

CALPIA RECOGNIZES THEIR SUPERSTAR – ROY BORGERSEN

By Rusty Bechtold, Administrator, Workforce Development Branch, CALPIA

The California Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA) would like to recognize a “Super Star” from an outside organization that has gone above and beyond to support CALPIA’s mission of providing skill development opportunities which reduce recidivism for California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) inmates.

CALPIA would like to recognize Roy Borgersen who is an instructor with the Northern California General Laborers Local 185 Union and is contracted with the CALPIA Career Technical Education (CTE) program. Borgersen has been an instrumental part in the success of this program and has been positively impacting offenders and ensuring they have the job skills necessary to become productive workers when they leave prison.

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FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: DOYLE RADFORD SR. – LABORERS LOCAL 185 REPRESENTATIVE, THREE FEMALE OFFENDER CTE GRADUATES, ROY BORGERSEN – CTE LABORER INSTRUCTOR AT FOLSOM WOMEN’S FACILITY, ROBIN HARRINGTON – ASSOCIATE WARDEN FOLSOM WOMEN’S FACILITY

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The Construction Labor program is a 3-6 month pre-apprentice offender training program under the supervision of journeyman professionals working with the Construction and General Laborers Local 185 which provides training in diverse skills including hand tools, pneumatic & power tools, compressors, tape measurement, concrete forms and pouring, signage and traffic control, demolition, general health & safety, general construction related math and job interview methods.

Established in 2005, the CALPIA CTE program was founded on two principals; reducing recidivism and lowering the cost to CALPIA and CDCR for construction projects. This program was the first in the nation to approach these two principals in collaboration with the various trades unions.

CALPIA worked with the Northern California Laborers' Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee to establish a program in California prisons that would adopt the same curriculum being used to train union apprentices' outside prison. After completion of training, paroling offenders are eligible for placement in full-scale apprenticeship programs. CALPIA pays the initial union dues and provides a full supply of tools to offenders who complete the program. CALPIA contracted with the unions to supply a union certified trainer to administer the curriculum to the inmates, ensuring consistency with apprenticeship training operated outside of prisons. The CTE program has proven successful with the recidivism rate for offenders graduating from CTE at approximately 89 percent less than offenders who parole from the general population.

Borgersen has been helpful in lowering offender's recidivism since 2007. He has provided instruction and graduated over 100 offenders that have reentered the community with job skills that are in demand. Also, Borgersen in the last six months has expanded his instruction to include female offenders and to provide them the same pre-apprenticeship program as the male offenders. The results for the women have

been overwhelmingly positive and the local laborer union has job opportunities available for them upon their release. Currently, Borgersen is working with male youth wards and will provide the same pre-apprenticeship laborer program and also will include specialized training in lead and asbestos removal.

Borgersen has been working in the General Laborers Local 185 for twenty-five years and has brought real work experience and knowledge for the offenders to use. He not only focuses on technical skills, but also instills a professional attitude of determination, perseverance, and confidence in the offenders. He teaches trade skills and provides the offenders with good work habits that increase the likelihood of them finding future employment and staying out of prison. Together, these skills provide graduates with employment opportunities in construction labor. His positive approach, methods and message he brings to the offenders is what makes him a "Super Star" for our CALPIA program.

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