



Arkansas celebrates 10th annual National Apprenticeship Week

The Office of Skills Development, a division of Workforce Connections within the Arkansas Department of Commerce, announces its participation in the 10th annual National Apprenticeship Week (NAW), taking place Nov. 17-23, 2024. This year's theme, "Celebrating 10 Years of Engagement, Expansion, and Innovation," highlights a decade of growth in apprenticeship programs and their impact on building a skilled workforce nationwide.

National Apprenticeship Week provides an opportunity for industries, employers, and training providers to explore the benefits of apprenticeship programs. These benefits include increased employee retention, improved productivity, and a steady pipeline of highly skilled workers tailored to meet industry needs. Various events across Arkansas will showcase the success of local apprenticeships and the opportunities they offer for job seekers and businesses.

The Office of Skills Development invites employers and training providers interested in starting or expanding their apprenticeship programs to join this year's events. A highlight of the week is the employer forum, "Employers Growing Talent Through Apprenticeship," scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2024, at UA Pulaski Technical College in Little Rock. This event, held in partnership with the Little Rock Workforce Development Board, Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, and Apprenticely, will provide insights on launching effective apprenticeship programs.

For a full schedule of events across the state, visit www.apprenticeship.gov/national-apprenticeship-week.

Since its inception in 2014, National Apprenticeship Week has promoted the expansion of apprenticeship programs across traditional and emerging industries. Arkansas has experienced significant growth, with a rising number of registered apprenticeship programs and hundreds of active apprentices joining the workforce over the past decade. This year, Arkansas was the first in the nation to roll out a certification process for pre-apprenticeship programs and implemented its first youth apprenticeship program.

"National Apprenticeship Week is a chance for us to celebrate the growth and success of apprenticeship programs in Arkansas," said Cody Waits, executive director of Arkansas Workforce Connections at the Department of Commerce. "This year's theme of engagement, expansion, and innovation aligns with our mission to equip Arkansans with the skills employers need now and in the future."

