

2025 YEAR IN REVIEW



Wisconsin Department of
Workforce Development
Bureau of Apprenticeship
Standards



THE WISCONSIN APPRENTICESHIP ADVANTAGE

Wisconsin Apprenticeship experienced another year of remarkable progress and growth in 2025 as we developed programs to advance our state's workforce. The year highlighted the vital role of our programs—Youth Apprenticeship, Certified Pre-Apprenticeship, and Registered Apprenticeship—in meeting the evolving needs of businesses and industries and empowering individuals to engage in prosperous futures.

Wisconsin's Registered Apprenticeship Program reached a record 18,524 apprentices across more than 3,095 employers in 2025, marking the program's fourth consecutive record-breaking year in its 115-year history. Youth Apprenticeship set two more participation records during the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years in Wisconsin, making the program the largest by participation in the country. We also saw 33.8% growth in Certified Pre-Apprenticeship participants.

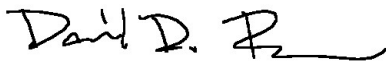
We hosted our **State Apprenticeship Conference** in spring 2025, displaying a testament to the strength and enthusiasm of our statewide network. Bringing together more than 400 partners, educators, and industry leaders, the event served as a powerful catalyst for collaboration and shared innovation.

Together with our partners, we've seen firsthand the power of apprenticeship programs to transform lives and strengthen our communities, from high school students exploring career pathways through Youth Apprenticeship to adults gaining valuable skills and credentials through registered programs. Looking ahead, we are thrilled to anticipate the launch of **additional pathways for both Registered and Youth Apprenticeship in 2026** to further expand opportunities for Wisconsin's learners and employers.

This review highlights the important achievements made in 2025 in expanding access to these critical workforce development programs and the resulting successes of employers and apprentices alike.

The continued dedication from our staff, sponsors, and stakeholders is key to these efforts as shared throughout this review. We celebrate the partnerships forged, the milestones reached, and, most importantly, the individuals whose lives have been positively impacted by the opportunities created through apprenticeship.

Sincerely,



David D. Polk
Director, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

BUREAU OF APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to be the premiere apprenticeship program that demonstrates leadership in commitment, excellence, and innovation to support Wisconsin's economy with an educated, driven, and diverse workforce.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards provides regulation, oversight, direction, and technical assistance for the Wisconsin Apprenticeship system. The Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards commits to strengthen and enhance the framework by building sustainable relationships and accessible pathways for all apprenticeship programs: Registered Apprenticeship, Youth Apprenticeship, and Certified Pre-Apprenticeship. The Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards will continue seeking opportunities to establish relationships with valued stakeholders and ensuring the commitment to increase support, visibility, participation, and promote career pathways.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Ensure quality, access, and opportunity in the Wisconsin Apprenticeship system.
- Commitment to apprenticeship accessibility for all Wisconsin populations.
- Advocate for continued growth of Registered and Youth Apprenticeship employers.
- Promote integrity and accountability to ensure efficiency in the delivery of services.
- Provide technical assistance to participants and stakeholders.
- Support advisory relationships to improve collaboration and opportunity within the program.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND PROGRESS

The Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards (BAS) strategic plan focuses on program goals that help ensure quality programming and growth. Efforts and accomplishments tracked in 2025 demonstrate the dedication and success of our staff and programs during another record year for apprenticeship.

Goal	2025 Progress
Increase employer participation across all programs, including cross-program participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 143* new sponsors participating in the program, a 34% increase over 2024 • 26* sponsors expanded from Youth Apprenticeship (YA) to Registered Apprenticeship (RA), a 44% increase over 2024 • 172 Employer information sessions conducted • 229* industry events attended, a 72% increase over 2024
Introduce and increase non-traditional occupations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 352* employer-oriented events attended by BAS • 66* new sponsors from emerging sectors, up 38% over 2024 • 22 new occupations developed
Advocate for apprenticeship program completion to be recognized and accepted by Wisconsin's higher education system as a pathway to college degrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued participation in Technical College Advisory meetings • Growth of the Registered Nurse Apprenticeship program, adding 5 new contracts for total of 20 (associate degree) • Growth of the Teacher Apprenticeship program, adding one new contract for total of eight (bachelor's degree) • Three degree-aligned apprenticeships created: Paramedic, dental assistant, and surgical technologist
Increase participation of under-represented and non-traditional populations from all backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended 30* apprenticeship events • 26* employer sponsors expanded from Registered Apprenticeship to Youth Apprenticeship • YA staff lead opportunity and access meetings in all 40 consortiums to review contracts
Provide regulatory assistance to aid in the understanding, utilization, and promotion of programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance provided at 500+ local committee meetings • 138* quality assessments performed by field staff • Communication upgrades including IT improvements and paperless document delivery • Developed and implemented YA grantee monitoring program

