effect of training and opportunities. Once on one apprenticeship track, it is difficult to change careers/interests.



EDUCATION & TRAINING

WHAT'S WORKING

Career Awareness

- Apprenticeship as promotion and marketing tool for career pathways
- Expands audience to older workers

Technical Assistance Support

- Keystone Apprenticeship Navigator Program
- Strengthening partnerships across education, workforce development, and government

Works well when:

- Growing interest from employers and workforce
- Top-down support in education agency
- Focus on monitoring out of school time (mentors)
- Provides continued training and development for instructors
- Clear expectations set for instructor and student participation

WHAT'S NEEDED

How to:

- Find social and emotional supports for implementation and student success
- Communicate value proposition
- Promote coaching conversations across education & training providers
- Appropriately braid resources
- Identify and share exemplary models

Education Alignment

- Align CIP and SOC to pending and approved apprenticeship programs
- Share pre-requisites for apprenticeship aptitudes and assessments (ex. Math)
- Apprenticeship Training model may not align with post-secondary design

Improved Administration

- Remove the apprenticeship politics
- Accelerate Apprenticeship Council approval
- Sustainable long-term funding for training
- Improved timeliness of response to program support requests, applications, and modification to programs
- Increase capacity for ATO
- Consistency on program reporting and paperwork
- Healthcare regulations & liability requirements are challenged for programs



ROADBLOCKS & BARRIERS

Apprenticeship Expansion is Limited

- Registered programs are not widely known and results in limited opportunities for Pre-apprenticeship alignment
- Timeliness and Awareness of funding opportunities
- Access to instructor and facility availability
- Time, effort and commitment to build and get approval is too great (takes too long)
- Competition and stigma between certain trades, registered vs. non-registered

Lack of:

- Coordination & Systems Approach: reporting, funding and monitoring are disconnected
- Interest and buy-in from administrators and employers
- Small-business alignment
- State-level focus on student success (supports, transportation needs, rural and geographic variance)
- Brick and mortar RTI training facilities

Apprenticeship Administration

- Properly vetting mentors, ratios, personality is difficult for educators
- ATO focus and design built for traditional programs makes it rigid for non-traditional development
- Education design components of time and progress lacks alignment with employer's need to hire employee - they cannot wait for education program timeframe

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY



WHAT'S WORKING

“Grow Your Own” Model

- Apprenticeship is a “tool” for Employee recruitment
- Increases opportunities for adults and existing workers to develop new skills, higher earnings
- Strengthens connections and support for local schools
- Leverage use of existing registered programs and standards
- Targeted focus on occupation shortages, such as maintenance

Funding

- Federal Priorities on Reshoring, Infrastructure, CHIPS, and Inflation Reduction provide manufacturers capacity and funding for apprenticeships

ROADBLOCKS & BARRIERS

Pennsylvania's Approval Process

- Some employers report it has taken up to three (3) years to work with ATO and Council approval
- Inconsistency in “Standards” review
- Apple-to-Apple comparisons don't apply: Different industries have different needs in terms of occupational knowledge, skills, abilities
- ATO expertise: more capacity needed but lack of expertise Guidance changes frequently and is administratively burdensome
- ROI of registration is low given level of effort

Assumptions, & Stigma

- Resistance to “apprenticeship” and “vo-tech” from employers and community
- Apprenticeship may be new human resource tool, “don't know what we don't know
- Design and embed apprenticeship or earn and learn, models into workplace but will not register.

Workforce Shortage

- Not enough workers: Lack of available workforce supply impedes ability to be compliant with staffing ratios
- Pennsylvania's standards have not aligned with federal modernization requirements

WHAT'S NEEDED

Start Early

- Promote apprenticeship opportunities in middle school
- 500 school-districts and 1,000+ activities and ways of promoting careers: Where is scale to engage/connect with employers?

Implementation Support

- Technical assistance is front-loaded and gap of support at implementation
- Employers need to know where to go for support, resources and best practices (goes beyond application compliance)
- Mentorship Training and Development (incl. DEI)
- Local connections and leverage with USDOL Centers of Excellence

Rebrand

- Dispel the Stigmas on apprenticeship and “vo-tech”
- Establish marketing campaign (local and at scale statewide)

Promote ROI of Registration

- Clarify messaging and value-add on investment by employers
- Explore ratio reduction for non-traditional programs

COMMUNITY HUBS

WHAT'S WORKING

Community Hubs WORK!

