mation will be sent out to the business managers, training coordinators, and instructors very soon, so be on the lookout for this material.

I want to thank everyone in the Education and Training Department for all of the hard work they put forth regarding the Instructor Training Program (ITP) and the International Apprentice Contest (INAC), which proved to be an overwhelming success. I know how much work these two programs require, and without the dedication and due diligence of the team, it just wouldn’t happen. We sent out over 3,000 surveys to the participants of the ITP program, and they came back with overwhelmingly positive reviews on the quality and caliber of the instructors and the materials. Those reviews say it all and are just another reflection of everyone’s dedication and commitment to providing the very best training for our members. You should all be proud.

In all, we had a record number of attendees, with a total of 2,013 registered! Within that realm, there were 421 first-time participants. We offered 123 courses with 11 new offerings this year. To help facilitate the program, we had 257 ITP faculty members, along with 170 industry representatives. We had 36 vendors participate in the industry expo that was featured on registration day and proved to be very beneficial.

I’d like to congratulate our winners of the International Apprentice Contest: HVAC/R winner Josiah Q. Tiegs, District 4, Local Union 539, Minneapolis, MN; Pipefitter winner Justin D. Lindberg, District 4, Local Union 601, Milwaukee, WI; Plumber winner Carter M. Hagen, District 4, Local Union 25, Rock Island, IL; Sprinkler Fitter winner Dennis J. Komassa, District 4, Local Union 183, Milwaukee, WI; and Welder winner Colton Houston, District 2, Local Union 10, Richmond, VA.

I’d also like to congratulate Carter M. Hagen for receiving the Allyn Parmenter and George Bliss UA Directors of Training Award. Every contestant who makes it to the INAC is a winner. It is no easy task, and everyone enjoys watching their skills and determination during the contest. I want to thank the INAC Committee and Chairman Patrick “Fuzz” Foley for the hard work they put forth all year long to make this contest a success year after year.

The Block Party, 5K Race, and Pub Crawl on Monday evening, August 12th, was a huge success, and total donations—from several sources—enabled us to donate $110,000 to the Semper Fi Fund. This organization does such amazing things, and to date, the UA has donated $530,000. This donation makes a significant impact on the men and women who have bravely served our country as well as supporting their families. I know this Fund holds a special place in all of our hearts.

In closing, I’d like to wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season and a healthy, happy, and peaceful New Year.

AWS CWI Nine-Year Recertification

by Phil Martin, Administrator of UA Certification Programs

The UA’s training program for the AWS CWI certification has been a great success and a benefit for many of our members. As of 2019, we have over 2,300 UA members who hold the CWI certification. A significant number of CWIs are getting to the point of having to undergo their nine-year recertification. With this in mind, it would be a good time to review how the AWS QC-1 recertification process works.

The nine-year CWI recertification process can be met by a CWI in three different ways. The first option is to take and pass the AWS CWI Part B (practical hands-on) exam. If you decide to recertify by taking the Part B hands-on test, it must be taken no earlier than six months prior to your CWI expiration date, because if you fail the hands-on exam, you do not have a lot of time to attempt a retake before you lose your CWI certification. If that happens, you have to take all three parts of the CWI exam over.

Most CWIs dread the thought of taking the Part B exam over again, so now we have two other options. The second option (and the option most used by our members) is to attend 80 hours of continuing educational courses, known as PDHs (Professional Development Hours). Any of the UA training courses related to welding, inspection, or nondestructive testing may be used as PDHs. A minimum of 80 PDHs must be earned (training received or instruction delivered) during the nine-year certification period and 20 of those 80 PDHs must be earned in the final three-year period. Credit for a particular course may only be granted once in a nine-year period. (Example: A single 40-hour course taught any number of times can only be used to fulfill 40 hours of the 80 hours required for recertification). The American Welding Society’s Certification Department recognizes PDHs taken with the UA for CWI nine-year recertification. The AWS Certification Department will accept UA transcripts in lieu of a certificate of completion.
You will find a complete listing of AWS-approved courses on the following UANet website:


Instructors who want to substitute teaching hours for the required PDHs must submit documentation of the hours of training performed. Such documentation must include a complete syllabus of subjects taught, a copy of the certificates of attendance or completion issued, the number of students attending, the dates of the training provided, and documentation that the training was a formal offering and not personal coaching, tutoring, or individual instruction delivered to meet job requirements.

The third option is recertification by passing a two-hour endorsement exam. You can apply for this option up to six months prior to your expiration date. Passing one of these endorsement exams meets the requirements for recertification. An important note to remember is that endorsements cannot be taken to the Codebook to which your initial CWI certification was attained. Typical endorsements are as follows: AWS D1.1 Structural Steel; API 1104 Pipeline; Structural Drawing Reading; ASME Section IX, B31.1, B31.3; ASME Section VIII, Div. 1 and Section IX; and AWS Certified Radiographic Interpreter.

The nine-year recertification requirement happens much faster than you think, so it’s best to plan ahead.

Growing the UA Brand

by Rich Benkowski, UA Training Specialist

Every year, the UA Instructor Training Program grows with the number of attendees and new courses offered to meet the needs of UA signatory contractors and customers. This year was no different as the number of participants and attendees exceeded all previous programs. In August of 2019, the event grew in a direction meant to facilitate market share capture and expand the UA brand of industry leadership. Director of Education and Training James Pavesic signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with three industry partners that will create best opportunities for increasing manhours in the service sectors. A MOU clearly outlines specific points of an understanding. It names the parties, describes the project on which they are agreeing, defines its scope, and details each party’s responsibilities.

HVAC Excellence works to improve competency in the HVACR industry through validation of the technical education process at various stages of a technician’s career. To accomplish their goals, they offer portable and stackable credentials (for students, technicians, and educators), professional development, and programmatic accreditation. Through this articulation agreement, students applying to the United Association apprenticeship program may be granted up to one year of training credit and start their training in the second year of the apprenticeship program.

Such standards are designed to ensure that our future workforce receives the quality of training required to provide the skills necessary for success in the HVACR industry. A list of accredited HVAC Excellence schools can be found here: https://www.escogroup.org/accreditation/accreditedprograms.aspx.

As an aging army of HVACR service technicians near retirement, this MOU can accelerate the replacement of skilled craftsmen and women into the service trucks of our signatory partners. UA National Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator Laura Ceja believes this will support her efforts. According to Laura, “This articulation agreement allows UA training directors to identify potential apprentice candidates for recruitment who have received equivalent credentials and skillsets for placement in our apprenticeship programs. Students who are graduating from HVAC Excellence accredited programs are more likely to complete their apprenticeship and have already learned the skills they need to be successful service technicians. By actively partnering, we are creating a pathway for students who are graduating from accredited technical programs to become UA members. This will help build our membership and bring qualified workers into our ranks. This acceptance of credentials does not negate the graduate’s need to comply with any of our existing requirements. Apprentice applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by each training center and must meet established program requirements and any additional testing.”

The MOU with NITC for a National Brazing Certification is unlike any other agreement in the piping industry. Do not confuse this initiative with a UA brazing certification or a