

## Ironworker apprentice program allows students to earn while they learn

High school graduates looking for a career that doesn't require expensive tuition may want to explore an alternative education path – the Ironworkers Local 416 apprentice program.

“Our apprentice-training program offers a great opportunity for recent graduates, and they can earn a good wage while they learn the skills needed to get jobs,” says Hart Keeble, Local 416 Business Manager and Financial Secretary/Treasurer.



The hourly pay of a starting apprentice is typically 50 percent that of an experienced journeymen. A first-year apprentice with Ironworkers Local 416 earns \$16.75 an hour, plus vacation, health insurance and pension benefits, all while they learn reinforcing structures, installing post-tensioning tendons, placing and tying rebar and other skills. Apprentices get regular pay raises as they progress through the training.

“Many new apprentices tell us they are surprised by the ability to earn a good living while learning a job,” says Keeble.

The apprenticeship combines four years of supervised, structured, on-the-job training with classroom instruction and hands-on training. Apprentices get 160 hours of instruction every year – including college-level classes.

“Training sets us apart, and our contractors expect safe, productive and skilled workers,” says Keeble about the investment. “It’s the right thing to do and it helps us win work.”

Employment of ironworkers is projected to grow 22 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all occupations, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. That bodes well for recent graduates currently looking for work.

For more information on the Local 416 apprenticeship program, go online at [reinforcingironworkerslocal416.org](http://reinforcingironworkerslocal416.org) and click on the apprenticeship tab. Or go to [www.universityofiron.org](http://www.universityofiron.org).