How do I become a Heavy Equipment Operator Apprentice?

The International Union of Operating Engineers Local 478 Apprenticeship Training and Skill Improvement Fund is taking applications this winter for a program starting in the spring for a limited number of apprentices. This training is intended for individuals interested in becoming a Heavy Equipment Operator.

Applications must be completed in person at 240 Cheshire Road, Meriden, CT 06451. Applications will be available (M-F) January 10, 2011 through January 21, 2011 (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) for a program starting in April 2011.

The I.U.O.E. Local 478 Training Fund adheres to the Equal Employment Opportunity principles. For additional information visit our website at www.local478.org or call 1-800-841-0478.

Minimum qualifications of all apprenticeship applicants:

- Minimum age of 18
- Valid driver’s license
- High school diploma or G.E.D.
- Must be able to meet the physical requirements of the job,
- Apprentices must be available for numerous evening and Saturday training sessions at the Meriden training center throughout the 4 years of training.

Be prepared to fill out an application

Have your complete employment history with you.
Bring references and contact information with you.
Have your educational history and list of any formal training you have received in the past.

What is a Heavy Equipment Operator?

Operating Engineers are the operators of construction equipment such as cranes, power shovels, scrapers, paving machines, motor graders, loaders, trucks and a host of various machines used by the industry.

The work site for an operating engineer will be at construction projects such as commercial and residential development, roadways, demolition of buildings, bridges etc. The work site may also be in plants that produce stone, sand, and gravel, or in the clean up of hazardous waste sites. This could mean working in isolated areas or in the middle of a major city. It also means that reliable transportation is a must for operating engineers.

In addition to operating equipment, apprentices will learn how to be responsible for daily maintenance of the machines they operate.

How does it work?

The best way to learn the skills of an Operating Engineer is to do the work of an Operating Engineer. Therefore, an apprentice will actually work on the job, learning from journey worker operators.

If you are selected, you will first have to complete a six week pre-apprenticeship training period starting April 4, 2011. During this period, you will gain formal training in the basic areas necessary to work on a jobsite. You will also be evaluated by the local 478 staff of instructors on your knowledge and performance. You will not make any wages during this period, however there is no charge to you either.

Each apprentice must accumulate 6,000 hours of combined OJT and classroom training. In the classroom the apprentice will supplement on the job training with mandatory related instruction at the training site. Apprentices receive instruction in safe operating practices, construction fundamentals, and health and safety topics.