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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Chuck Parker, President | John Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer | Justin Williams, Director

Williams Takes Over as New ACT Director, White Retires

Last month, previous Affiliated Construction Trades (ACT) Director Steve White retired after 30 years of service in the position and new ACT Director Justin Williams officially took over.

Williams was born and raised in West Virginia.

He grew up in Buckhannon and now resides in Charleston with his wife, Briana Warner, and their two daughters.

He was previously an attorney for the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 132 and has experience in both the campaign and legislative fields.

Williams earned his J.D. from West Virginia University College of Law, after obtaining both his Master of Public Administration and B.A. in Political Science from West Virginia University.

After a three-month transition period, Williams is prepared to take on the role of ACT Director and work to support the trades.

"I'm looking forward to strengthening ACT's position in WV," said Williams. "ACT will work every day to educate our elected officials about our skilled trades members and to

make sure every West Virginian is aware of the opportunity to have a great career in the construction industry."

With the passage of the Bipartisan

Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, West Virginia will receive millions of dollars in federal funds over the course of the upcoming

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New ACT Director Justin Williams speaks about apprenticeship and workforce development issues at the West Virginia Press Association Legislative Outlook event on January 6, 2023.

2023 Legislative Session Begins at West Virginia Capitol Building in Charleston

West Virginia's 60-day legislative session began on Wednesday, January 11.

After the 2022 election, the Republican party has realized the largest majorities ever since taking power in 2014.

The split in the House of Delegates is 88-12 while the split in the

WV Senate is 31-3.

Over the course of the last several years, representatives from ACT and the WV State Building Trades (WVSBT) have been making inroads on both sides of the aisle to promote apprenticeship programs and WVSBT Government Relations Director George Capel believes those efforts

are paying off.

"We have made a lot of progress with lawmakers, especially in the House of Delegates," said Capel. "Recently, House leaders have been very receptive of our ideas regarding workforce development, and we look forward to working with them on a number of issues."

However, Capel admitted there still may be some issues the Trades will have to defend.

"We have been informed that cuts to unemployment benefits may be on the table again this year," said Capel. "If that does happen, we will do everything we can to work with our

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Log on: WVccl.org

West Virginia Laborers' Apprenticeship Program Accepting New Applications

The West Virginia Construction Craft Laborers' Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee is accepting applications year-round.

Those interested can apply at any WorkForce WV Office between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:00 pm Monday through Thursday and 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Friday.

Applicants must be at least 18 years old; have a high school diploma (or equivalent) or pass a test administered by WorkForce; have a valid driver's license; and be physically able to perform the work of the trade.

A substance abuse test, including random tests, will be required at some point in the process.

Documents such as a copy of a birth certificate, a valid driver's license, transcripts of grades, and

proof of a high school degree will be requested at a later date.

The apprenticeship program consists of hands-on classroom training and paid on-the-job training.

The WV Laborers' Training Center in Mineral Wells provides 400 hours of classroom and hands-on training free of charge including meals and lodging.

Apprentices will also learn on the job in their home areas while earning a paycheck, for a total of 4000 hours, approximately two years.

Upon completion of the program apprentices will earn Journeyman status and receive a certificate from the U.S. Department of Labor.

The areas of training provide a wide variety of skills to ensure highly productive workers will have suc-

cessful careers. Topics include pipe-laying, mason tending, instrument reading, environmental remediation and more.

For more information visit their website www.wvccl.org or call 304-

489-9665.

To receive a free brochure, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: West Virginia Laborers' Training Center, P.O. Box 6, Mineral Wells, WV 26150. ■

Williams Takes Over

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ing years and many believe there is the potential for a statewide construction labor shortage.

Williams says addressing this need for craft-workers is among his main priorities as ACT Director.

"We have always provided the necessary manpower for projects in our jurisdiction, and I don't want that to be something that changes anytime soon," said Williams. "We are working on, and will soon be implementing, a

plan to increase the awareness of job opportunities and help develop our state's workforce, strengthening the skilled labor pipeline to our crafts."

