



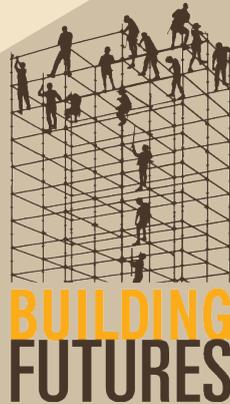
FIND YOUR PATH

Your Rhode Island
Construction Career Guide

About Building Futures

Building Futures is a statewide nonprofit organization that connects Rhode Islanders to family-sustaining careers through Registered Apprenticeship.

Our construction pre-apprenticeship program has launched trades careers with over 460 men and women. Building Futures administers the MC3, a nationally recognized apprenticeship readiness curriculum, for Rhode Island high schools, on behalf of the RI Building and Construction Trades Council. In partnership with the Department of Labor and Training, we work with employers to expand the use of Registered Apprenticeship in non-construction trade high-growth industries across the state.



Learn more at www.bfri.org



This guide is designed to help you explore careers in Rhode Island's Building and Construction Trades – professions that build our large-scale construction projects like highways and bridges, large commercial office and residential projects, universities, hospitals, and more.

Building and construction is a fast-paced industry with big rewards, including excellent pay, health, and retirement benefits. Explore career options available in 16+ different trades. Find your path!

RHODE ISLAND NEEDS SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE

**Construction is one of Rhode Island's fastest-growing industries.*
As a skilled tradesperson, your expertise will be in high demand.**

- **2400+ new jobs by 2032**
- **10% growth industry-wide**
- **Skilled tradeswomen & men are retiring – the industry needs to train new people to meet demand**

"Since 1908, the Rhode Island Building & Construction Trades Council has empowered workers with competitive job opportunities. Today, our trained, highly skilled and safety conscious workforce represent a collective body of more than 10,000 union craftsmen and women in and around Rhode Island. When you become a union apprentice, you enjoy all the benefits that come with being a proud union member.

"Become part of a strong and united brother/sisterhood of thousands of men and women who work together and strengthen our communities."

Michael Sabitoni, President
Rhode Island Building &
Construction Trades Council



INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Page

1	Union Trades Registered Apprenticeship Advantage
3	Construction Career Pathways
4	What is Registered Apprenticeship
5	Heavy & Highway Construction
7	Plan Your Future
9	MC3: Multi-Craft Core Curriculum
10	Building Green Futures Apprenticeship Readiness
11	Women Are Building Rhode Island Apprenticeship Readiness
13	BF200: Pre-Apprenticeship
17	Building Trades Apprenticeship Program Requirements

Building Trades Registered Apprenticeship Programs

18	Bricklayers & Tile Setters	30	Millwrights
19	Carpenters	31	Painters & Tapers
20	Electrical Workers	32	Pile Drivers
21	Elevator Constructors	33	Plasterers & Cement Masons
22	Glaziers	34	Plumbers & Pipefitters
23	Heat & Frost Insulators	35	Roofers
24	Iron Workers	36	Sheet Metal Workers
29	Laborers	37	More Trades

Pre-Apprenticeship Graduate Stories

Shannon Sampson, 6
Andre Isom, 6
Emani Correia, 8
Zoë Estrin-Grele, 12
Darche Hood, 12
Vennicia Kingston, 14
Byron Santos, 15
Rebecca White, 25
Jonathan Perez, 26
Savit Sayavong, 27
Jerrel Almeida, 28



Registered Apprenticeship is:

- ✓ Employment & postsecondary education combined.
- ✓ Structured on-the-job learning supplemented by classroom instruction.
- ✓ Driven and designed by employers to ensure you develop job-specific skills in high demand.

A trades apprenticeship
is your path to a
rewarding career—
debt-free.

