

News from the Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship & Training Fund



Champions at Work

Competitors in cabinetmaking proudly pose after wrapping up a full day of competition.



VOL. 10 | ISSUE 1 | MARCH 2025

haumana



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SkillsUSA Competition Showcases Hawaii's Top Emerging Talent

On February 18, the Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship & Training Fund (HCATF) proudly hosted the SkillsUSA Hawaii carpentry competition at the Kapolei Training Center, bringing together some of the state's most talented and ambitious high school students. This annual event, part of the SkillsUSA Hawaii Championships, provided a real-world construction challenge, testing students on their ability to think critically, work efficiently, and execute precise craftsmanship under pressure.

This year's event welcomed 28 high school students from Kalaheo High School, Pearl City High School, Radford High School and Waipahu High School on Oahu; Baldwin High School and Maui High School on Maui; Kealahou High School on Hawaii Island; and Kauai High School. Participants competed in one of two main categories - Rough Framing and Cabinet Making - where they had just six hours to complete their projects using blueprints received the morning of the competition. No outside assistance was allowed, with judges only intervening for safety-related concerns.

At stake? More than just bragging rights – winners in each category earned a chance to advance to the national SkillsUSA competition in Atlanta, Georgia, this July.



Kauai | Oahu | Molokai | Lanai | Maui | Kona | Hilo



Edmund C. Aczon
Executive Director

*The Hawaii
Carpenters Apprenticeship
& Training Fund*

Message from the Director

As we enter 2025, we continue to see the impact of apprenticeship programs in shaping careers, fostering second chances, and opening doors for underrepresented groups in the trades. This issue of Haumana highlights some of the most inspiring stories from recent months - stories of resilience, skill, and opportunity

From the graduates of our Waiawa Correctional Facility program, who are stepping into the workforce with a new sense of purpose, to the women breaking barriers in construction, we celebrate the achievements of those who are changing the face of our industry.

We also shine a spotlight on the SkillsUSA Hawaii competition, where emerging talent showcased their craftsmanship, and take a closer look at apprenticeship wages in Hawaii, reinforcing that these programs don't just provide jobs - they create sustainable careers where our members can earn a living wage.

Mahalo to our apprentices, instructors, signatory contractors, and everyone who supports our mission. Together, we are not just building careers - we are building the future of Hawaii.

With Aloha,

Edmund C. Aczon
HCATF Executive Director

SkillsUSA Competition *Continued*

A Test of Precision, Focus, & Adaptability

Throughout the day, competitors measured, cut, and assembled their projects with intense focus, knowing that accuracy and attention to detail would determine the winners. Judges evaluated craftsmanship, time management, and structural integrity, all while ensuring students adhered to industry safety standards.

"Understanding the build before you even start is key," said Judge Dennis Apilado, Senior Superintendent with Moss and Associates. "Some students rush in and start cutting without fully reviewing their plans, but the strongest competitors are those who take their time to visualize each step before making their first cut. Slow and steady wins the race."

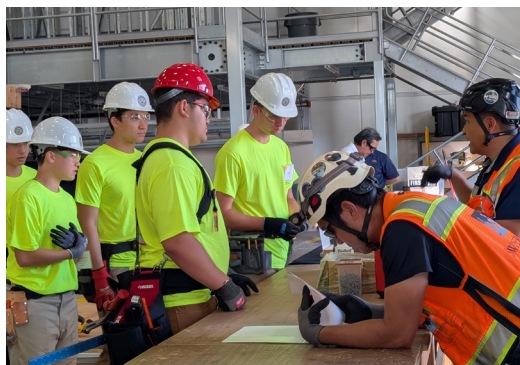
Among this year's competitors was Mikah Hall from Pearl City High School, a returning participant eager to take home the gold. "My first year, I was pretty nervous, always checking the timer. But now, I've learned to pace myself and keep a steady rhythm," Hall shared. "The tools here are a lot bigger than the ones in school. At first, that was intimidating, but now I feel way more confident using them."

His journey through SkillsUSA has been a steady climb - placing third in his sophomore year, second as a junior, and now striving for first.

