

APPRENTICESHIP

Trades Introduction Program Provides Pathway to a Lucrative Career in the Union Building Industry

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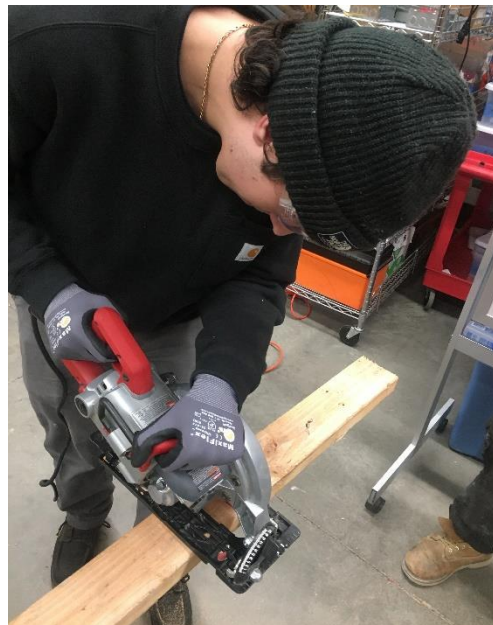
Labor Liaison, United Way Bay Area

The Trades Introduction Program in San Mateo (TIP) is a union-based MultiCraftCore Curriculum (MC3) apprenticeship readiness program that has seen much success. TIP students commit to a rigorous 120-hour course. As a result, they graduate well prepared for candidacy in union construction apprenticeship programs.

To date, TIP has graduated 326 students and placed 203 in union apprenticeships or construction-related employment. This level of success is testament to the commitment of all partners – including the San Mateo Building Trades Council, area JATCs as well as the local community college district and workforce board. TIP also works closely with our sister program, the Trades Orientation Program in Santa Clara County, coming together on grants and sharing best practices to benefit all of our students.

The MC3 curriculum covers a multitude of construction basics; green construction, tool identification and use, blueprint reading and construction math. It also includes Labor History, which has significant impact on TIP students.

“After I learned how important unions are and how much people have done to fight for them, I felt like I just needed to be a part of it and do whatever I can to get into it,” said Ian Steeg, a 2020 TIP graduate. Ian was working at a family member’s auto body shop when he heard from a friend about TIP and thought it sounded perfect for him. He has recently become a union plumber apprentice and when asked about his new career he responded enthusiastically, “I love it, it’s great. I’m learning a lot, all the people I work with are great



Ian Steeg practices using a skillsaw during his apprentice training.

people and it's fun to go to work every day. Plus, I'm making almost double the wage I was at the auto body shop."

Freddie Vaenuku, another recent graduate told us, "TIP really opened up my eyes. Prior to TIP, I knew the trades had high paying jobs, but I didn't know about the other benefits of having that brotherhood and community. Learning what had been done to get to where we are now made me want to be a part of the union and the movement. It pushed me to want to be better, to continue their work, to make sure they didn't sacrifice for no reason."

The impacts of a union-based pre-apprenticeship program should not be underestimated. The demand for the program cannot be overstated. It's clear from the voices of graduates that TIP changes lives.



Freddie Vaenuku finishes up his first day on the job.