

NEWS RELEASE

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers®
AFL-CIO-CLC



900 Seventh St. N.W.
Washington DC 20001

www.ibew.org

Edwin D. Hill, International President

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Jon F. Walters, International Secretary-Treasurer

Contact: Gerardo Mulero
Phone: 787-754-4239
Cell phone: 787-587-6080

ELECTRICAL WORKERS UNVEIL PUERTO RICO TRAINING CENTER

Facility to Evaluate, Train Construction Electricians

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers unveils the first multi-employer electrical apprenticeship training center today in Puerto Rico, the crucial first step in achieving a uniform skill level for the island's construction electricians. With the IBEW's proven reputation for producing master craftsmen, the educational center offers Puerto Rico's electricians the opportunity to upgrade their abilities to meet the highest standards in electrical construction.

"This is a historic moment in the IBEW," said IBEW International President Edwin D. Hill. "For the first time in Puerto Rico, contractors, builders and all users of construction will have a benchmark by which to judge the abilities of electricians. Soon, everyone in the Puerto Rican business community will know that IBEW means the most experienced, best qualified electricians in construction."

The training center is a cooperative effort of the IBEW, the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), a group of 70,000 electrical contractors, and the National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (NJATC), a model educational partnership of IBEW and NECA that spends \$100 million annually to develop the electrical work force of the future.

The three-story, 8,700-square-foot facility in Dorado will also serve as the administrative offices of newly chartered IBEW Local 950. Featuring conduit-bending and transformer labs, theory classrooms and eight jobsite-comparable evaluation stations, the educational center will be staffed by NJATC-certified instructors. Former Colegio De Peritos Electricistas (Puerto Rico electrical trade association) President Juan Pagán is the education director. The center opened on March 1.

A key component of the instruction at the educational facility will be English as a Second Language classes. All training material is in English, and for the sake of safety and uniformity, IBEW members must have basic proficiency in English. Most instructors will be bilingual.

One of the first tasks of Local 950's charter members will be to adopt the IBEW Fifth District's Code of Excellence, a written commitment to demonstrate to customers that IBEW members perform the highest quality of work, utilize their skills and abilities to the maximum, and exercise safe and productive work practices.

To maintain the uniformly qualified work force, potential IBEW members must take evaluations that test the full scope of skills required to install electrical components and systems. Before workers can become journeyman electricians, they must undergo a five-year, full-time apprenticeship program that covers a full range of instruction that includes digital electronics, structured cabling system, basic math, transformers, DC theory, motors and more. Adhering to strict performance standards, each IBEW journeyman wireman is required to spend 1,000 hours in the classroom and 8,000 hours on the job. By graduation, IBEW members are qualified to perform everything from delicate fiber-optic installations to large construction projects.

The IBEW is an international labor organization that has trained the most qualified electricians in the trade for more than 110 years. With approximately 750,000 members in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Republic of Panama, the IBEW has members in construction, utilities, manufacturing, telecommunications, broadcasting, railroads and government.

