

The following report is a summary of the major issues facing the State Machine Tool Apprenticeship Advisory Committee (SMTAAC).

Number of Apprentices: Since May of 2004 the twelve trades that are tracked by the State of WI and considered to be under the guidance of the SMTAAC have decreased by 47%. As of October 2009 state records indicate there are 254 apprentices in metal working trades and 160 employer sponsors. Of the 254 the top 87.4% of all metal working trades are represented by for specific trades, Tool & Die Maker represents 107, Machinist represents 84, Mold Maker (Die Cast & Plastic) represents 16 and Machinist CNC represents 15. This is a significant change since 1998 when we had 1032 apprentices in metalworking trades in the State of WI. (See TDMAW web site for actual statistics). Everyone will see this differently but I see this as a real opportunity for someone interested in getting paid to learn when college tuitions seem to be raising every semester. Over the next ten years employers will need replacements for all those retiring boomers. Anyone having a metal working career as a solid foundation will be well on his or her way to having financial independence.

Apprentice Soft Skills: The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) understands their role in apprenticeship as providing the soft skills such as the ability to communicate and relate to people while the employer provides the hard skills having to do with the trade. As such they are the CORE Abilities across all trades and across society at large. WTCS has developed a scoring guide to use for the evaluation of work in the classroom, on the job or both. (See TDMAW web site for a copy of the Core Abilities Assessment). Primary Apprentice Core Abilities have been defined as:

- Work Cooperatively with others, one-on-one and in a team environment
- Communicate effectively
- Work productively
- Adapt to change
- Apply problem-solving strategies
- Think critically

Rating scale for Apprentices is:

- Advanced:** Performs at the leadership level; meets or exceeds “proficient” standard, a good example for others.
- Proficient:** Performs effectively, efficiently, and independently.
- Competent:** Performs adequately, meets basic standards.
- Developing:** Shows emerging skill; evidence is incomplete of performance requires improvement.
- Needs Improvement:** Little or no evidence of competence.

Manufacturing Skill Standards Council: Governor Doyle, WTCS, Harley Davidson and several other larger manufacturers in WI endorsed MSSC as a curriculum and certification program that would assist in raising the skill levels of WI manufacturing production workers. I am personally not aware of any company large or small that is using all four certifications (Quality, Safety, Maintenance and Production). The cost of curriculum and the certification process made this prohibitive to small business and as of this date I am only aware of one larger company using the quality and safety modules for their employees. Feedback received on the maintenance module indicated that even BA degreed Mechanical Engineers were not guaranteed a successful certification due to the depth of the curriculum. The SMTAAC has suggested that the WTCS look at the quality and safety modules and integrate this curriculum into their existing apprenticeship curriculum if they do not already include similar content.

Department Of Labor: Karen Morgan gave a power point presentation at our last meeting outlining the new rules and regulations issued by the DOL by which all States must align their apprenticeship programs. **SUMMARY:** The Department of Labor (DOL or Department) is issuing this final rule to update regulations that implement the National Apprenticeship Act of 1937. 29 U.S.C. 50. DOL issued

a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on December 13, 2007, outlining proposed updates to labor standards, policies and procedures for the registration, cancellation and deregistration of apprenticeship programs, apprenticeship agreements, and administration of the National Apprenticeship System.

Karen indicated that WI has had a much more vigorous State Apprenticeship program than the DOL and in many ways the DOL is catching up. If you are really interested in reading in depth about all the rule changes at the Federal level, go for it at this web link:

<http://www.dol.gov/federalregister/PdfDisplay.aspx?DocId=21677>

Or use Google to find: “Apprenticeship Programs, Labor Standards for Registration, Amendment of Regulations”. One note worth watching for is the non-change to the Apprenticeship Agreement; simply an addition to include statements about on-the-job learning component for programs using competency-based or hybrid approach.

National Institute of Metalworking Standards (NIMS): There have been a couple meetings dedicated to understanding the NIMS credentialing and its connection to a National Competency Based Apprenticeship System for the Metalworking Industry. I will be the first to admit that my previous understanding of the NIMS system was flawed and inaccurate. If you are interested in learning more about NIMS, this web site does a very good job with some Q&A regarding what it is: <https://www.nims-skills.org/web/nims/39> . The following is a sample from the Q&A site.

Question: What is the difference between accreditation and certification?

Answer: We accredit training programs. We certify individuals and issue credentials as proof of that certification.

NIMS estimates certification fees for Levels II, III, & I. and to be fully credentialed in an accredited program would be between \$600 and \$700 dollars.

During the committees discussions it was pointed out that some of the Technical Colleges are already using portions of the NIMS curriculum but at this time no one is aware of credentialing in WI. It was my former belief that everyone had to travel long distances to get certified. That is incorrect, any one can be set up to do the certification and the credentialing comes from demonstrating during the certification process that you know what your doing. The process seems very adaptable to apprenticeship and gives confidence to employers and apprentices that the training was consistent and everyone was certified to known benchmarks. Under NIMS there is less of the apprenticeship left to interpretation since it is competency based. On the TDMAW web site is a sample of “Core Competency Requirements” for Machinist.

As of this writing the committee is still waiting for additional information but all indications are that NIMS would be favorable to all parties involved with apprenticeship. My personal take away is that WI will adopt NIMS, but apprenticeship will be a hybrid between time based and competency based. A competency-based system allows apprentices to fast track through training and complete an apprenticeship in less than the traditional 4 or 5 years. Apprenticeship sponsors are going to want that apprentice to remain employed for some minimal time to get an ROI on their training investment. Much work still needs to be done but the SMTAAC has given the State Bureau of Apprenticeship the green light for further evaluation. All this fits into a very timely five year WI Apprenticeship Program review mandated by our Federal Government.

Apprenticeship Conference: I do not have dates yet for the next conference in early 2011 but wanted to make sure everyone is aware that the next conference will be celebrating WI Apprenticeship’s century

mark. DWD has promised a celebration to remember. (Not sure what that means) Perhaps some stimulus dollars are earmarked for a large party.

Respectfully Submitted,
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Apprenticeship Committee