

A photograph of two construction workers in a building under construction. The worker on the left is wearing a white hard hat with various safety stickers, a blue shirt, and a yellow safety vest with 'NOBODY GETS HURT' printed on it. The worker on the right is wearing a white hard hat with stickers, a dark hoodie, and a yellow safety vest. They are both looking down at a large sheet of paper, likely blueprints, and discussing it. In the background, other workers and construction equipment are visible.

## BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH NORTH AMERICA'S BUILDING TRADES UNIONS

### PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTH AMERICA'S BUILDING TRADES UNIONS

Partnership with North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU) offers an **opportunity for developers and project owners to increase productivity and lower costs**, all while providing critical benefits to communities across North America.

A December 2022 study of 1,550 projects over 20 years by Independent Project Analysis found that:

- Productivity for union labor is **14% higher** than non-union labor.
- The use of union labor **reduces the total cost of projects by an average of 4%.**
- Projects are **40% less likely to experience a shortage of skilled labor** when union labor is used.
- Projects using union labor are **one-third less likely to experience workforce turnover.**[1]

PLA projects are completed around **17% faster than non-PLA projects.**[2]



**14%**

Higher productivity rate

**40%**

Less likely to experience skilled labor shortages

**33%**

Less likely labor turnover

Working with NABTU ensures access to **highly skilled, safe workers, who receive cutting-edge training from billions of dollars of private investment.** Economist Peter Philips called this “the largest privately-financed system of higher education in the country.”[3]

- The Building Trades and their signatory contractors invest **\$2 billion annually in training** in the US. **For North America, this total is \$2.35 billion.** [4]
- Overall, the Building Trades unions operate **1,900 training centers** across the US and Canada.[5] These unions had 296,342 registered apprentices in 2024-25.[6]
- Registered apprentices from union programs account for the vast majority of construction apprentices in the U.S.[7] In 2021, **union programs accounted for 67.7% of construction apprentices.**[8]

# PREVAILING WAGES

- Federal prevailing wages were established when the Davis-Bacon Act was signed into law by Republican President Herbert Hoover in 1931.<sup>[9]</sup> **The law is designed to ensure workers are paid fair wages that reflect local standards.**<sup>[10]</sup>
- Peer-reviewed research shows that **prevailing wage laws promote worker safety and training, and do not increase project costs.**<sup>[11]</sup>



## HEALTH & SAFETY

- A study by the Illinois Economic Policy Institute found that **union worksites had 34% fewer OSHA violations per inspection** than nonunionized work sites.<sup>[12]</sup>
- **Union worksites have fewer fatalities.** A 2018 study by a Harvard scholar found that a 1% increase in unionization is associated with a 3% decline in the rate of occupational fatalities.<sup>[13]</sup>
- Construction workers with apprenticeship training – the vast majority of whom are union workers – have fewer injuries at work, leading to lower costs for contractors. A 2022 study published by the *Journal of Safety Research* found that plumbers with no apprenticeship training had 46% higher rates of workers' compensation claims.<sup>[14]</sup>



## SOCIAL BENEFITS

Union apprenticeship programs are **more diverse** than non-union programs. According to a 2024 report by the Institute for Construction Employment Research:

\* **18.7% of new union apprentices were non-white** in 2021, compared to only 14% for new non-union apprentices.

\* **6.26% of new union apprentices were women** in 2021, compared to only 4.45% of new non-union apprentices.[15]

*NABTU's Supported Apprenticeship Readiness Programs (ARP's) graduate:[16]*

**76%**  
People of color

**21%**  
Women

**23,866**  
Successful veteran transitions since 2016

# FEDERAL BENEFITS FOR UTILIZING NABTU'S WORKFORCE

Under the Inflation Reduction Act, most tax credit programs offer a **fivefold bonus credit to project owners** who meet prevailing wage and registered apprenticeship requirements.

Our apprenticeship programs and collective bargaining agreements **help project owners and contractors meet IRA labor standards requirements.**



## UNION PENSION CAPITAL

- NABTU's members participate in unionized pension funds with \$830 billion in assets. [17]
- We are collectively owners and investors in asset managers like Ullico & the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust.
- These firms build affordable & market-rate housing, and invest in a range of infrastructure and commercial real estate projects.
- NABTU welcomes the opportunity to explore deploying our own capital in fiduciarily prudent investment opportunities.



## SUPPLYING THE WORKFORCE

- NABTU invests **\$2 billion annually in training** [18]
- 140,000 journey level workers **upgrade their skills each year**
- An average of **76,300 apprentices began training** in the last 4 years [19]
- **1,900 state-of-the art training centers** nationwide [20]
- Overall, the Building Trades **train 300,000 Registered Apprentices each year** [21]
- Partnering with NABTU guarantees a skilled workforce, **ensuring your project is fully staffed and delivered on schedule**

## SOURCES

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