Trades Apprenticeship vs. Building Tech Degree

	Registered Apprenticeship in RI Building Trades Unions	Local Building Technology Bachelor's Degree
	\$22 per hour* average starting wage plus \$25.97 in healthcare and retirement benefits	\$36,000 /year** tuition cost
First Year	+ \$42,000 average across trades + \$49,862 in benefits	- \$36,000 (+ Debt & Interest)
Year 2	+ \$50,953 average + Healthcare & retirement benefits	- \$36,000 (& Debt & Interest)
Year 3	+ \$57,665 average + Healthcare & retirement benefits	- \$36,000 (+ Debt & Interest)
Year 4	+ \$68,717 average + Healthcare & retirement benefits	- \$36,000 (+ Debt & Interest)
Total Over 4 Years	\$217,635 average wages + \$199,448 average benefits + Credential you can take anywhere.	- \$144,000 + Debt & Interest + College Degree

*Based on average 2025 wages and Apprenticeship length across RI Trades.

**Based on 2025-2026 tuition at area trade school.

The retirement benefits in the trades can't be beat. In our trades careers, you are not just earning a paycheck, you are securing your future."

*Scott Duhamel, Secretary Treasurer,
RI Building & Construction Trades Council*

Construction Career Pathways



Kickstart your career with apprenticeship

The trade unions in the Rhode Island Building and Construction Trades Council work together with construction employers across the state to run outstanding Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs. These apprenticeship programs develop Rhode Island's next generation of skilled workers. While the skills are different in each trade, work in any of the trades shares some things in common.

APPRENTICESHIP



- On the job learning & classroom instruction
- Earn while you learn
- Gain nationally recognized credentials

UNION REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP



- 3-5 years, based on the trade
- Wages increase with time on the job
- Outstanding no-cost instruction

ENVIRONMENT



- Work in all weather & sometimes at heights
- Fast-paced
- Physically & mentally demanding

ADVANTAGES



- Family sustaining wages
- Family medical coverage, pension, annuity
- Pride in achieving excellence in a craft

CAREER PATH



- Guaranteed advancement
- Excellent leadership opportunities
- Multiple opportunities after apprenticeship

PREPARATION



- GED or HS diploma
- Physical fitness & stamina
- Team sports, hands-on work or hobbies & math

Heavy & Highway Construction

Building and construction apprentices are rebuilding Rhode Island's infrastructure. Apprentices working on highway, bridge, and roadwork construction work in a fast-paced environment and develop specialized skills. Many different trades are involved in building our state's infrastructure.



Ironworkers



Electricians



Laborers



Carpenters



Industrial Painters





Shannon Sampson
Apprentice Industrial Painter
IUPAT 195

"It changed how I view myself, strengthened my character, my integrity. It has highlighted qualities in me that I didn't know I had."

"The trades have done so much more for me than just a career."

Andre Isom
Journeyworker Laborer
LIUNA 271

"As a laborer, we are the first ones on the job and the last to leave, so we are always working and we get to see the whole project through start to finish."



"Being a journeyworker Laborer, it has changed my life."

Plan Your Future



Emani Correia

Apprenticeship Readiness to Pre-Apprenticeship
to Registered Apprenticeship



Apprentice Bricklayer Local 3

In just four months, Emani graduated Building Green Futures and BF200 and started his career as an apprentice Brick, Block, and Stone Mason with the Bricklayers Union Local 3.

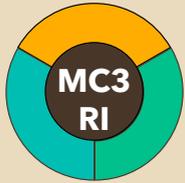
Emani spoke with us about Building Green Futures.

"I didn't know how much impact trees had on asthma, heat, water, and stormwater. Driving by [tree plantings], I think, 'I did that.' I go home and talk about the stuff we did building drains for stormwater and planting trees in different places every day."



I go home and feel like I did a lot that day, that I did something for my community."

Apprenticeship Readiness In High School



Multi-Craft Core Curriculum

The Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) is designed by the experts – the North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU).

✓ Provides a national certification, recognized by building trades union apprenticeship programs nationwide

✓ Endorsed by the RI Building & Construction Trades Council to recruit the next generation of tradespeople

How It Works

- 120 instructional hours, delivered in a student's junior or senior year
- Topics include industry awareness, health and safety, math, labor history, blueprint reading, green construction, financial literacy
- Technical assistance, curriculum support, and administration.

