

# APPRENTICESHIP

## Accomplishments of a Local Union Ironworker Learned and Shared through Apprenticeship & Training

### The Story of Richard E. (Dick) Zampa Jr.

#### Mike Peterson

*Apprenticeship Coordinator*

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I write this article in honor of those Ironworkers who learned their skills and knowledge from the older generation, who improved upon them and then willingly passed them down to the newer generation. That is what Dick Zampa Jr. has done with his career as an ironworker.

Dick Zampa Jr. was born into a family of ironworkers in 1954 in the San Francisco Bay



Pictured from left to right, Alfred Zampa, Dick Zampa Jr., Dale Ray, Dick Zampa Sr.

Area town of Tormey. Like his grandfather (Alfred Zampa), father (Dick Zampa Sr.) and uncle (Gene Zampa) before him, Dick also went into the trade becoming a member of Ironworkers Local 378, Oakland, California in 1973. Dick completed his apprenticeship in 1976, and since has held positions of journeyman Ironworker and foreman.

In 1983, Dick became an apprenticeship and training instructor. He taught classes on welding, First Aid/CPR, Hazardous Materials, Lead Hazard, OSHA 30, OSHA 510, and OSHA

500. He also gave classes on Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and many more construction related safety courses. In addition, he provided apprentices with Construction Organizing Membership Education Training (C.O.M.E.T.).

In 1995, Dick was hired as the Apprenticeship Coordinator for Ironworkers Local 378. Through hard work, Dick earned a bachelor's degree from the National Labor College in 2001. Then he became the Director of Apprenticeship for the California and Vicinity District Council. Now, nearly 48 years into his career as an ironworker, apprentice instructor, apprenticeship coordinator and a statewide director, Dick has announced he is retiring at that end of May 2021.

Dick's commitment, dedication and efforts to improve the lives of people from all lifestyles through apprenticeship and training is unmatched.

The poem "The Bridge Builder" by Will Allen Dromgoole comes to mind every time an Ironworker announces his or her retirement. The poem questions why a man would be building a bridge across a river that he will never use. The man replies:

*"There followed after me today  
A youth whose feet must pass this way.  
This chasm that has been as naught to me  
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.  
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!"*

Dick has been our living, breathing and working personification of that poem. He has given his time and seemingly limitless energy to thousands of our members; through education, training, leadership and example so that they could lead a better life. For all he has done for all of us, we are extremely grateful and thankful.

We hope that you enjoy many years of your well-deserved retirement.



Dick Zampa Jr. (left) and Mike Peterson (right) review plans for the new San Diego Ironworkers Apprenticeship and Training Center.