

NEWS OF JOBS

Demand Grows for Merchant Seafarers

(NAPSA)—Those seeking steady employment in an interesting field may want to ride the current wave of opportunity experienced by the Merchant Marine.

In addition to a growing number of job openings, the industry is one of the few that can boast free training for job applicants and a guaranteed first job.

Part of the recent increase in the number of jobs available can be attributed to the federal government's Maritime Security Program (MSP). Under the program, commercial ships carry cargo that supports the country's security efforts.

There are currently 47 vessels enrolled in the MSP program, with an additional 13 set to join them. Those 60 ships under the U.S. flag will provide job opportunities, including entry-level positions.

As employees working under contracts between maritime companies and the Seafarers International Union, merchant mariners have opportunities to work on a wide variety of vessels, including deep-sea cargo vessels, tankers, military support ships, Great Lakes vessels, cable ships, tugboats and passenger ferries.

The Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education is the union's affiliated school. It offers the most U.S. Coast Guard-approved courses of any maritime school in the nation—from entry level to license preparation to academic support.



The Merchant Marine is one of the few industries to offer free training and guarantee graduates a first job.

The school's apprentice program blends hands-on training with classroom instruction. The training consists of three phases, including 90 days aboard a U.S.-flag ship. That particular phase has helped boost the industry's retention rate—approximately 75 percent of students who complete the entire unlicensed apprentice program are still sailing four years later.

Students at the Center may also receive college credit recommendations for successfully completing certain sanctioned courses. In addition, all students who successfully complete the program are guaranteed their first job.

Based in Piney Point, Md., the school's training tools include bridge and engine simulators, the Joseph Sacco Fire Fighting and Safety School and a culinary lab.

To learn more about the Merchant Marine, visit the Web site at www.seafarers.org.