



How Apprenticeships Provide a Unique Post-Secondary Option for U.S. Students

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U.S. families looking for alternatives to the typical 4-year college route, according to a recent Carnegie/Gallup study, apprenticeships provide an opportunity to gain hands-on experience, earn industry credentials and build workplace skills.

For students, apprenticeships provide affordable paths to secure high-paying jobs and careers without the typical student debt associated with college. While earning wages, they also earn stackable industry credentials that put them well on their way to earning an associate's degree.

“We use an earn and learn model” said Project Hire-Ed Manager Danielle Kuglin Seago who runs College of DuPage’s apprenticeship program. Apprentices earn a full-time salary working for an employer who provides on-the-job training to help them learn the position over time. At the same time, the apprentice is taking courses at College of DuPage that compliment the responsibilities of their job. The employer pays for the cost of tuition, books, and fees for the apprentice, as they learn skills and gain experience to help them be successful on the job. And often apprentices earn more than their counterparts as seen from a **study** released by Opportunity America and the Brookings Institution which found that graduates of employer-led apprenticeships earned salaries up to 63 to 86 percent more than other career and technical graduates from the same community college.

Apprenticeships can help those who don’t know where they want to start with their degree.

“Being pressured by my family about choosing a school and a career just made me want to take a break from going to college at all. I thought I would get a part-time job somewhere while I decided on my career. I knew that I couldn’t give up because I wanted to be the first one in my family to graduate from college. I started by taking general education classes to eventually see what I wanted to do in life. After the first three years, nothing really stuck out to me. I was frustrated seeing friends almost done with their degrees and finding out what they wanted to do. I knew I had to figure something out,” said Jonathan Torres, HVACS apprentice who started with the Project Hire-Ed program a year ago.

Rory Condon, current Project Hire-Ed apprentice found a successful path as an industrial maintenance apprentice. “I struggled to find my way for years after high school. I worked mostly dead-end jobs for over a decade, including some light manufacturing experience, and then I decided it was time for a change. I made the choice to go back to school to try to find an actual career that worked for me.”

And apprenticeships can help provide a path for a solid career.

Hamid Benfakir, Pioneer Service CNC machinist apprentice, said that his Project Hire-Ed apprenticeship has enabled him to work at a company where he sees himself as a long-term employee with a steady salary. "Being a student in this program has allowed me to incorporate the knowledge acquired in the classroom as well as the technical skills learned on the job into building a foundation for a career in the CNC manufacturing field," he said.

Apprenticeship instructor and HVACR Program Chair, Bob Clark said: “You're working in a skilled workforce environment that's challenging you daily, and that in itself is exciting. On top of that, you're getting hired by this organization at the front end of college, and you're working your way through college and gain experience at the same exact time, and you're creating yourself a career. Whether or not you choose to stay with that the rest of your life, it starts propelling you towards success.”

Apprenticeships provide career pathways for job seekers, while addressing the **strong demand in DuPage County for skilled workers.**

After hearing regional employers share their common concerns over an aging workforce and talent pool skills-gap, College of DuPage (COD) created the Project Hire-Ed apprenticeship program to address these workforce needs. Apprenticeships at COD have helped employers find the right talent for their organizations through a pipeline of potential apprentices and by upskilling their existing workforce through apprenticeships. And they are ensuring student apprentices are gaining the skills employers are looking for in both foundational, employability skills and the technical skills needed to be successful on the job. Apprenticeships have been the win-win solution for career-seeking students and employers.

For more information about Project Hire-Ed apprenticeships: contact us at **Project Hire-Ed** or attend the upcoming virtual information session on May 26 at 6:30. Registration required.

For a copy of the Carnegie Corporation-Gallup study: <https://www.carnegie.org/news/articles/nearly-half-american-families-want-alternatives-four-year-college-according-carnegie-corporation-new-york-gallup-survey/>

Continue Your Apprenticeship with Project Hire-Ed™

What Other Project Hire-Ed Apprentices Have Said

*“The Project Hire-Ed apprenticeship **has been amazing**. The schooling really correlates with the things I do at my job.”*

*“Since I have been in the program I **have loved every moment**. The days go by so quickly since I constantly learn new things every day.”*

*“I am glad I chose this path instead of full-time college because I not only get the education, but I also get the **experience firsthand**.”*

For more information

- Watch our short two-minute video: tinyurl.com/PHE-Video
- Check out our website at cod.edu/project-hire-ed
- Email us at project-hire-ed@cod.edu



Start Your Career Now

- Work in a career while taking related coursework at College of DuPage that leads to a certificate in Applied Technology and be halfway to earning your associate degree.
- Receive full-time salary and benefits.
- No college debt: Employer pays tuition, books and fees.
- On-the-job training and gain hands-on experience.
- Wage increases as skills increase or milestones reached.

