

Utility Arborist Program at Alpena Community College

Utility Line Clearance/Tree Trimmer Training

History of Training within the Energy Industry at ACC

- Have provided Certificate and Associates in Applied Science in Utility Technology (lineman) for nearly 50 years
- Offer a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Systems Technology
- Through a Consultation, Education and Training grant from MIOSHA, began providing safety training to utility line clearance and other tree service workers in 2018

MIOSHA-CET Funded Tree Trimmer Boot Camp

- Discovered training, particularly safety training, is unregulated and left up to the employer
- Participants in the boot camps expressed extreme satisfaction with the standardized training and asked for MORE
- Established relationships with businesses and industry experts
- Identified a part of the Energy Industry in which there is a severe workforce shortage

MiLEAP Grant

- Awarded a Michigan Learning & Education Advancement Program grant to respond to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to help job seekers make the jump from education and training to employment by delivering short- and mid-term customized training solutions
- The goal of MiLEAP is to get Michigan back to work by helping job seekers find education and training programs in high-skill, high-wage careers that result in industry-recognized credentials
- Focus on short-term training and credentialing

Industry Engagement

- Through relationships established with the MIOSHA-CET Tree Trimmer Boot Camps, held multiple meetings and discussions with Tree Service companies to establish a plan – with the goal of assisting with filling labor shortage with trained workers
- Looped in Dustin Brighton (chain saw safety expert) and Lucas Drews (master climber and aerial rescue/EHAP expert)
- Identified Program Director, Walt Wiltse, safety supervisor in the line clearance industry with over 25 years experience

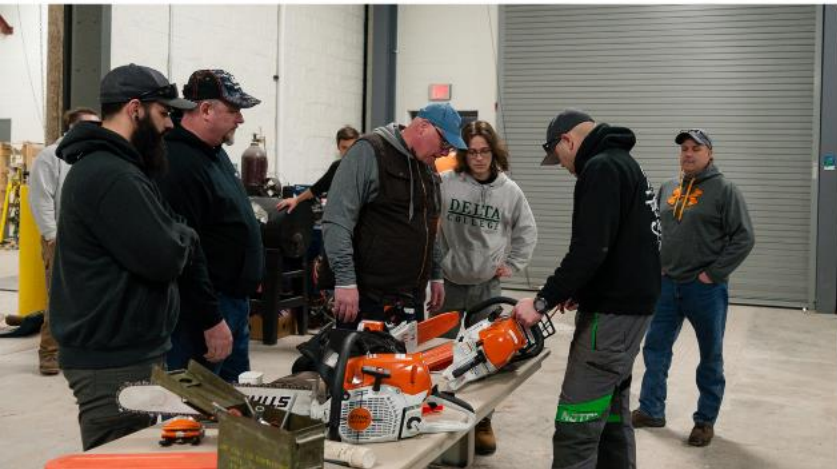
The Utility Arborist Program is Born

(Summer 2022)

- One semester in length
- Summer accelerated program ran eight 32-hour weeks
- Fall and spring semesters are 15 weeks, 16 class-hours per week
- Classes held on Thursdays and Fridays only
- \$3,600 per person
- Students eligible for funding assistance through MiLEAP grant

