

IBEW's Hour Power TV To Feature Sound And Communication Technology Training Center



IBEW Hour Power visits the new Northern California Sound and Communication Technology Training Center.

The National IBEW's Hour Power online TV and video channel will be featuring a short film that profiles NorCAL Sound & Communication's new Technology Training Center in San Leandro.

The ten minute video is scheduled to be posted on the IBEWHourPower.com website (West Coast Section) in February 2016. It was produced by Matthew Walton of Oswego Creative for the IBEW.

The new facility, which serves 11 IBEW locals and 44 counties within Northern California, is considered to be the most advanced IBEW technology training center in the country.

The video features on-site interviews with two IBEW Local Business Managers, as well as

apprentices and installer/technicians at several job sites. The IBEW Business Managers that were interviewed include Ronald Bennett of IBEW Local 302 in Martinez and Gerald Pfeiffer of IBEW Local 332 in San Jose.

Apprentices and installer/technicians for local contractors Redwood Electric Group and CH Reynold, Inc. were interviewed at several Silicon Valley job sites, including Samsung and Cisco Systems, Inc. in San Jose, and Blue Coat Systems, Inc. in Sunnyvale.

The video also contains interviews with Ken Miller, Training Director, and Terry Monroe, Assistant Training Director.

IBEWHourPower.com is part on-line magazine and part TV channel, honoring the pride, professionalism, and successes of the IBEW. It is dedicated to connecting IBEW members.



IBEW Hour Power's Matthew Walton at the National NECA Convention in San Francisco.

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A publication of the National Electrical Contractors Association and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers of Northern California.

