



University of Arizona Facilities Management's Apprenticeship Program Receives Innovation Award



2014 SHRM - Greater Tucson
Celebrating Innovation in the Workplace
Technology / Process Improvement

The Society for Human Resource Management of Greater Tucson (SHRM-GT) has awarded University of Arizona Facilities Management (UAFM) the 2014 **"Celebrating Innovation in the Workplace Award"**, recognizing UAFM's Apprenticeship Program as a Technology/Process Improvement tool *"to enhance employee processes or change the organizational culture,"* and which enhances recruitment in the skilled trades.

The UAFM Apprenticeship Program was created to provide a pipeline of skilled and motivated tradespeople to replace anticipated vacancies in UAFM's maintenance shops. A local and nationwide shortage of skilled trades-workers already makes it difficult to recruit replacements when employees retire or leave for other reasons, and all trends indicate that those shortages will only deepen in the future.

The Apprenticeship Program, registered under the Department of Labor (DOL), provides a well-defined path for an apprentice to complete the course-work and work-experience required for journeyman certification in four

to five years, while receiving a salary and benefits. Besides augmenting the available UAFM workforce and bringing fresh perspectives to the participating shops, the mentoring process reshapes organizational culture, emphasizing inclusion, knowledge-sharing, and cooperation.

The first apprentice class began in August 2013, and the next will begin in August 2015. Apprentices receive on-the-job training and take classes at Pima County Community College. They are each mentored by an experienced UAFM Tradesperson in their trade, and work alongside their mentors to learn the practical aspects of the trade. In the process, they become familiar with campus facilities and infrastructure, and are acclimated to the organizational culture, which makes for a seamless transition when they fill a permanent UAFM position.



SHRM-GT's mission is to provide human resource-related information, education, expertise, and influence. It is the leading voice of the human resources profession in Southern Arizona.