



Teaching is a relationship between individuals; it is a two-way street, where people get together to learn skills and knowledge. Teaching in front of students is accountability all the time. I taught a lesson on personal protective equipment and bloodborne pathogens using ketchup and rubber gloves. The students had a blast learning how to remove a glove when contaminated. The students understood what it was all about without fancy talk or pedagogy. Teaching is transferring your knowledge and understanding into the brains and ideas of your students. Teaching is not telling what should be done. Teaching is helping people understand what needs to be done. The trick is getting your brain out into the young minds of the students by meeting them on their level and interest without patronizing them.

—John Kugler, field staff, Chicago Teachers Union

As a trade instructor, it is my job to give my students all the skills they need to be employable. OSHA 10 is essential in that set of skills. Not only are students able to produce quantifiable evidence that they can locate and identify the dangers on a construction site, but also that they know how to responsibly address the situation.



—Sara Bruno, Sustainable Architecture department head, Platt Technical High School, Milford, Conn.



My desire has been to provide the youth of New York City with the knowledge of how to carry out their passion for construction in a safe manner. The OSHA training has been invaluable in providing my students with credentials they need to procure careers in the construction industry. My students are more cognizant of the importance of thinking about safety before they engage in carrying out a task in the class.

The students of New York City need this training, and what better place to get it but from those who know them best!

—Scott Pagan, electrical, Bronx Design & Construction Academy

## OUR MISSION

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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**OSHA Outreach Program:**  
A VALUABLE RESOURCE  
FOR LOCAL AFFILIATE  
MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT



For more than seven years, the AFT and members in three large affiliates—in cooperation with their principals and school districts—have launched an OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) Outreach Program for career and technical educators. These initiatives have supported AFT teachers in becoming OSHA-authorized outreach trainers who in turn can provide safety and health education to their students, ensuring that they are prepared to navigate the assorted hazards of work.

These teachers are committed to the safety and well-being of their students and are enthusiastic participants. They understand that teachers and school staff are uniquely positioned to advocate for students who work or may go on to work in highly hazardous industries. They are also proud that their union has been the key proponent and supporter of the OSHA Outreach Program.

The program offers two types of training—for construction trades and general industry (e.g., culinary, cosmetology, auto, technology, health services, etc.). The program provides students with basic and more advanced training about common safety and health hazards on the job. High school students in either group receive a minimum of 10 hours and up to 30 hours of invaluable information on their rights to a safe and healthy workplace, as well as effective methods for identifying and preventing exposure to common hazards in their program of study. Students receive an OSHA 10-hour or 30-hour course-completion card at the end of the training.

## Benefits for Students

The program:

- Promotes safety awareness through participatory hands-on activities;
- Provides students with training tailored to the specific needs of their program of study;
- Includes outreach training content, such as hazard recognition and avoidance, workers' rights, employer responsibilities and how to file a complaint; and
- Offers students the opportunity to earn a nationally recognized course-completion card, which is beneficial for future employment.

In Connecticut, the State Vocational Federation of Teachers and its statewide district (Connecticut Technical Education and Career System) created a cooperative program that has prepared more than 100 career and technical educators to become OSHA-authorized trainers who in turn deliver training to their students. To date, more than 6,000 students have graduated with their OSHA 10 or 30 cards.

In New York City, the United Federation of Teachers—in collaboration with the state Department of Education's Career and Technical Education program—has implemented an accommodating platform, which has more than 51 career and technical education teachers who have achieved and maintained their OSHA-authorized trainer status in both its general and construction industry categories. In return, these educators have provided the OSHA 10- and 30-hour training and issued cards for approximately 6,000 of their students to date.

In Illinois, the Chicago Teachers Union has been implementing this program for its CTE teachers over the last three years. To date, CTU and the AFT have trained more than 40 educators who have in turn been able to give much more in-depth, hands-on, in-class instruction than is provided in the online option available to students in the district.

The AFT believes that this program has potential to build a joint labor-management program that supports members and their students. The AFT can assist local unions in developing a cooperative program that meets local needs. Here's how it works:

- The AFT works with local union leaders to identify career and technical educators who would be interested in becoming OSHA-authorized trainers.
- Local leaders would then approach administrators in their districts to discuss the potential benefits of the OSHA-authorized training program for students and staff alike. The AFT would train CTE teachers, providing limited initial stipends; and the district would agree to incorporate the OSHA 10-hour course into the curriculum and pay for OSHA 10 cards for students (currently \$8/student).
- The AFT would also support teachers with prepared curriculum, resources and access to a national network of colleagues who are actively teaching the program.

Please contact [4healthandsafety@aft.org](mailto:4healthandsafety@aft.org) if you are interested in hearing more about this capacity-building program.



I volunteered to become an OSHA Outreach trainer through the United Federation of Teachers because I needed to expand my knowledge of on-the-job safety beyond what I learned at work or what is presented in textbooks. My knowledge about OSHA, its mission, and how to navigate and use its standards and regulations has expanded significantly.

This puts me in an excellent position to impart this knowledge to my students so they become cognizant of dangers present or potential that arise in the shop room or at their place of employment. Students have a sense of accomplishment in obtaining what adults in the job market are seeking in increasing numbers as employers make it mandatory to have this credential for employment purposes.

—Janis Graham, CTE construction educator,  
High School for Construction Trades, Engineering and  
Architecture, Ozone Park, New York City

I decided to become an OSHA-authorized trainer because I am a CTE (career and technical education) teacher who teaches electrical installation, and I would like my students to understand the value of working safely. My students are exposed to electrical hazards and construction hazards from the moment they walk into my classroom. The value of becoming an OSHA-authorized trainer has brought a tremendous amount of knowledge to my classroom safety, health training and teaching. Students will actively identify hazards in the classroom or possible unsafe acts and will address them. Students understand their rights when working in their internships and will assert their rights if they believe they are being treated unfairly or working in unsafe conditions. Since I have started teaching OSHA, students have become more conscious of what happens in the classroom and also what they see out in the real world on construction sites. Students come to my classroom with pictures and stories of hazards that they saw and how OSHA should be aware of these situations.

—Ivana Nuñez, CTE electrical  
installation educator, Queens Vocational  
and Technical High School, New York City

