

Looking for the next generation of

As work opportunity continues to increase, Carpenters continue to recruit and train the next generation of skilled and professional carpenters, pile drivers, drywall-lathers, scaffolders, installers, mill-cabinet workers and other members of our trade. That's why we've built the International Training Center in Las Vegas. That's why, together with our signatory contractors, we maintain and continue to upgrade our own network of Northern California training facilities.

At high school—and even middle school—career days, through Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, through Helmets to Hard Hats and with community-based non-profits, we're reaching out to people who are looking for a career with good wages and benefits and a chance to grow with the industry.

On these pages, we're sharing a few of the creative ways we recruit motivated newcomers who will provide our industry with a skilled workforce, who will keep this union strong, and maintain the standard of wages and benefits we have fought for and achieved over the years.

Formerly incarcerated, these women start 'a new life' as carpenters

What would Terry do?

That's what Lisa Mercuri, a Local 505 fourth-period apprentice carpenter, asks herself every time she isn't sure how to handle a particular job. Terry Shupe was her instructor just a few years ago in the Carpenters Pre-Apprenticeship program at the Folsom Women's Facility.

In and out of prison five times—"I had a drug habit, and I was forging checks and committing fraud to support it"—Mercuri was fortunate to be transferred to Folsom, where she enrolled in the California Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA) program for the construction trades.



A 2014 graduation for pre-apprentices at Folsom Women's Facility. Lisa Mercuri, now a member of Local 505, is the third pre-apprentice from left, back row. "Graduation can be a very emotional moment," says Curtis Kelly, NCCRC Northern and Central District Manager, and a member of the Prison Industry Authority board of directors. "It's a huge success for them." That's carpenter pre-apprenticeship instructor Terry Shupe, Local 46, standing at the far right.



Lisa Mercuri, Local 505, is currently working for Clark-Pacific building dormitories at a Bay Area university.

The Carpenters Joint Training Committee for Northern California (CJTNC) has a memorandum of understanding with PIA that gives participants who complete the Carpenters Pre-Apprenticeship while in custody direct entry into the union's apprenticeship program. The program was launched in 2005 at the initiative of Curtis Kelly, NCCRC northern and central district manager, and a member of the Prison Industry Board.

"Curtis and the Carpenters were way out in front on this," says CALPIA General Manager Charles Patillo. "They were the first. We could not have implemented this without them stepping up."

Beginning with a pilot project at Folsom, the program now includes partnerships with piledrivers, laborers and ironworkers in prisons throughout the state. It works. The rate at which carpentry program graduates return to prison is 7.6 percent, as opposed to over 46 percent for the general state prison population.

"It works because it's a real partnership

Contractors

Members of the current Fairfield pre-apprenticeship "boot camp" class got a first-hand look at construction projects last month in a field trip to a high-end residence in the foothills and a hospital near Stockton.

They were hosted at a custom-built residence in Fiddletown by Level 10 Construction. Superintendent Joseph Landing and Foreman Doug Brown walked the group through the project. Fourth-period apprentice Oswald Xavier, Local 405, and sixth-period apprentice Juan Covarrubias, Local 152, spoke to the group about their first framing experience.

In French Camp they met with Brian Harp, an Otto Construction superintendent, who described the company's work at the San Joaquin General Hospital Acute Care Patient Wing.

First-period apprentice Brittainy R. Proctor, Local 46, a recent boot-camp graduate, gave the group advice on getting hired. Local 152 Field

Carpenters

between the CALPIA and the union, changing peoples' lives for the good of the whole state," Kelly says. "Using union carpenters as instructors means they are really serious about this program."

Released on parole in 2014 after four years, Mercuri still remembers getting up every morning at 5:30, getting to their facility on the Folsom site by 6:30, and doing "book work," including the history of the union, for a few hours before breaking out the tools.

"We got to do all kinds of things," Mercuri says. "We rebuilt the Folsom administrative building and other prison buildings. We worked at CalExpo. We worked in the state parks. I learned to drive every kind of lift. We did whatever they needed at the prison. We even built about 15 big dollhouses for kids who had lost their homes in the fires. I loved it!"

Another PIA graduate, Danielle Zavala, a former Fresno gang member, now a sixth-period apprentice in Local 701 after 3½ years in prison, puts it very simply: "I learned the values and the work ethic I never had before. I was an 'alpha female' on the Fresno streets. In the program, I became a leader."

Terry Shupe was one key to their success. A 40-year member of Local 46 who retired a year ago, Shupe worked with co-teachers from the Laborers, creating a program that has been emulated throughout the country.



Danielle Zavala, Local 701, a former Fresno gang member, has worked on projects all over Northern California, including High Speed Rail, above.

"We didn't baby them," he says. "We worked in the heat, in the rain. But I think they knew that this was their chance to get a good-paying job when they got out. And we sure didn't want to graduate people who couldn't do the job."