In addition, Williams explained

"I want to make sure we do all we can to secure a bright future for all the crafts under the West Virginia State Building Trades umbrella."

Justin Williams

*Director
Affiliated Construction Trades*

that ACT and the WV State Building Trades are working with the state legislature, state

and local school boards, and representatives in higher education to develop pre-apprenticeship programs and ensure apprentices can receive an associate degree upon completion of their program.

"By developing relationships with different state agencies, community organizations, and other entities throughout our state we will find stronger

applicants for our programs," said Williams. "I want to make sure we do all we can to secure a bright future for all the crafts under the West Virginia State Building Trades umbrella." ■

PKB-Marietta Trades Hold Annual Christmas Luncheon



Building Trades members, contractors, families, and friends eat together at the annual Parkersburg-Marietta Building Trades Council Christmas Luncheon on December 16.

"The annual Christmas luncheon is a great way to celebrate the holidays together and show appreciation for our members who work hard throughout the year," said Buddy Malone, Business Manager for the Parkersburg-Marietta Building and Construction Trades Council.

Legislative Session

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friends on both sides to ensure this important safety net is not cut for working families."

Capel went on to add that other issues such as attacks on the WV Jobs Act and other laws that are important for local workers may be brought up as well.

"We are ready to defend any and

all laws and regulations that are important to the trades," said Capel. "That said, we also plan to show lawmakers that we have the same goal. We want to retain our people in West Virginia and provide jobs for local workers. There is no reason why we all cannot work together to support those ideals." ■

New Gallup Poll: United States Approval of Labor Unions at Highest Rate Since 1965

A recent Gallup poll has concluded approval of labor unions in the United States is currently the highest it has been since 1965.

As of 2022, 71% of Americans said that they approve of labor unions.

The results were derived from Gallup's annual Work and Education survey, which collected data from a random sample of 1,006 adults over the age of 18 across all 50 U.S. states during the month of August 2022.

This new approval rating has grown more than 20% over the course of the last 10 years, and about 10% since before the COVID 19 pandemic.

In fact, the National Labor Relations Board reported a 57% increase in union election petitions filed during the first six months of fiscal year 2021.

According to the Gallup poll "The low unemployment rate that developed during the pandemic altered the balance of power between employers and employees, creating an environment fostering union membership that has resulted in the formation of unions at several high-profile companies."

In addition, the poll asked union members to give their top three answers for their primary reason for

joining a union. 65% of the respondents noted that better pay and benefits was one of the main reasons for joining a union, and 57% said employee rights and representation was among their top three reasons. These two responses were the top two answers.

Gallup concluded that while "it is a challenging environment for em-

ployers -- and many are pushing back against unionization efforts despite unions' improved public image," employers should strive to find ways to improve their engagement with unionized workers. The trend of increasing approval ratings of unions, and unionization efforts, are anticipated to continue throughout the upcoming years. ■

Charleston Trades Raise \$11K for SA Kettle Drive



Members of the WV Carpenters and their family members work a bell-ringing location at the South Charleston Cabela's store, as a part of the Charleston Building and Construction Trades annual partnership with the Salvation Army for their Red Kettle Drive.

"We always look forward to this time of year," said Fred Chandler, Business Manager for the Charleston Building and Construction Trades Council. "Working with the Salvation Army gives us the opportunity to give back to the community that has given us so much and help those in need during the holiday season."

The Charleston Building and Construction Trades Council has partnered with the Salvation Army for decades to help fundraise during the Red Kettle Drive.

This year, the Laborers, Pipefitters, Carpenters, Electricians, Painters, Roofers, and Sheet Metal Workers helped to volunteer at 7 locations around the Charleston area. Through their efforts, a total of \$11,059.63 was raised for the Salvation Army.

Trades Sponsor First WV New Energy Conference



Mike Jenkins, Senior Council Representative with the WV Carpenters, speaks at the first 2022 West Virginia New Energy Conference last month in Charleston, West Virginia.

The event, sponsored in part by the WV Electrical Workers Association and the Eastern Atlantic Council of Carpenters, was hosted by American Clean Powers and the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition (MAREC), a group of utility-scale solar, wind, battery storage, and public interest organizations dedicated to promoting renewable energy.