* Indicates growth from 2024

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

*Figures represent best available data as of Jan. 16, 2025

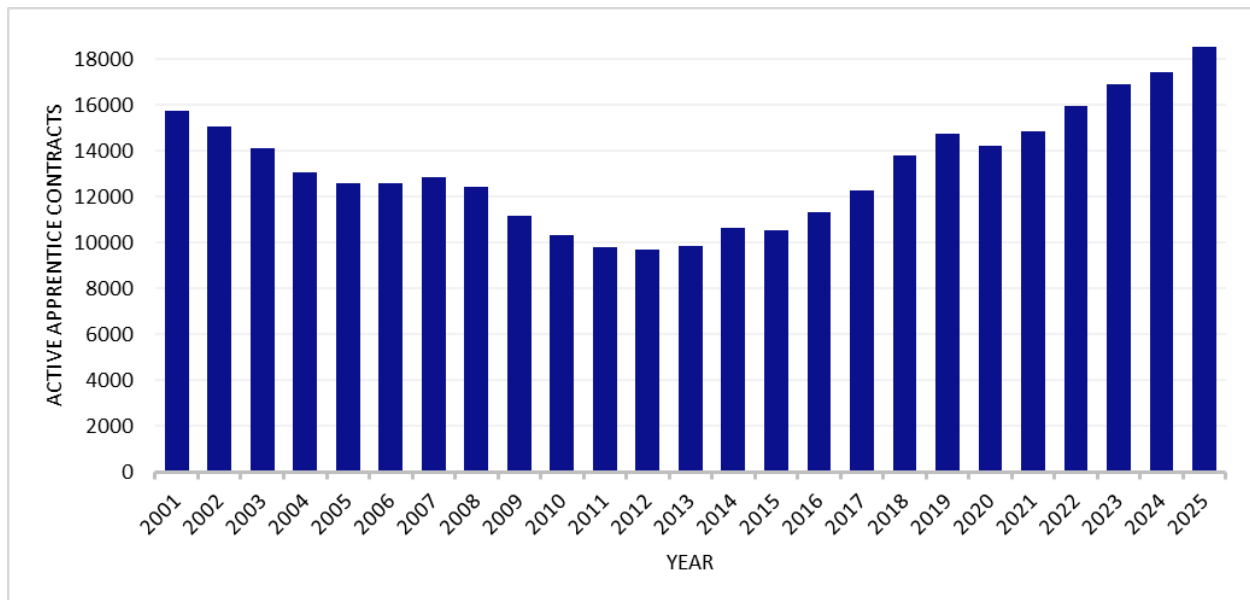
STATE APPRENTICESHIP PARTICIPATION

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) contracts in 2025 set another record with an all-time high of **18,533** apprentices, an increase of 6.2% (see **Figure 1**). Apprenticeship contracts in Wisconsin have increased steadily since the all-time low in 2012 with 87.9% more apprentices in 2025 than 2012.

The following provides definitions for Figures 1-6:

- An active contract identifies an apprentice working on a program within the calendar year.
- New contracts are those signed within the identified calendar year.
- Completed contracts are those that have been completed within the calendar year.
- Active employers are employers that have apprentices under contract with BAS.

FIGURE 1: STATE ACTIVE APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS



ACTIVE CONTRACTS

- 2025 active contracts: 18,533
- 2024 active contracts: 17,452
- Change from 2024: 6.2% increase
- 2001 active contracts: 15,777
- 24-year low (2012): 9,681
- All-time high (2025): 18,533

NEW APPRENTICE CONTRACTS COMPARED TO UNEMPLOYMENT

As shown in **Figure 2**, there is an inverse relationship between the state unemployment rate and new apprentice contracts. There were 4,870 new apprentice contracts in 2025, which is **up** by about 8% from 2024. The state’s average unemployment rate in 2025 was 3.2%.

FIGURE 2: APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS VERSUS UNEMPLOYMENT

