

# Illinois Workforce Partnership Business Leadership Award Nominee Absolute Fire Protection

The Workforce Connection is proud to work with Absolute Fire Protection to expand opportunities and apprenticeships in the region. Absolute Fire Protection is an industry leader in fire protection and prevention services in Northern Illinois with strong ties to the community. Absolute Fire Protection has a great need for skilled talent to install, test, repair, and perform maintenance on fire sprinkler systems – a critical role that encompasses many different skill sets. Absolute Fire Protection knew they needed to develop a talent pipeline for the talent and skill needed for these jobs, not only for the short-term but also for the long-term needs of their business and the community.

Absolute Fire Protection worked with The Workforce Connection and created the Fire Sprinkler Apprenticeship program. The partners worked together and spent time understanding Absolute's needs and goals to ensure the program was built out effectively and requirements were equitable and appropriate for the roles. We worked together on the selection process, which was valuable because we were able to ensure we had the right candidates for the apprenticeships. With the WIOA funding, Absolute was able to add additional positions beyond its initial projections which in turn, helped the business add capacity and depth to its team.

As an Apprentice Sprinkler Fitter, apprentices learn and earn over four years with 19 classes and credentials in addition to paid training in the field. At the conclusion of the apprenticeship, individuals earn their Journeyman Sprinkler Fitters card. Almost 18 months in, all of the initial candidates are still successfully on their way to becoming journeymen who will earn nationally recognized credentials and earn upwards of \$50 per hour once complete. We are also working to add additional classes with Absolute Fire Protection to continue to grow the team's capacity and provide more opportunities to individuals in the community.

We are grateful for the vision and leadership of Absolute Fire Protection to create this apprenticeship model to build talent and opportunity in the region.



**NOMINEE SPOTLIGHT:  
LWIA 3**

**BUSINESS LEADERSHIP  
AWARD**



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**Nominated by  
The Workforce Connection  
Local Workforce Innovation Area 3**



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