# LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM<sup>TM</sup> RECRUITING TOOLKIT

#### HOW DO I RECRUIT EMPLOYEES AND MORE SPECIFICALLY APPRENTICES?

Companies that participate in the Landscape Management Apprenticeship Program<sup>™</sup> can demonstrate to prospective employees how they will invest in their future by providing formalized, on-the-job training. Apprenticeships can offer a competitive, life-changing professional development experiences not available from all employers or in all industries. Here are resources and tips to help you communicate about your investment in the program.

### Explore the Department of Labor's resources for companies that offer apprenticeship programs

The Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship has tremendous resources, both for companies considering and ready to launch apprenticeship programs. You can find general information here and a helpful toolkit here.

 Make sure you and your key staff understand the NALP apprenticeship program and the benefits it provides for the profession

To sell a product effectively, you need to know the product. Make sure you and your key staff members understand how the program works, how long it may take to complete, and how completing the program affects an employee's ability to move up in your organization. Having job descriptions, organizational charts, or career pathway information can be helpful.

#### • Involve your HR department

Your HR department is a great place to start: they are recruiting for your organization anyway, and they should be leading the pack on recruiting apprentices. Develop handouts to provide to potential apprentices so they can learn more and review again later.

• Be prepared to talk compensation Interested parties may want to know how their compensation will grow as their mastery of tasks and responsibilities increases through the apprenticeship program. Have a scale to show them.

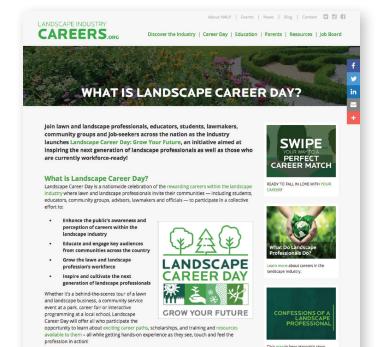
## Connect with your local workforce development board

Workforce development boards are a network of federal, state, and local offices that support economic expansion and develop the talent of the nation's workforce. State and local WDBs serve as connectors between the U.S. Department of Labor and more than 2,500 local American Job Centers that deliver services to workers and employers. Your local WDB is your link to the public workforce system, sometimes even supporting tax credits for businesses. Find your local WDB here.

• Encourage area colleagues and your state or local industry associations to be involved By involving regional peers and your local or state landscape organizations, you can make a concerted effort in improving the profession and attracting apprentices. The more members involved, the more we attract new faces to our profession by "competing" against other industries that have an established presence with apprenticeships.

## • Attend local community job fairs sponsored by Chambers of Commerce or other groups

There are always job fairs or career fairs going on in the community. Many are sponsored by Chambers of Commerce or other business organizations. Additionally, many non-profits, such as Goodwill, provide career fairs and career centers. Make sure you work with them to promote the program, as some non-profits that are career focused may help you recruit apprentices.



• Be in constant contact with your local high school agriculture and horticulture programs

Local school programs are a great place to start. Not everyone goes to college and the apprenticeship program is basically an educational program with on the job training that is developing a career path for the participants. Your local high school agriculture, horticulture, or STEM programs should be your best friend. Let student advisors know about the Landscape Management Apprenticeship Program. Work with other area contractors to encourage schools to provide exposure about the industry to students, using apprenticeship opportunities as a hook.

## • Be in constant contact with local FFA, 4-H, or Scouting programs

Youth organizations are a great place to recruit. FFA chapters, 4-H groups, Scouting programs, and others always need guest speakers for their meetings. You or your staff should be attending such meetings every month. Starting as young as Middle School is okay, or even younger with Scouting groups.

## • Participate in career day events at local middle schools and high schools

All schools and school systems have career day events. Get yourself in front of all the students at once. Have exciting things so they can get involved at your booth and become interested – Have an active display, not a passive display. Use NALP's Landscape Career Day materials.

#### • Take part in college fairs

Highs schools often host college fairs, where colleges have booths recruiting students to their campuses. You will often see the military at these fairs as well offering an alternative to college. Consider a booth there as well as an additional alternative to college, one that also provides a paid job and educational training.

#### • Educate local middle school and high school counselors about the apprenticeship model

School counselors often have a great influence over the choices and career paths chosen by our youth. Educating them on the profession and the apprenticeship program is essential as a method to get the word out. Have an event at your office/shop and invite them out or arrange to speak to them at a teacher work day event. If you are working with younger age groups, such as elementary or middle

When is Landscape Career Day?

Make sure to download this compreh

spread version of the toolkit here

While most Landscape Career Day events will take place in March and April, lawn and landscape companies can plan their events for dates that work for their audience and company goals.

Planning on hosting a Landscape Career Day event for your local community?