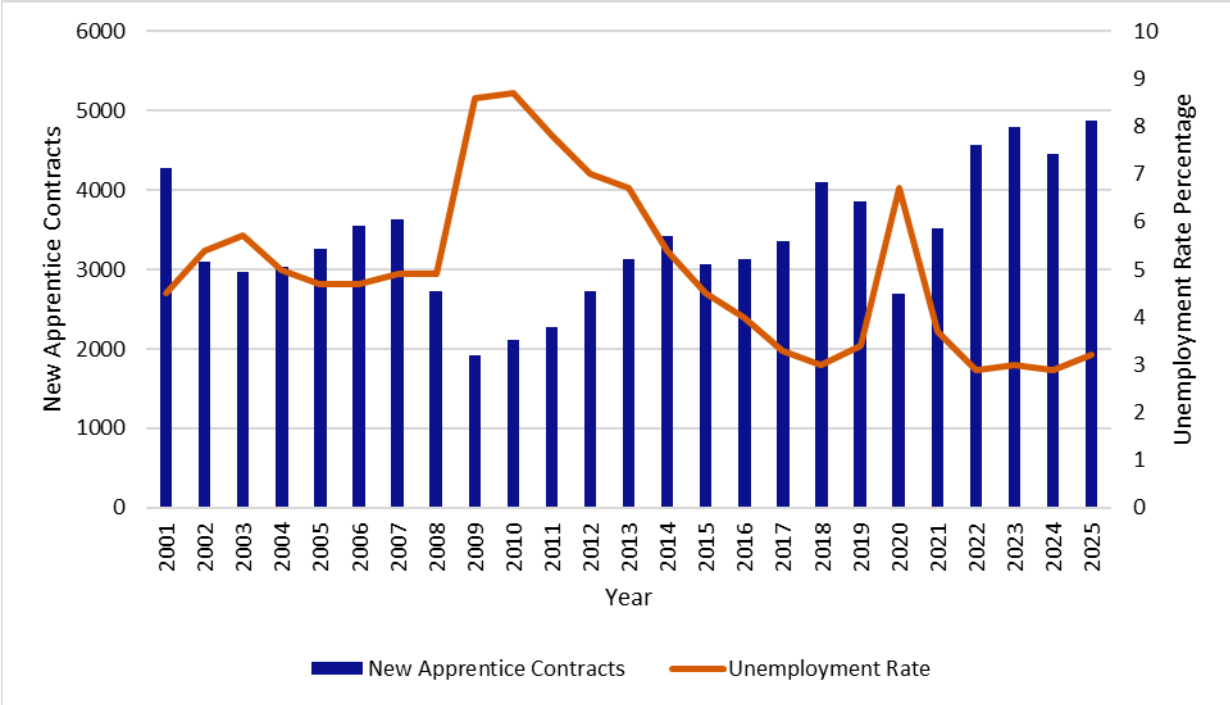


Figure 3 - Provides a snapshot of Wisconsin unemployment rates and the corresponding number of new apprentice contracts. Wisconsin's 12-month average unemployment rate averaged 3.2% in 2025.

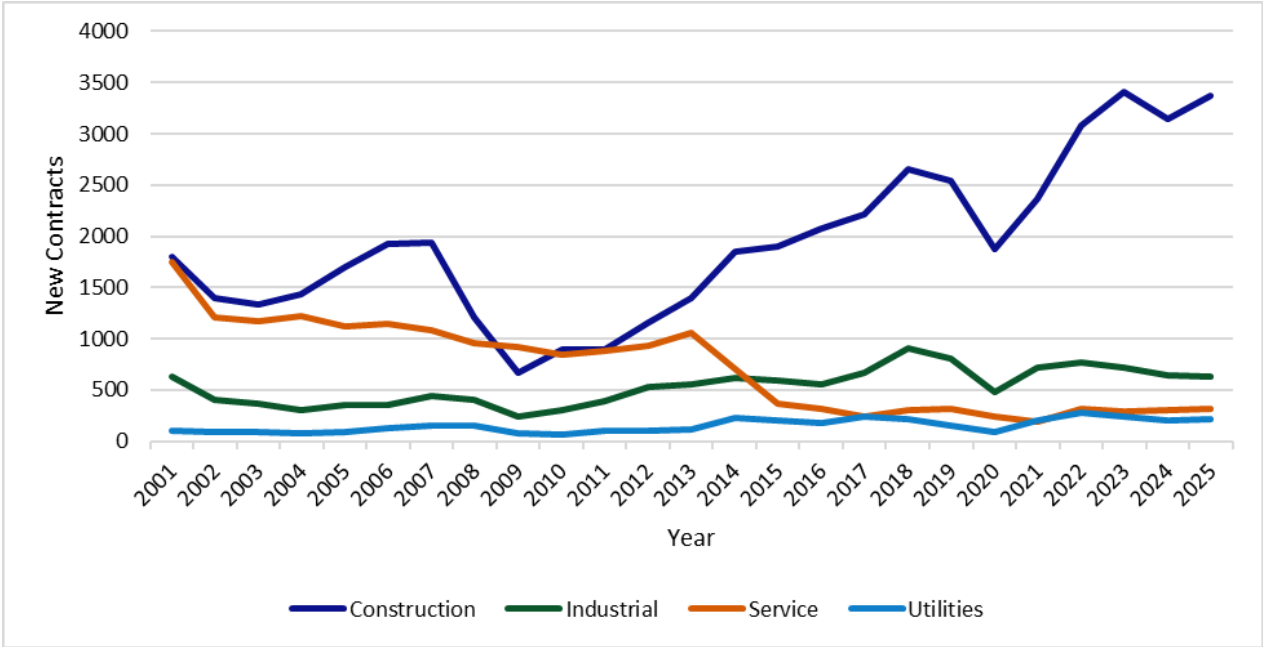
FIGURE 3: WISCONSIN UNEMPLOYMENT AND NEW APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS

	2001	2009	2020	2024	2025
New Apprentice Contracts	4,276	1,919	2,696	4,447	4,870
Wisconsin Unemployment	4.5%	8.6%	6.7%	2.9%	3.2%

SECTOR CHANGES

In 2025, new apprentice contracts showed a slight increase for all major sectors, except the industrial sector, which saw only 48 fewer contracts than in 2024 (see **Figure 5**). Figures were steady for active apprentice contracts with utilities leading growth with a 7.1% increase.

