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

West Virginia Trades Hold Labor History Classes

Earlier this month, the West Virginia Building and Construction Trades kicked off a series of labor history classes across the state with the aim of educating members about the significance and history of the wider labor movement in West Virginia.

The classes, taught by Sam White of PTM Consulting Group, give an in-depth look at the labor movement and how it has shaped the current state of organized construction in the state of West Virginia.

The class covers the history of labor in the US from the perspective of the Building Trades with an emphasis on the labor history of the Ohio River Valley region.

Other topics that are highlighted include the history of workplace safety, skilled labor's role in securing collective bargaining rights for workers, the impact of new technology, the history of the open shop movement, and the power of the labor movement to improve our society.

"With fewer young people coming from union families, a labor history class taught from the perspective of

the building trades can help counter the misinformation about labor and its history in our culture," said White. "It can also help build pride in membership, improve retention, and pres-

ent an accurate history of the labor movement, the building trades, and the individual craft unions."

According to White, participants learn how to identify patterns in the

history of labor that they can then apply to better understand where they are today and to help move their union forward into the future, all on

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Members of the Upper Ohio Valley Building and Construction Trades Council attend a Labor History Class, taught by Sam White, at the Ironworkers HQ in Wheeling, West Virginia.

Trades Showcase Apprenticeship Programs, Double Down on Recruitment Efforts

Earlier this year, the West Virginia Building and Construction Trades Council approved a measure which creates a budget to be spent on recruitment initiatives across the state of West Virginia.

Part of this budget is being spent

on a series of videos, which feature members of each construction craft, to give a well-rounded view of West Virginia Building and Construction Trades crafts.

The crafts featured in the videos will include: Boilermakers, Brick-

layers, Carpenters, Cement Mason, Electricians, Insulators, Iron Workers, Laborers, Millwrights, Operating Engineers, Industrial Painters, Pipe Fitters, Roofers, and Sheet Metal Workers.

Representatives from the West

Virginia Building and Construction Trades Council say this initiative is aimed at helping build up craft apprenticeship programs to address the need for labor in West Virginia's construction industry.

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New Changes to Jumpstart Program Unveiled at IBEW 466 in Charleston

On October 23 at the IBEW 466 Headquarters in Charleston, West Virginia, WV State Treasurer Larry Pack unveiled new features for the Jumpstart Savings Program.

The program will undergo several major changes including the transition from a savings plan to an investment platform for current and future trade professionals through the state-administered Money Market Pool.

“We need to protect our well-paying blue-collar jobs and empower the talented individuals who use their skills to support their communities – and most importantly, their families,” Treasurer Pack said.

“That is why my Office is proud to relaunch our Jumpstart Savings Program and provide investment functions for our skilled workforce

who are the backbone of our nation’s economy.

We will invest their funds using conservative and enduring values that are a mainstay of our state.”

The Jumpstart Savings Program will transition from a basic savings account to a state tax-advantaged investment account through the West Virginia Money Market Pool.

The program allows individuals who wish to pursue a wide range of skilled vocations or trades – ranging broadly from welding to cosmetology – to save money for career expenses

and enjoy certain state income tax benefits.

Those individuals who take advantage of the program can utilize their investments for business expenditures needed for their skilled voca-

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Larry Pack

Treasurer

State of West Virginia

tion or trade which are eligible for a state income tax deduction.

“These changes build on Treasurer Moore’s vision by allowing individuals to cover the costs of entering the workforce while investing in their future,” Treasurer Pack said.

The West Virginia Money Market Pool has been in operation for over 20 years and is offered through the West Virginia Board of Treasury Investments (BTI).

The objective of the portfolio is to maintain sufficient liquidity to meet the needs of skilled workers, entrepreneurs, and blue-collar workers while striving to earn a return above inflation.

The program was originally launched under Treasurer Riley Moore in 2022.

For more information on the Jumpstart Savings Program, log on to www.wvjumpstart.gov. ■



West Virginia Treasurer Larry Pack unveils new positive changes for the Jumpstart Savings Program at the IBEW 466 Headquarters in Charleston, WV.

West Virginia Trades

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the backs and shoulders of those who came before them.

In addition, apprentices gain an appreciation for the history of their organization in the context of labor movement history and the evolution of the building and construction industry.

Classes are free to WVBCT members and at least two classes will be scheduled for each local Building Trades Council jurisdiction to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate.

“There is no better part of the country to learn about the history of labor and the building trades,” said White. “All new union members should learn about this history so that they can pass it on to future generations.”

