



IN BUSINESS, IT'S TALENT THAT DRIVES INNOVATION. TO GROW AND THRIVE IN TODAY'S ECONOMY, EMPLOYERS IN ALL INDUSTRIES NEED A HIGHLY SKILLED WORKFORCE. NOW, MORE AND MORE ARE DISCOVERING A PROVEN STRATEGY FOR BUILDING ONE: **APPRENTICESHIP.**

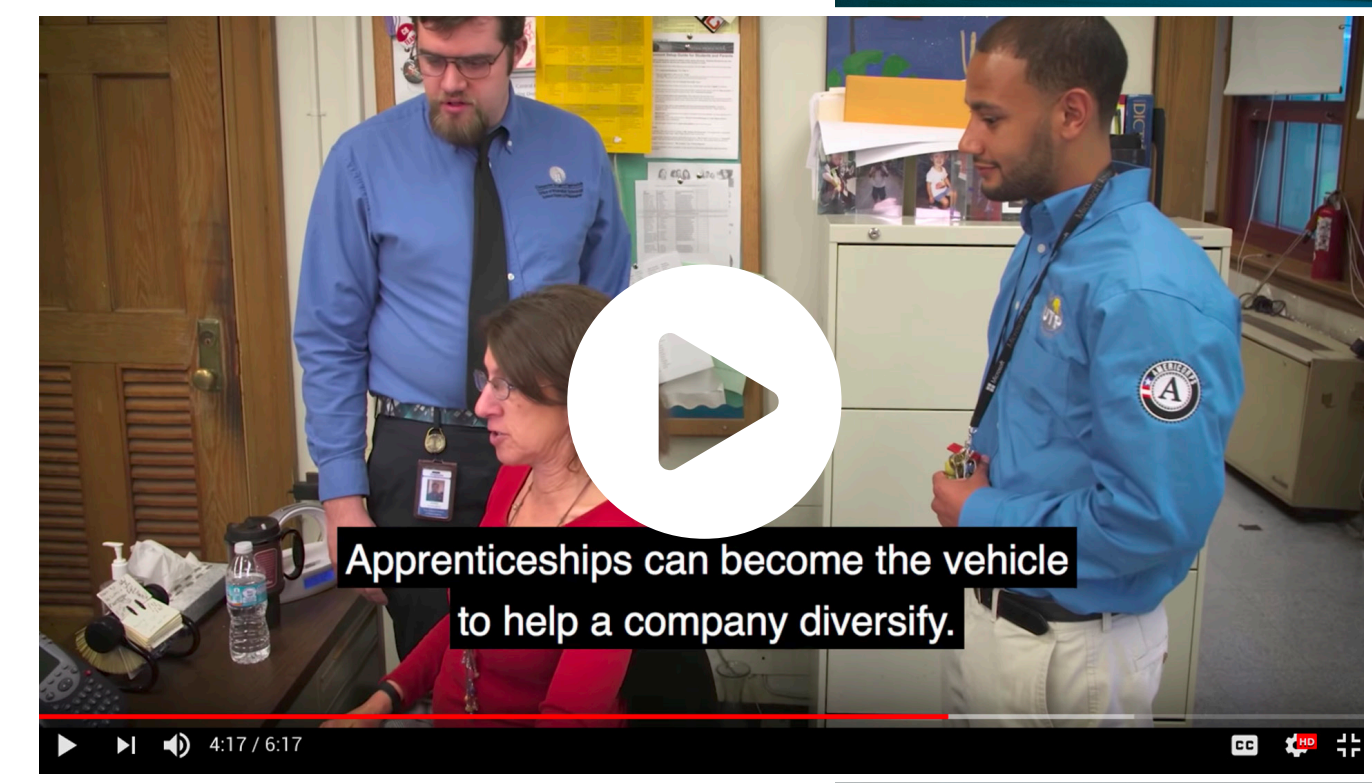
Combining classroom instruction with on-the-job training, apprenticeship programs help bridge skills gaps and bring new and more diverse talent into the workplace, including people with disabilities and those with diverse backgrounds and educational experiences. The result is a pipeline of primed and ready workers for years to come.

What's more, apprenticeship is a strategy for preparing workers in not only traditional trades, such as construction, but also high-growth industries, such as health care, information technology, transportation, energy, and many others.

In short, Apprenticeship Works...

**for workers,
for opportunity,
for inclusion,
for employers,
FOR BUSINESS.**

Hear More About Apprenticeship
Interested in learning more about how apprenticeships can help build a skilled, diverse workforce for your company or industry? View "#ApprenticeshipWorks," a video produced by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. This video features interviews with representatives from four organizations that manage or sponsor apprenticeships in a range of fields, including information technology, health care information management, and shipbuilding. It is one in a two-part series; the other video focuses on the value of apprenticeships to individuals. To view either video, visit www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/Apprenticeshipworks-video-series.htm.