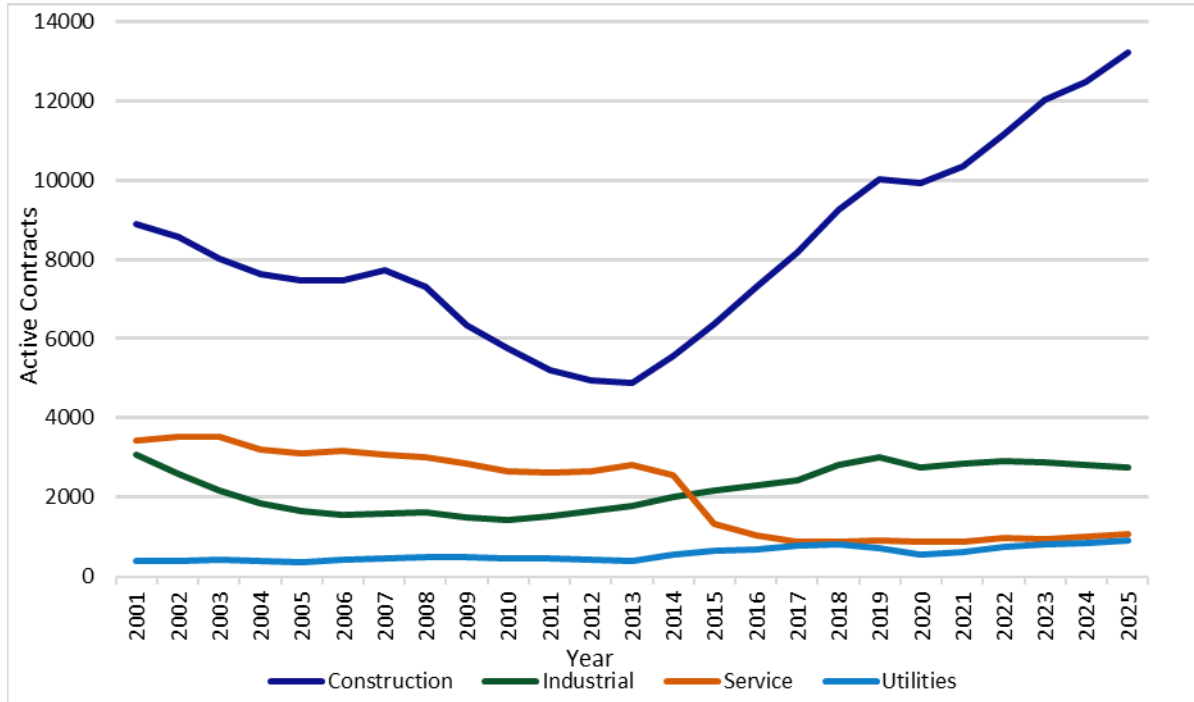
FIGURE 4: NEW APPRENTICES BY SECTOR



New apprentices by sector, 2021-2025:

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Construction	10,336	11,148	12,021	12,482	13,228
Industrial	2,840	2,912	2,868	2,807	2,759
Service	863	972	945	993	1,057
Utilities	623	744	826	839	901

FIGURE 5: ACTIVE APPRENTICES BY SECTOR



Active apprentices by sector, 2021-2025:

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Construction	2,362	3,079	3,404	3,142	3,373
Industrial	713	769	724	643	630
Service	188	311	287	310	315
Utilities	210	284	246	200	218

FIGURE 6: ESTABLISHED SECTOR ACTIVITY

	Active Contracts	New Contracts	Completed Contracts	Registered Employers
Construction	13,228	3,373	1,633	1,955
Industrial	2,759	630	362	597
Service	1,041	308	96	403
Utilities	901	218	179	106
Healthcare	517	283	69	48
Transportation	45	29	5	9
Agriculture	25	15	2	16
IT	17	14	2	4

FIGURE 7: TOP APPRENTICESHIP OCCUPATIONS

Sector	Occupation	Total Apprentices	New Apprentices
Construction	Construction Electrician	3,407	787
	Plumber	2,239	468
	Operating Engineer	1,440	502
	Carpenter (Construction)	1,346	366
	Construction Craft Laborer	808	326
Manufacturing	Industrial Electrician	436	84
	Maintenance Technician	361	82
	Maintenance Mechanic	349	79
	Tool And Die Maker	282	58
Service	Cosmetologist	269	83
	Funeral Director	206	39
	Firefighter	119	57
Utilities	Electric Line Worker	405	85
	Gas Distribution	95	32
	Designer Technician (Gas & Electric)	59	22
Health Care	Medical Assistant	133	20
	Caregiver	133	128
	Community Health Worker	75	48
Transportation	Bus/Coach Operator (2025 launch)	21	21
	Professional Truck Driver	13	4
Agriculture	Organic Vegetable Farm Manager	16	8
IT	IT Support Professional	10	8

REGISTERED APPRENTICE BRIDGE FROM YOUTH APPRENTICE

The number and percentage of new registered apprentices who previously participated in a Youth Apprenticeship (YA) program, or bridging, have steadily increased each year since at least 2018 (see **Figure 8**).

FIGURE 8: REGISTERED APPRENTICES BRIDGING FROM YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP

2026 state fiscal year includes partial data through Dec. 31, 2025.