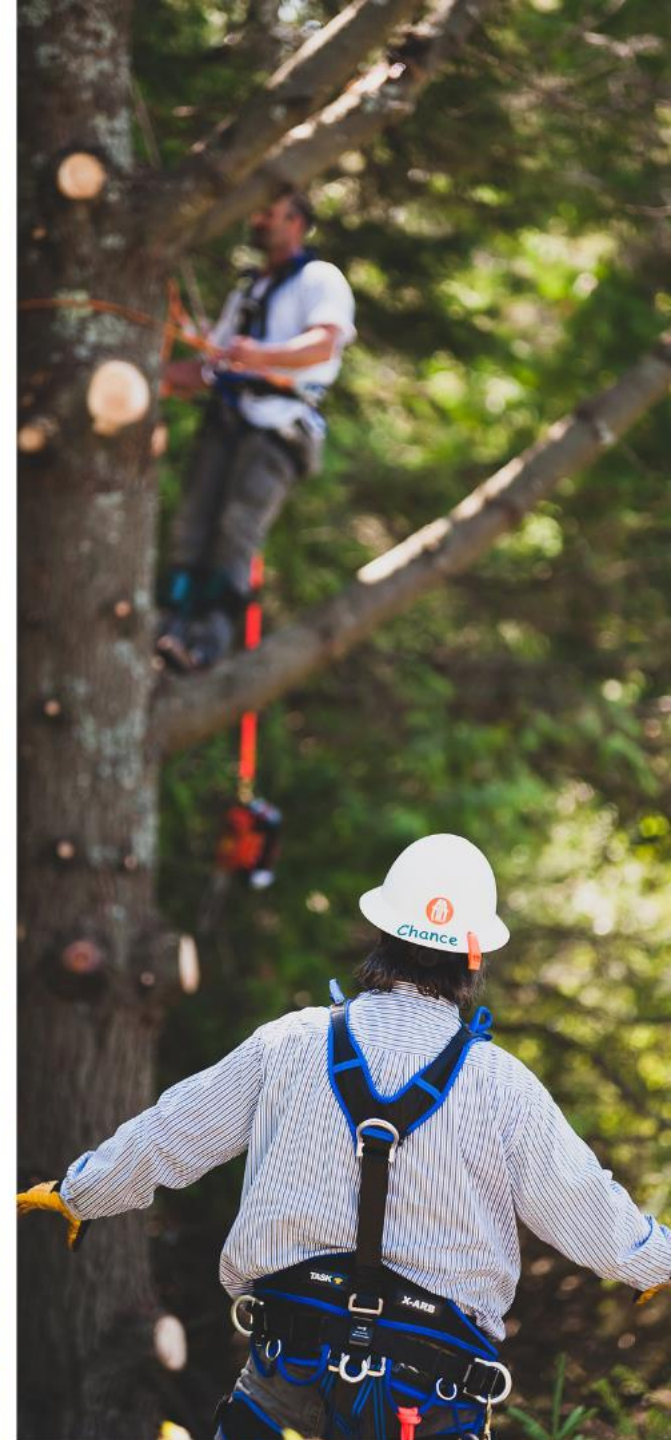
Curriculum/Content - Focus on Safety

- Aligned with USDOL Registered Apprentice Standards
- Nearly all hands-on training
- Content based on ANSI Standards
- Engagement with MIOSHA Consultants to dive deep into OSHA 1910.269
- Explanation of MAD, and evaluation of different distances for different voltages



Facilities

- Coordination with robust Utility Technology program
- Poles placed and power lines run alongside two-track roadways through ACC wooded property
- Lines are not energized but give the real-world feel to work in an environment exactly like what workers will see in the field



Curriculum/Content - Equipment Use

- Chipper operations
- Chainsaw operations
- Climbing
- Bucket truck operations



Curriculum/Content - Proper Tree Felling

- Hazards and obstacles
- Height and lean
- Retreat path/escape route
- Notch plan
- Hinge plan
- Back cut plan
- Use of retreat path



Curriculum/Content - Other

- PPE
- Knot tying
- Electrical Hazards
- Fire Protection
- Traffic Control
- Job briefing and job site set-up

Credentials

- OSHA 10 General Industry
- CPR/First Aid Certification
- Pesticide Application
- CDL Training

Industry Showcase

(all participants were aggressively offered multiple employment opportunities)

- Three graduates
- Industry representation from:
 - Nelson
 - Davey
 - Asplundh
 - Kappen
 - Thunder Bay Tree Service
 - Integrity Tree Services

A man wearing a grey hard hat with a red logo, green-tinted safety glasses, a grey t-shirt with 'ALPENA COMMUNITY COLLEGE' printed on it, and a blue safety harness is giving a thumbs up. He is standing on a mountain ridge with a dense forest of evergreen trees in the background. The sky is bright and hazy.

Success Stories

ALPENA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Opportunities

- Industry representatives indicate prior criminal history should not be a deterrent
- Program capacity exceeds current student demand
- Workshops/advanced training are being evaluated for current workforce

Recruitment Challenges

- *Indeed* website indicates the industry does not provide training and therefore discourages workers to pursue this career
- Unknown/misunderstood industry
- Labor force/student shortages

How can we help you?

- Open and available staff to discuss curriculum and delivery
- Request promotion assistance
- Let's get the word out!
- Together, we can enhance the industry and create a safer, more empowered workforce

Thank you!

Please let us know if you have questions or comments!

Dawn Stone
Dean of Workforce Development
stonedawn@alpenacc.edu
989-358-7293

Walt Wiltse
UA Program Director
wiltsew@alpenacc.edu
989-358-7284