To find out how your school can offer the MC3 contact Building Futures
(401) 919-5919 or info@bfri.org

Apprenticeship Readiness For Young Adults



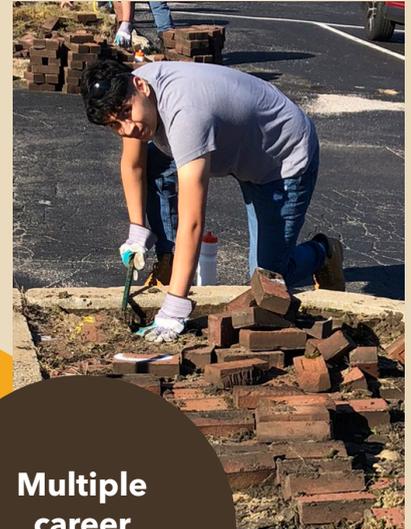
Prepares younger adults, 18-24 years old, for our rigorous pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship employment.

Physical Conditioning

Work Readiness

Climate Justice

Community Impact Projects



Career Exploration:

- Construction
- Green infrastructure
- Urban Forestry
- Environmental Engineering
- Landscaping
- Tree care, Arboriculture

Multiple
career
pathways

Construction
Pre-apprenticeship

Women Are Building Rhode Island

Women enjoy outstanding career opportunities in building and construction, including pay equity and job protections, but are underrepresented in the industry. The **Women Building Rhode Island Apprenticeship Readiness program** gives women the opportunity to explore hands-on skills and encourages further participation in pre-apprenticeship and placement in trades careers.



**WOMEN
BUILDING
RHODE ISLAND**





"There's pride that comes from knowing that we built something that lasts."

**Darche Hood
Journeyworker Insulator
Heat & Frost Insulators Local 6**

"The trades are a real option for women out there. There are so many skilled craftsmen and women in the field. It's an honest living."

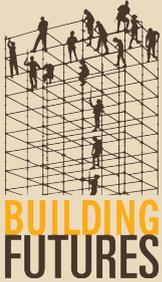
**Zoë Estrin-Grele
Apprentice HVAC Technician
UA Local 51**

"Being a woman in a male-dominated field is hard. These are great careers, even if they're hard, and we deserve to have access to these careers and the lives and benefits that come with them."



"As women, we know we are strong and equal to the work."

Construction Pre-apprenticeship: BF200



- ✓ 5-week, 200 hour construction pre-apprenticeship program
- ✓ For low-income adults, 18+, to gain skills and experience to enter employment in a construction registered apprenticeship
- ✓ Industry recognized certifications
- ✓ Alumni programming & support throughout your career

Emphasis on hands-on training prepares participants for Registered Apprenticeship in any trade.

- Masonry
- Framing
- Welding
- Drywall
- Plumbing
- Taping
- Iron Working
- Electrical
- Painting
- Pipefitting



Classroom learning complements hands-on training.

- Financial Literacy
- Industry Expectations
- Trades Exploration
- Math
- Labor History

Elective Programming

Post-graduation elective programs help BF200 grads gain more industry skills & experience before employment.



Graduate Service Learning



BF200 grads built this!
ONE Neighborhood Builders affordable, green home project in Providence



Welding Elective



Vennicia Kingston

Stock clerk to business owner

Journeyworker Laborer LIUNA 271

Vennicia began in the trades as an apprentice Laborer. Her first job was rebuilding the Pawtucket Bridge – a big project that allowed her to complete her apprenticeship and purchase her first home.

Now she has launched her own business, Eagle Eye Construction, specializing in post-construction clean-up.



"Building that bridge helped me build my love for construction...when I got out there being in that dirt and working with those machines...
I started to actually love what I was doing."

Byron Santos

Boring job to rewarding career



Journeyworker Glazier IUPAT 1333

Byron was a lab technician before he learned about Building Futures' pre-apprenticeship program. Now he is a journeyworker glazier working with glass and aluminum.

"At my old job, it was the monotony that killed me. But now I'm learning every day, I see the difference we're making every day."

Byron is pictured here with Scott Duhamel, IUPAT and the RIBCTC.

"I see my classmates from high school now worrying about how much they owe on college loans, and it's crazy. **As an apprentice, I got paid to learn.**"



Photo courtesy of the RI Foundation

Find your path



The trades on the following pages offer the finest construction apprenticeship programs in Rhode Island.

Each trade offers excellent wages, health care, and retirement benefits.

Each trade has its own process for accepting new apprentices. Visit their websites, call their offices, and visit www.bfri.org for more info.