Q&A with Ronald Bennett, Business Manager of IBEW Local

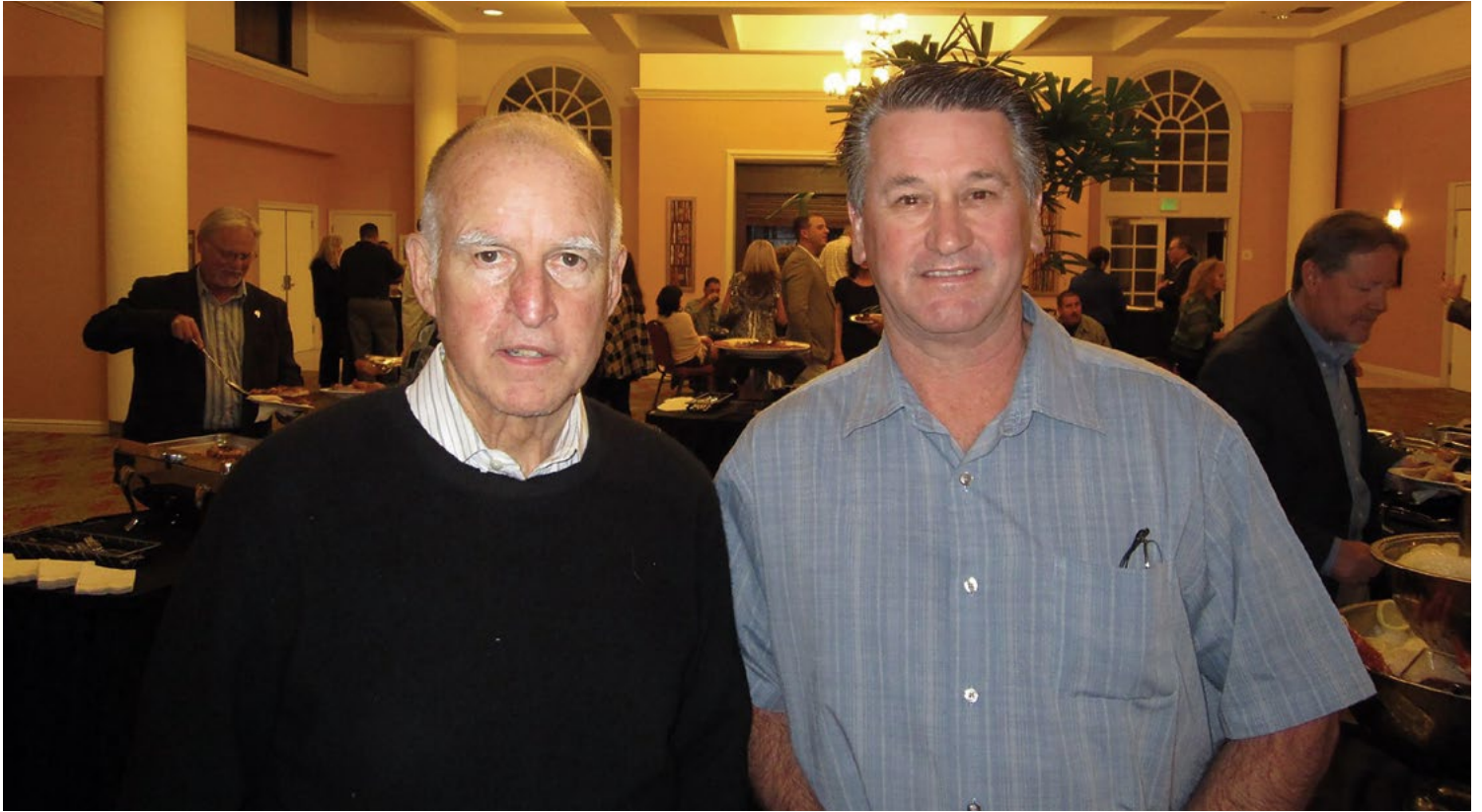


PHOTO COURTESY IBEW 302

Ronald Bennett, Business Manager IBEW 302, along with Jerry Brown, Governor of California.

Q: Please share your impressions of the new Technology Training Center?

A: The new training center is far beyond my expectations. It is amazing what it has become. There are 11 IBEW locals that are served by this training center. They all came together as one to allow our members to work in unity throughout Northern California in this facility.

Q: What does this Technology Training Center mean for the future of IBEW Local 302?

A: It shows the world that the IBEW is on the cutting edge of technology. We are on the forefront and are the best value for your construction needs.

Q: What does it mean for the Technology Training Center when all the locals come together?

A: It makes it easier for all our members to have the same common goals to improve our industry. We are supporting the best interests of the industry and the IBEW, in our hearts and minds.

Q: Is the future for sound and communication bright?

A: Absolutely. Everything is moving toward being technology based. You see the latest technology in security, in voice/data, and in video; we have smart hospitals, smart buildings.

Q: What would you tell an apprentice who is looking to get into the sound and communication industry?

A: Technology is changing so rapidly that you need to be on the cutting edge of the developments. The IBEW Technology Training Center is the place to be to stay ahead of changes in technology.

“This technology training center shows that the IBEW is on the cutting edge of technology,” said Ronald Bennett, Business Manager, IBEW Local 302, Martinez.



PHOTO COURTESY IBEW 302

Ronald Bennett, Business Manager, IBEW 302

302 & Gerald Pfeiffer, Business Manager of IBEW Local 332



PHOTO BY SCOTT PORTER

PHOTO COURTESY IBEW 332

Gerald Pfeiffer, Business Manager IBEW 302, interviewed by IBEW Hour Power.

Q: You are on the board of directors that oversaw this project. How did it get started?

A: We needed a centralized training facility. We were working out of mobile classrooms and visiting every local with them to carry out the training. We couldn't stage true labs with our mobile classrooms. We now have a lot of really good labs here at this training center.

Q: What is different about this Technology Training Center?

A: This training center separates us from the rest. Anyone can have a training center. Anyone can pull cable and try to get it done, but when you have to meet deadlines and you have to be high tech, you need the training. This is what we have provided for the sound and communication technicians and apprentices, so they can keep up to date and perform at the highest level.

Q: How much input did the NECA contractors have on this Technology Training Center?

A: They had a tremendous amount of input; they were very involved. We had a number of voice data video contractors all involved in this, helping us to plan and build out the facility.

Q: Why is this Technology Training Center an important part of the future for your local?

A: We are in the high technology center of the world. If we don't keep up with the training requirements and provide the men and women who can do the work, we won't be competitive. We'll be the ones thrown off the job, instead of the ones brought in to fix the job.

Q: Apprentices say that they enjoy coming here to learn. They like the open, light environment, with all that smart boards, and technology. They say it is a welcoming environment. Did you set out to make it that way?

A: That is exactly why we created this facility for the students. We give our students study areas, meeting areas, and conference areas where they can meet and talk with each other. Classroom time is important, but it's also important for the students to be able to collaborate and keep up to date with what they have seen on job sites.

Q: Do you think this building gives students the opportunity to explore different areas of what is important to them and what they need to learn about technology?

A: Yes. Students have the ability to talk with instructors, to talk with each other, to walk around the various labs. We are the high tech center of the world and all of the cutting-edge technology is right here, as part of the facility. We have an on-site data center that they can see and use. It's not behind closed doors. Everything they need is here.