State fiscal year is July 1-June 30.

RA Start State Fiscal Year	Total RA Starts	YA to RA Bridge Count	Bridge Percent	Began RA in Same Year as YA Exit	Began RA One Year After YA Exit	Began RA Two Years After YA Exit	Began RA Three Years After YA Exit
2018	3,246	81	2.5%	19	43	14	0
2019	3,578	150	4.2%	44	48	26	14
2020	2,949	187	6.3%	50	56	26	24
2021	2,824	243	8.6%	73	46	43	22
2022	3,569	337	9.4%	97	93	40	29
2023	4,382	457	10.4%	139	91	66	34
2024	4,253	494	11.6%	170	107	58	45
2025	4,437	635	14.3%	189	143	75	32
2026*	2,460	369	15.0%	86	115	60	26

Note: Columns do not add up to total bridge count due to individuals entering RA from YA outside the time range shown.

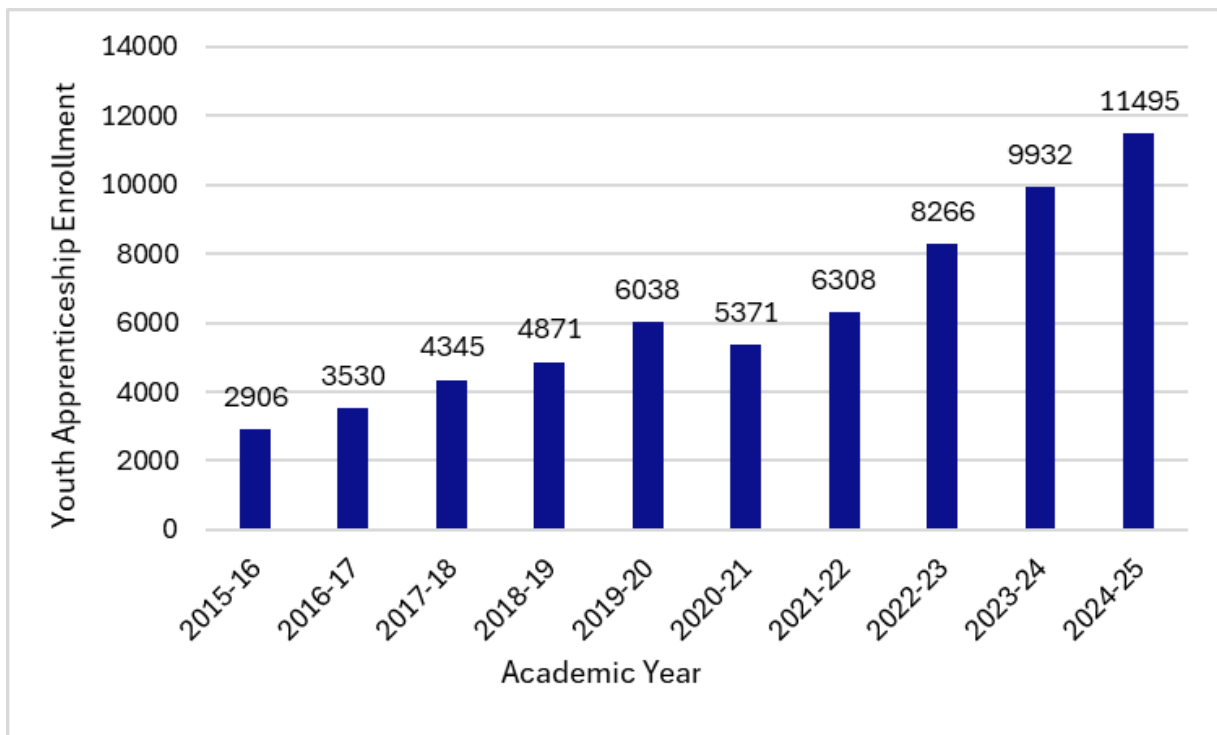
YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP

Youth Apprenticeship (YA) is a critical part of Wisconsin's apprenticeship system, providing juniors and seniors in high school with a work-based learning experience. YA combines related classroom instruction with mentored employment in a career field of interest. For employers, YA is a time-tested talent-acquisition strategy used to build workforce pipelines and shape the workforce of the future.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- Wisconsin's YA program is the largest of its kind by participation in the country.
- Nearly **11,400** youth apprentices participated during the 2024-2025 academic year, a 14% increase from the prior year and the fourth consecutive year of record-breaking participation.
- Over **600** youth apprentices bridged to registered apprenticeship in 2025.
- Outreach efforts increased participation in the YA program from **75% to over 99%** of Wisconsin's school districts with a high school.
- **Of private high schools, 44** participate in the YA program.
- The YA Barber/Cosmetology program was created and enrolled **33** youth apprentices.
- The BAS developed and implemented a grantee monitoring program.
- YA staff conducted comprehensive modeling of all 40 YA consortia.

FIGURE 9: YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP ENROLLMENT OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS



YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PERFORMANCE METRICS

- In the 2024-25 academic year, 77% of youth apprentices successfully completed their program and received a state Youth Apprenticeship Completion skill certificate.(see **Figure 10**).
- In the 2024-25 academic year, 74% of two-year graduates were offered a job by the employer that provided on-the-job training (see **Figure 11**).

