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Kane
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Contact: Michele

michele.kane@calpia.ca.gov

CALPIA Graduates Receive Apprenticeship Certifications At Mule Creek State Prison

IONE – On May 12, 2022, The California Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA), in partnership with the California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) recognized fifty-three incarcerated individuals as apprentices at Mule Creek State Prison.

Through DIR's Division of Apprenticeship Standards, incarcerated individuals received their apprenticeship completion certificates earned while working for CALPIA. The men took part in one of two ceremonies which were held to recognize the CALPIA graduates in Healthcare Facilities Maintenance, Fabric Products and Coffee Roasting programs.

"What an honor to congratulate you all for a job well-done," said CALPIA's General Manager Bill Davidson while speaking to the graduates. "The apprenticeship completion certifications exemplify dedication, knowledge, and the opportunity for meaningful employment when you return home."

Family, friends, and staff cheered on the graduates who were excited for this in-person ceremony to take place.

"Our incarcerated population helps to make CALPIA successful at this prison," said Mule Creek State Prison Warden Patrick Covello. "Graduates you are at the forefront, so keep moving forward. Congratulations!"

CALPIA became a Registered Apprenticeship Partner with DIR's Division of Apprenticeship Standards which represents an impressive partnership among industry, labor, education, and government leaders. Apprenticeship opportunities are available at every California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) prison.

Incarcerated individuals obtain workplace knowledge, skills, and industry-recognized credentials through the apprenticeship training. CALPIA's registered apprenticeship program provides on-the-job training and job-related technical instruction.

The number of hours to obtain Journey person level varies by job classification, ranging from 2,000 to 8,000 total hours. In addition, all apprentices are required to complete 144 hours of "Related Supplemental Instruction" annually.

Graduate Relious Carter received his apprenticeship certification in front of his proud daughter.

“It means everything to me as I have learned how to operate and repair machines,” said Carter. “I have learned amazing job skills that I can take to the streets.”

CALPIA is a self-funded program that provides approximately 7,000 incarcerated individuals with life-changing job training opportunities with the goal of successful re-entry into their communities.

“This program has taught me teamwork and not to blame others for a problem, but look together for a solution,” added Carter.

CALPIA increases public and prison safety and reduces recidivism. According to a recent University of California, Irvine study, by three years after release, only 15.4 percent of CALPIA participants had been returned to custody.

The State Apprenticeship program started in 2018 and to date there are 2,241 incarcerated individuals registered into the program with 1,451 incarcerated individuals completing an apprenticeship program.

“The apprenticeship certificate represents the highest level of competency in careers in their field,” added Davidson. “We want our graduates to be successful when they leave so they can provide for themselves and their families with that ultimate goal of never coming back to prison.”