"As the high tech capital of the world, we need all the cutting-edge technology right here in one place. That is why we built this training center," said Gerald Pfeiffer, Business Manager, IBEW 332, San Jose.

Q&A with Ken Miller, Training Director and Northern California Sound & Commu



Ken Miller, Training Director, at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Northern California Sound & Communications Technology Training Center in summer of 2015.

“There isn’t another training center like this in the country,” says Ken Miller, Training Director.

Q: What was your vision for the Technology Training Center?

A: Our program is unique because we are a regional training center and encompass 11 IBEW local jurisdictions. We didn’t have our own training facility building until six months ago. Before that, we were pulling mobile classrooms around all over the region. Up to Sacramento, Santa Rosa, San Jose, Oakland, and so forth. You really couldn’t focus on pulling wire out of a mobile classroom. In this building, we have a wire pulling lab and so many of the things we were unable to do in the past, since we were basically a roadshow.

Q: What would you like to highlight about the new labs in the Technology Training Center?

A: We have a new wire pulling lab. It helps the apprentices be productive, efficient, and safe in their work when they are learning to pull wire. It is our goal to get them to the point that they hit the ground running when they go to the job site. They can do it right the first time, without a rework. We also have a hands-on security lab, which includes CCTV and access control. This lab has individual booths and the apprentices can go in there and learn how to get wire from a card reader to a mag lock to a controller.

Q: Have you brought any visitors through? If so, what is their take on the facility and the labs?

A: We have had quite a few visitors. We have had numerous IBEW and NECA folks through here, and many others. There really isn’t another training center like this in the country. Again, our program is very unique, taking place in a large region with 11 locals. It focuses on new state-of-the-art technology and we have done our best to look to the future in putting the facility together. I have to say that most of our visitors are flat out blown away.

Q: Please take us through some more information about the various labs?

A: We have a hands-on fire alarm installation and programming lab. It also includes emergency communication systems and paging/address. We have a lab devoted to structured cabling that includes copper and fiber; it is mainly aimed at network communications. There is also a BICSI certified training facility, so we can provide BICSI certification to our apprentices as well as to the installer/technicians when we do the upgrade classes. We have an lab where we train apprentices on video projection and how to mount video projectors. Our apprentices learn how to hang a screen, how to work on a T-bar grid, and how to cut tiles to learn to install ceiling speakers.

Q: Outside of the classrooms and labs, what are some of the other amenities of the building?

A: We have a lot of user-friendly areas on the first floor: a well lit open area lobby with interactive touch screens where our students can get information about our program. We have a very nice student break area, where the students can relax and communicate with each other. We have the data center where we have a number of racks with an interactive kiosk. You can pull up each individual rack and see what it is and why it is there. This rack includes equipment that we train on. We have a computer lab, and a collaboration area that contains several huddle rooms where students can work individually or collaborate together. Everything is well lit; there is a lot of natural lighting. We spent a lot of time selecting paint colors and floor coverings. We think the amenities are very conducive to the learning environment that we have put together here.

Terry Monroe, Assistant Training Director, Communications Technology Training Center



PHOTO BY SCOTT PORTER



PHOTO BY NICK ELIAS

Terry Monroe, Assistant Training Director, being interviewed by IBEW Hour Power for their feature on the Technology Training Center.

“We are training for tomorrow’s technology today,” says Terry Monroe, Assistant Training Director.

Q: What factors influenced the JATC decide to build a new Technology Training Center?

A: Our trustees consolidated the program in 2005 under one umbrella. Our training now covers 44 counties in Northern California. Because of the amount of territory we cover, it was really evident to us that we needed to have a centralized training facility. We knew that being able to have stationary labs in a place that our apprentices could call home would be a great thing and was needed. With a lot of hard work and research, we have that Technology Training Center today.

Q: What has been the reaction of the contractors that have toured the facility?

A: To date, I think that everyone that walks through here is in awe. When they walk through it, they see how the vision is materializing. They are really excited.

Q: Have you been able to bring in any end users or owners through the facility?

A: We’ve had city council members, chamber of commerce members, and many other folks come through. We have gotten really good reviews from everyone that toured the center.

Q: What upside potential does the facility have?

A: Sometimes it’s difficult to get our installer/techs back in to upgrade their training. Now that we have this regional facility that is centrally located, it’s a lot easier for them to take an upgrade class. With the new facility, they now see more of the benefits of the training through the level of skills our new apprentices are developing.