FIGURE 10: PROGRAM COMPLETION RATE

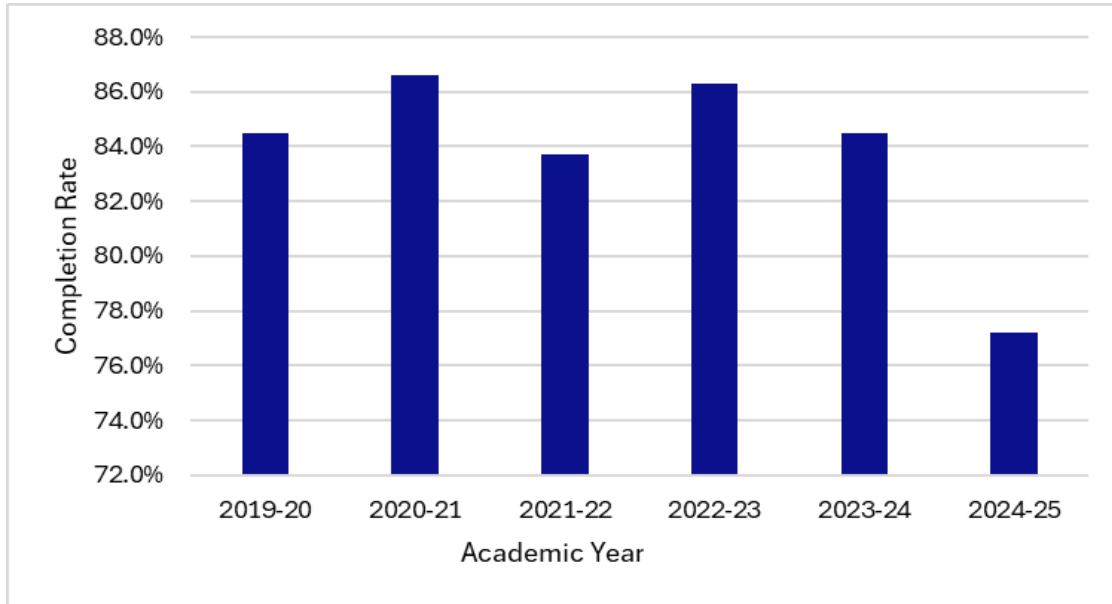


FIGURE 11: EMPLOYMENT OFFERS TO TWO-YEAR COMPLETERS

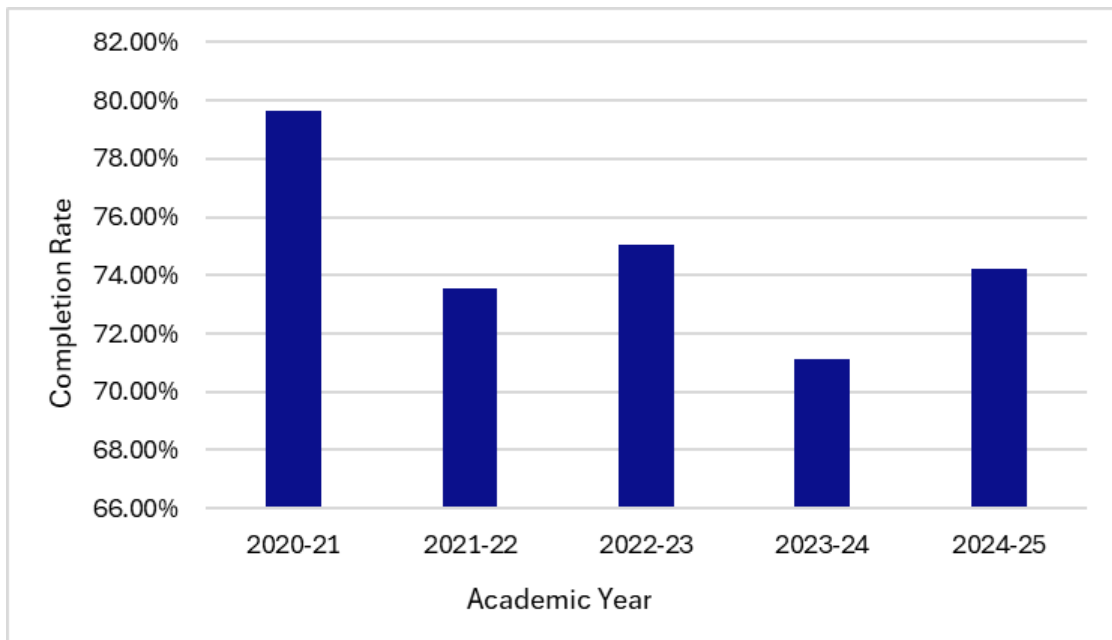


FIGURE 12: ENROLLED YOUTH APPRENTICES BY OCCUPATIONAL AREA

Occupational areas are broad categories used to organize YA programs. Among states offering the program, Wisconsin has one of the broadest sets of youth apprenticeship offerings, with 16 occupational areas and 83 specific occupations available.

