JULY 2026

WESTERN STATES
College of Construction

The Construction College Advantage

CONGRATS WSCC GRADUATES





Over the past year, **110 apprentices** graduated with an Associate of Occupational Studies degree across all WSCC campuses.

Their perseverance and dedication to professional growth demonstrate the qualities that strengthen our industry and build the workforce of tomorrow. These graduates have developed the skills, knowledge, and professionalism that will support their continued success both on the jobsite and throughout their careers.

Congratulations to each graduate on this significant achievement. We wish all graduates continued success and look forward to the positive impact they will make in this industry.

WSCC Team

In this newsletter you can expect:

- Community Highlight
- Apprentice Spotlight
- Instructor Spotlight
- BOOST Program Insight
- Course Updates

Community Highlight - Heavy Metal Summer Experience

The Heavy Metal Summer Experience (HMSE) camp hosted by WSCC was held from June 8-12, 2026 at the Local 145 campus in Grand Junction, Colorado.

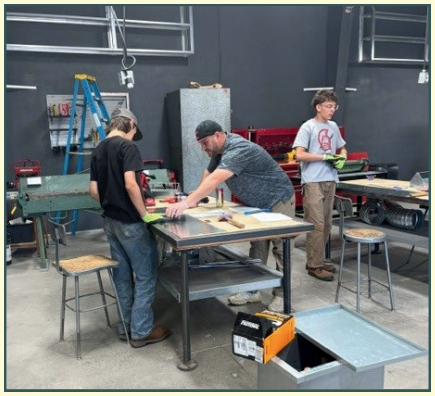
HMSE is a FREE program that offers high school students and recent graduates a hands-on introduction to union career opportunities in the building trades. Three high school students got to explore the basics of the HVACR, sheet metal, pipefitting and plumbing trades over the course of a week, completing various activities and learning more about available programs and career paths in the trades.

WSCC is proud to partner with the Heavy Metal Summer Experience to provide these summer experiences to young hopefuls interested in what the trades have to offer. To learn more about HMSE, you can visit **hmse.org**.











Spotlights from UA Locals 58 & 145

Apprentice Spotlight



Jesus Vazquez
Local 145

A huge congrats to this edition's outstanding apprentice, **Jesus Antonio Torres Vazquez!**

Jesus is a plumber at Local 145 who chose his current trade for the opportunities to learn a valuable skill while receiving great benefits and pay and being closer to his family. His favorite part of the program has been the schooling, noting that he has had great teachers and plenty of time to hone his skills through various hands-on projects. He greatly appreciates Daniel Schulte, Local 145 program director who also serves as an instructor.

His biggest inspiration is his mother, who has taught him to make sacrifices for a better tomorrow. When not working, he enjoys fishing, paddleboarding, and hiking.

Instructor Spotlight



James Kolthoff
Local 58

For this edition's instructor spotlight, we want to show our appreciation for Local 58 instructor **James Kolthoff!**

James is a Local 58 pipefitter who has been in his current trade for 12 years. He became an instructor to share the knowledge given to him during his career and his favorite subject to teach is Rigging. He always strives to use hands-on techniques and visuals as much as possible in the classroom. He hopes to leave a positive impact on students by making challenging classes fun and engaging for all.

In his free time, he likes to go hunting, fishing, shooting, or spend time at the gym!

Inaugural BOOST Pre-Apprenticeship Program

The inaugural session of the BOOST (**B**uilding **O**n **O**ccupational **S**killed **T**rades) Pre-Apprenticeship program took place this summer from May - June 2026. There were 10 students in the first cohort who all successfully completed the curriculum, which included program orientation, 16 classroom days, and 4 project days that spanned across Denver, Colorado Springs, and Aurora at different local unions.

The inaugural program graduation was held at the WSCC office on Friday, July 10, 2026. All 10 graduates were able to celebrate their achievement with their families, instructor, and WSCC staff present. Congratulations to our incredible first BOOST cohort!



Graduating class of the first-ever WSCC BOOST Program session

The Next BOOST Program will take place in Fall 2026!

DATES TBA SOON.

- The waitlist for the next session is now open **HERE**.
- To learn more about this program and see the latest updates, visit **westernstatescollege.org/boost**

WSCC Course Updates

Professionalism In Construction Instructor Workshop

In June, we hosted a successful workshop for our *Professionalism in Construction* instructors. With support from Leah Gutmann and valuable instructor feedback, we are implementing minor curriculum enhancements to strengthen the program. We plan to offer at least one workshop annually to provide ongoing instructor support and ensure content remains current and relevant.

ACCE Teaching & Learning Practitioners Certification

WSCC hosted a three-day *Teaching & Learning Practitioners* certification course through the American Council for Construction Education (ACCE) last month. Previously attended by BOOST instructors Tim Severance and Mike Cranford, the course received strong endorsements for its value and impact. We are pursuing foundation grant funding to expand participation opportunities for technical instructors across all campuses.

Thank you for reading!

Have something to contribute for a future WSCC Newsletter?

Submit your story and images by emailing the Editor at marisa@westernstatescollege.org

Submission deadline for October 2026 edition: **Friday, Oct. 16, 2026.**

THE EDITOR



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