

## Advantages of a Local 520 Apprenticeship

### Here are some of the advantages of a Local 520 Apprenticeship:

1. **No Tuition.** Your training is completely paid for with the exception of your books by a Training Fund that is part of our fringe benefit package.
2. **Low Cost Books.** You must pay for your books at the beginning of the school year, typically \$200-\$300. As an incentive, if you receive a final grade of 90% or above your book money is reimbursed at the beginning of the next school year. Over 80% of our apprentices get all their book money back.
3. **Training by Pipe Tradesmen.** All of our Instructors are Members who work or worked in the field.
4. **Combination of Shop Time and Classroom Time.** This is not a books and PowerPoint training program. Most courses include some shop time where you learn hands on.
5. **Earn While You Learn.** Our apprentices start out working for a Contractor and begin school in September. You take off one day every other week for class.
6. **Good Pay.** Apprentices currently start out at \$17.44 per hour. Apprentices get a raise every year that amounts to approximately \$1.75 per hour. After your apprenticeship you become a Journeyman. Current Journeyman rate is \$34.87 per hour.
7. **Health Care Benefits.** You get full healthcare benefits including medical, optical, dental, and prescription medication coverage from the first day you begin work. In the future if you get married or have children they are all covered under your benefit plan at no additional cost out of pocket.
8. **Retirement Plans.** You will begin to contribute into a pension plan that gives you a set amount of money monthly for each year you work and an annuity plan where you can determine where your money goes (stocks, bonds, etc.) from the first hour you work. After 30 years of service you add the number of years you worked to your age and when that number equals 90 you can retire with full benefits. For example a Member who gets into our apprenticeship at 20 years of age and works full years can retire at age 55.

9. **College Credits.** Apprentices who complete the Local 520 Apprenticeship program receive 35 credits toward an Associate's degree. If a Member decides to pursue their Associates they pay for their courses and books and upon successful completion turn in their receipts and documentation for reimbursement from the Training Fund.