Q: Describe your blended learning concept at the Technology Training Center.

A: Our blended learning concept refers to classroom time versus online

learning versus on-site work time. The new facility has allowed us to reduce the amount of classroom time that apprentices need to spend by 50%. We are now able to offer a lot of that classroom instruction online through videos we make in-house in our curriculum development room. When students are in the classrooms, we handle assessments, hands-on work, final exams, etc. In the interim, before they come back for the assessment, they have full access to our instructors online; they have blogs that are setup throughout student database; they have access through chat rooms to be able to communicate with each other. One of the major benefits of this style is that apprentices can stay on the job site longer and are able to help the employer bring the projects into completion on schedule.

Q: What would you tell a young person that may not be excited about going to college, but is looking for a career? What would you tell them about sound and communication as a career?

A: Sound and communication is the technology branch of the construction world. Our instructors are continuously going back to get trained so that they can stay current with today’s techniques. Our techs will be the ones powering the computers at the job sites, the ones setting up the infrastructure for the computers and for the different technologies.

Q: Is sound and communication a good career path?

A: Absolutely. I started off as an apprentice several years ago, made my way up through the apprenticeship, became an installer, and then became a foreman. I then became a superintendent and was asked to be a part of the JATC. I came on as an instructor assistant, and then I became an instructor and started working with the apprentices. I didn’t see myself being where I am today 20 years ago, but the IBEW has been very good to me. The employers have helped me along the way and I have nothing but great things to say about the IBEW/NECA and the program they offer. With IBEW/NECA you can get a job and earn and learn at the same time. It’s a great model.

Sprig Electric's Successful Safety Program Starts Day One



PHOTO BY NICK ELIAS

David Toll

Safety Director at
Sprig Electric in San Jose, CA

Sprig Electric's safety program starts the moment a new employee is hired and is continually revised to promote the best safety-related policies and procedures company-wide. David Toll, Safety Director, discusses how the safety program emphasizes that everyone work safely together as a team, keep all safety practices easy to follow, and make those practices a habit.

Q: What is your official title at Sprig Electric and how long have worked there?

A: I am the company safety director and have been with Sprig Electric for 8 ½ years.

Q: What are the various components of your safety program and how is it administered?

A: The safety program is supported by a full-time safety director, area safety managers, and site safety managers, providing the training, equipment, and knowledge they need to run a project safely. All crew leaders complete training in OSHA 30-hour; CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation); AED (automated external defibrillator) and First Aid; and pass their skills and knowledge on to their crews. Our safety program works because everyone from the first year apprentice to the very top management understands the importance of a safe working environment and its benefits, and have a 100% buy-in with the safety program.

Q: What is the initial safety training that Sprig Electric employees go through?

A: All new hires complete a one-hour orientation video which explains in great detail what is expected from them while on the job and what they can expect from the Sprig Electric safety program. They meet with their foreman or superintendent and discuss site-specific safety requirements and review Sprig's Code of Safe Practices.

ConstructSecure, Inc.



Gold Award 2013



PHOTO COURTESY SPRIG ELECTRIC

All new Sprig Electric hires complete a one-hour orientation video which explains in great detail what is expected from them while on the job.



PHOTO COURTESY SPRIG ELECTRIC

Sprig Electric utilizes modern technology to promote communication and to integrate online safety training.



PHOTO COURTESY SPRIG ELECTRIC

Sprig Electric employees are encouraged to discuss any safety issues with their foreman, with the knowledge it will be passed on.

Q: How is employee participation in the safety program encouraged, implemented, and reinforced?

A: When an employee starts work at Sprig and completes their orientation process, they are well aware of how important safety is and their role in keeping it that way. Employees are encouraged to discuss any safety issues with their foreman, with the knowledge it will be passed on to the right people. All employees have the confidence that everything is being considered and implemented to make their working environment safe. The working environment is not considered safe until the employee feels it is safe.

Q: How would you describe your process for implementing the safety program?

A: The Sprig Electric Safety Committee, consisting of all levels of management, reviews all safety-related items on a monthly basis. The committee then decides if any changes need to be made to existing policies or procedures, or if new policies or procedures need to be created. Any modifications to the safety program are then implemented within the monthly foreman’s meeting, passed on to the crews through job site tailgate meetings, and within the initial employee training.

Q: How has your program grown or changed over the past few years? What’s new?