Eligibility

✓ 18+

✓ HS Diploma
or GED

✓ Drivers
License

✓ Reliable
Transportation

✓ Drug
Free

Additionally, the Electrical Workers require applicants have a grade C (70) or better in HS Algebra I (or equivalent) and a passing score on a reading comprehension and algebra exam. The Plumbers & Pipefitters require a passing score on a math exam.

Bricklayers & Tile Setters

Bricklayers & Allied Craftsmen
Local 3 MA-RI-ME-NH

150 Midway Road, Suite 153
Cranston, RI 02920-5743
(401) 946-9940
Bac1ri@verizon.net
www.bacweb.org



THE WORK

Bricklayers build and restore interior and exterior walls and other structures out of brick, block, and stone. Tile Setters lay and grout ceramic tiles of all types to floors, and interior and exterior walls.

The Bricklayers & Tile Setters' apprenticeships require 6,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 3 years to complete.



Carpenters

Carpenters Union Local 330

14 Jefferson Park Road

Warwick, RI 02888

(401) 424-1100

www.carpenters330.org



THE WORK

Carpenters build, repair, and install cabinets, doors, windows, framing, floors, paneling, molding, and drywall used in buildings. They construct forms for pouring concrete, build wooden bridges, piers, and trestles, install tunnel bracing, and drive piles.

The Carpenters' apprenticeship requires 8,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 4 years to complete.



Electrical Workers

IBEW Local Union #99

JATC Training Facility
40 Western Industrial Drive
Cranston, RI 02921
(401) 946-9908
www.ibew99.org



THE WORK

Electrical workers assemble, install, maintain and test electrical equipment and wiring systems in residential, commercial, and industrial settings such as new wiring, power and controls to motors, HVAC, light fixtures, fire alarms, traffic signals, outdoor lighting, process controls, energy management, solar, wind, and energy efficiency, and other equipment.

The Electrical Workers' apprenticeship requires 10,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 5 years to complete.

Elevator Constructors

International Union of Elevator
Constructors Local 39

555 Jefferson Blvd, Suite 5a
Warwick, RI 02886
(401) 391-0239
www.iueclocal39.org



THE WORK

Elevator Constructors assemble, install and replace elevators, escalators, dumbwaiters, moving walkways and similar equipment in new and old buildings. Elevator constructors also maintain and repair this equipment and modernize older equipment.

The Elevator Constructors' apprenticeship requires 8,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 4 years to complete.



Glaziers

International Union of Painters and
Allied Trades District Council 11
Glaziers Local Union #1333

269 Macklin Street
Cranston, RI 02920
(401) 781-6016
www.iupatdc11.com



THE WORK

Glaziers select, cut, assemble, and install all kinds of glass and plastics; they build and install metal sash and moldings using aluminum or steel framing, and, they apply weather seals and hardware.

The Glaziers' apprenticeship requires 8,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 4 years to complete.

Heat & Frost Insulators

International Association of Heat
& Frost Insulators and Asbestos
Workers Union Local #6

303 Freeport Street
Dorchester, MA 02122-3513
(617) 436-4666
www.insulators6.org



THE WORK

Heat and frost insulators apply insulation materials to pipes, tanks, boilers, ducts, refrigeration equipment, and other surfaces requiring temperature control.

The Insulators' apprenticeship requires 6,400 on-the-job hours, which takes about 4 years to complete.

Iron Workers

International Association of Bridge,
Structural, Ornamental & Reinforcing
Iron Workers Union Local #37

845 Waterman Avenue
East Providence, RI 02914
(401) 438-1111
www.iwlocal37.com



THE WORK



Ironworkers erect, assemble or install fabricated structural metal products, usually large metal beams used in the construction of industrial, commercial, or large residential buildings. Ironworkers erect steel framework on bridges, storage tanks, and overhead crane runways.

The Ironworkers' apprenticeship requires 6,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 3 years to complete.



**Rebecca White
Apprentice
IBEW Local 99**

"I'm getting to see everything there is from beginning to end.

"As the years go on I'll get to learn more details and I'll get to run things and do things on my own."

Since speaking with us about her apprenticeship, Rebecca has taken on a new role at an electrical contractor, Rossi, where she is now a safety officer. Congrats!