Industry Support: Swinerton & Local Sponsors Elevate the Competition

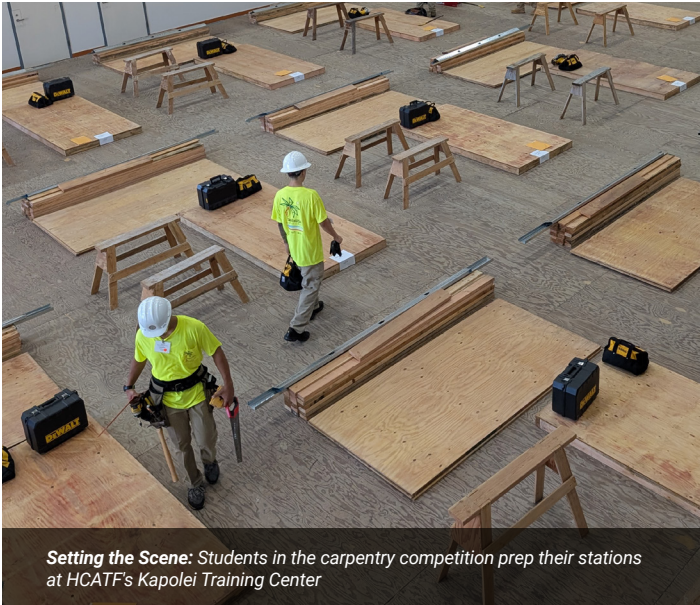
A key partner in this year's SkillsUSA competition was Swinerton, a valued signatory contractor that played an active role in supporting the event. For the past three years, Swinerton has not only provided sponsorship but also contributed materials, hands-on guidance, and competition judges. This year, Swinerton delivered essential lumber and supplies for competitors and had several of their own employees serving as judges in the Framing competition.

"What I appreciate about this event is that it teaches students how to be competitive in a way that reflects the real industry," said Derrick Apilado, Assistant



Above: Mikah Hall from Pearl City High School
Left: Swinerton volunteers distribute plans at the start of the carpentry competition

Superintendent for Swinerton's Millwork Division. "They learn early on what it takes to be successful in this field - problem-solving under pressure, precision, and working efficiently. That early exposure is crucial."



Setting the Scene: Students in the carpentry competition prep their stations at HCATF's Kapolei Training Center

He also emphasized the importance of teamwork in the trades, reminding students: "You should be competitive against the task, not each other. Teamwork is so important."

Beyond Swinerton's contributions, DeWalt and Slim's Power Tools also supported the event, donating tools and making an appearance to watch the students compete.

A Proud Moment for Families & Supporters

For many competitors, SkillsUSA was more than just a contest - it was a moment of validation for years of hard work and dedication. Parents and instructors watched eagerly from behind safety barriers, cheering on their students as they put their skills to the test.

For Bricyn Ah Chin, whose son Legend competed in the event, the competition was about more than just technical skills - it was about seeing his child's passion come to life. "Legend has always loved wood shop," he said. "When he told me he was chosen for this, I could see how excited he was. Watching him out there today, working hard and showing what he's learned - it's incredible."

The winners from each category were announced following

the competition, with the first-place winners earning a spot at the SkillsUSA Nationals in Atlanta this July.

Opening Doors: Women in Construction at SkillsUSA

This year, the competition also reflected a growing shift in the construction industry - the increasing presence of women in the trades. With a total of 5 female participants, more competing than in previous years, SkillsUSA continues to serve as an important entry point for young women looking to pursue careers in carpentry, drywall, and millwright work, as well as other construction fields.

"Competitions like this show young women that they belong in this industry just as much as anyone else," said Darrell Seto, an HCATF Training Coordinator who helped run the event. "The confidence and skills they develop here will carry them forward into apprenticeships, jobs, and leadership roles."

HCATF remains committed to creating inclusive opportunities for all aspiring tradespeople, ensuring that the next generation of carpenters reflects the diversity and strength of Hawaii's workforce.

COMPETITION WINNERS

CARPENTRY

- 1) Legend Ah Chin, Baldwin High School
- 2) Jayson Pascua, Maui High School
- 3) Elijah Bermoro, Kealakehe High School

CABINET MAKING

- 1) Lucianna Snyder, Kalaheo High School
- 2) Mikah Hall, Pearl City High School
- 3) Reece Pedro, Kealakehe High School

Why Competitions Like SkillsUSA Matter

Competitions like SkillsUSA are about more than just winning - they're stepping stones to real-world careers. By participating, students gain technical proficiency and essential workplace skills such as time management, teamwork, and problem-solving. HCATF's involvement reflects a broader commitment to workforce development, ensuring Hawaii continues to produce highly trained professionals who are prepared to meet the demands of the industry.



All Smiles: Cabinetmaking competitor Mia Alexander was all smiles, despite the pressure!