A: Our safety program has grown tremendously over the past seven years since I have been with Sprig. We have always had a great safety program here at Sprig Electric, but the ways we get the message of safety to our employees in the field has seen the biggest growth. We have utilized modern technology to promote communication and have also integrated online safety training. It is so much easier to get the message directly to the job sites. We no longer shut down the site for a half day to bring everyone into the office for training.

Q: How do your customers view safety and do they see the value?

A: Our customers are very proactive with their safety requirements both with their in-house employees as well as subcontractors requirements. 90% of our customer-base are repeat clients, not only because they know they are getting a quality product from Sprig Electric, but also that it will be done in the safest way possible. We hear this very often from all our customers.

Q: What safety awards and recognition would you like to cite?

A: We have received numerous safety awards from our customers, and are highly acknowledged by our peers in the National Electric Round Table. We were awarded an EMR (Experience Modification Rating) of .50 in 2015.

Q: How would you describe Sprig Electric’s safety philosophy?

A: Quite simply: work safely together as a team. Keep all safety practices easy to follow, and make them a habit.

Your Health And Welfare Trust Fund Important Phone Numbers

Questions about eligibility for coverage, premiums, reserve accounts, and info booklets, call:

United Administrative Services
408.288.4400
Toll-Free 800.748.6417

Trust Self-Funded Medical Plan Trust Dental Plan

Questions about claim payment, claim forms and benefit info:
408.288.4400
Toll-Free 800.541.8059

Anthem Blue Cross PPO

www.anthem.com.ca
To locate a participating preferred provider physician, clinic, or hospital:
408.288.4400 or 800.541.8059
Refer to Group # 170016M001

First Dental Health Dental PPO

www.firstdentalhealth.com
To locate a participating preferred provider dentist:
Toll-Free 800.334.7244

Kaiser Permanente

www.kaiserpermanente.org
Questions about benefit info and ID Cards:
Toll-Free 800.464.4000
Refer to Group # 919

Optum Health

www.OptumHealth.com
Questions about mental health and substance abuse benefits or the member assistance program:
800.888.2998
Group # 10000824-0001, 0002

Vision Service Plan

www.vsp.com
Questions about vision benefits and vision claims or to request a Vision Plan Provider Directory:
Toll-Free 800.877.7195

To order additional copies of *The DATA* contact
scott@hillzoog.com

IBEW/NECA Sound & Communications Health & Welfare Plan

Featured Health and Welfare Plan Benefit - Vision with VSP

The IBEW/NECA Sound and Communications Health and Welfare Plan covers vision exams and pays a portion of the cost for prescription glasses or contact lenses.

Who is covered by VSP?

All participants covered under the Trust's Self-Funded Medical PPO plan and the Kaiser HMO plan.

For new employees, vision benefits for you and your eligible dependents start when you are eligible under the Plan.

How To Obtain VSP Benefits

- To find a VSP network doctor:
 - Call 1-800-877-7195
 - Check the website: www.vsp.com
- Call the VSP network doctor and make an appointment. Identify yourself as a VSP Member.
- Pay the \$10 copayment for the exam and \$25 copayment for the prescription glasses or contacts to the VSP provider. If you order glasses and the cost exceeds the covered amount, you will have to pay the difference.



Non-VSP Provider Benefit

If you receive an eye exam or obtain prescription glasses or contacts from a licensed provider who is not part of the VSP network, you can apply for reimbursement. See the chart below for non-network reimbursement amounts. Call or check the VSP website for the *Out-of-Network Reimbursement Claim Form* and instructions.

	VSP Provider	Non-Network Reimbursement
WellVision Eye Exam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 every 12 months 	\$10 copay	Up to \$50
Prescription Glasses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lenses New lenses every 24 months Frame New frame every 24 months <p style="text-align: center;">- OR -</p> Contact Lenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 set every 24 months instead of glasses (includes fittings) 	\$25 copay (Included in the \$25 copay for lenses) Frame covered up to \$130, plus a 20% discount on the amount over your allowance	Up to \$50 for single vision lenses; \$75 for lined bifocals; \$100 for lined trifocals Up to \$70 Up to \$105

This summary has been designed to give you a general overview of the Plan's Vision benefits effective January 1, 2015. It does not, however, attempt to explain all the details, provisions, limitations, restrictions, and exclusions of the Plan's Vision benefits.

norcalvdv.org

**VOICE
DATA
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SOUND AND COMMUNICATIONS
of Northern California