



# Career/Technology Trends

## Grads Find Wiring Nation's Desktops Is Key to Top Pay and Tech Training

A white-hot career path for today's high school grads is information cabling — the electrical wiring that brings voice, data and video connections through a building to the desktop.

Currently, many professional voice-data-video installer/technicians are earning as much as \$50,000 a year, according to the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), whose NJATC training program is the acknowledged leader in recruiting and training America's electrical construction workers.

Adding to the lure of information cabling are the substantial intellectual and financial rewards being offered electrical trainees.

### Training Perks

The NECA-IBEW training program boasts an enviable earn-as-you-learn curriculum, offering participants a substantial salary, as well as health and pension benefits and college credits during the apprenticeship period.

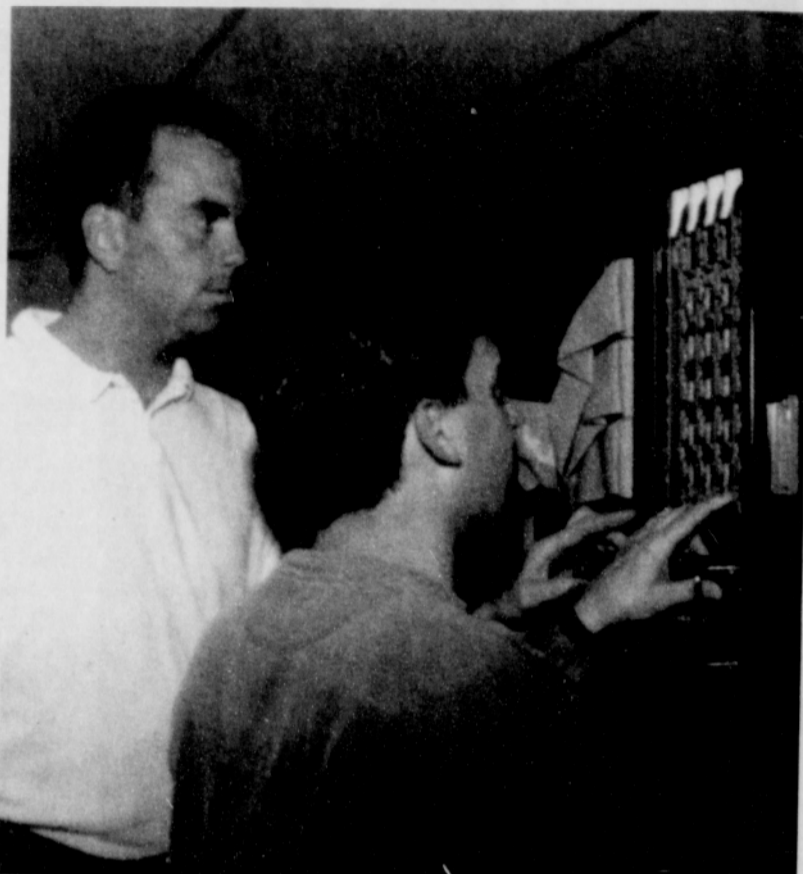
For example, apprentices in the NJATC program for voice-data-video installer/technicians earn an average of \$50,000 to \$75,000 over the three-year training period, which requires 480 hours of classroom instruction and 4,800 hours of on-the-job training. And the demand for these workers is skyrocketing.

NECA-IBEW officials estimate they will need to recruit and train an additional 50,000 telecommunications installer/technicians over the next 10 years to meet the voice-data-video cabling needs of the nation's commercial buildings.

In addition, demand for journeyman wiremen — the professional electricians who wire the electrical systems of the nation's buildings and factories — is almost as hot.

### Recruiting Push

To help meet the exploding need for these professional electrical workers, NECA and IBEW are aggressively working to increase awareness of the outstanding career oppor-



Outstanding career opportunities abound for professional electrical workers who install the telecom wiring that brings voice, data and video connections through a building to the desktop.

ties in electrical construction.

"If America is to be globally competitive in the 21st century and serve the nation's exploding technology needs, it must attract people to electrical and information cabling careers," says NECA Chief Executive Officer John M. Grau.

"We need to recruit young people into the construction industry in general and the electrical field in particular, and to reemphasize the worth and rewards of trade mastery and skilled labor careers."

More than 40,000 apprentices are currently enrolled in the multi-year NJATC training programs for highly-skilled electrical jobs in the industrial, commercial, residential and telecommunications sectors.

For a free informative brochure on the types of careers currently available through NJATC apprenticeships in the electrical and telecommunications industry, write to Electrical Construction Careers, PO Box 2532, North Babylon, NY 11703.

