What is Big Ideas Inc.?
The first phase of our business plan is to provide community education-style classes to introduce any demographic who wishes to try skills in trades such as carpentry, welding, plumbing, electrical, masonry, commercial cooking, and commercial sewing, just to name a few!!

Why are we needed?
Skilled trades have taken a social beating and back seat to 4-year degrees and white collar careers for years now.

We intend to provide meaningful ways to give people of all ages and stages of life the chance to try their hand at what may become a hobby, cottage business, or a new career!

Discover, Explore, & Learn Real-World Trade Skills!

Upcoming Classes:

Winter & Spring

*Introduction to Carpentry – Level 0*
No prior knowledge or experience in carpentry is necessary. This course will teach you how to use the tools and machines needed in carpentry safely and effectively.

*Carpentry–Level 1–Beginners Wood Projects*
Participants will construct a 2'x2' outdoor planter or similar project. This class reinforces the safety rules, proper use of most power machines, and proper use of power hand tools taught in level 0.

*Welding – MIG/Wire Feed*
In this class participants will review the safety rules while learning basic welding and shop concepts.

*Welding – TIG*
This course will continue to reinforce safe practices and increase the participants skillset in welding. Machine setup and basic welding technique will be taught.

*Introduction to Sewing – Pillow Case*
This class requires no prior knowledge of, nor experience in, machine sewing! If you are interested in basic sewing skills like threading a machine, pinning material for stitching, and making straight seams, this class is for you!

*Sewing – Reading and Using Patterns*
In this one-night class, you will learn to read and lay out a pattern, pin your pattern and fabric, and practice your skills in stitching as you make a pair of lounge/pajama pants.

*Culinary – Decorated Cookies*
Cookie decorating does not have to be hard or scary, but it helps to learn the tips and tricks that make it easier! This class will cover the basics of baking and decorating techniques.

Watch for NEW classes: Plumbing, Electrical, and Home Improvements!

For more information, class dates and times, location, and sign up instructions – please find us on Facebook or go to www.BigIdeasUSA.org!
A surprise shortage of blue collar workers is changing the contours of the U.S. labor market, boosting their pay, narrowing wage inequality and drawing more women into those jobs.

The shortfall is being driven by a shrinking supply of manual and low-pay service workers as the labor force becomes more educated and less willing to take on such jobs, according to a new Conference Board study. “The divergence between blue collar and white collar supply is going to persist and even become bigger through 2030,” Gad Levanon, chief economist for North America at the New York-based research group and one of the authors of the report, said in an interview.

“Manufacturers and other companies with physically demanding jobs are finding it tough to fill those positions when baby boomers retire. “It’s harder and harder to attract younger people into those jobs, either because they are pursuing education alternatives or the stigma associated with light industrial work,” Quigley said.

The supply of lower-skilled workers is also being squeezed by growth in the number of Americans who’ve claimed disability benefits and dropped out of the labor force.

Without overheating the economy. Unemployment at 3.7 percent is the lowest since 1969 and running well below Fed estimates for its long-run sustainable rate.

“The acute shortage of talent in the blue collar space is very, very pronounced,” said Peter Quigley, executive vice president at Kelly Services, Inc., a staffing company with branches in all 50 U.S. states.

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Exacerbated by the opioid epidemic, that’s much more concentrated in the population without a bachelor’s degree, the Conference Board report says.

Tighter restrictions on immigrations are also playing a role and will continue to do so in the future, said Moody’s Analytics Inc.’s Chief Economist Mark Zandi. Many of those foreign workers are lower-skilled and in industries such as construction and farming.

Automation and off-shoring were widely expected to devastate demand for industrial workers and depress their pay, especially when compared with their more educated counterparts. But that hasn’t happened, at least so far, according to the Conference Board: Blue collar and low-pay service jobs have grown as rapidly as total employment since the economy began recovering in June 2009.

For much of this expansion, manufacturers and other
companies have been slow to ramp up capital spending and step up automations, opting instead to take on more workers to meet rising demand for their products and services. That’s been reflected in the slow growth of productivity: Output per hour worked has risen at an annual average rate of 1.2 percent since the recession ended in June 2009, well below the 2.2 percent post World War II pace. Companies may also be approaching the limits of how much of their operations they’re willing or able to outsource. “We’re probably in the third and maybe fourth cycle of outsourcing,” Quigley said. “Most of the large companies, if they were going to outsource, they’ve already done it.”

The combination of surprisingly robust demand for blue collar workers and their limited supply is forcing companies to increase pay at the bottom end of the scale. Minimum wage increases have also helped those less well-off. That’s helping to reverse the decades-long trend toward greater wage inequality, according to Levanon, who co-wrote the report with economist Frank Steemers.

Besides granting bigger wage increases, companies are getting creative in offering other perks to employees, including more breaks, re-jigged work schedules and greater flexibility for working parents, Quigley said.

The improved packages look to be attracting more women into blue collar jobs. “It helps remove some of the inhibitions or reluctance” some women may have in taking those positions, Levanon said.

The increase in female participation is particularly evident in the transportation sector, where demand for workers has taken off because of the growth of online shopping. “It’s probably ground zero for labor shortages,” Levanon said.

“Lower-income workers are doing better,” Moody’s Zandi said. “The balance of power has shifted from employers to employees.”
Upcoming Events:

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at Big Ideas, Inc.

We would love to help you succeed!