

# CBG Partners With The League Of WI Municipalities On Responsible Bidder Efforts



When municipalities competitively bid public works, the award must go to the “lowest responsible bidder.” Determining whether a bidder is “responsible,” however, can be a near impossible task unless the local government has an extensive contractor pre-qualification process. A contractor pre-qualification process is beyond the resource capabilities of many local governments.

All too often, a local government awards work to a contractor only to find out later—after the project experiences delay, cost overruns or poor quality—that the contractor previously failed to satisfactorily perform for other local governments. How can local governments better inform themselves on whether a bidder is truly responsible?

Construction Business Group (CBG) has compiled information on over 9,600 contractors and offers free access to the database to registered users. For each contractor, the database has links to judgments, tax liens, debarment records, OSHA violations, and more. The data is verifiable and reliable public information and provides local governments, other project owners,

general contractors and engineering firms with a convenient, easy to use research resource.

Recently, the League of Wisconsin (LWM) and CBG entered into a Memorandum of Agreement that will make the bidder database an even more powerful tool for registered users. Local government officials will have exclusive access to a project evaluation form that may be completed for public works projects. The project evaluation will be connected to the contractor (or subcontractor) that was evaluated and available to view by other local governments and all other registered users.

To register and access the database, go to [responsiblewisconsin.com](http://responsiblewisconsin.com). From the homepage, you can request access if you are not a registered user or access the database if you are already registered.

**Robb Kahl,**  
CBG Executive Director

PHOTOS BY JEFF PETERSON



*Left, Apprentice Brody Brunner begins his career as an Operating Engineer with James Peterson Sons, Inc. Brody recently completed his pre-apprenticeship through the Destinations Career Academy program.*

*Top right, Apprentice Brody Brunner working at a James Peterson Sons jobsite.*



# Operating Engineers' DCA Program Produces Quality Apprentices

By Mindy Mulryan, Workforce Development/Project Specialist for CBG

Despite a pandemic, several recent high school grads have been able to stay focused and determined to keep their careers and futures on track! One of them is Brody Brunner, who finished his senior year at a time when COVID-19 required statewide school closures. But unlike many other students who were experiencing online learning for maybe the first time, Brody was already familiar with it.

Brody had completed the Operating Engineers' pre-apprenticeship courses through Destinations Career Academy (DCA) while enrolled in the Medford School District. Brody took all four of the available courses, and when his school had to close, he was able to manage his time in a way that allowed him to also apply for and start work as a first-year apprentice. Brody had already been working part-time in the shop at James Peterson Sons, Inc., a union company, so the transition to becoming a Local 139 Operating Engineer apprentice was a smooth one.

Jeff Peterson of James Peterson Sons was familiar with the DCA pre-apprenticeship courses because he was an integral part of getting the Medford School District involved in the program when he was on the school board. "I find the program to be a good fit for James Peterson Sons because we can work with the students as they approach graduation to assess whether they are a good fit for us. The students are able to explore whether this is a career that will be a good fit

for them. It's a win, win for everyone," said Peterson.

Brody was able to move into a full-time position with James Peterson Sons as his high school coursework wrapped up. "I knew early on that construction work was the type of work I wanted to pursue. However, it was a huge perk to take the pre-apprenticeship courses while in high school to get a head start on an apprenticeship," said Brody. Brody is very excited to not only be working in a field that he enjoys but also have the opportunity to travel and see various parts of the state while working.

Brody is making the most of these difficult times with a bright future ahead of him. Congratulations to Brody! And a huge 'Thank You' to James Peterson Sons for their continued support of the Operating Engineers' pre-apprenticeship program!

Through the pre-apprenticeship program, Brody completed Basic Construction Equipment Fundamentals, Basic Maintenance of Mobile Equipment, Basic Grade and Construction Math, and CDL Competency. This program is certified by the State of Wisconsin and is aligned directly with the Operating Engineers registered apprenticeship program. The courses also qualify for Advanced Standing with Fox Valley Technical College. To find out more, please contact Mindy Mulryan at (608) 444-4137 or [m.mulryan@cbgwi.com](mailto:m.mulryan@cbgwi.com).

# Wisconsin Operating Engineers And DWD Pilot Youth Apprenticeship

By Laura Cataldo, Senior Manager, Construction & Real Estate Services, Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP

A missing link to the Operating Engineers' workforce outreach has been a formal Youth Apprenticeship Program. Five other construction trades have operated a formal Youth Apprenticeship Program for a number of years: carpentry, electrical, masonry/concrete, mechanical/HVAC, and plumbing/sprinkler fitting. The Operating Engineers submitted a draft program to DWD for review that was immediately accepted and set to pilot for Fall 2020.

## WHAT IS YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP?

Youth Apprenticeship (YA) is the connection between school and work-based learning. YA is a school-to-work initiative that combines classroom academic instruction with mentored on-the-job paid training. The requirements are:

- 180 hours of technical related classroom instruction
- 450 hours of mentored on-the-job paid training
- One or two year commitment

## HOW CAN YOU ASSIST?

**Sponsor a student:** We are seeking 6-10 employers willing to sponsor youth apprentices during the 2020-2021 school year. While not a requirement that the student be enrolled in the Destinations Career Academy Pre-Apprenticeship Program, we would like to find matches for those students already engaged in our pathway. Students currently registered for the Fall 2020 courses are from the following school districts:

- Adams-Friendship
- Dane County School Consortium
- Johnson Creek
- Marshall
- Portage
- Rio
- Tomah School District
- Auburndale
- East Troy
- Medford
- River Valley School District (Spring Green)
- Valders
- Belleville
- Edgerton
- Oconto
- Whitewater
- Black River Falls
- Howards Grove
- Wonewoc-Center

## Rules and Regulations of Youth Apprenticeship:

- Youth apprentices, employers, and schools have a written Education/Training Agreement that is approved by DWD.
- Youth apprentices are covered by general liability and worker's compensation policies through the employer.
- Youth apprentices are subject to all state and federal child labor laws. Youth apprentices are allowed to work in some prohibited occupations (example: excavation operation or motor vehicle driver) because they meet the criteria of "student learner" AND the work is incidental (less than 5% of their time) to their training and for intermittent and short periods of time.
- Youth apprentices are required to provide their own transportation to and from the workplace and their own insurance coverage.
- Youth apprentices are not eligible for unemployment compensation.

**Serve as Subject Matter Expert for YA Construction review in January 2021:** DWD is in the process of reviewing the rigor and relevance of all Youth Apprenticeship Programs. Construction pathway review will begin in January and we are seeking subject matter experts to participate in this review.

**To learn more about the Operating Engineers Youth Apprenticeship Pilot Program, please contact Laura Cataldo at (608) 616-2835 or via email: [laura.cataldo@bakertilly.com](mailto:laura.cataldo@bakertilly.com)**