



January 2023

KENTUCKY

LABOR FORCE UPDATE

Appreciating Apprenticeships

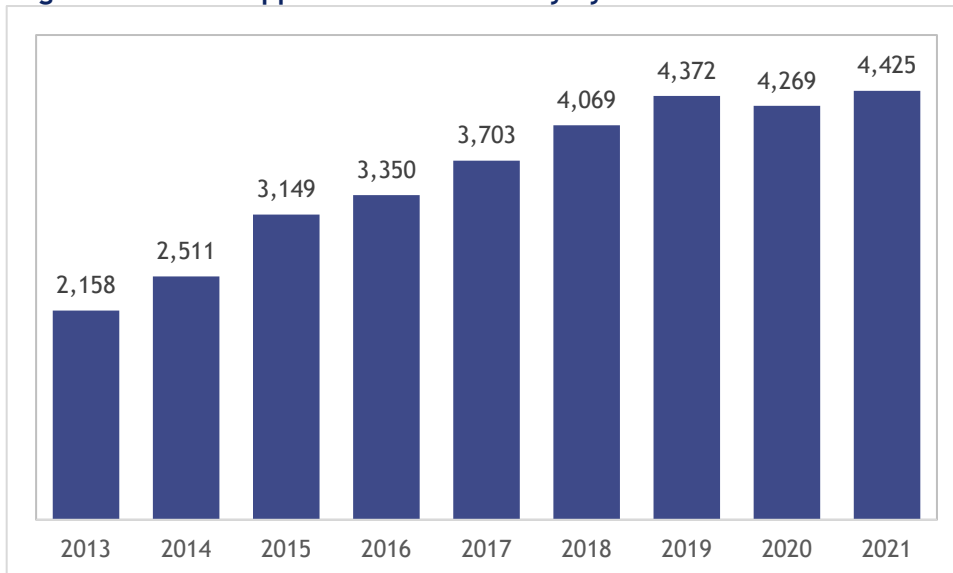
Last June, the [Labor Force Update](#) focused on building a workforce pipeline from nontraditional labor pools. Tapping these populations expands the pool of potential workers while promoting workforce diversity. Missing from this analysis were apprentices. This month's *Labor Force Update* takes a closer look at apprenticeship programs registered with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

The Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) helps employers build and retain a qualified workforce and provides opportunities for workers seeking competency in an occupation. Approved programs provide both formal instruction in a classroom and on-the-job learning with a mentor. The length of a registered apprenticeship program can vary depending on the employer, the complexity of the occupation, industry, and the type of program. Apprenticeships must be at least one year long to meet regulatory requirements, but are typically two to five years in length. Apprentices are paid employees of the company sponsoring the program and should earn progressively higher wages during their tenure. Apprentices who master core competencies in a specific occupation receive an industry-recognized credential which is transferable across employers.

Registered Apprenticeships

- Related technical instruction (RTI) of at least 144 hours in a physical or virtual classroom
- On-the-job learning (OJL) of at least 2,000 hours overseen by a mentor at the employer site
- Wage increases over the course of the apprenticeship, which can be tied to time in the program or to demonstrate skill competency
- An industry-recognized credential upon completion of the apprenticeship

Registered Active Apprentices in Kentucky by Federal Fiscal Year



The number of apprentices in the U.S. is growing. Between federal fiscal years 2013 and 2021, the number of registered active apprentices grew by 88 percent, from 221,100 to 414,900. In Kentucky, registered active apprentices more than doubled over this same time period (increasing 105 percent), up to 4,425 in fiscal year 2021 from 2,158 in fiscal year 2013.

Note: Federal fiscal year is from October through September. Data include apprentices employed in Kentucky in national programs.