Zavala remembers her first trip down to Local 701 after she was released from prison in 2013, with her union dues paid up for a year

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Carpenters honored by CALPIA

Carpenters were among the honorees at a recent Sacramento Employer Forum, sponsored by the California Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA), for their effort to bring the benefits of union apprenticeship to prisoners upon their release.

The Carpenters' CALPIA program, established in 2005, long anticipated the new approach initiated by Gov. Jerry Brown emphasizing, as he said at the PIA event, compassion, education and rehabilitation.

Scott Kernan, Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, expressed his thanks to unions and other agencies participating in "an incredible change in the California criminal justice system."

The simple key, said Kernan, is to develop "extensive in-prison programming, a community transition, to get a roof over their heads, and perhaps most important, a living wage." That's why, he said, there is a particular focus on direct connection to construction industry employment, including access to apprenticeship.

Gov. Jerry Brown was the featured speaker at the event. "The current system has become "an organized enterprise that feeds on and reproduces itself," he said. "The path we're on now ... is trying to treat people like human beings. What you are doing is righteous. You are pioneers. Keep doing what you're doing—it's working."

host pre-apprentices at delta and foothill projects

Representative Susan Rodriguez reminded the apprentices-to-be about their union responsibilities once they became full-fledged members.

"Otto and Level 10 did a fantastic job of giving our boot-camp students a great tour of their job sites," said Hector Lopez, coordinator at the Fairfield Training Center. "For them to give us that much time is really appreciated."



At left, boot campers meet with Level 10 Superintendent Joseph Landing at a residential project in the Sierra foothills. At right, they also visited an Otto Construction site at a medical facility in French Camp, where they met with Superintendent Brian Harp.



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and a new set of tools, courtesy of CALPIA. "I was scared. I was afraid of change," she says. "I had no transportation." But Frank Dombrowski, coordinator at the Fairfield Training Center, "took me down to the hall, introduced me around, and they took me in right away, like family. The women members were amazing, they gave me really strong role models to look up to."

She particularly remembers Local 701 foreman Chris Clarke, with whom she worked on an early bridge job. "He asked me if this was what I really wanted to do, and then put me with a crew who taught me to do it the right way," she says.

Giving back matters to these women. Mercuri has earned certification as a drug and alcohol counselor. "Along with my work, it's a real passion for me," she says. "I call into the PIA program once every few months, and they put me on the speaker phone to talk to the inmates there."

Zavala, now married to a union pipefitter and the owner of a home in Fresno, is also in the process of arranging clearance to go back into Folsom Women's Facility to speak to CALPIA participants. "I really want to

be able to tell my story to people going through the same things," she says. "I'm working my butt off, but it's a whole new life, and that's because of the union."

Mercuri is now working for Clark-Pacific building four ten-story dormitories at a Bay Area university. "It's good people, hard work," she says. "It's great to be independent and self-sustaining. It's great to be learning all the time. I like it all—framing, concrete, finish work. I like the feeling of starting out with a flat slab and making something out of it. I never had that feeling before this."

Zavala is working on a water treatment plant for Balfour Beatty. "I get called back all the time. People are very accepting, and happy to teach," she says. The only problem is "guys see a female on the job, and they want to be nice. They want to help you lift things. You have to prove yourself, or they'll give you 'girl jobs.'"



Danielle Zavala, at right, with fellow Local 701 members, attended a Sisters in the Brotherhood meeting in Las Vegas—from left, Tammy Prado, Kayla Franklin, Carolyn Shaffer and Zavala.

Mercuri sees it that way, too. "If I let them treat me like a girl," she says, "I'll never learn anything!"

"Looking back," says Kelly, "Carpenters can be proud. We're doing the right thing. The state of California has been good to us, and here's a way we're giving back, and creating that new generation the industry needs."

'Rosie's Girls' get a look at a career in carpentry

When World War II broke out in the early 1940s, American women stepped up. When their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons went off to Europe and the Pacific to fight, women went to work building the ships, planes and tanks needed to win. The image of Rosie the Riveter was born, and the "Rosies" of that era are honored today in a monument and museum on the Richmond waterfront, on the site of the old Kaiser shipyards.



Journeylevel members Olwyn Brown, Local 713, and Tanya Lewis, Local 22, helped some of Rosie's Girls with a carpentry project.



Local 46 Field Representative Janet Staples and Local 152 Field Representative Patricia Ramirez meet with some Rosie's Girls at their Richmond career day.

Staff at the Rosie the Riveter Memorial, not content just to tell the story, have developed programs to bring that Rosie "we-can-do-it" attitude to today's young people. Each summer middle school girls, mostly from low-income families in Richmond, attend a six-week day camp where they take on a variety of challenges, building inner strength along with job skills, exploring their hopes and dreams,

and expanding horizons as they learn about possible careers for women.

Last month, at the Rosie Girls Career Day, Carpenter staff and rank-and-file members joined representative of other professions—medical, information technology, legal, law enforcement and others—in describing and showing their work, their training and other aspects of the trade.

This year, some 32 local teenage girls participated in the program.