

For Immediate Release

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**Telecommunications Consortium Teaming with  
DoL, FCC on Public-Private Workforce Training Initiative**

***TIRAP Aimed at Creating Telecom Workforce of Future, Strengthening Safety and Quality***

***Washington, D.C., October 14, 2014*** – A consortium of telecommunications companies and industry associations today joined with the U.S. Department of Labor (DoL) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to unveil a public-private partnership aimed at developing apprenticeships to improve workplace safety, address industry workforce needs, and provide workers with greater employment and advancement opportunities.

Known as TIRAP (the Telecommunications Industry Registered Apprenticeship Program), the joint venture will develop Department of Labor-credentialed apprenticeship programs for the training and career development of the telecommunications industry workforce.

TIRAP marks the first time that a multiple industry stakeholders have combined efforts to create an apprenticeship program that industry members can implement voluntarily and cost-free to enable employees to cultivate key skills through education and on-the-job training. Upon finishing the training program, an apprentice earns a nationally-recognized credential that validates a worker's technical proficiency.

"Innovation is driving demand for advance telecommunication services, and as result the industry needs a highly-skilled, safety-conscious workforce to build and maintain our country's world-leading network infrastructure," said Scott Kisting, Senior Vice President at Midwest Underground Technology, Inc. and Chairman of the TIRAP's governing board.

"A DoL-credentialed apprenticeship program will help us fill the thousands of much-needed positions with driven, skilled workers that have a safety-first mentality."

TIRAP brought together stakeholders from various parts of the industry to oversee the continue development new apprenticeships that will meet the current and future needs of the telecommunications industry, including wireless infrastructure companies American Tower Corporation, CommScope, Crown Castle International, and SBA Communications; construction and service companies Midwest Underground Technology, Inc. and Shenandoah Tower Services; safety equipment manufacturer and outfitter GME Supply Company; industry trade group PCIA - The Wireless Infrastructure Association; and non-profit veterans training and employment advocate Warriors4Wireless. TIRAP is also partnering with the National Association of Tower Erectors' Safety Task Force on the development of apprenticeship safety training guidelines.

"Today, we are in the midst of the rapid deployment of 4G wireless networks and beyond. Our first apprenticeship, telecommunications tower technician, is focused on those individuals constructing these cutting-edge networks and developing their technical knowledge, understanding of the scope of work for these deployment projects, and mastery of all-important safety training," said Kisting.

"In turn, these apprenticeships will help address industry needs, enhance workplace safety in the workplace through skills-based and experiential training, and open up opportunities for high-skilled, well-paying jobs in one of the fastest growing industries in the world."

TIRAP members will continue to work with the DoL and other stakeholders to develop more apprenticeships and career ladders to facilitate the ongoing development of the wireless workforce.