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Press Release

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New Core Driller Training in Kotzebue, Bethel

JUNEAU, Alaska—A first-of-its-kind apprenticeship program is delivering core driller training that will allow Alaskans to compete locally and globally in the mining industry.

“This training is for Alaskans who live in the remote areas where our natural resources are being developed,” Labor Commissioner Click Bishop said. “Once trained, these Alaskans will be employed in high-paying, high-skilled jobs in their towns and villages.”

The intensive core driller training program is a collaborative effort of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development’s Office of Apprenticeship, the U.S. Department of Labor Employment Training Administration’s Office of Apprenticeship, the University of Alaska’s Mining and Petroleum Training Service and the mining industry.

“By partnering with industry, we are developing a premier workforce development model that will meet employers’ needs,” Labor Deputy Commissioner David Stone said. “Our goal is to increase the ability of companies to hire locally and keep dollars in Alaska, helping raise the standard of living in our rural communities.”

Registered apprenticeship combines on-the-job learning with classroom instruction, with a progressive pay scale so that participants earn while they learn. Apprenticeship allows employers to establish the standards of proficiency they need while developing a local and loyal workforce.

The first 18 participants, who are all registered apprentices, will graduate on April 22 at the Alaska Technical Center in Kotzebue and then return to their jobs.

“The focus of this program is to continually develop skills so that at the end of their three-year apprenticeships, workers will become journey level core drillers,” State Apprenticeship Coordinator Gerry Andrews said. “The second session begins April 23 in Bethel at Yuut Elitnaurviat training center. The third class, for entry level apprentices, will return to ATC on May 6.”

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