



## **The German Apprenticeship Model: Inform, Educate, and Promote**

Objective: to present Germany's (D-A-CH) successful Dual Education and workforce development model as an alternative option to the US model, which is based heavily on the 4-year college degree with little to no integrated professional training or experience.

### **Challenges with the American System**

- The US education system continues to focus almost exclusively on the “college-for-all” model, which is proving unsustainable. The average student graduates with \$40K in debt and has little to no actual work experience in their chosen field.
- The US is facing a critical shortage of skilled workers, and it is projected to get much worse. Research reports and the media agree that the “skills gap” and worker shortage will continue to increase. In MN the forecast projects a deficit of 400K workers in the next 5-10 years.
- There is a lack of registered apprenticeship programs and training opportunities. The programs that do exist are not widely known and mostly tied to just the building trades.
- Americans are conditioned from an early age to believe that a 4-year degree is the only option for a post-high school education that leads to a good career and economic security.

### **Success of the German Dual Education System**

- After high school in Germany, rather than the university route, students can choose to complete a registered apprenticeship that combines on-the-job training with a credentialed degree.
- In Germany more than 350 apprenticeships are available and opportunities range far beyond the building trades.
- German companies who invest in apprenticeships have much higher rates of employee retention, productivity, and enhanced innovation.
- Germany achieves lower youth unemployment and high-level skills and careers for workers who did not attend a university.

### **The Project: The German Apprenticeship Model: Inform, Educate, and Promote**

At the Germanic-American Institute (GAI), we believe that the Dual Education system in Germany (D-A-CH) can be used as a guide and modified and adapted to be of great value for the US. By building a workforce development model similar to that in Germany, industry will reduce the shortage of skilled workers, and young people will have new opportunities for entering a successful and financially rewarding career.

However, not many people are aware of or familiar with the concepts of Dual Education and how apprenticeships are developed for the workforce. Furthermore, the majority of Americans are ingrained to believe that a 4-year degree should be the goal of every student, even if it means acquiring massive debt with no career training.

As such, in the spring of 2018 the GAI and GACC (German American Chamber of Commerce) launched the NEW Apprenticeship initiative to promote the model of the German Dual Education system in the US. The three components are:

### **1) Educate:**

- Educate the public and stakeholders about the German (D-A-CH) Dual Education system and how it is tied to Germany's leading workforce development practices and strong national and global economy.
- Educate industry leaders on the positive impact apprenticeships make on employee investment and retention, ultimately leading to enhanced profitability.

### **2) Inform:**

- Inform families, students, and school career counselors about current apprenticeship opportunities that are available in the Midwest. Highlight the non-traditional apprenticeships that are not tied to manufacturing or the building trades.
- Inform companies about federal, state, and private programs that will help them develop apprenticeship programs for their company or industry.

### **3) Promote:**

- Help "rebrand" apprenticeships as a smart alternative to a 4-year degree. Highlight stories of young people who now have a successful, professional career after completing an apprenticeship.
- Promote apprenticeships as a ticket to the middle class in the US, thus helping to close the ever-widening socio-economic gap and skills gap.

## **How will we accomplish this?**

To meet the project's objectives, the GAI and GACC have planned the following events and projects:

### **1) Symposium: The NEW Apprenticeship Model & Initiatives** . (<https://gai-mn.org/SoNA>)

On April 10, 2018 the GAI and GACC MN Chapter hosted a Symposium on apprenticeship programs and initiatives in Minnesota and the US. We brought together various stakeholders to increase awareness and advance Dual Education models and apprenticeship opportunities. Presenters included the following:

- GACC Midwest; Mario Kratsch VP – ICATT Apprenticeship Program
  - ICATT Apprenticeship Program is benchmarked on the German Dual Education system
- Bühler Inc; Verena Walther, Sr. HR Generalist
  - Bühler, a Swiss company located in Plymouth, MN, has developed its own apprenticeship program in coordination with Dunwoody College
- St. Paul College; Rainer Haarbusch PhD, Dean of Career and Technical Education
- DLI MN; Annie Welch PIPELINE Project, and Leslie Philmon, Registered Apprenticeships

## **2) Industry Roundtable Discussion**

GAI and GACC will facilitate a discussion with MN business leaders about the apprenticeship system in Germany and how a similar model could be implemented in Minnesota. Additionally, we will inform them of opportunities with PIPELINE and ICATT. Attendees to include:

- Chambers of Commerce
- Business and Industry Organizations
- St. Paul College and other Community and Technical Colleges
- Siemens, Heraeus Medical Components, Bühler Inc., etc.
- MN PIPELINE Project

## **3) Education Seminar: Inform MN school districts about existing Career Pathway Options**

We will bring together school districts that have already implemented a career pathway program that is tied to the apprenticeship model with districts interested in starting one. Educate school leadership about apprenticeship programs that are already in place.

## **4) Public Seminar: Educate the public about the German (D-A-CH) Dual Education system and positive impact on workforce development and the national economy**

- Inform the public about current existing opportunities.
- Promote the success stories, both of businesses who have started apprenticeship programs as well as students who have completed them.
- Provide guidelines for what families, students, and other stakeholders can do to advocate for and support the apprenticeship model in their districts.

## **5) Pavilions at Deutsche Tage and St. Paul Oktoberfest, June and September 2019**

Host a tradeshow-style Apprenticeship Information Pavilion at the GAI's two large annual festivals that incorporates all of the information delivered at the above cited events. The public attendance at these two festivals is projected to be in excess of 25K.

## **6) On-going education and promotion of the Dual Education system via targeted PR campaigns**



[GAI MN](#)

The **Germanic-American Institute** is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster appreciation and understanding of the culture, language, arts, and ongoing history of the German-speaking peoples through public educational and cultural programs.

The GAI carries out its mission through three main areas: Education, Cultural Programming, and Community Building. We provide a venue for deepening the understanding of contemporary, cross-cultural issues and the exchange of ideas between the US and Germany.

Our values expand our mission to include authenticity and social responsibility. We produce cultural programs that reflect the multi-cultural, multi-faceted identity of the modern German-speaking world.



German American  
Chambers of Commerce  
Deutsch-Amerikanische  
Handelskammern

[GACC Midwest Minnesota](#)

The **Minnesota Chapter of the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest** is dedicated to encouraging, extending and promoting trade, commerce and investment between the Federal Republic of Germany and the State of Minnesota.

The Minnesota Chapter is the local representative of the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest (GACC Midwest). With six main locations throughout the US, the German American Chambers of Commerce are an integral part of the global network of German Chambers of Commerce Abroad.