## Shortage of Electrical Workers Threatens "Wiring" of America

The overwhelming obstacle to wiring American businesses over the next decade will be recruiting and training the thousands of professional electrical workers needed to cable the nation's new commercial buildings and rewire outdated ones.

That's the prediction of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), whose NJATC training program has long been the acknowledged leader in recruiting and training America's electrical construction workers.

NECA-IBEW officials estimate that an additional 50,000 telecommunications installer/technicians will need to be recruited and trained over the next 10 years to meet the demand for cabling the nation's commercial buildings.

Apprentice installer/technicians in the NECA-IBEW training program must complete a demanding three-year course encompassing 480 hours of classwork and 4,800 hours of on-the-job experience to become NJATC certified.

However, participants in the earn-as-you-learn program receive a highly competitive salary, health and pension benefits and college credits during the apprenticeship, with installer/technicians earning an average of \$50,000 to \$75,000 over the three-year training period.

NECA-IBEW officials say that attracting people to professional electrical and information cabling careers is as much about "rewiring" America's attitudes toward the construction industry and skilled labor careers, as it is about wiring the nation for the infor-

mation age.

"Unfortunately, the prosperity of the last decade and the glamorizing of overnight high-tech wealth has moved many people to forget the honor of the skilled trades and their value in the workplace," says IBEW International President John J. Barry. "Our society needs to reemphasize the worth and rewards of trade mastery and skilled labor careers."

NECA and IBEW officials say they hope to unite the wide-ranging resources of the business, education and labor communities to counteract the alarming shortage of skilled electrical workers.

The effort will focus on advancing cooperative education and awareness activities that address technology training needs, and career opportunities for future electricians and cabling installer/technicians.

## Construction Industry Boom Continues; Top Marks Go To Electrical Specialties

Amid the robust growth of the nation's construction sector, careers in the electrical field are now providing some of the most challenging and rewarding opportunities of all.

Recent government reports show that over the past decade, electrical construction grew faster than other types of construction contracting, accounting for almost 16 percent of all hiring in the construction trades between 1991 and 1997.

This exploding demand for professional electrical workers appears to stem from the dramatic growth in information cabling — the wiring of buildings to take voice-data-video connections to the desktop — and the nation's increasing requirements for electrical maintenance, service and repair work.

### Outstanding Training

In response, the organized electrical construction industry — through a joint effort of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) — has continued to commit significant resources to its long-standing NJATC training program.

This program is designed to recruit qualified workers and provide them with the extensive on-the-job training and specialized instruction needed to ensure that highly skilled, professional workers

will always be available in the electrical construction field.

In 1999 alone, NECA and IBEW invested an estimated \$80 million in NJATC programs for training more than 40,000 apprentices for electrical jobs in the industrial, commercial, residential and telecommunications sectors. In addition, the program provided training for 50,000 journeymen who returned for specialized instruction to further improve or update their skills.

### Salary and Benefits

Unlike most education and instruction programs, NJATC apprenticeships are earn-as-you-learn programs, providing participants with regular paychecks, health and pension benefits, and the earning of college credits during training.

Depending on the electrical specialty selected, length of apprenticeship, and local pay rate, NJATC participants generally earn between \$80,000 and \$150,000 over their full apprenticeship period.

Most apprenticeship programs run from 3 to 5 years, depending on the specialty chosen. Currently the most popular apprenticeships are for installer/technicians of information cabling; linemen; and inside wiremen. These require 3-, 3<sup>1/2</sup>-, and 5-year programs respectively.

All demand several hundred hours of classroom time, and thousands of on-

the-job training hours under the direction of experienced professionals.

### College Credits

The NJATC program has also formed numerous alliances with colleges and universities to help electrical workers obtain academic degrees as well.

The American Council of Education allows 50 hours of college credit equivalency for completion of the wireman apprenticeship program, and 30 hours for the lineman apprenticeship. Approximately 2,000 colleges and universities across the country will accept these credits on a transfer basis.

Despite these outstanding benefits and career opportunities, the demand for highly skilled, professional electrical workers is outstripping supply.

For example, NECA-IBEW officials currently estimate they will need to train an additional 50,000 telecommunications installer/technicians over the next decade to meet the country's skyrocketing needs for information cabling. Demand for other professional electrical specialties is also exploding.

To learn more about career opportunities in electrical construction, order a free informative pamphlet on the NJATC apprenticeship program from Electrical Construction Careers, PO Box 2532, North Babylon, NY 11703.

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107) or call Amy Miller at 503/943-2228.

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