March marks Women in Construction Month, a time to celebrate the perseverance, skill, and innovation that women bring to the industry. While construction has historically been a male-dominated field, women have always been builders - of homes, communities, and legacies. Their presence in the industry continues to grow, and here in Hawaii, women in construction are making an undeniable impact, paving the way for future generations.

Breaking Barriers, Building Futures

For decades, women have played essential yet often overlooked roles in construction. Nationally, efforts to support women in the trades took shape in the 1950s when a group of 16 women founded the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) to foster mentorship and advocacy in the industry. In Hawaii, similar efforts have taken root, with organizations like NAWIC Hawaii and the Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship & Training Fund (HCATF) providing training, resources, and opportunities for women to thrive in the trades.

At HCATF, we've seen firsthand how critical it is to create a welcoming and supportive

environment for women entering the field. Whether through apprenticeship opportunities, mentorship programs, or contractor partnerships, we continue to champion a more inclusive workforce.

"Women bring a different perspective, a different skill set, and a different level of attention to detail that makes them an asset in the field," said Edmund Aczon, HCATF Executive Director. "More than that, they bring resilience - because for many, this isn't just a job, it's a statement that they belong here."

Women in Hawaii's Trades: Strength in Numbers

Today, more women than ever are stepping into careers in construction. In Hawaii, there are nearly 100 women in the Hawaii Regional Council of Carpenters, reflecting a steady increase in participation. But while the numbers continue to grow, it's not just about statistics - it's about impact.

One such example is Leanne Tacadena, who began her journey through HCATF's apprenticeship program straight out of high school - a decision that was met with unwavering support from her family.

"My dad would bring me on side jobs, and I'd always watch him work," she shared. "He's a hard worker. People are always calling him to fix their AC or electrical, and he's just always on it. I love that about him." Inspired by his





An All-Island Effort: HCATF runs across all-islands - as does its efforts to include women. A female apprentice on Maui works hard during class.



Women in the Spotlight: HCATF apprentice Leanne Tacadena is all smiles at HCATF's Kapolei Training Center during an interview with Hawaii News Now.

dedication and drawn to hands-on work, she knew early on that carpentry was the right path for her.

Though many of her peers were planning to attend four-year colleges, Leanne took a different route - one that offered financial stability without the burden of student debt.

"I thought my family would be scared that I didn't want to go to college, but once I told them, they supported me 100 percent," she said. "I've been telling them about the benefits of the Carpenters Union and how good it is."

Her passion for the trade was sparked in high school, where she spent three years in building and construction classes before participating in HCATF's Career Connections Summer Internship Program which set her up for an apprenticeship. Now, she's fully immersed in hands-on learning and credits her journeymen mentors for making her feel both safe and welcomed on the job site.

"I ask a lot of questions, and my journeymen always answer them. They make sure I feel safe, and I think that's what I love most about carpentry - it's that feeling of satisfaction, of accomplishment," she explained. "Building something that people will use for 10, maybe even more, years. Just being able to look at your work - especially high-rises - and say, 'I did that.' That's an amazing feeling."

For Leanne, the apprenticeship is more than just a career;

it's a pathway to long-term financial security and personal goals. She's already making smart financial decisions, investing her earnings, and saving toward her dream of owning a farm.

Contractors & Organizations Making a Difference

Signatory contractors and organizations play a critical role in fostering inclusivity in Hawaii's construction industry. Companies like Hensel Phelps and Swinerton have taken meaningful steps to recruit, train, and retain women in the workforce.

Hensel Phelps, for instance, has made notable progress in promoting gender diversity. The company has a women's network, W-Net, dedicated to recruiting, developing, and retaining female employees. Over the past five years, Hensel Phelps improved its female-to-male employee ratio from 1:11 to 1:6 and promoted its district's first female project superintendent. Additionally, in 2024, the company hosted Women's Leadership Seminars across nine regions, expanding on a legacy that began in 2002 with just 20 women.

Swinerton has been a longtime advocate for gender inclusion through its involvement in programs such as Honolulu Habitat for Humanity's Wahine Build initiative. Swinerton and Hensel Phelps have both provided mentorship, training, and skilled volunteers for Wahine



Above: Smiles and shakas on site during HCATF's last participation at the Wahine Build
Right: The all-female crew worked together to build a home for a deserving family in Waimanalo



thriving in the field, they're more likely to see a future for themselves in construction."

These collaborative efforts - from contractor-led recruitment programs to volunteer-driven builds and structured mentorship through HCATF - demonstrate a growing commitment to fostering an inclusive industry. Through mentorship, leadership development, targeted recruitment, and on-the-job training, Hawaii's construction sector is actively working toward greater gender diversity, ensuring that women have the support and opportunities they need to thrive.