- Support partnership and peer activities to expand apprenticeship
- Multiple structures (geography, function, customer-centered) reinforce a community of practice approach
- Scale awareness and utilization on other education, workforce development, and economic development programs, resources, models, and networks

Work well when:

- Prioritize cooperation and operate in good faith
- Centralize and raise awareness on resources
- Demonstrate expertise and qualifications in apprenticeship development and quality
- Identify best practices and model examples
- Assist in the process of preparing, applying, and implementing apprenticeships
- Leverage existing partnerships
- Support peer-to-peer relationships and advocacy
- Partner with the Apprenticeship & Training Office staff to improve the efficiency and timeliness of applications

WHAT'S NEEDED

Resource Development & Organization

- Library for standards and common templates for specific occupations, sectors, quality frameworks, as well as case studies and research

Capacity Building & Partnership

- Sustain local and regional non-government community hubs
- Invest in ongoing professional development for expansion efforts
- Asset map key stakeholders and alignment with employers and youth organizations
- Invest in apprenticeship training (before and after registration)

Awareness & Transparency

- Uncomplicate and expedite the application process
- Dispel the myths for apprenticeship by elevating voices closest to the work
- Improve awareness to better understand who is doing what and how they can help



ROADBLOCKS & BARRIERS

Buy in to Registered Programs is Limited:

- Cannot expand if employers don't buy-in
- Hubs rely on trust and expertise - takes time to build and can be easy to lose
- Apprenticeships get lost in translation among various stakeholders and government processes - its complicated

Knowledge in Networks

- Don't Know WHO you don't know - overall lack of Hub awareness
- It's WHO you know - too many single points of contact to uncover

Strategic Planning & Resources

- Note enough strategic planning for short, mid, and long-term goals
- Resources are broadly focused on process, too general, wordy, and lack visual clarity



LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

WHAT'S WORKING

Labor Model Design

- Union-Contractor Partnership
- Joint Apprenticeship & Training Council keep 'pulse' of apprentices and opportunities
- New apprentices can thrive in longer-term projects when orienting to work and site
- Fluid ability to pivot to demand and anticipating needs

Education & Public Partnerships

- Strong linkage to Career and Technical Education
- Inform local CTE programs of study and curriculum relevancy
- Strengthen recruitment into programs
- Articulating apprenticeship into college credit (ex. Associate's degree)



ROADBLOCKS & BARRIERS

Student Readiness

- Lack of Instructors (Labor and CTE)
- Math literacy level of applicants
- Inconsistent remediation support

Workforce & Hiring

- Long-term careers and benefits are not always the "selling point"
- Legal liability and implications to medical marijuana
- Worker supports in housing, childcare and transportation that align with work-site and project schedules (ex. early morning childcare and transportation routes)

Funding

- Grant-writing capacity and timelines
- Sustainable investment for training, new technology



WHAT'S NEEDED

Workforce & Hiring

- Define modern selling points and vehicles to promote career opportunities (ex. social media)
- Workplace & retention models for diverse workforce

Program & Funding Activities

- Maximize training fund model
- Raise awareness on grant opportunities (incl. capacity)
- Modern equipment for CTE and programs that provide talent pipeline

Student Readiness

- Explore written aptitude tests and performance demonstrations
- Design remediation and adult education partnerships for apprentices that need it
- Scale "bridges" from CTE into apprenticeship programs
- Explore opportunities for 12th graders to "apply" during final year of study (similar to college application process)
- Work experiences to align with industry worksites and demonstration of safety standards

“ Getting through the process of having an apprenticeship approved is REALLY HARD-- Especially if you work in a nontraditional field. Additionally, accessing funding to support apprenticeships is tricky. ”

“ The apprenticeship navigators are helpful in working with employers to navigate the apprenticeship process. ”

“ We have a lot of the right ingredients for a strong, modern earn-and-learn training system as an alternative (and complement!) to collegiate pathways ”

“ The ATO has done a great job in streamlining the process but for business owners/employers we still hear that the process is a little complicated ”

“ Momentum in the state for apprenticeships is positive ”

“ Apprenticeships are misunderstood. ”

“ Listen to voices of practitioners to determine priorities and next steps for investments. ”

“ In our region, we have not had interest from employers to develop apprenticeships. We feel prepared to serve as a training provider but not as the lead organization for an apprenticeship ”

“ The length of time to have the application reviewed, edited, and approved. Employers do not have the time to invest in edits and rewrites over and over. They have a business to run. ”

“ The word is getting out to industry, hospitals, schools, and training providers that there is an emphasis on RAPs and Pre-RAPs especially in non-traditional occupations. ”

SAVE THE DATE

ApprenticeshipPA

COLLABORATIVE AND EXPO

NOVEMBER 18-19, 2024
WIND CREEK | BETHLEHEM, PA



ABOUT US

ApprenticeshipPA is brought to you by the PA Workforce Development Association in partnership with the PA Association of Career & Technical Administrators.

We are member-based associations that believe in the power of partnership and the importance of convening. Pennsylvania has a promising future for organizations interested and involved in apprenticeships – what better way to convene professionals involved in apprenticeship, to reinforce the importance of quality programs, and to foster a sense of relevancy in today's economy.

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