



Pierre-Fort Pierre Bridge Newsletter

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**Lt. Cmdr. John C. Waldron Memorial Bridge
Pierre & Fort Pierre, SD**

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

November 15-21, 2021 is National Apprenticeship Week. National Apprenticeship Week is a nationwide celebration that offers an opportunity to highlight how registered apprenticeship provides a critical talent pipeline that can help to address some of our nation's pressing workforce challenges.



What is an apprenticeship? Registered apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway that offers career seekers the opportunity to earn a paycheck while learning from day one and gain workplace-relevant skills in the field of their choice. Not only do apprenticeships help workers, employers' benefit by recruiting and developing a diverse and highly skilled workforce that helps grow their business and create flexible training options that ensure workers develop the right skills for the job.

The need for apprenticeship in the skilled trades industry has grown immensely. Skilled trades are critical to our country's infrastructure and its economic competitiveness. One of the biggest challenges has been increasing talent shortages and skill gaps that are slowing the industry's ability to keep up with the country's need to maintain and build infrastructure. Among these challenges is the impending retirements of highly skilled and experienced workers and attracting new talent pools to skilled trades careers, especially the next generation of youth.

Why would you want to complete an apprenticeship? According to the US Department of Labor, the average starting wage after completing an apprenticeship program is \$72,000 and workers who complete apprenticeship programs earn an average of \$300,000 more over their career when compared to peers who don't.

For more information on apprenticeship opportunities in South Dakota, visit SDAGC website at www.buildsouthdakota.com. For more information on starting an apprenticeship program for your company, visit www.apprenticeship.gov.

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Project Update

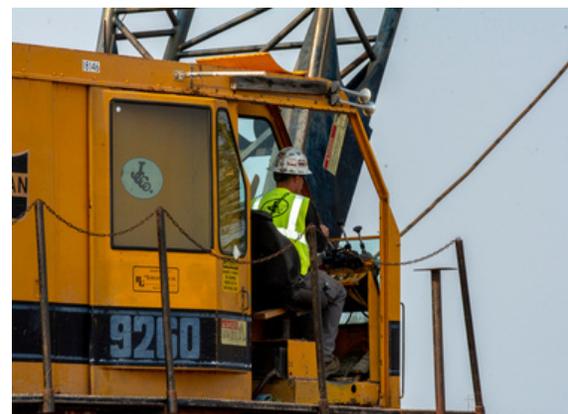
Substructure construction and approach work is currently in progress. The new bridge is anticipated to be open for traffic Summer 2023 and total project completion anticipated for Summer 2024. Two drilled shafts and two columns have been completed, with crosshole sonic log testing passing inspection. One capital has been completed and the second is anticipated to be constructed in the coming weeks.

Drilled shaft construction and substructure construction will continue into Spring 2022. A Beck Model 3600 drill rig has arrived on-site to complete drill process and a fifth crane will be arriving shortly to assist with additional construction progress. One lane will remain open for west bound traffic through Winter 2021/22.



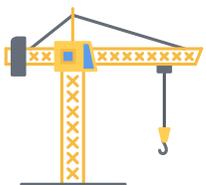
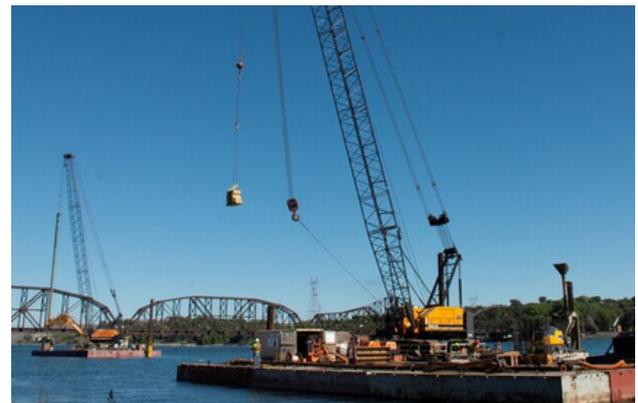
What does it take to be a crane operator?

To become a crane operator, a formal education is not required as most operators learn their skills through an apprenticeship or on-the-job training. Apprentice programs are usually local and last 3-4 years made up of classroom education and paid training in the field. Some states require crane operators to be licensed or hold certifications through the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO). To obtain a certification, one will have to attend a crane training program, pass a written and practical exam



As of May 2020, crane operators earned an average hourly wage of \$30.77 and annual wage of \$64,000, with experience the annual wage can increase to more than \$100,000, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. They expect the need for operators to grow within the next 10 years due to increases in global shipping, which will require more professionals to help with loading and unloading. With today's supply shortages and shipping port backlog, job opportunities will continue to become in high demand as large numbers of crane operators retire or leave the profession.

Crane operators are employed in many different industries like construction, mining, maritime ports, and railway. Crane operators work closely with other equipment operators and ground crew, plus you get to work and travel to many different job locations



For more information on how to become certified as a crane operator visit www.nccco.org.

Do you have a question regarding the Pierre-Fort Pierre Bridge Construction Project? Please email us at bridgeinfo@projectsolutionsinc.com