

OPPORTUNITY IN YOUR COMMUNITY:

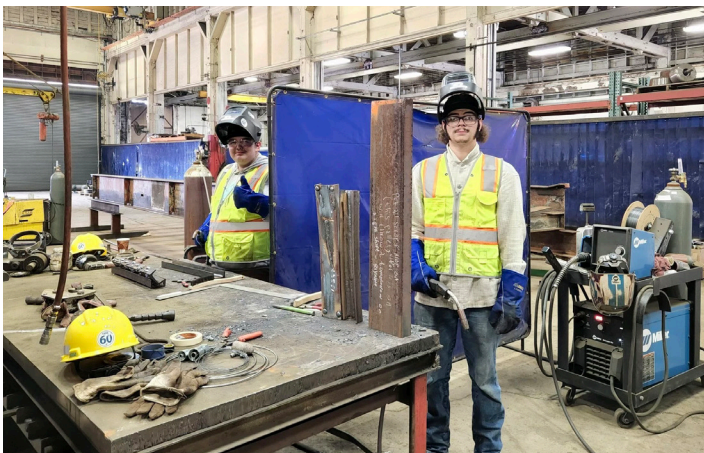
Shelton's Fab Shop is providing employment opportunities to local high school students by partnering with a youth apprenticeship program. The Aerospace Joint Apprentice Committee (AJAC) is an industry-driven apprenticeship organization focused on providing on-the-job experience through internships for both youth and adults in key industries like Automation & Machinery, Clean Energy, Transportation & Logistics, Wood & Paper, among other areas. The AJAC serves Washington state, partnering with 15 school districts, 12 community colleges and close to 300 companies.

This program provides participants with foundational skills and the ability to explore various career pathways and accessible careers in their own communities. The program is unique in having an exemption to the common 18-year-old minimum age requirement in the workplace. This gives 17-year-olds the ability to work in fields they may want to pursue after high school.

Apprenticeship programs like this help fill gaps between the highly skilled individuals currently working in the field and the next generation. This program provides real-world experience and hands-on learning to high school juniors or seniors preparing to enter the workforce.

Students pursuing this program first have the opportunity to tour and learn about participating companies to get an idea of where they are most interested in working. Shelton's Fab Shop sparked interest in many students and ultimately three apprentices were brought on board – Kaleb, Brandon and Sonny. Shelton Fab partners with the Aberdeen and Shelton Sawmill later in the program and these divisions also contribute to the selection of student apprentices.

The 18-month program officially launched in May with a signing and the three began working at SPI in July. They worked full-time in the summer, and are part time during the school year, being paid an hourly wage. Apprentices log 2,000 on-the-job training hours, working in the morning at the fab shop and attending their regular high school classes in the afternoon. This is made possible due to the partnership between the High Schools CTE program and the AJAC alliance.



Kaleb and Sonny welding



Sonny, Brandon, and Kaleb at signing night with SPI Crew Jacquelin Earley and Ron Burch

Many were involved with getting this program running smooth and structured to ensure it a good experience for both the students and SPI. Shelton Fab Shop Superintendent Korey Harris implemented a plan for students on how they would go about working on real projects the Fab Shop needed addressed. Kaleb, Brandon and Sonny were presented with a problem and tasked to present an idea, come up with a project design and then execute the solution building and installing the parts. Some of the projects worked on include saw infeed material stops for the Fab Shop, forestry pinecone drying racks, chipper grates for Aberdeen, and OLI-spiked side press roll for Shelton.

While group instruction and training was provided, each began floating to their area of specific interest and were able to receive additional one-on-one instruction supporting their desire to expand their knowledge in pathways they may explore careers in.

Hosting students in the Fab Shop has also had a positive impact on resident SPI crewmembers boosting morale and adding an influx of excitement on the shop floor. Young minds eager to learn new skills provide SPI crew the opportunity to lead by example providing insight to the next generation of workforce.

"This program has not only opened career pathways for these three students, but word has also been getting out to surrounding communities," said Korey Harris. "The hope is that all three pursue a career with Sierra Pacific after graduation, but no matter the outcome all of us have gained beneficial skills from the experience. This program is a great opportunity for us and local schools to learn together and to strengthen our partnerships."

Shelton Hosts Youth Apprentices

SPI's AJAC apprentices were asked about their overall experience so far, favorite projects they've been able to work on and next steps for their future.

Kaleb

"My favorite experience working on projects has been welding. It's fun. I also enjoyed learning CNC Lathe work, but now know it's not what I want to do for a job."

Back at school, junior classmates are asking how they can be in the program the next year, "My friends think this is awesome. My parents are happy I am getting this experience, I tell them all the things I get to do here."

Brandon

"As far as (favorite) projects, it's the spike rolls. I have never used assembly in CAD before and working on this project taught me more about machining."

Brandon had taken a 9th-grade CAD class previously and is self-taught using YouTube. He is now working on projects with SolidWorks and CAD Modeling applications.

After the program, Brandon wants to stay with Sierra Pacific getting a few years of experience before going to engineering school.

Sonny

"I didn't expect to work on big projects so soon. I like everything I have been doing and have improved a lot in welding. I like working with pieces and making a finished product and hope to see how the projects we work on are used in the mills."

Sonny has been offered a job with another company upon completion of the program, but did add, "I don't know yet, I just might stay with SPI."



Brandon & Kaleb working on a CAD project

Students successfully pursuing this opportunity are those with a good work ethic and willingness to learn. Upon completion of the program, they will have skills and experience to enter the workforce at a higher level. All three students are doing exceptionally well in the program and at SPI. There is real interest and hope to expand this program hoping to offer similar opportunities to youth at the Eugene Fab Shop (once complete) and the Anderson Fab shop.

"I honestly believe this is a real solution for many of the problems we are facing in our industry," said Darrin Moorcroft, Shelton Manager. "We have never had an opportunity to work so closely with schools and students; we can see the benefit. We are already seeing added value for them as learners, and to us as a business. They have been successful in completing projects and we have lots of excitement on the shop floor."

ROOSEVELT ELK TAG RAFFLE

As a large private landowner in California, SPI drew one landowner elk tag in the coastal Northwestern Zone for Fall 2022. The tag was raffled off in a free company-wide raffle on July 26. Joshua McIlroy, Sonora Resaw Operator, was announced the lucky winner. He is pictured (center) with his family and big game prize.

