STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

# Dept. of Workforce Development: Celebrates another record-breaking year in youth apprenticeships

Posted on Friday, Apr 28, 2023

**>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. Get the app or access via desktop.**

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today announced record participation in its Youth Apprenticeship (YA) programs, with 8,357 high-school juniors and seniors pursuing paid, on-the-job training in fields, including manufacturing, health, science, agriculture and more. This record number represents 30% more youth apprentices than the 2021-2022 school year.

“With record low unemployment at 2.5% and a record number of jobs, Wisconsin employers are seeking new ways to connect with high-skill employees,” said DWD Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek. “Youth Apprenticeship is one way for employers to find talent, and the program’s record numbers show that it’s a connector for employers and job seekers alike. Youth apprentices truly are the next generation of our workforce, Wisconsin’s future nurses, construction workers, marketers, manufacturers, technology innovators, and more.”

DWD’s YA program is an earn-while-you-learn model that connects apprentices with high-skill, high-wage employment with employers across the state. In addition to learning the hands-on skills of the occupation from the employer, youth apprentices gain occupation-specific knowledge through an area technical college or private training center in addition to completing their high-school coursework. A key component of apprenticeship is employment and there is no apprenticeship without a respective job opening.

The record-high total of 8,357 youth apprentices in the 2022-2023 school year surpassed the previous record of 6,392 apprentices for the 2021-2022 school year, continuing a year-over-year, record-breaking trend. The state’s Registered

Apprenticeship program also continues to grow, having its best year yet at 15,937 apprentices in 2022.

In addition, YA had a record 5,719 employers, training and giving these students work opportunities in a variety of industries.

“Together schools, employers, local YA consortiums are preparing youth apprentices for the next step on their career path,” Polk said. “Whether that next step is registered apprenticeship, higher education, or standard employment, our partners ensure that Wisconsin’s youth apprentices are equipped for whatever their future holds.”

YA pathways with the highest participation are: manufacturing, 1,509; health science, 1,393; agriculture, food and natural resources, 1,048; architecture and construction, 1,039; and marketing, 1,015.

Beyond the high participation in the program’s current pathways, YA continues to evolve to meet the needs of both employers and students. The program recently added 14 new pathways and has plans to create pathways in five broad program areas: education and training; business management and administration; government and public administration; human services; and law, public safety, corrections, and security. The new YA occupational pathways will be completed by the fall of 2024.

To learn more about Wisconsin Apprenticeship, visit WisconsinApprenticeship.com.