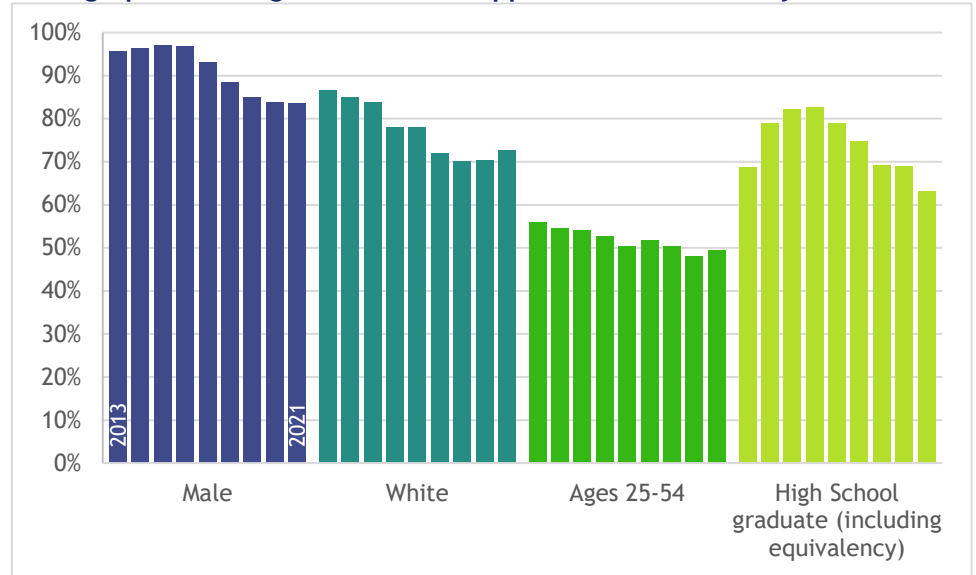
Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS), accessed December 2022



Appreciating Apprenticeships

Although the majority of active apprentices in Kentucky are white males between the ages of 25 and 54, apprentices are becoming more diverse. The share of female apprentices has gone up from a low of three percent in 2015 to a high of 16.0 percent in 2021. Nearly 30 percent of apprentices are non-white, up from 13.4 percent in 2013, and younger with 48.7 percent under the age of 24; though the share of those over the age of 55 is growing (1.8 percent in 2021 up from 0.5 percent in 2013). The share of apprentices who indicated their highest education was a high school diploma or equivalent peaked in 2016 at 82.7 percent falling to 63.2 percent in 2021. The next largest category, for which data were available, was those who had completed some college or had an associate degree (13.4 percent).

Demographics of Registered Active Apprentices in Kentucky



Note: Federal fiscal year is from October through September. Data includes apprentices employed in Kentucky in national programs.
 Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS), accessed December 2022

MYTH: Apprenticeship programs are only for union construction trades.

FACT: Apprenticeship programs are also in fields such as energy, financial services, IT, healthcare, hospitality, and advanced manufacturing.

Apprenticeship programs offer a wide range of opportunities to learn a specific skill and use it toward a career. The DOL has more than 1,000 approved occupations* for registered apprenticeship programs from 3D printing technician, able seaman, actor, and aerospace engineer to waste water treatment plant operator, welder, wellness coach, and X-ray equipment tester. Employers can draw from this pool of occupations or develop their own.

The Kentucky RAP is administered by the Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Services (OEAS) in the Education and Labor Cabinet. According to the OEAS, there are currently 301 apprenticeship program sponsors* which include employers, unions, associations, public schools, and community colleges, 33 of which were added in FY 2022. Together these sponsors offer apprenticeships in more than 200 occupations, with many sponsors offering multiple apprenticeship opportunities. There is also a youth apprenticeship program, the Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK), offered through the Kentucky Department of Education’s Office of Career and Technical Education (CTE). The program is designed to create a pipeline for students to enter a postsecondary RAP after graduation. Since the program began in 2013, more than 600 youth have participated.

* The full DOL list can be downloaded [here](#). The list of KY RAPs is [here](#).