Career Day event that your community will dig! View and download a digital

area by visiting local lawn and landscape companies' websites and social media chanr updates. You can also contact the National Association of Landscape Professionals at Jenn@LandscapeProfessionals.org to inquire about events happening locally.

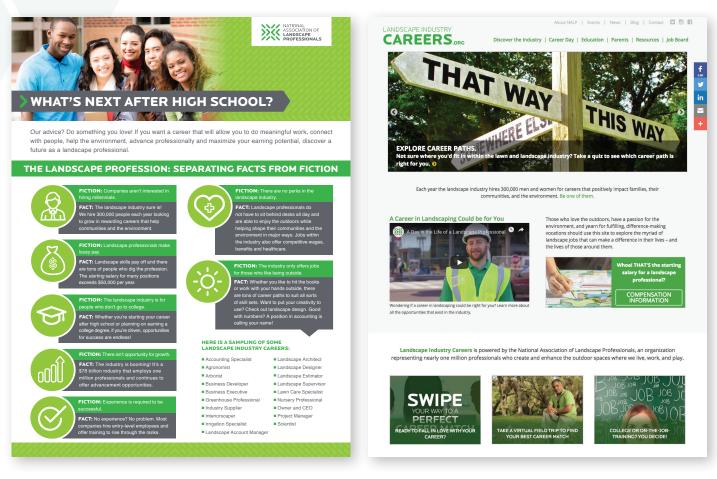
sted in participating in Landscape Career Day, keep an eye out for events in your

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school, consider providing a fun activity sheet that they can share with their parents and friends. See examples in NALP's Landscape Career Day materials.

• Educate school system vocational-technical directors about the apprenticeship model

Every organization has leaders, and leaders set the tone for the organization. School systems have directors of Career and Technical Education. They need to be aware of the apprenticeship program and the benefits that it can afford their graduates.

Recruit from athletic programs

Students participating in athletic programs are already used to being outdoors and are accustomed to sweating and hard work. Attend and be involved with sports booster clubs, place signage at athletic fields, and speak to athletic associations.

• Make sure your local technical or community college is aware of the apprenticeship model

You should be recruiting at the local college for their graduates, so don't forget to inform them of the apprenticeship program. There is a large pool of students who leave college, often for financial reasons, who have already shown an interest in the field. They are definite candidates for the apprenticeship program and may have already met many of the study module requirements.

#### · Host a community service event

Host a community landscape project and invite everyone to help. Suppliers, vendors, community groups etc. Have signs or banners at the event advertising the apprenticeship program and make sure you invite the local media.

#### Use social media

Use social media to get the word out about opportunities in your apprenticeship program. Young people are glued to their social media apps, so don't miss out on the opportunity that exists on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and more. Make sure you use photos in your posts, as they attract more attention. Include links to your company website or NALP's NALP's career website, LandscapeIndustryCareers.org.

- Always invite others to visit your company Never pass up an opportunity to show off. No one tells your story better than you do.
- Have a Landscape Career Day event and market the apprenticeship model

NALP has developed Landscape Career Day. Host an event and include information on your apprenticeship program as part of the activities. NALP has even developed a Host Tool Kit to assist you in planning the event!

#### • It's an investment

Remember that growing your staff and the landscape profession is an investment. It will take both time and money. Use some of your recruiting budget or your marketing budget to help. Your employees are your biggest investment.

Keep in mind, participating and developing as many of these recruiting activities is essential to your success. Information on the apprenticeship program should be a constant in your recruiting. The continued success of our profession depends on all of us promoting the benefits of landscaping and the landscape profession.

## LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM<sup>™</sup> RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

### Decide on which promotional activities are best for your organization

Not all the suggested activities may fit your needs and or capabilities. Decide which ones are best, make a list and begin. Just like marketing your company, multiple activities will better inform the community and possible participants about the program.

#### Identify and develop collateral materials to promote the program

NALP has developed a host of materials to help you promote the apprenticeship program. Check out what's available and then determine what supplemental materials you may wish to create.

### Decide who is leading each activity

Every successful event or activity has a leader in charge. Ask for volunteers and get the ball rolling.

## Provide the resources for success, materials, dollars, people, etc. Make sure your company provides the necessary resources for success. Collateral materials, dollars, giveaways, time off from other duties to develop and do the activity.

## Identify potential partners that may assist you in promoting the profession such as other companies, vendors and professional organizations

Others may be willing to help as well. Local vendors and suppliers may assist you with your activities. The success and growth of your company and the profession is also critical to their success.

### Schedule promotional activities

Develop a calendar of activities, schedule out as far in advance as possible so you can promote heavily.

### Make it an ongoing process

Once you have recruited your first apprentices, you need to keep recruiting more. Just like making your first sale, you need more to sustain.