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Eastern Seaboard Apprenticeship Conference

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ESAC is the oldest continuously running apprenticeship conference in the nation. The first one was held in Bethel, Maine, in 1944. This conference rotates among 22 states and the District of Columbia. Its purpose is to bring together private and public sponsors of apprenticeship programs to address regional and national issues that impact the quality and operation of their programs and the apprenticeship system in general. Workshops, seminars, and vendor presentations provide state-of-the-art professional development to representatives from the states that constitute the Eastern Seaboard Apprenticeship Conference. Member states now include Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia.

Connecticut pioneered the development of apprenticeship programs. William Fitzgerald, a Congressman from Connecticut's 2nd Congressional District, preached his doctrine, "Industry needs to train youth." As a champion for human rights and the sponsor of the 1937 National Apprenticeship Act, Fitzgerald had a far-sighted vision and insisted the country needed a large reservoir of skilled and trained manpower. His persistence and efforts as a United States Congressman resulted in the bill for federal apprenticeship training that has paved the way for the present federal-state partnership in on-the-job training and vocational training throughout the nation. Fitzgerald was appointed to the Labor Committee in November 1936. He served until 1938 and, during this time, sponsored the National Apprenticeship Act, often known as the Fitzgerald Act, which was signed by President Roosevelt on August 16, 1937. The Fitzgerald Act pioneered national standards for apprentice training. As a result, thousands of previously unemployed youths were trained for national defense during World War II. State apprenticeship agencies worked with the U.S. Department of Labor to encourage the growth of apprenticeship training.

South Carolina is pleased to host the 79th annual ESAC conference. Our local committee of state and union representatives is busy planning for a successful conference. For the most updated information, please visit our website at www.esaconference.org. In the past few years, we have dedicated the final day of the conference specifically to education, with presentations related to the educational community. As such, we are inviting Charleston area teachers, administrators, and Board of Education Members to attend the conference this year, being held at the Wild Dunes Resort in Isle of Palms, South Carolina. This year's youth and education day will be Thursday, May 22nd. Breakfast will begin at 7 AM, and the sessions will run from 9 AM to 3:30 PM with a break for lunch from 12-1:30 on your own. The abbreviated schedule, as well as the registration link, can be found on the ESAC website www.esaconference.org. For educators only, click the register link on the home page, then scroll down and follow the educator instructions to register. **The normal \$160 fee has been reduced to \$25 per educator registration if you enter the code EDU25, and that will be for Thursday the 22nd only and solely for educators.** We hope to see you at the conference. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

ESAC

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