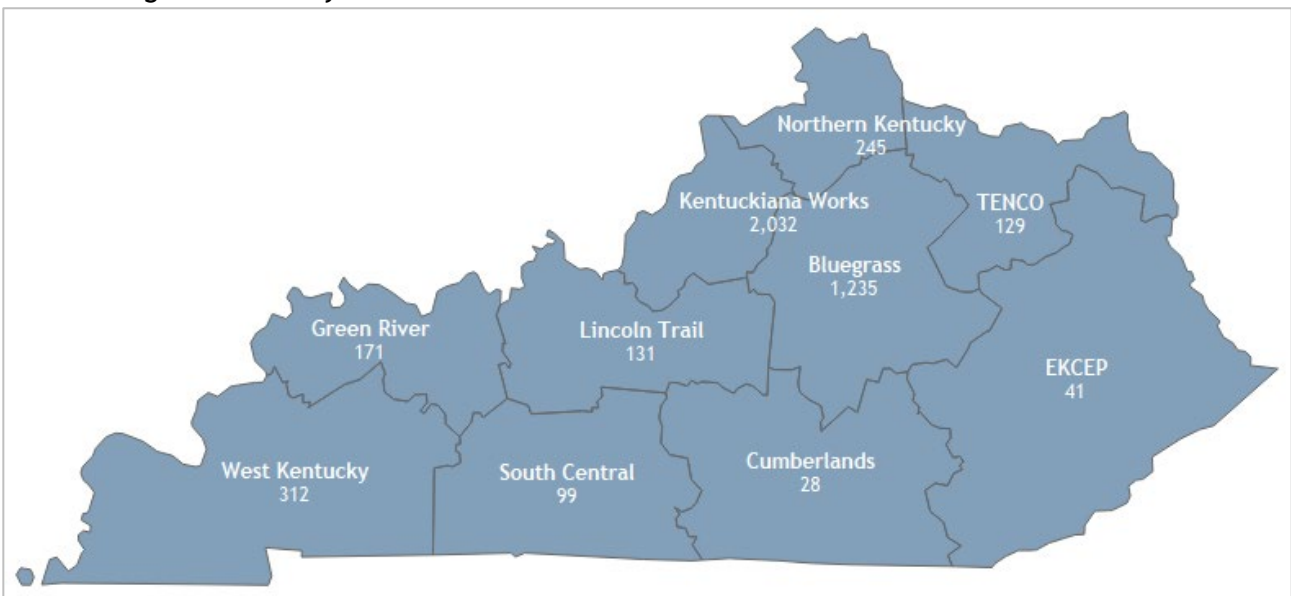
Appreciating Apprenticeships

The occupation with the most active apprentices in 2022 was Interior Electrician with 1,147. The table below shows the top 20 occupations with active apprentices in Kentucky.

SOC	Occupation	Active Apprentices
47-2111	Electrician (Alternate title: Interior Electrician)	1,147
49-9051	Line Erector (Power-Line Distribution Erector)	359
31-1131	Nurse Assistant Certified (Existing title: Nurse Assistant)	337
47-2221	Structural Steel Worker (Alternate titles: Ironworker or Structural Ironworker)	320
47-2152	Plumber	208
49-9051	Line Maintainer (Alternate title: High Voltage Electrician)	162
47-2152	Pipe Fitter (Construction)	159
49-9041	Maintenance Mechanic (Any industry) (Alternate title: Industrial Maintenance Mechanic)	103
51-4121	Welder-Fitter	103
49-9021	Environmental Control Syst. Install/Services (HVAC)	93
35-2012	Cook (Any industry) (Alternate title: Nutrition Care Specialist)	85
47-2211	Sheet Metal Worker	84
47-2073	Operating Engineer (Alternate title: Heavy Construction Equipment Mechanic)	76
49-2095	Electrical Technician	72
47-2061	Construction Craft Laborer	68
51-4111	Tool and Die Maker	55
47-4021	Elevator Constructor (Alternate title: Elevator Constructor Mechanic)	44
49-9021	Heating & Air-Conditioner Install/Services	44
29-2061	Nurse, Licensed Practical	43
39-9011	Child Care Development Specialist	39

Source: Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Services, accessed December 2022

There are more than 4,400 active apprentices earning a paycheck while getting hands-on learning and direct work experience throughout Kentucky.



Source: OEAS list of available Kentucky Registered Apprenticeship Programs, accessed December 2022



Appreciating Apprenticeships

The Registered Apprenticeship system provides opportunities for workers seeking to work and learn at the same time they are receiving an industry-recognized and nationally portable credential, and potentially college credit. For employers seeking to build a workforce that meets their specific needs, the RAP is a proven recruitment, training, and retention strategy. The RAP has the ability to attract new and diverse workers as the programs expand to include occupations from more industries.

The OEAS is working with KYSTATS to develop an interactive dashboard with this data which will include reporting on how the apprentices are fairing in the labor market one, three, and five years after completion of the apprenticeship. Stay tuned!



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Kentucky Labor Force Update

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