



# Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 33 JATC

Joint Apprenticeship Training Center

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Media Contact:  
Michele Farrell  
[mfarrell@measuredintentions.com](mailto:mfarrell@measuredintentions.com)  
515-419-8357

## **Plumbers and Steamfitters Local Union 33 has created the first, post-secondary quality pre-apprenticeship program in the State of Iowa.**

“It all started with our vision to find the best candidates for careers in skilled trades and set them up for lifelong success. This is an opportunity for students, or those looking for a career change, to obtain training and employment in this high-demand field with exceptional opportunities for advancement,” stated Local 33 Training Director Eric Smith.

Jane Eitel, a retired teacher, was looking for her second career. “I looked at many opportunities, but nothing was a fit. When I visited the Local 33 website and met with Eric, I knew I was on the right path. Being an older woman, I wasn’t sure how I would fit in, but immediately I felt like a part of the community. Now a year into my apprenticeship, every step in the process has been what Local 33 committed to me. I tell everyone about this program and the many career opportunities.” Jane is now employed at The Waldinger Corporation.

To achieve this vision, the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local Union 33 met with state officials, construction company owners, journeypersons, apprentices, school counselors, and high school students to develop the quality pre-apprenticeship program curriculum. After completing the program and 320 hours of paid work, the plumbers and steamfitters students will become a pre-apprentice with wages between \$11.75 and \$15.14/hour. Completing the program will also strengthen their application for the Registered Apprenticeship program in which they can earn over \$15/hour, and within five years, become a journeyperson earning \$33.65/hour plus benefits.

“Not only do you get paid while you are training, the path to increasing your wage to living a great lifestyle is laid-out for you. The benefits are super important as well,” commented Mauricio Villeda, apprentice at Modern Piping. “Local 33 provides my health insurance and my retirement plan. It is great to learn from those who have come before me. Everyone is very welcoming and accepting; a true family feel.”

The Plumbers and Steamfitters Local Union 33 quality pre-apprenticeship program goals include:

- Providing training, with a focus on safety, to those individuals supporting our journeypersons and apprentices in the field. This includes a 10-hour OSHA certificate.
- Improving the quality of support provided to our members in the field.



Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 33 JATC • 2501 Bell Ave • Des Moines, IA 50321  
Ph (515) 244-1346 Fax • (515) 243-1057 • [www.ua33jatc.org](http://www.ua33jatc.org)



- Strengthening the quality of applicants for the apprenticeship program.
- Providing an opportunity for individuals not connected to the industry, including those from non-traditional groups, to strengthen their application for the apprenticeship program.
- Providing an opportunity for individuals to learn more about Local 33 and the apprenticeship program prior to applying to the program.

This first of a kind program is a balance of classroom hours and paid field work with potential employment upon completion. Enrolled students will become proficient in math skills, be able to identify tools and equipment of the industry, understand what is expected of them on a job site, and most importantly, have an awareness of safety.

The quality pre-apprenticeship program will be piloted this summer. Classroom hours are scheduled to begin in Des Moines on June 11th and end on July 11th with field hours to follow. Students admitted to the pilot will receive a scholarship to cover the cost of the program. As part of the program, students will receive 160 hours of classroom training and 320 paid on-the-job training hours at an hourly wage between \$11.75 and \$15.14. They will also be offered employment after successful completion of the quality pre-apprenticeship program and have a direct connection to contractors and the registered apprenticeship program at Local 33, thus creating better potential for them to become part of the registered apprenticeship program in the future.

To begin the Plumbers and Steamfitters pre-apprenticeship program, interested applicants can fill out an application by April 30th at [www.ua33jatc.org/preapprenticeship](http://www.ua33jatc.org/preapprenticeship). For more information or if you have questions, contact Training Director Eric Smith by email at [esmith@ualocal33.org](mailto:esmith@ualocal33.org) or by phone at (515) 244-1346.