

The Construction Industry Employment Outlook Remains Strong

More than 6 million people work in the construction industry – making it one of the nation’s largest industries. It is a high-growth industry that is critical to the U.S. economic viability and development with 4.8 percent of the GDP and significant projected growth. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the construction industry will add nearly 175,000 jobs annually and add approximately one million new jobs between 2002 and 2012. It is predicted to be among the economy’s top 10 largest sources of job growth.

In the skilled trades areas, The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects between 2002 and 2012 a 154,000 new jobs for electricians, 122,000 new jobs for carpenters and 47,000 new jobs for construction managers. The projected need for all the construction areas and trades is in high demand, whether it be in masonry, sheetmetal, welding, heavy highway equipment, pipefitters, laborers, or plumbers. People in the industry like to point out that construction workers with skills and talents cannot have their jobs outsourced overseas.

If an individual is interested in a trade, they can begin training in high school in one of the construction technology programs, and after high school can “earn and learn through apprenticeship and training programs. They are offered through apprenticeships in specific trades programs, though the Colorado Industry Training Council and through community college programs. Plus a Construction Management major is available at University of Colorado and the Civil and Architectural Engineering, and Electrical Engineering programs at the University of Colorado. Any training, whether through a high school construction technology program, or through classes at the community college give an applicant a “leg up” to applicants not having the same experience.

Those with extra training tend to progress through apprenticeship training at a faster pace because they’ve already taken courses such as mathematics, mechanical drawing, and woodworking. Students need to have a good knowledge of math, and a trained worker can advance much more quickly. And when it comes to pay, it is a good paying industry. The pay scale rises with the skill level and a wage of \$20.00 an hour is not uncommon in the construction industry even prior to completing an apprenticeship program. And how do you get started into a trades program? If you start at the entry level, begin by demonstrating a commitment to the company and to your job or you can start as a “helper”. Then move on to an apprenticeship program or the company will offer to send you through a training program.