The Road Ahead

Women are changing the face of construction, and the industry is still working to break these barriers. By continuing to advocate for equal opportunities, providing training and mentorship, and fostering inclusive job sites, we can ensure that women in construction are not just welcomed - but valued, supported, and empowered to lead.

As we celebrate Women in Construction Month, we honor the women who build Hawaii - today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

For the most current information on events like Wahine Build 2025, and Women in Construction Week please visit the official Honolulu Habitat for Humanity and NAWIC websites.

Build projects, reinforcing their commitment to supporting women in construction. By participating in these initiatives, they help bridge the gap between aspiring tradeswomen and industry professionals, fostering a broader network of support for women in the field.

Wahine Build itself has mobilized over 200 women in past years, providing hands-on experience while breaking down stereotypes surrounding women's roles in construction. These efforts expose women to construction skills in both professional and volunteer settings, fostering confidence and interest in the field.

Beyond individual contractors, HCATF continues to strengthen its efforts to support women in the trades through the "Sisters in the Brotherhood" (SIB) program - a nationwide United Brotherhood of Carpenters (UBC) initiative aimed at increasing the retention and advancement of women in the union. Locally, HCATF has expanded outreach and mentorship programs, ensuring that Hawaii's female apprentices and journeymen have access to resources, training opportunities, and a strong support network.

"For women entering the trades, representation and mentorship are key," said Mereane Hamatake, HCATF Training Coordinator. "When women see other women



www.honoluluhabitat.org/wahine-build



www.wicweek.org



Building New Futures: HCATF's Pre-Apprenticeship Program Helps Inmates Take the Next Step

January 14, 2025 - At the Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF), nine men stood proudly, certificates in hand, marking a major milestone in their lives. They had just completed HCATF's pre-apprenticeship carpentry program - a six-week course designed to provide real skills, real opportunities, and a real second chance.

For many of these graduates, this wasn't just about learning carpentry. It was about proving to themselves - and to their families - that they had a future beyond the walls of WCF.

A Program That Opens Doors

A collaboration between HCATF, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR), and Honolulu Community College (HCC), this program offers inmates a pathway to a career in the construction trades. Over six weeks, participants gain hands-on experience in carpentry fundamentals, safety training, and blueprint reading - mirroring the same curriculum offered at HCATF's main training facility.

"This program is about more than just learning a trade," said Robert L. Locquiao, an HCATF instructor for the program. "It's about building confidence and creating a pathway to real careers where these men can provide for themselves and their families."

This initiative is already making a difference. Since launching in 2024, 24 men and women from WCF and its sister facility, the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), have completed the training. Six have already been indentured as apprentices with the Hawaii Regional Council of Carpenters.

Finding Purpose Through Hard Work

For many, this program represents a





turning point. Lokahiokalei Liu one of the recent WCF graduates, shared how the experience changed his outlook:

"This program was really good for me," said Liu. "It gave me confidence and hope for myself. I also learned how this is a career opportunity, not just a job where I can be productive, responsible, and provide for my kids. I didn't know where I wanted to go in life, but this program has given me direction." This sense of purpose is what sets this program apart. It's not just about learning technical skills - it's about developing the mindset and discipline needed to succeed in the workforce.

Expanding Opportunities: Women in the Trades

The success of the WCF program has led to an expansion of opportunities for women as well. A similar pre-apprenticeship program

is already running at the Women's Community Correctional Center, where female participants are gaining the same hands-on experience and preparing to enter the trades.

"Bringing this program to WCCC is a huge step forward," said HCATF Executive Director Edmund Aczon. "There's no reason why women shouldn't have the same opportunities to build careers in construction, and we're seeing incredible potential in this first group of participants."

More Than a Graduation - A New Beginning

As the graduates step beyond the gates of Waiawa, they do so with more than just a certificate. They carry with them the knowledge that they have something valuable to offer and the chance to rebuild their lives in a meaningful way.

"Our goal at Waiawa Correctional Facility is to ensure individuals can be contributing members of the community upon release," said Roseanne Propato, Corrections Education Program Manager with

the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. "This program and partnership with HCATF allows for those who are formerly incarcerated to not only contribute, but earn a living wage and contribute to building our community."

With ongoing support from HCATF, local contractors, and the apprenticeship program, these graduates have the opportunity to transition into full-time careers, earn competitive wages, and create a future that once seemed out of reach.