Occupational Area	Student Count	Percent
Health Science	2,072	18.16%
Manufacturing	1,493	13.09%
Marketing	1,405	12.32%
Architecture & Construction	1,400	12.27%
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	1,305	11.44%
Hospitality & Tourism	1,227	10.76%
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	932	8.17%
Education & Training	576	5.05%
Finance	340	2.98%
Business Management and Administration	266	2.33%
Information Technology	154	1.35%
Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM)	152	1.33%
Arts, AV Tech. & Comm.	37	0.32%
Human Services	33	0.29%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	14	0.12%
Government & Public Administration	1	0.01%

CERTIFIED PRE-APPRENTICESHIP

Certified Pre-Apprenticeships (CPA) help job seekers gain the necessary skills to enter RA programs and helps employers find qualified applicants. Programs are delivered by employers, community organizations, educational partners, and others.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- Certified Pre-Apprenticeship had a record-breaking year with **1,121** program completers in 2025.
- The program has an **87.9%** completion rate.
- Certified Pre-Apprenticeship added **eight** additional programs, totaling **43** certified pre-apprenticeship programs across **29** training providers.
- **In 2025, 24** programs had at least one participant complete the program.
- Of apprentices who completed the CPA program in 2024, 85% had reported wages in 2025.

FIGURE 13: CERTIFIED PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS COMPLETING AT LEAST ONE COHORT

Provider/Program	# of Completers
Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers	5
Career and College Academy	24
Employ Milwaukee - Fresh Coast Tech Up	29
Employ Milwaukee - Industrial Maintenance Mechanic	4
Ezekiel Community Development Corporation	6
Five Star Educational Training Center - Five Star Milwaukee Childcare PREP Program	1
Human Asset Development Corporation	3
Innovative Educational Services Institute	4
Madison Area Technical College - Electro-Mechanical and Engineering	1
Milwaukee Community Service Corps Inc.	8
Next Door Foundation	1
Northcentral Technical College - Diesel Technician	5
Operation Fresh Start - Carpentry	34
Operation Fresh Start - Forestry	24
Revitalize Milwaukee	6
Urban League of Greater Madison - Foundation for the Trades	18
Waukesha County Technical College - Manufacturing	1
Wauwatosa East High School	27
Wisconsin Operating Engineers - Youth	53
Wisconsin Pipe Trades United Association	9
Wisconsin Department of Transportation - Highway Construction Skills Training	101
WRTP BIG STEP - Construction Readiness	671
WRTP BIG STEP - Entry Level Construction Skills Training	84
WRTP BIG STEP - Entry Level Manufacturing Skills Training	2
Total	1,121

FIGURE 14: CERTIFIED PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PARTICIPANTS BY AGE