For more information on the labor history classes, or if you are interested in additional labor history classes or other labor studies classes or projects, contact Sam White at sam@ptmconsultgroup.com or (573) 673-4642. ■

Trades Showcase

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“We have always prided ourselves in being able to step up to the plate when contractors and developers have a need in our jurisdictions,” said John Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer for the West Virginia Building and Construction Trades Council.

“These videos are just one aspect of how we are trying to meet folks where they are to encourage them to explore taking on a career in the trades.

The plan is to visit each craft to

give folks an idea of what our affiliates do in each of their programs.”

With new challenges and technology on the horizon, Epperly says the trades plan to build on this new initiative going forward.

“Contractors approach us all the time, asking for additional skilled workers,” said Epperly. “Because of this, we are directing significant resources to ensure that we can always be ready, regardless of what their needs are,” said Epperly. ■

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



WV BUILDING TRADES SURVEY

Heading into the 2026 election cycle, we want to hear from members about what issues, candidates, and ideals are the most important. This short survey will only take 5 minutes, but it will give WVBCT leaders a better understanding of what matters most to craftworkers across the state. Your responses are confidential and your feedback will help guide our efforts and advocacy on behalf of union construction.

Laborers, Roofers Charity Softball



Union members stepped up to the plate Saturday, raising thousands of dollars for flood relief in the Ohio Valley. Members of LiUNA, the Laborers’ International Union of North America, and the Roofers Union participated in a charity softball tournament hosted by Laborers Locals 1149 of Wheeling and 809 of Steubenville at the St. Clairsville Junior Sports Complex. The event raised \$4,000 for the United Way of the Upper Ohio Valley Flood Relief Fund, which supports local families and communities affected by flooding. Four teams competed in a round-robin format: Laborers Local 1149, Laborers Local 809, Roofers Local 188 of Wheeling, and the WVALDC Team, made up of laborers from Local 616 in Cumberland, Maryland, and Local 1149. The top two teams advanced to the championship game, where Local 1149 defeated Local 809, 20-13, to claim the title. Organizers said the tournament was a big success and hope to expand the event next year to include more teams and raise more for local causes.

One Tiny Cut, One Big Risk: Understanding Tetanus by Dr. Elaine Darling

Guest Columnist - Remember your parents and grandparents as you were growing up telling you to watch where you were walking so you don't step on rusty nails? Those rusty nails they were talking about could carry a bacteria that causes tetanus.

And lots of things that come into contact with soil, dust, and rust can carry the tetanus bacteria, too. Many skilled trades workers are in constant contact with sharp tools, heavy equipment, and jagged materials.

That's where tetanus comes in. It does not spread from person to person; rather, tetanus spores are in the dirt and dust around us, so people can get tetanus when the bacteria enter through breaks in the skin.

This is often through cuts or wounds made by contaminated tools, machines, and other objects, or through existing, open cuts and wounds.

Even with the best safety practices, cuts, scrapes, and puncture wounds unfortunately happen.

Tetanus infection can have some painful and disabling effects.

You might have heard people talk about tetanus as "lockjaw," and this is because it can cause painful muscle contractions in the jaw and throughout the body.

When the bacteria enters the body, it can release a toxin that causes painful muscle stiffness, difficulty swallowing and breathing, seizures and even death.

Even "minor" injuries can become life-threatening if the tetanus bacteria gets in. In fact, 1 out of 10 people who get tetanus will die from it.

Once tetanus takes hold, there's no cure.

Prevention through vaccination is the only defense and helps to maintain your ability to show up, put in a full day's work, and provide for yourself and your family.

That's why staying up-to-date on your tetanus shot is crucial. Immunization protects us from tetanus and a variety of other illnesses that can knock us off the job.

A tetanus shot (typically called DTaP, Tdap, or Td in medical records) is recommended for all teens and adults at least every 10 years.

However, if you get a cut, puncture, or wound and it has been longer than five years since your last tetanus shot, talk with a healthcare provider to see if it's recommended for you to get another.

In West Virginia, you can get your tetanus shot at many places in your community, including some workplaces, your healthcare providers' office, the local health department, community health centers, and pharmacies.

Most insurance plans cover adult vaccination. Check with your insurance plan for coverage details.

For adults who do not have insurance or whose insurance does not cover immunization, free or reduced-cost vaccines may be available at community health centers, free clinics, and local

health departments.

Like many of the precautions we take each day to protect ourselves from injury on the job, tetanus immunization is an important tool in the toolbox that helps keep us safe. ■



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