#APPRENTICESHIPWORKS



**Apprenticeship
Works
for Business:**

A GUIDE TO
BUILDING INCLUSIVE
WORKPLACES

#ApprenticeshipWorks



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REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: NEWPORT NEWS SHIPBUILDING

“The apprenticeship model will work in almost every context—wherever you have a workforce need, wherever you have a gap, whether we’re talking about a skills gap or retention issues.”

- Todd Estes, Director, Apprenticeship Institute, Tidewater Community College

The Apprentice School at Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, Virginia, operates multi-year Registered Apprenticeships in a number of shipbuilding fields as well as advanced programs of study. Together, these programs provide Newport News Shipbuilding, which designs, builds, and maintains ships for the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, a continuous supply of employees with the skills and knowledge necessary to grow and succeed in the years ahead. The Apprentice School is structured within Newport News Shipbuilding, but partners with educational institutions, including Tidewater Community College and Old Dominion University, to offer college credit.

What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a job and career pathway that allows individuals to simultaneously earn money and learn a skill through a combination of education and hands-on training. For employers, often called “sponsors,” apprenticeships are a business-driven investment in the future. Apprenticeships facilitate flexible training within a company’s own culture in order to meet its unique workforce needs.

The apprenticeship model is rooted in flexibility. Businesses can customize each program to meet specific needs. Reflecting this, apprenticeships vary in length depending on a number of factors, including the occupation and nature of program. They typically range from one to six years, with most being somewhere in the middle. Regardless, throughout the process, apprentices are full-time employees preparing for long-term careers. The resulting benefits for sponsors include enhanced retention, increased productivity, and lower recruitment costs. In many industries, such as the traditional trades, apprenticeships have also been shown to improve safety, in turn reducing workers compensation costs and improving employee health and well-being.

Apprenticeship programs that are *registered* meet national standards established by the U.S. Department of Labor or federally recognized state apprenticeship agencies. This makes their credentials portable and recognizable to employers nationwide. Thus, Registered Apprenticeships attract a wider range of potential apprentices seeking rewarding, long-term careers.

The five basic components of a typical Registered Apprenticeship program are:

- > Business involvement, to tailor training to identified needs;
- > Structured hands-on training, in an actual workplace and overseen by an experienced mentor;
- > Job-related instruction, usually provided in collaboration with education partners such as community colleges, technical schools or apprenticeship training schools, or online or at the job site;
- > Rewards for skill gains, with pay from day one and increases as apprentices gain higher skill levels; and
- > A nationally recognized credential that ensures employers across an industry that an apprentice is fully qualified.

Who sponsors apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships can work in any workplace or industry in need of a stable, reliable stream of skilled, qualified workers. However, employers don’t have to operate apprenticeship programs alone, and in fact the vast majority do not. Typically, programs are run in collaboration with many partners, including but not limited to industry associations, unions, state and local workforce and economic development entities, two- and four-year colleges and universities, the military, and others. The U.S. Department of Labor is currently in the process of partnering with industry groups, companies, nonprofit organizations, unions, joint labor-management organizations, and many others to help them design apprenticeship programs that fit their unique industry needs. Some employers also work with such partners to offer pre-apprenticeships, which prepare people to enter and succeed in apprenticeships. Like apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships involve both instruction and hands-on training.

Do apprenticeships strengthen workforce inclusion?

Yes! Increasingly, apprenticeships are an effective and efficient strategy for increasing workforce inclusion. Because of the range of opportunities available, they provide a good career path for people from all backgrounds, including people with disabilities. For businesses, this increased diversity means a broader range of perspectives on how to confront challenges and achieve success.

The U.S. Department of Labor protects applicants and current participants in Registered Apprenticeship programs from discrimination on the basis of disability. Moreover, Registered Apprenticeship programs are taking proactive steps to recruit people with disabilities. These steps support an inclusive workforce, which benefits all employees and the business as a whole.

Each Registered Apprenticeship program’s sponsor develops its own minimum qualifications related to education and the ability to perform essential job functions. For a qualified apprentice with a disability, an apprenticeship sponsor must provide a reasonable accommodation to allow equal employment opportunity, unless to do so would cause undue burden. An applicant for an apprenticeship may also require a reasonable accommodation to assist in applying and interviewing for an apprenticeship. Generally, the individual with a disability must inform the sponsor that an accommodation is needed.



REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

URBAN TECHNOLOGY PROJECT

“I would say to any employer that had any hesitation about hiring someone from an apprenticeship program with a disability, or quite frankly anybody with a disability, that it’s the energy and excitement that someone brings to the job, and the desire to learn really should be your only focus, and that’s worked out for us tenfold.”

- Melanie Harris, Chief Information Officer, School District of Philadelphia

The Computer Support Specialists Information Technology apprenticeship program run by the Urban Technology Project (UTP) trains individuals for careers in technology while also providing much needed support to both faculty and students in Philadelphia high schools. Upon completion of the program, many UTP alumni go on to work for the school district, both in its administrative offices and individual schools around the city. A partnership between the School District of Philadelphia and Communities in Schools of Philadelphia, UTP also offers a pre-apprenticeship program, called the Digital Services Fellows program, through which individuals work alongside apprentices.