How Do I Get Started or Learn More About Project Hire-Ed?

- We can work with your current employer to explore the extension of your apprenticeship or seek out other apprenticeship companies after your high school apprenticeship.
- Attend an information session in early 2022.
- Contact our student outreach coordinator, Meg Frey, at freym302@cod.edu or (312) 636-3977.

Why Choose the Project Hire-Ed Apprenticeship Program?

- **Proven program:** We have many high school apprentices who have continued with our program who are successfully learning and working in DuPage area companies.
- **Mentors to help you succeed:** We train and facilitate a mentor to work with apprentices and have an Apprentice Success Case Manager with 20 years of experience helping students succeed.
- **16 state-of-the-art manufacturing tech labs:** Our TEC center is a 78,000 square foot facility developed at a cost of \$50 million with the latest equipment and technology.

What Career Paths Do You Offer?

- Within the manufacturing industry, apprentices can explore jobs in various careers, including Electro-Mechanical/Mechatronics, Facility Maintenance, Industrial Maintenance, Manufacturing CNC and Manufacturing Machining.
- Additionally, there are opportunities in HVACR Service and Welding.

Continue Your Apprenticeship with Project Hire-Ed™

Learn Why Others Love Being a Project Hire-Ed Apprentice

Launching My Career During High School

*By Juan Hernandez, Lake Park High School Youth
Apprentice 2021 graduate*

As soon as I started my high school machining class, I knew right away this is the career path that I wanted to follow. I began a youth apprenticeship through GPS Education Partners, and I was also given information about Project Hire-Ed at College of DuPage. When I became a senior, I received more information about the program and decided to join since I thought it would be perfect for what I wanted to do. Applying was a very smooth process, and I was given a large network of contacts that were willing to help me.

Being in the program for about a month now, the apprenticeship has been amazing. The schooling is what I thought it would be. It really correlates with the things I do at my job. Both in my job and in school I am learning a lot more than I thought I would have for only being an apprentice for a month. I've been able to learn many machines at work, and my classes at College of DuPage are making my skills in metrology sharper, which helps a lot in my job. I am looking forward to learning how to create programs and actually becoming a programmer. I think with ease this will happen because my job has been really supportive, knowing that I have to juggle work and school together. I do feel that they will help me learn to program and sharpen my skills in it and the school will help me on that path.

Since I have been in the program I have loved every moment. The days go by so quickly since I constantly learn new things every day. I am glad I chose this path instead of full-time college because I not only get the education, but I also get the experience firsthand.

Experienced Project Hire-Ed Apprentice

By Rory Condon, Industrial Maintenance Apprentice

“You do something in class and then two days later I see that on a machine I'm trying to fix at work—it all comes together. And really helps it click for me. I learn so much better and keep track of all those skills. It's been very beneficial.”

“Being an apprentice has actually helped me build my confidence in what I'm doing and given me a purpose that I was missing before when I was working miscellaneous jobs after high school. It's more like I have a career now and I'm working towards something because I have definite goals. I think all around it's just been great for me. My one piece of advice is that I wished I would have joined Project Hire-Ed earlier.”

“My instructors at COD have been great. Every one of them has either worked or is still currently working in the industry. So there's a lot of hands-on experience and things that they can share with you. It's not just the professors teaching out of a book. As far as the facilities, they're great. The welding lab is incredibly impressive. I've taken a class in the HVACR lab, which is enormous and also very impressive. Even my employers were so impressed. They used to get apprentices from other schools and they came to College of DuPage and we're blown away by the facilities.”

“The advice I would have liked to have given myself earlier would have been to join Project Hire-Ed earlier and not waited so long. I know companies are really looking for people, and a lot of the people who are in those jobs now are on the older side and soon retiring. So it's just going to be more and more opportunities. Having this apprenticeship has been the greatest thing that I've done for my career and my life, so I would definitely say to others to go for it.”



For more information, email
project-hire-ed@cod.edu.

Apprenticeships In Action Video

This video features two apprentices from the Work-Based Learning and Youth Apprenticeship Collaborative Program. The main speaker in the video continued his apprenticeship with COD's Project Hire-Ed's apprenticeship program.

Only 4 minutes in length, the video highlights **what these students like about being an apprentice.**



Or

<https://tinyurl.com/Apprenticeships-in-Action>