



Top Notch 2026 Training Excellence Award

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

An independent jury comprised of industry users, owners and other representatives will select one Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee to receive the Top Notch Training Excellence Award.

Please note our applications have been updated. Please read all the instructions before preparing your application.

QUALIFICATION FOR RECOGNITION: Applicants for the Training Excellence Award MUST:

- Be a formal apprenticeship program for one of the unions of the Indiana State Building Trades.
- Be associated with a union currently financially contributing to Top Notch. (Either via collective bargaining language, through your affiliated union or contractor association or via an annual donation.)

BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH RECOGNITION AS TRAINING EXCELLENCE RECIPIENT INCLUDE:

- Program mention in Media Release issued by Top Notch following the May awards program.
- Program mention in Full Page advertisement in the Indianapolis Business Journal
- Program mention in Building Excellence Follow Up Article
- Program mention in Top Notch Newsletter Article.
- Program mention and tag in Top Notch Social Media Posts.

TOP NOTCH TRAINING EXCELLENCE AWARD APPLICATION PACKAGE: Each application should include each of the following:

- 1) AWARD APPLICATION:** A completed Top Notch Apprenticeship Excellence awards application.
- 2) ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATION DATA:** Please include enrollment data for the past five years, including number of apprentices and diversity breakdown. In addition, please include program graduation rates for the past five years.
- 3) MULTIMEDIA REQUIREMENT:** At a minimum, all application submissions should include five photographs or images to support the text of the application.



All applications are encouraged to consider the use of additional supporting forms of media, including PHOTOS, FLASH DRIVES, or POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS to respond to the application questions. However, such creative materials must be limited to five minutes in length and should be considered supporting materials to the written submissions. The applicant will not present such materials to the jury. The jury will review the materials independently.

Inclusion of photographs and additional supporting forms of media as part of an application authorizes Top Notch to use the material at the annual awards presentation, as well as in advertisements promoting the awards program.

4) REFERENCES: Please provide a list of references, including ten apprentices who are currently enrolled in your program and five journeymen who have graduated. Please provide accurate email addresses for each reference.

Top Notch will forward a separate survey to each reference to be completed immediately following receipt of the reference list. *Failure to include references, or incomplete contact information for references, will result in the disqualification of the application submission. Please note the judges pay particular attention to the response rate of the reference surveys. Top Notch encourages applicants to follow up with the references to ensure they are responding in a timely fashion.*

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- All Applications should be limited to activities that have taken place in the past three years.
- Applications do not need to remain anonymous. Applicants should feel free to utilize the name of their organization in the submission.
- Each applicant will receive a feedback form completed by the jury outlining what worked well on their application and what could be improved for future cycles.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Please note ALL AWARD APPLICATIONS must be submitted online at topnotch.org by April 9, 2026.
Applicants can download award applications for each category at the Top Notch website at www.topnotch.org. Applicants must submit all requested reference lists, including mailing addresses OR email addresses, by the deadline.



AWARDS PROGRAM:

The award recipients for each of the above awards will be recognized at the Top Notch Standards of Excellence Program to be held May 14, 2026. Prior notice of recognition will not be given to the award recipients prior to the Top Notch Standards of Excellence Program.



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APPLICATION FORM

Please note ALL AWARD APPLICATIONS must be submitted online at topnotch.org by April 9, 2026.

Apprenticeship Program Name:

Contact Name:

Address:

City/State:

Phone:

Email:

Website:

How does your program contribute financially to Top Notch of Indiana?

- We contribute as a result of language in our collective bargaining agreement.
- We belong to a Labor Management Partnership that contributes to Top Notch (also referred to as the Construction Industry Progress Council of Indiana or CIPC.) Partnership name:
- Other:



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APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please review the Standards of Excellence for the Top Notch Training Excellence Award Category:

In the Indiana Union Construction Industry, there is a commitment to continuous training/education. The established foundation, through jointly managed apprenticeship programs investing more than 42 million dollars in training annually, is unparalleled in the construction industry. In addition, the continuing educational opportunities provided by both labor and management outside of the apprenticeship programs are integral. The end result is a more qualified, productive, and professional workforce for our industry and our client/customers/end users.

Please describe how your apprenticeship program effectively applies the standards of excellence in this award category to **EACH** of the **FOUR** industry categories below. Answers should be limited to programming or initiatives that have taken place in the past three years. Please limit your response in each category to 500 words or less. Any application not following this guideline will NOT be considered for an award.

I. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

Describe how your apprenticeship program approaches recruitment to ensure you are attracting a new generation to our industry?

II. OPERATIONS AND INNOVATION:

How has your organization grown in the past three years? What types of results and outcomes have you created that showcase your growth? **PLEASE NOTE: MEASURABLE DATA OUTLINING YOUR GROWTH PATTERN DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS IS REQUIRED FOR THE APPLICATION. THIS SECTION WILL BE EVALUATED BASED ON THIS DATA.**

III. PARTNERSHIP WITH CONTRACTORS

Describe the partnership your apprenticeship program has with its employers as it pertains to curriculum development. Tell us about a unique training initiative you implemented.

IV. SHARE YOUR PROGRAM STORY.

It is difficult to capture the totality of an organization in four questions. We are pleased to offer an open category that you may use to share your apprenticeship program's story. Tell us more about your program and/or an initiative that you are proud of. Consider including the following information:



- For new initiatives and programs, was this a one-time event or an ongoing initiative and what was your goal for this program?
- What was your approach to planning and implementation?
- How did/do you measure success? Be as specific as possible with results and metrics.

END OF APPLICATION