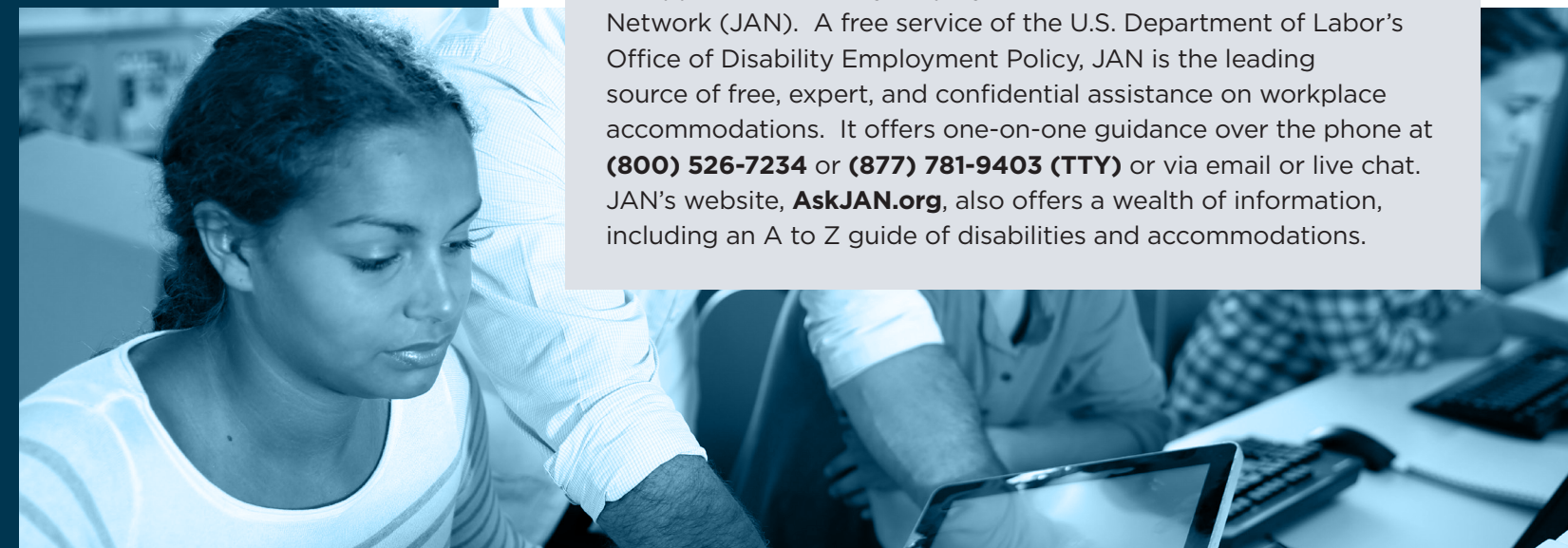
REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

MEDPARTNERS

“We saw competition between hospitals, our company, and other companies for talent, and we really felt like it wasn’t a sustainable environment for our clients. We really needed to do something to bridge the gap and bring talent into our workplace.”

- Marci Wilhelm, Co-Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer, MedPartners

MedPartners started its apprenticeship program to build a pipeline of professionals with the skills necessary to keep pace with rapid changes in the field of health information management, also known as medical coding. The company operates its program in collaboration with the American Health Information Management Association, which is capitalizing on apprenticeship as a way to bridge employment and education in the emerging industry. Apprentices serve MedPartners’ client hospitals and other health care facilities across the nation through a two-phased program consisting of intensive instruction followed by on-the-job work under close supervision.



When people with disabilities disclose a disability to request accommodations is a personal choice, and many disabilities are not readily apparent. Thus, key to a disability-inclusive work culture are policies and practices that are flexible in facilitating success for all employees.



Where can I get help to develop a Registered Apprenticeship program?

The nation’s Registered Apprenticeship system is overseen by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship in collaboration with

state apprenticeship programs. These agencies work together to ensure programs meet established standards, protect the safety and welfare of apprentices, and issue nationally recognized certificates of completion. They also promote the development of new programs, with input from a range of stakeholders, including industry associations, educational institutions, and workforce and economic development organizations. To help employers interested in learning more about sponsoring apprenticeships, the department offers a number of resources, including an employer toolkit and information on potential funding sources and state-based tax credits that can assist in getting a program up and running. All this and more is available at www.dol.gov/apprenticeship.

Employers who need help determining effective accommodations for apprentices (or any employee) can use the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). A free service of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy, JAN is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential assistance on workplace accommodations. It offers one-on-one guidance over the phone at **(800) 526-7234** or **(877) 781-9403 (TTY)** or via email or live chat. JAN’s website, AskJAN.org, also offers a wealth of information, including an A to Z guide of disabilities and accommodations.