



# **NJ PLACE**

*Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education*

**NJ PLACE** - **NJ: Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education** facilitates an alternative route to a college degree.

**NJ: Pathways Leading Apprentices to a College Education** is an exciting new program stemming from collaboration between community colleges, organized labor, and several NJ State agencies. This coalition is developing a statewide model to award college credit for registered apprenticeships. The pilot program, while initially focused on the union building and construction trades' apprenticeship training programs, will establish a model to evaluate apprenticeships for college credit. Upon completion, this model can be transferred to other apprenticeship training programs throughout the state.

As a unique program in NJ, this model creates a pathway connecting college-level learning in local union apprenticeship training programs to degree programs in New Jersey's community colleges and senior colleges and universities. NJ PLACE demonstrates how apprenticeships can serve not as an alternative to a college education, but rather, as a pathway leading to a college degree. The dual opportunity this program presents will enhance New Jersey's workforce. This alternative allows an individual to gain both the valued skill and earnings power of a trade with the additional benefit of a college degree.

To date several union building trades' apprenticeship training programs have had their training facility's curriculum, training instruction - classroom and field experience, and trainers evaluated by the American Council on Education, a third party organization that evaluates and recommends college credit for organizations not traditionally affiliated with a college or university. This process is facilitated regionally through the ACE Regional Director located at Thomas Edison State College. The college credit recommendations to date total anywhere from 45 to 70 college credits.

In response to this model, all 19 NJ community colleges are pursuing a new Technical Studies degree that will allow apprentices to transcript their ACE credits toward an Associate in Applied Science degree in Technical Studies. These credits, combined with general education requirements and customized coursework, such as construction management classes, will allow the apprentice to pursue a concentration in construction management, business or technology to achieve a higher level of success in their profession. Formal articulation agreements are being established between these organizations and the NJ community colleges and senior colleges and universities.

A liaison specifically dedicated to assisting the apprentices' transition from apprenticeship to a college degree has been identified at each of NJ's 19 community colleges. The NJ PLACE Director has visited these liaisons and keeps them abreast of any new information relative to the project.

High school guidance counselors should feel comfortable sharing information about NJ PLACE with students who seek post secondary education, but have a desire to work in a formally trained craft. NJ PLACE provides an alternative pathway to a college degree and the best of both worlds!

The NJ PLACE partnership includes, but is not limited to:

- NJ AFL-CIO
- American Council on Education
- International Association of Heat & Frost Insulators & Asbestos Workers
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers
- International Association of Operating Engineers
- NJ's 19 Community Colleges
- NJ Carpenters Fund
- NJ Commission on Higher Education
- NJ Council of County Vocational Schools
- NJ Department of Education
- NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- NJ Institute of Technology
- NJ State Employment and Training Commission
- NJ Statewide Transfer Initiative
- Rutgers, The State University
- Thomas Edison State College
- UA Plumbers and Pipefitters
- UA Air Conditioning and Refrigeration

For more information about this program, please contact Jeanine Nagrod, NJ PLACE Director, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 50 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; 732-932-7925 tel; 732-932-8677 fax; [j.nagrod@rutgers.edu](mailto:j.nagrod@rutgers.edu).