"Programs like this prove that people can change when given the right opportunities," said Aczon. "This isn't just about filling jobs - it's about changing lives, strengthening families, and building a better future for our community."

As HCATF continues to invest in apprenticeship programs and workforce development, one thing is clear: when people are given the tools to succeed, they will rise to the challenge.



EARNING A LIVING WAGE THROUGH APPRENTICESHIPS IN HAWAII

Based on "Living Wages in Registered Apprenticeship Programs," University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign & Illinois Economic Policy Institute (2025).



APPRENTICESHIPS IN HAWAII: A PATH TO PROSPERITY

Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) provide aspiring tradespeople in Hawaii with the opportunity to earn while they learn, gaining valuable hands-on experience and a pathway to financial security. A recent study by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the Illinois Economic Policy Institute examines whether these programs truly deliver living wages — earnings sufficient to cover basic needs and build a stable future in industries like construction.

ARE APPRENTICESHIPS THE KEY TO FINANCIAL SECURITY?

WHAT THE DATA SHOWS FOR HAWAII

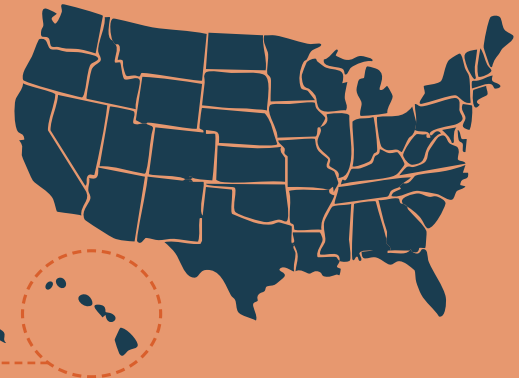


Construction dominates apprenticeships in Hawaii, with **70%** of apprentices enrolled in union programs.



Union programs boast a higher completion rate, ensuring apprentices are equipped for long-term success.

\$40
/hour



Apprentices in Hawaii's union construction programs earn **\$40/hour** upon program completion — among the highest in the nation.



98%

Nationally, **98%** of construction apprentices can cover basic living expenses by the time they complete their programs.

Why Union Apprenticeships Lead the Way in Hawaii

Union-affiliated apprenticeship programs in Hawaii's construction industry provide higher wages, better job security, and access to benefits, helping workers achieve long-term financial stability.

PROGRAM TYPE	STARTING WAGE	EXIT WAGE (HI)	COMPLETION RATE
Union	\$19/hr	\$40/hr	61%
Non-Union	\$16/hr	\$25/hr	53%

APPRENTICESHIPS: A SMART CAREER CHOICE FOR HAWAII'S WORKFORCE

Registered apprenticeships offer a proven pathway to earning wages that support a comfortable standard of living in Hawaii, particularly in the construction industry. Interested in starting your apprenticeship journey?

LEARN MORE AT
www.hicarpenterstrainig.com

social spotlight

We'd love to see what you're up to! Follow our social media accounts to share, learn and network with other members of our apprentice ohana. Tag us in your posts for a chance to be featured on our pages.



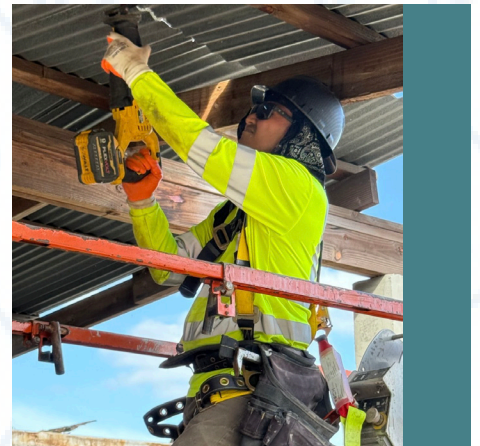
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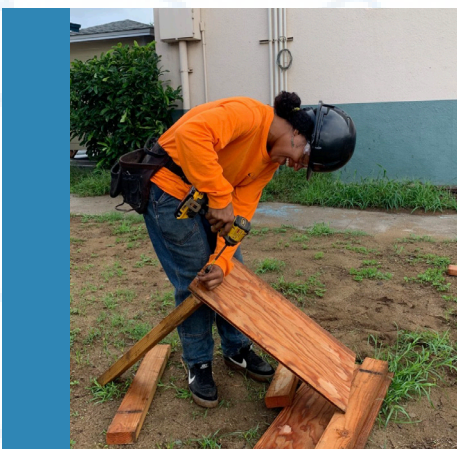
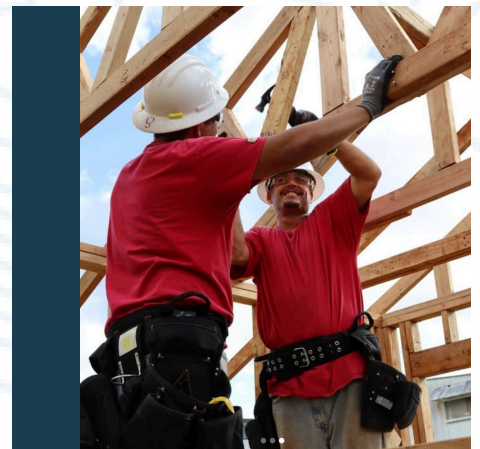
hands on in hilo

