



NECA-IBEW Electrical Training Center Safety Director Barry Moreland, center, demonstrates safe use of a forklift to a group of pre-apprenticeship program graduates. Behind him is Brian Beasley, who came to the IBEW from Constructing Hope, a program started by Irvington Covenant Church.

To diversify, IBEW recruits

By DON McINTOSH
Associate Editor

To boost the ranks of minorities in the union electrician workforce, NECA-IBEW Electrical Training Center (NIETC) put on a free basic skills class July 11-15 for eight black workers interested in the trade. Most of them put the knowledge to use the following week as they were placed in jobs as material handlers, with mentors assigned to help them. In the inside wireman trade, material handler is the \$9.01-an-hour starting rung of a career ladder that can lead to a \$36.05-an-hour journeyman wage (plus \$17.38 an hour in benefits).

In the weeklong class at the training center on Northeast Airport Way, sessions were led by NIETC instructors and members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 48's Electrical Workers Minority Caucus. Students learned how to safely climb a ladder and operate a forklift, and how to identify basic parts that go into an electrical installation. By weeks' end, the seven men and one woman had OSHA 10, CPR/AED, and forklift certifications, and had been through IBEW member orientation.

For Brian Beasley, 33, the training is a second chance.

"I went through some hardships, most of them brought on by myself," Beasley told the Labor Press, alluding to past trouble with the law. But Beasley, who has two uncles in the electrical trade, credited the NIETC training and the Constructing Hope pre-apprenticeship program — for helping him find his way again.

Becoming an inside wireman apprentice is a three-month process, explains NIETC Workforce Development Coordinator Bridget Quinn. First you turn in an application, and then the following month take an aptitude test. If you do well on the test, there's an interview the month after that. The interview score and aptitude score are combined, and you're placed on a ranked list of

candidates for new classes when they open up.

Apprentice wages start at \$14.42 an hour and rise to \$30.64. Apprenticeship consists of classroom learning and 8,000 hours of on-the-job training, and can take several years. How long it takes depends on the economy, because how many apprentices are needed depends on how much construction is being done.

Quinn said the union needs women and minority apprentices in order to meet quotas set by some local construction projects, like a South Waterfront project run by the Portland Development Commission.

"I think the greatest barrier has been that a lot of these folks don't come from a community with a big construction background," Quinn said. If you don't see somebody or know somebody growing up who works in the construction field, then you don't think of it as an option."

Quinn said participants in the skills training have a chance to become effective apprentices, and eventually effective journeymen.

"Later on down the road," Quinn said, "they can be role models for their siblings or community."

Clarification:

In the July 15 issue, the Labor Press reported that the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council pushed for a law in the 2011 session of the Oregon Legislature that would have required companies to pay the prevailing wage on construction projects that get the state's Enterprise Zone property tax abatements. The article correctly reported that House Bill 2586 did not get a hearing in the House Business and Labor committee. But an almost identical bill, House Bill 2624, *did* get a hearing, and passed out of that committee only to die in the House Revenue Committee without a hearing.

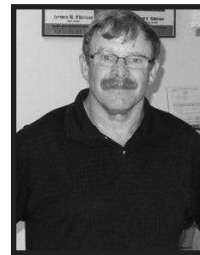
Morgan re-elected to third term as business manager of Laborers #296

Kenneth (Kenny) Morgan was re-elected to a third term as business manager/secretary-treasurer of Laborers Local 296. He ran unopposed.

Also elected by acclamation were President Gary Lee Moore, Jr.; Vice President Earl Browning, Jr.; Recording Secretary Jack Roy; Sergeant-at-Arms J.P. Wedge; and Trustees Nate Worley, Shon Brinkmeyer and Dago Aranda.

Greg Held, Paul Askew, and Zack Culver were re-elected to the Executive Board.

Moore and Mike Angermeier were elected delegates to the Portland Metal Trades Council; Moore and Roy were elected delegates to the Oregon State and Columbia Pacific building trades councils; Held, Roy, Moore, and Gary Jackson were elected



KENNY MORGAN

delegates to the Laborers District Council; Aranda and Browning were elected delegates to the Northwest Oregon Labor Council; and Morgan, Roy and Moore were elected delegates to attend the international convention.

Terms of office are for three years.

Portland-based Local 296, with offices in Central Point, represents laborers in construction, at the shipyards, in school districts, at the Housing Authority of Portland, workers in weatherization, hod carriers, and heavy and high-way in Southern Oregon.

NLRB offers free training sessions in Portland

To promote better understanding of labor law, the Portland office of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has begun holding free monthly "lunch and learn" trainings. The NLRB is a federal agency that conducts private-sector union elections and investigates and prosecutes labor law violations known as "unfair labor practices."

The Portland trainings take place in

a conference room on the 19th floor at 601 SW Second Avenue. They're aimed at shop stewards, union business reps, and managers — anyone interested in learning about the National Labor Relations Act and how it's applied.

July 13, the topic was the workers' rights that are guaranteed by Section 7 of the Act. No one ate lunch during the session. But attendees did learn that workers have the right to talk off-the-clock to co-workers about wages, may wear union buttons in most work-

places, and can't lawfully be interrogated about their union sympathies.

The next session will be Tuesday, Aug. 9 at noon. The subject is Section 10(b) of the Act — the details of how and why workers lose out if they don't file unfair labor practice charge within six months of when their employer broke labor law.

Call 503-326-3085 or e-mail subregion36@nlrb.gov to RSVP, get on the e-mail list, or find out more about the sessions.

UA Local 290 awards \$578,000 in scholarships

Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 290 doled out \$578,000 worth of scholarships to members' children and grandchildren this year.

Every child who applies receives \$2,000 to be used for furthering their education. Each grandchild receives \$1,000. All told, 259 children and 60 grandchildren received a check.

The scholarships, which are awarded annually, are funded by a check-off of 7 cents an hour for every hour worked.

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