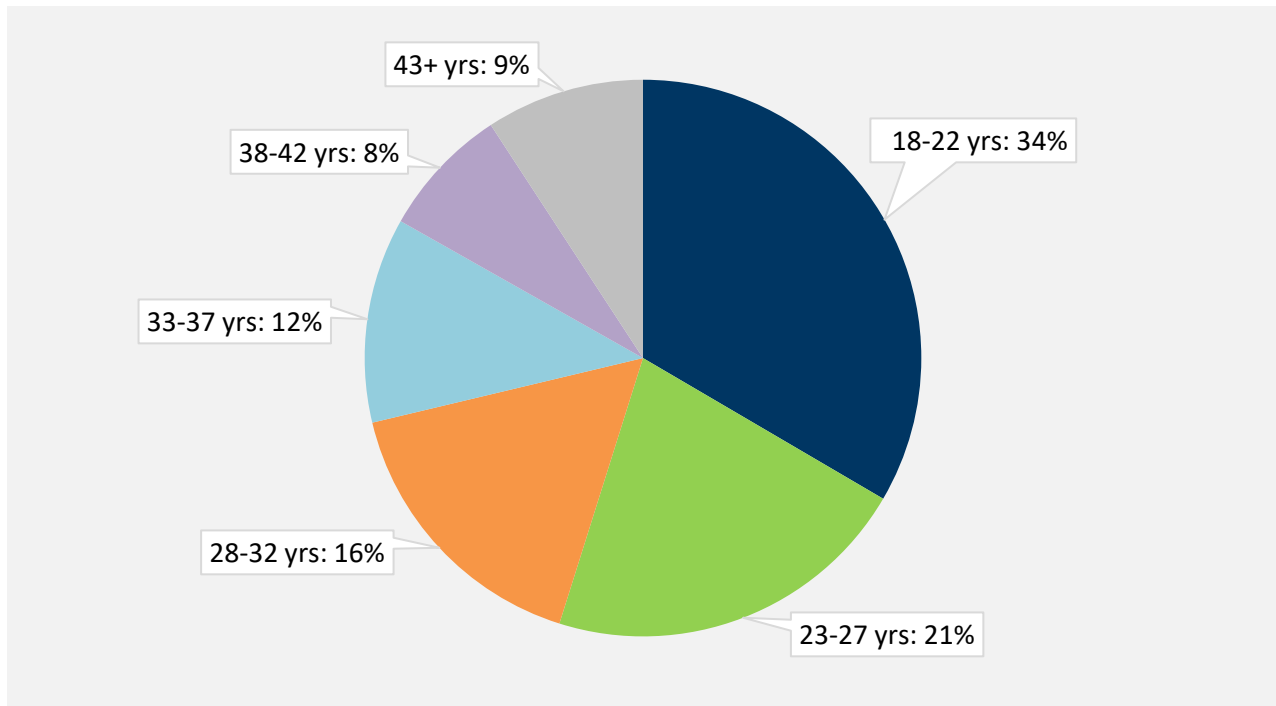


Table shows pre- and post-wage data for apprentices that entered RA programs after completing a CPA program in FY 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024).

	CPA Count	2022 Q3 Median Wage	2022 Q4 Median Wage	2023 Q1 Median Wage	2023 Q2 Median Wage
PRE-CPA (FY 2023)	262	\$ 6,362.42	\$ 6,021.58	\$ 5,719.35	\$ 6,660.59
FY 2024 Instruction Year – No wage data collected					
		2024 Q3 Median Wage	2024 Q4 Median Wage	2025 Q1 Median Wage	2025 Q2 Median Wage
POST-CPA (FY 2025)	262	\$ 11,605.44	\$ 12,609.34	\$ 11,561.26	\$ 12,970.80
	% Wage Increase	82%	109%	102%	95%

FIGURE 16: CERTIFIED PRE-APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETERS WHO BECAME REGISTERED APPRENTICES IN 2025 (BY TRADE WITH FIVE OR MORE PARTICIPANTS)

Occupation	Participants	Percentage
Steamfitter (Service/Refrigeration)	27	16.5%
Construction Craft Laborer	25	15.2%
Steamfitter (Construction)	23	14.0%
Plumber	20	12.2%
Carpenter (Construction)	20	12.2%
Operating Engineer	14	8.5%
Sheet Metal Worker	10	6.1%
Construction Electrician	9	5.5%
Painter And Decorator	6	3.7%
Carpenter (Floor Coverer)	5	3.0%
Sprinklerfitter	5	3.0%

APPRENTICESHIP GRANTS

STATE APPRENTICESHIP EXPANSION FORMULA FUNDING, ROUND 3 (SAEF3)

The State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula, round 3 (SAEF3) grant program funds expansion of state registered apprenticeships. These funds, awarded through the U.S. Department of Labor, support staffing, supplies, data system improvements, and other related capacity-building activities for the performance period.

Performance period: July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028

Total award amount: \$1,015,406

Grant Deliverables:

- BAS staff funding
- System improvements
- In-state travel and supplies
- Funding will be used within the first year of the grant

COMMUNITY PROJECTS (CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING) GRANT

The Community Projects (Congressionally Directed Spending) grant funded program expands innovative career pathways in early childhood education and teaching through apprenticeship opportunities and addresses the shortage of child care providers through outreach events and by assisting child care entrepreneurs through a partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Performance period: April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2027

Total award amount: \$5,000,000

Major 2025 Activities:**Early Childhood Education Apprenticeship**

- Sponsors with early childhood apprentices – 36
- Total active early childhood apprentices – 85
- Total active early childhood youth apprentices -- 300
- Completed early childhood apprentices since program began in 2019-20 – 15

Teacher Certificate Apprenticeship

- Teacher apprentices – 8
- Sponsoring school districts – 4

Major Goals/Deliverables:

- Hire, train, and onboard two new positions to support the grant deliverables and expectations.
- Provide funding to cover tuition costs for a minimum of two cohorts of Early Childhood Educator (ECE) apprentices in select Wisconsin technical colleges.
- Provide up to \$10,000 in on-the-job learning (OJL) reimbursements per ECE apprentice to sponsors who sign new apprentices within the first year of the grant.
- Provide up to \$5,000 in OJL reimbursements per ECE apprentice to sponsors who sign new apprentices within the second or third years of the grant.
- Increase YA to RA bridging rates of ECE apprentices through Youth Apprenticeship Consortia incentive payments of \$1,000 per apprentice.
- Improve current data systems to collect and report grant-funded participant data to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).
- Tuition reimbursement for teacher registered apprentices to cover up to 50% of tuitions costs.
- Incentive payments provided to teacher mentors who support the teacher registered apprentices and work in the sponsoring school districts.
- Reimburse 100% of licensing and application fees for teacher registered apprentices.
- Subaward to the DCF to develop and execute efforts to increase licensed child care providers throughout Wisconsin by expanding outreach and engagement efforts, and technical assistance and services to potential child care providers.

CONCLUSION

Looking forward to another year of progress in 2026, we are grateful for the opportunity to offer programs that impact lives and make Wisconsin stronger one apprenticeship at a time. Together with our partners, we continue to build the Wisconsin apprenticeship advantage.



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The Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards is supported by the U.S. Department of Labor. A total of \$1,849,430.90, or 10% percent of the program is financed with federal funds and a total of \$16,203.103.70, or 90% percent is financed with other sources.

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