It’s the greatest feeling in the world to learn a trade from people who are good at it. If you’re willing to learn, they’re always willing to teach.”

Sean Bagley
Apprentice, Northwestern/Evanston Skilled Trades Training program

Bringing the Community to Work

Sean Bagley has worked for a year in Northwestern’s paint shop. “It’s the golden ticket to work here,” he says of his new job.

Bagley is one of six Evanston residents hired last year as apprentices in the year-long Northwestern/Evanston Skilled Trades Training program. Developed to connect residents with employment opportunities in the community, the partnership works toward the city and University’s shared goal of maintaining Evanston as a wonderful place to live, work, and learn.

In April 2015, Northwestern committed to hiring city residents each year for a paid training program in its facilities management division. The University contributed nearly half a million dollars toward the program in its first year.

Each trainee is placed in Northwestern’s carpentry or paint shop to learn about the trades. After 12 months, participants will either be hired full-time at the University or have a year’s worth of experience to help them find jobs elsewhere.

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A t Evanston Township High School (ETHS), seniors are preparing to become freshmen. In a partnership between the school and Northwestern, graduate students teach minicourses at ETHS, providing high school seniors with a glimpse of the rigor and excitement of a college class.

The NU-AVID program allows teaching certificate students from Northwestern’s Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching to learn how to teach at the university level, while ETHS seniors get a preview of the college experience.

This is just one of many collaborations fostered by the Northwestern/ETHS partnership office, which opened at the high school in 2012. Focused on connecting resources between the two institutions, the office is fully funded by Northwestern as part of President Morton Schapiro’s Good Neighbor, Great University initiative.

“This program is a win-win,” says partnership coordinator Kristen Perkins. “It shows ETHS students how college is different from high school. When a teacher gives you a syllabus in high school, you might throw it away. In college, it’s important.”

ETHS teachers serve as teaching assistants for the minicourses on days when instructors aren’t present. This year, about 55 high school seniors are taking the eight-week classes.

In a recent report to the District 202 Board of Education, Perkins detailed the growth of the collaborations, which initially focused on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Students and staff at both the high school and university levels are benefiting from the partnership office’s programs.

For example, its Women in STEM program increased from 9 students in 2013 to more than 140 students this year, while teaching, tutoring, and mentoring opportunities for Northwestern students have expanded to multiple academic areas.

The office is also planning a summit this fall to spark conversation about women’s issues and empowerment, and is working with the University’s Segal Design Institute to develop a new high school course on design thinking and doing.

TO LEARN about volunteering at partnership office events this spring or fall, email program assistant Jill Lindeman at jill.lindeman@northwestern.edu.

Connecting Great Institutions

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend,

Welcome to Northwestern University’s Office of Neighborhood and Community Relations newsletter.

As the office’s executive director, I’m Northwestern’s primary liaison to the Evanston community. I advise our senior leadership and help create opportunities for the University to build strong, supportive partnerships with Evanston residents, community organizations, schools, civic and business groups, and local government.

This newsletter showcases our outstanding community members and connects Evanston’s people and organizations to the University’s wide range of resources.

Together we will create a stronger, more unified community that benefits all of our members. I look forward to hearing from you on how the Office of Neighborhood and Community Relations can assist you or your organization.

Best regards,

Alan Anderson
alan.anderson@northwestern.edu
847-467-5762

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Evanston sophomore Noni Shelton (left) and freshman Sarah Bloom (right) explain their design project to Northwestern/ETHS partnership coordinator Kristen Perkins.
“I’ve discovered it’s an art when it comes to painting,” Bagley says. He has learned how to prepare different surfaces for painting, from plaster walls to outdoor wooden benches, and which brushes to use for different types of jobs.

Trainees in the carpentry shop mount monitors, install office furniture, and refurbish dormitories. They also learn how to hang doors—an art in itself at a university this old. Each building has different types of doors of differing sizes and materials that have been expanding and contracting through hundreds of Midwestern seasons.

“There’s been a national trend over the last few decades away from the skilled trades as a career,” says John D’Angelo, Northwestern’s vice president for facilities management. “That’s resulted in both a shortage of these critical positions and a loss of economic diversity in many communities.”

In addition to training, the program provides coaching on such life skills as financial planning. Mentors walk participants through the health and dental insurance benefits that some may be receiving for the first time.

“As much as these young people will learn from this experience, we at the University benefit from their talents and energy,” says Northwestern executive vice president Nim Chinniah, noting that the program will build a network of qualified workers to fill positions for years to come.

“We’ve learned a lot,” says Steve Kindrick, human resources manager for facilities management. “The trainees’ work ethic has been impressive, along with the willingness of the Northwestern community to take them under their wing. Even this late in the program, the trainees have ear-to-ear grins. They’re happy to be part of the team.”

For Bagley, who had previously worked in Evanston as a bus driver and at restaurants, “it’s the greatest feeling in the world to learn a trade from people who are good at it.” His friends have asked him how to get into the program.

Six new apprentices will start this spring, and the program hopes to expand to more fields, such as engineering.

“This is the best group you could work with,” Bagley says. “If you’re willing to learn, they’re always willing to teach.”

Bagley’s hard work has paid off—this spring, he and another apprentice learned they would be hired full-time at Northwestern.

TO LEARN MORE about participating as an apprentice in the program, call Kevin Brown, youth and adult program manager for the city of Evanston, at 847-448-8042.
Preventing the Community

Our goal is to never be needed, because that means that nothing bad has happened.

That’s how Joseph Frascati describes Northwestern’s Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT).

As emergency preparedness manager with Northwestern University Police, Frascati coordinates the University’s CERT training. Volunteers practice simulated emergencies, including search-and-rescue operations in adverse conditions, moving and bracing debris to extricate trapped victims, and extinguishing fires.

“You form these teams and train them in the hope that you will never actually need to use them,” Frascati says. In an emergency, however, CERT volunteers would swing into action.

Northwestern began the trainings in 2014 as a partnership between University Police and the Evanston Fire Department to engage students, faculty, and staff in serving the community. The University is one of 2,600 sites that offer CERT nationally.

Volunteers receive 20 hours of training in basic disaster and emergency response skills from experienced first responders and emergency management professionals. Topics include disaster preparedness and medical operations, CPR and defibrillator skills, and active shooter awareness.

“CERT programs operate within the community like good Samaritans to provide support to first responders,” Frascati says. “The program is intended not to replace Northwestern University’s response capabilities but rather to serve as an important supplement to them.”

In addition to emergency situations, volunteers are able to contribute to community welfare by providing support during major special events such as Dillo Day.

TO LEARN MORE about upcoming CERT training dates or to register for classes, call Joseph Frascati at 847-467-3065 or email joe@northwestern.edu.

TO LEARN MORE about event details and community resources, visit our website at www.northwestern.edu/communityrelations

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