The conference was organized to connect industry and labor over discussions surrounding renewable energy opportunities.

Among the items discussed were the newly announced Berkshire Hathaway project in Ravenswood, West Virginia. Late last year, the company announced it would renovate a shuttered aluminum manufacturing plant to create titanium products for the aerospace industry.

Also, pieces of federal legislation, such as the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, were discussed.

In addition, Delegate Wayne Clark (R-Jefferson) was in attendance to unveil his recently created New Energy Caucus at the West Virginia Legislature. Clark explained the idea was spurred by new technologies that he believes should be utilized to continue WV's "energy legacy."

"The New Energy Caucus is a way for my legislative colleagues and I to learn more about a broad spectrum of energy resources and advancements," said Clark. "Instead of being reactive, we must be proactive and take the lead."

Apply by March 6

Charleston IBEW Local #466 Accepting Electrical Apprenticeship Applications

The Charleston Joint Electrical Apprenticeship and Training Committee will accept apprenticeship applications from 8:30AM until 4:00PM Monday through Friday until March 6th.

Applications will be accepted at the Charleston JATC Building, locat-

ed at 810 Indiana Avenue, Charleston, WV 25302. Applications can also be submitted at the IBEW 466 Satellite Office located at 316 Mercer Street, Princeton, WV 24740.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 466 and the WV-Ohio Valley National Elec-

trical Contractors Association work together to deliver the highest quality training available for electrical apprentices in all phases of commercial,

full year of high school algebra, or one post-high school accredited algebra class, with a passing grade. All applicants must provide high school



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Trades, Lawmakers and State Agencies Partner on Pre-Apprenticeship



Michael Shaffer (center), Principal of Adult Programs for the WV Schools of Diversion and Transition, gives a tour of the Mount Olive Correctional Facility to (from left) Delegate Evan Worrell (R-Cabell); Delegate Eric Brooks (R-Raleigh); John Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer for the WV State Building and Construction Trades (WVSBT); and Fred Chandler, Business Manager for the Charleston Building Trades.

The WV Schools of Diversion and Transition (WVSDT) creates the curriculum for construction certificate programs offered to inmates in the WV corrections system.

Since late last year, representatives from ACT and the WVSBT have been working with representatives from WV Corrections to develop their curriculum and expand pre-apprenticeship opportunities offered to inmates who may be future apprenticeship prospects.

The effort is a part of a larger initiative to develop the state's workforce throughout various demographics to find more applicants for craft apprenticeship programs.

"With all of the federal money coming into the state, we are ramping up our efforts to find more applicants for craft apprenticeships," said John Epperly. "We were very impressed with the programs offered by the WVSDT, and we plan to work with them as well as many other partners to ensure we get the best applicants to secure the best future for all of our crafts."

Affiliated Construction Trades

600 Leon Sullivan Way
Charleston, WV 25301
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industrial, instrumentation, and tele-data work.

Apprentices receive five years of training, with a total of 900 hours of classroom instruction and 8,000 hours of paid, on-the-job training.

This provides affiliated contractors with craft workers who have the knowledge, skills, and attitude to remain competitive with honest wages and benefits.

Applicants for the apprenticeship program must be at least 17 years of age to apply and 18 years old at the time of indenture.

Applicants must be physically able to perform the essential functions of the trade, present evidence of possession of a valid driver's license, and provide proof of high school graduation or equivalent.

All applicants must also show evidence of completion of at least one

transcripts or equivalent records, whichever are applicable.

In addition, applicants must qualify for an interview using the electrical trade's aptitude test, developed and validated by the American Institutes for Research. Information for test preparation can be found at www.electricalprep.com.

If applicants have prior military experience, they may submit a DD-214 to verify their service, and their training and experience in the armed forces will be considered.

At the time of application, a fee of \$20.00 is required.

No applications submitted after 4:00PM on March 6th will be considered.

For more information contact Training Director Dustin Vaughn at DustinV@ibew466.org (304) 345-5166 or log onto IBEW466.org. ■