"The best thing about apprenticeship was everything I learned."



Jonathan Perez
Journeyworker
Ironworkers Local 37

"Working with my hands, it just clicked with me.

"The benefit is learning new things, and driving around the state and taking pride in the bridges I helped build."

"Don't think about it, just do it. We need a lot of new union workers in the trades."



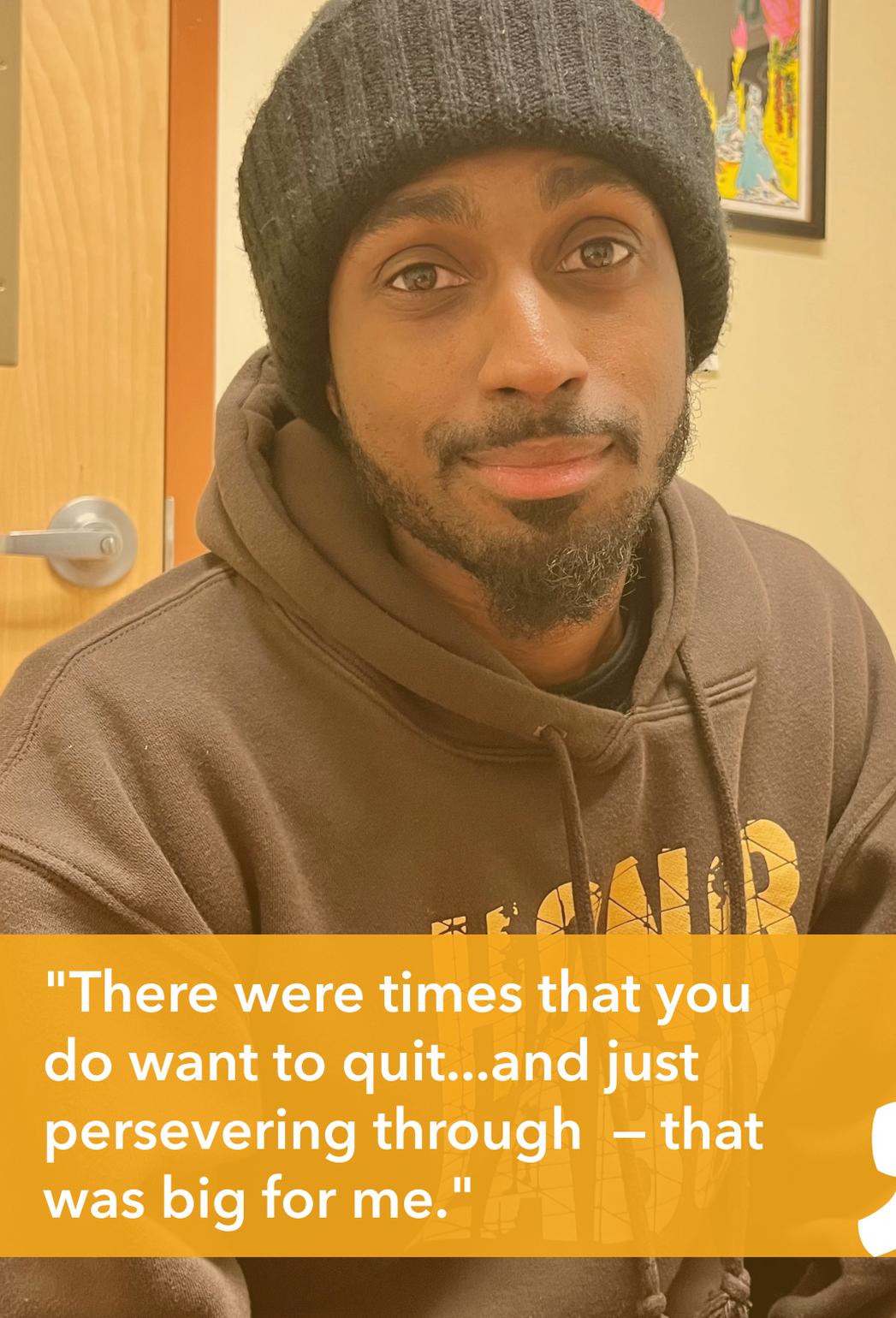


Savit Sayavong
Journeyworker
Industrial Painter
IUPAT 195

"I knew nothing about construction, but I knew I was a good physical laborer so I knew I could get through it. Now I'm a journeyworker industrial painter. It is a lot of setup and rigging, and working with paint on steel."



