



## ***The Union Mason Advantage- Apprenticeship Training***

Why use an all-union mason contractor? ***Using the best people builds the best results.*** Do you have apprentices working on your jobs? Are they properly trained?

Using union masons provides you with union apprentices who are schooled on masonry installation, safety procedures, and productivity standards. Working with a variety of materials, on a variety of work site, in a variety of weather conditions, a union mason must be adaptable. In order to become a mason craftsman, it all begins with an apprenticeship.

Even before becoming an apprentice, individuals must attend a pre-apprenticeship class/training. The candidates for masonry apprenticeship first must be at least 18 years old, and have a valid driver's license and birth certificate. Applicants must pay a small fee, pass an aptitude test, go through an interview process, and then pass a drug test. Only those most qualified candidates are then chosen for the pre-apprenticeship class and training.

The masonry pre-apprenticeship class is held at the **District Council Training Center** ([www.bac2school.org](http://www.bac2school.org)) in Addison, IL and lasts for 10 weeks. The DCTC is devoted only to the masonry industry, where team members are trained on installation of CMU, overhand bricklaying, brick veneer, masonry bonds, striking and material movement. Productivity and quality benchmarks are set during the class, and they must be met/exceeded in order to continue in the training.

Safety is also of the utmost importance. The apprentices receive their OSHA 10 hour safety training, as well as scaffold user training and silica awareness during the class. Proper use of masonry specific tools and equipment is also reviewed.

After completing the class, the pre-apprentice is invited into the local and then starts his/her apprenticeship. They then start working in the field with union masons and laborers, where their hands on training continues. Over the next three years, the apprentice will return to the DCTC for four weeks a year to hone their skills. Among the techniques they learn include stone, flashing, chimneys, fireplaces, mortar, grouting, aerated autoclave concrete, and arch construction. Not until 4500 hours of on-site work and completion of related training can the apprentice call themselves a journeyworker.

On your construction project would you want someone who just started with a firm, has no experience and calls themselves "an apprentice" with no formalized training building your structure? Or would you rather have someone who has gone through formalized safety, classroom and hands on training, followed by 4500 hours of real work experience with other craftspeople?

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