

March 19, 2015

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Bridget Quinn. I am a journeyman electrician and the Workforce Development Coordinator for IBEW Local 48.

I am writing to you today to voice support for the Portland Community College Corrections proposal to bring a new Construction Trades pre-apprenticeship program to the incarcerated women at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility called C.R.E.W (Construction Related Employment for Women).

I have professional experience with the program that was the predecessor of C.R.E.W. (the First Chance Pre-Apprenticeship Program which was run by the OR AFL-CIO). I taught the electrical portion of the curriculum and had the opportunity to witness the leadership of Jen Netherwood who ran the program. I witnessed the pride and determination that the women felt about the program and the work that they were learning to do.

There was one inmate in particular, Bell Anderson, who has a clear interest in becoming an electrician. She received a copy of the math book that the IBEW electrical apprenticeship program issues and taught herself Boolean Algebra. Upon release she signed up for and took part in a five-day intensive class I offer for individuals interested in the electrical industry. This class prepares students to gain entry-level employment in the industry. Bell has been working for an electrical contractor since completing the class and will be a well-qualified and successful apprentice once accepted into the apprenticeship. Pre-apprenticeships such as First Chance and C.R.E.W. provide women with the skills and confidence to become valuable community members.

The Department of Corrections and Portland Community College are currently negotiating the contract that will decide the fate of C.R.E.W. Although many have expressed verbal support for the C.R.E.W program, funding has not yet been allocated. I am asking that you help this program move forward in the funding allocation process.

I appreciate you taking the time to consider this important issue.

Bridget Quinn
NECA-IBEW Electrical Training Center
16021 NE Airport Way
Portland, OR 97230
503.333.1277
bquinn@nietc.org