"My advice – work hard. And keep your vision on what you want."



Jerrel Almeida
Journeyworker
Pipefitter
UA Local 51

"When I was put into the apprenticeship I was challenged a lot and that helped me to grow and I knew it was growing me.

I tried college. I went for a few years and it just didn't work for me. There are alternatives out here."

"There were times that you do want to quit...and just persevering through – that was big for me."



Laborers

Laborers International Union
Local 271

410 South Main Street
Providence, RI 02903
(508) 544-9830
www.apprenticeshipnelapp.com



THE WORK



Laborers place concrete and asphalt for roads, bridges, highways, and buildings; they perform a variety of functions including, underground utility work laying water, sewer, and gas lines; worksite preparation including compacting earth, digging trenches, and site maintenance; demolitions; all phases of environmental remediation; erecting scaffold and trench bracing; and, working with other crafts such as carpenter and mason tending.

The Laborers' apprenticeship requires 6,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 3 years to complete.

Millwrights

Millwrights Local 1121

750 Dorchester Ave.
Boston, MA 02125
(401) 946-9908
<https://local1121.com>



THE WORK

Millwrights assemble, erect, install and maintain all types of industrial machinery, including compressors, pumps, conveyors, monorails, extruders, gas and steam turbines, and mining equipment. Millwrights work indoors and out, using hand and power tools, rigging and hoisting equipment, torches and welders, lasers and optical transits.

The Millwrights' apprenticeship requires 7,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 4 years to complete.



Painters & Tapers



International Union of Painters
and Allied Trades
District Council 11
Painters Local Union #195

269 Macklin Street
Cranston, RI 02920
(401) 781-6016
www.iupatdc11.com

IUPAT 195 OFFERS 3 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS:



**Commercial
Painter**



**Drywall
Finishing
(Taping)**



**Painting and
Industrial Coating
and Lining
Applications**

THE WORK

Painters apply coats of paint, varnish, staining, enamel, or lacquer to decorate and protect interior or exterior surfaces of buildings, bridges, and other structures. **Tapers** apply joint compound and tape to drywall to seal joints producing smooth surfaces on walls and ceilings, plumbing fixtures, and appliances.

The Commercial Painter and Taping apprenticeships require 6,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 3 years to complete. **The Industrial Painting apprenticeship** requires 8,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 4 years to complete.

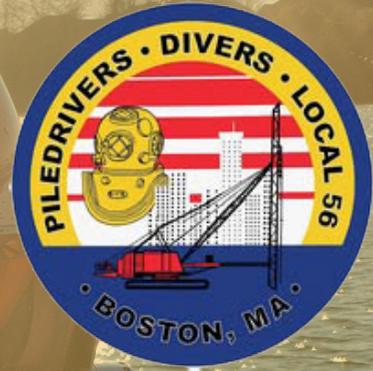


Pile Drivers

Pile Drivers Local 56

750 Dorchester Ave.
Boston, MA 02125
(617) 443-1988

www.nasrcc.org/local/piledrivers-local-56



THE WORK

Pile Drivers install piling to hold back dirt during excavations. They drive concrete, metal or wood piling, or poles, into the ground to create the foundation for skyscrapers and hold up docks, wharves and bridges. In some cases, pile drivers work on offshore oil rigs and as commercial divers involved in underwater construction.

The Pile Drivers' apprenticeship requires 7,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 4 years to complete.

Plasterers & Cement Masons



Plasterers & Cement Masons
Local 40

22 Amflex Drive
Cranston, RI 02921
(401) 943-1185
www.opcmia.org



THE WORK

Plasterers finish interior walls and ceilings of buildings, apply plaster on masonry, metal, wirelath or gypsum. Cement masons are responsible for all concrete construction, including pouring and finishing of slabs, steps, wall tops, curbs and gutters, sidewalks, paving and other concrete construction.

The Plasterers & Cement Masons' apprenticeship requires 6,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 4 years to complete.