Apprentices in Hilo worked carefully to demo an old structure. While the job might seem straightforward, safety still counts! Shout out to the crew for approaching the job with care. **#demoday**



putting in work

From tangible skills like framing, to soft skills like teamwork, pre-apprentices at Waiawa Correctional Facility are working hard to prepare for a new future in the trades. **#secondchances**



skills + smiles

Building skills with a smile! Two of the best things about the job? Making connections with your crew, and loving what you do. **#loveyourjob**

Journeyman Upgrade Courses

2025 Upcoming Schedule

2ND QUARTER

April, May & June Courses
#hcattraining | #upgradeyourskills

KAUAI

COURSE	START
Aerial Lift	04/05
Armstrong	04/05
AutoCAD	04/01
Basic Computer	04/01
Confined Space	04/05
Fall Protection	04/19
Fall Protection	06/07
Firestop	06/14
Forklift Certification	05/24
OSHA 10	04/28
OSHA 30	04/28

OAHU

COURSE	START
Aerial Lift	04/19
Aerial Lift	05/10
Aerial Lift	06/21
Armstrong	04/05
AutoCAD	04/01
Basic Computer	04/01
Confined Space	04/05
Door Hardware	04/05
Fall Protection	04/26
Fall Protection	05/31
Fall Protection - 24hr	04/26
Firestop	06/14
First Aid & CPR	04/12
First Aid & CPR	05/10
First Aid & CPR	06/21
Forklift Certification	04/12
Forklift Certification	05/17
Forklift Certification	06/14
Hazardous Waste Worker	04/05
Heavy Timber Framing	05/10
ICRA	05/06
ICRA	05/31
OSHA 10	04/28
OSHA 10	06/10
OSHA 30	04/28
OSHA 30	06/10
Scaffold Erector	03/05
Scaffold Erector	03/08
Scaffold Erector	05/13
Scaffolding	04/19
Scaffolding	05/10
Scaffolding	06/14
Silica Awareness	04/17
Silica Awareness	05/22
Silica Awareness	06/19
Solar Installer	04/05
Total Station	05/10
Welding	03/06

KONA

COURSE	START
Aerial Lift	06/14
Door Hardware	04/05
Fall Protection	04/12
Fall Protection	06/14
Firestop	06/14
Forklift Certification	04/12
ICRA	05/31
OSHA 10	06/14
OSHA 30	06/14
Silica Awareness	04/05
Solar Installer	04/05

MAUI

COURSE	START
Aerial Lift	04/19
Fall Protection	04/12
Fall Protection	05/10
Fall Protection	06/21
Firestop	06/14
First Aid & CPR	04/05
First Aid & CPR	05/03
First Aid & CPR	06/07
Forklift Certification	04/05
Forklift Certification	05/10
Forklift Certification	06/14
OSHA 10	06/10
OSHA 30	06/10
Scaffold Erector	03/08
Scaffolding	06/14

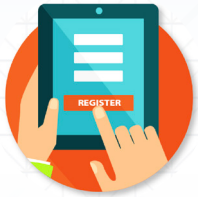
HILO

COURSE	START
Aerial Lift	05/03
Fall Protection	05/03
Firestop	06/14
First Aid & CPR	06/07
Forklift Certification	04/19
OSHA 10	05/10
OSHA 30	05/10
Scaffold Erector	03/08
Scaffolding	05/03
Total Station	05/10

REGISTER FOR UPGRADE COURSES ONLINE

Visit www.hicarpenterstraining.com/joueymen to register directly online, or download the required forms and view registration instructions. Contact Paul Tamayo at (808) 859 2812 or ptamayo@hicarpenterstraining.com if you have questions.

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