

BOLI continues series highlighting Oregon apprentice programs

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), home of the state's Apprenticeship and Training Division, is continuing its special series of spotlight articles on registered apprentices – workers earning living wages while learning the skills for a career in their chosen trade. The Apprenticeship and Training Division monitors all registered apprenticeship programs in the state to ensure maintenance of standards and to promote participation by women and people of color.

Apprentice Spotlight: AJ Banuelos – Despite coming from a big family of union tradespeople, Anjanet “AJ” Banuelos never thought seriously about apprenticeship. Or at least not until she was looking for work, drawing public assistance and trying to take care of three kids. Pre-apprenticeship training through Con-

structing Hope seemed like an option, but chance landed her in Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc's pre-apprenticeship program.

AJ hasn't looked back. Now less than 500 hours away from fourth term as a laborer apprentice, she seems far away from the clerical work that she thinks high school prepared her for. With not only the skills but the social network that OTI helped her to build, AJ feels like she's on solid footing – and wants to offer the same confidence and opportunity to succeed to others.

“I volunteer a lot with OTI, let them use my story, anything I can do,” AJ says with a smile. “And the supportive services, like childcare – I'm always telling other apprentices, do you know this help is out there?”

Noting that finding childcare when your days aren't 8 to 5,

Monday through Friday, especially when you're on a job out of town and need a provider who can accommodate that, AJ emphasized, “Childcare is a huge issue.” She likes the BOLI-ODOT workforce partnership's support for childcare expenses, per diems and other efforts to keep Oregon apprentices in their programs and on the job – she just wishes even more help was available.

AJ is far from complaining about apprenticeship in Oregon, though. Asked what else she might be doing today, she laughingly said, “I don't even know.” After a moment more of thought she says with characteristic honesty, “I don't even want to think about that.”

Downplaying her own hard work to get where she is, AJ is quick to express thanks to OTI especially: she recalls their pre-apprenticeship program

making her interested in every trade except roofing, when she came in leaning strongly towards becoming an electrician. The experience was so positive that AJ, something of a goodwill ambassador for OTI, sent her daughter to a Building Girls Construction Camp earlier this year – and reports that the “girly girl” was really excited about all that she learned.

OTI's supportive environment and strong foundation not only helped AJ start on the right path, but also provide great examples for her suggestions for helping to keep other apprentices on the path to success: mentoring and networking among apprentices to share information and foster other mutual supports. AJ sees tips on simple things like helping to understand difficult bosses as a great gift from older apprentices to younger ones, and just

between starting apprentices opportunities to carpool or suggestions on good childcare providers can be invaluable.

AJ's perspective on Oregon apprenticeship came with no pulled punches and no whitewash, but plenty of optimism. She's ready to be on the front lines working to make apprenticeship even more accessible and more supportive of future apprentices. That level of energy and commitment should come as no surprise, though, from a woman who spent three months travelling from her Troutdale home to work on the west side of the Willamette River required riding the bus, MAX train and street car – all three, both directions, every day for three months.

Visit www.oregon.gov/BOLI for more information about all of BOLI's work to the workforce and a stronger economy.

Community Calendar

VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Mondays	6:30 p.m., 410 North Street
Alcoholics Anonymous	Thursdays (Big Book Study)	7:00 p.m., 410 North Street
American Legion Post #119	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., 627 Adams Avenue
Booster Club	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Boy Scout Troop 201	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., Scout Cabin
Boy Scout Troop 860	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., LDS Church
Cemetery Beautification Comm.	2nd Thursday	6:30 p.m., Library
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-6081
Community Coalition	2nd Monday	12:30 p.m. School District Ofc.
Cub Scout Pack 201	Scout Cabin	For Info Call 503-429-4250
Emerg. Preparedness Comm.	4th Wednesday	6:30 p.m., WOEC
Friends of the Library	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Library
Girl Scouts, Neighborhood 4-2		For Info Call 503-819-0143
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	For location call 503-429-7193
Kiwanis Club	2nd & 4th Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., New Hong Kong
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., New Hong Kong
Municipal Airport Committee	1t Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Pioneer Museum		For Info Call 503-429-3713
Upr Nehalem Watershed Council	For date call 429-0869	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Grange
Public Works Committee	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Cares Directors		For Info call 503-429-1414
Vernonia City Council	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Comm. Learning Center	1st Wednesday	5:00 p.m., VCLC
Vernonia Community PTA	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Vernonia Garden Club	2nd Tuesday	1:30 p.m., Vernonia Library
Vernonia Grange	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	3rd Thursday	6:30 p.m., 510 Bridge St.
Vernonia Library Board	1st Wednesday	9:00 a.m., Sept-June, Library
Vernonia Parks Committee	3rd Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Planning Comm.	1st & 3rd Thursdays	6:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia School Board	2nd Thursday	6:00 p.m., District Office
Vernonia Sr. Center Board	2nd Friday	10:00 a.m., Senior Center
Vernonia Transfer Station	2nd & 4th Saturdays	8 a.m.-2 p.m., Behind VHS
Vern. Volunteer Ambulance Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
WOEC Directors	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., WOEC

MIST-BIRKENFELD

M-BRFPD Board Business Mtg.	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Ambulance Drill	1st & 2nd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Fire Drill	1st & 2nd Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Helping Circle	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B SAR Drill	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Volunteer Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
Natal Grange	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Natal Grange Hall
T.O.P.S.	Mondays	9:00 a.m., Main Fire Station

BANKS

Alcoholics Anonymous	Friday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
Alcoholics Anonymous	Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
American Legion Post #90	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Street Post
Banks City Council	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., City Hall
Banks Fire District #13	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Station 13
Banks Library Commission	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Banks Planning Commission	Last Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Banks School Board	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m., Jr. High Library
Banks Youth Group	Sunday, Wednesday	7:00 p.m., UMC Youth Bldg.
Chamber of Commerce	1st Thursday	12:30 p.m., Fire District Office
CPO 14	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Everybody's Hometown Band	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., BHS Music Room
Friends of the Library	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., Brown Derby
Sunset Park Assoc.	3rd Wednesday	8:00 p.m., Gun Club
T.O.P.S.	Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Administration Bldg.

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesday	10:00 a.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Sunset Park Church
Columbia 9-1-1 Board	3rd Thursday	9:00 a.m., 9-1-1 meeting room
Columbia Comm Mental Health	1st Tuesday	5:30 p.m., 58646 McNulty Way
Columbia Soil & Water District	3rd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., NRCS, 2514 Sykes
County Fair Board	2nd Monday	6:00 p.m., Fairgrounds 4-H Bldg.
County Parks Commission	2nd Thursday	4:00 p.m., 1054 Oregon St.
Comm. on Children & Families	3rd Thursday	5:30 p.m. OSU Ext., 505 N. Hwy. 30
Local Alcohol & Drug Plann. Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211