Plumbers & Pipefitters

Plumbers, Pipefitters, Refrigeration
UA Local Union #51

11 Hemingway Drive
East Providence, RI 02915
(401) 943-3033
www.ualocal51.com



UA LOCAL 51 OFFERS 3 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS:



Plumber



Pipefitter



HVAC
Refrigeration
Service



THE WORK

Plumbers repair, install, or alter the water, waste disposal, drainage, and gas systems and install plumbing fixtures and appliances. **Pipefitters** repair and install both high and low-pressure pipe systems that are used in manufacturing, in the generation of electricity, and in heating and cooling buildings. **HVAC** technicians maintain and install heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment.

The Plumbers and Pipefitters' apprenticeships require 10,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 5 years to complete.

Roofers

Roofers & Waterproofers
Local Union #33

53 Evans Drive
PO Box 9106
Stoughton, MA 02072
(781) 341-9192
www.local33careers.com



THE WORK

Roofers apply roofing material like fiberglass, slate, tile, and cedar or composite material like felt or rubber membrane to ensure buildings are watertight.

The Roofers' apprenticeship requires 6,000 on-the-job hours, which takes about 3 years to complete.



Sheet Metal Workers

Sheet Metal Workers RI
Local Union #17

175 Ridge Street
Providence, RI 02909
(401) 632-0944
www.smw17boston.org



THE WORK

Sheet Metal Workers build and install a wide variety of products by cutting and shaping sheets of steel, aluminum, copper, and other alloys. They fabricate and install heating and cooling components, work in industrial plants and build specialty fabrication.

The Sheet Metal Workers' apprenticeship requires 8,000+ on-the-job hours, which takes about 5 years to complete.

More Trades

International Brotherhood of Boilermakers
Local Union #29
210 Bodwell Street
Avon, MA 02322
(617) 328-8400
www.boilermakerslocal29.org

Boilermakers assemble, erect, and maintain boilers, tanks, pressure vessels, heat exchangers, pollution control systems, furnaces, condensers, and water towers.

Sprinkler Fitters and Apprentices of Connecticut,
Rhode Island & Western Massachusetts
Local Union #669 U.A.
PO Box 48, Lebanon, CT 06249
(860) 468-0444
www.sprinklerfitters669.org

Sprinkler fitters install all types of fire protection systems, including the layout and installation of underground fire mains.

Related Apprenticeship Programs



Construction Manager Apprenticeship

Learn to oversee a large construction project and help teams achieve goals.
www.dimeo.com



Survey Apprenticeship Program

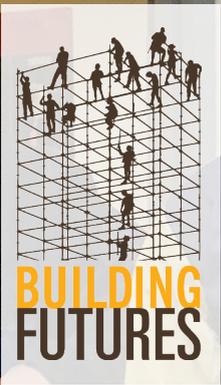
Learn surveying – the foundation of every construction and engineering project.
www.diprete-eng.com



**Learn more about our programs and
how to launch your new career at
www.bfri.org or email info@bfri.org.**



Thank you to all of the Building Futures construction pre-apprenticeship graduates who lent their pictures and voices to this effort, including: Lisa Silvio, John Jorge, Orlando Correa, Sharrieff Muhammad, Santana Cartagena, Vennicia Kingston, Shannon Sampson, Andre Isom, Emmani Correia, Marcos Mendez, Alfred Nunez, Donald Campbell, Marc Tornes, Madeline Pfirman, Zachary Aleardi, Zoe Estrin-Grele, Darche Hood, Jonathan Perez, Byron Santos, Sounai Chantavong, Dilainey Abreu-Maria, Miguel Berrios, Darrell LaFrance, Veasna Ngeth, Rebecca White, Andre Isom, Savit Sayavong, Jerrel Almeida, Jackie Chea, Devyn Maher, Orlando Gomes, Michael Reyes, Santana Vicente, Sebastian Medina, Marvin Lewis, Brittany Young, Sofat Long, Justin Kelley, Franklin Johnson, Christopher Melendez, Safire Fuentes, Manne Barbosa, and many others.



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Providence, RI 02903
(401) 919-5919
info@bfri.org
www.bfri.org**



**Thank you to our partners.
RHODE ISLAND**



BUILDING TRADES

www.buildingtradesri.com



Construction Industries of Rhode Island