

Airgas Welcomes New Schools into the High School Welding Education Initiative for 2022

Airgas, an Air Liquide company, continues to expand its High School Welding Education Initiative. **For the 2022 academic year, 20 returning schools and 16 new schools will be participating.** These programs were chosen based on four key factors: high unmet need at the school; a productive welding program with the potential to graduate job-ready welders; passionate teachers; and enthusiastic local Airgas champions.

Since the start of the high school welding program in 2012 with a pilot program in Philadelphia followed by a national expansion in 2018, Airgas has assisted 70 total schools, 2,700 students and more than 350 teachers. Participating programs receive a customized mix of hands-on professional development training or continuing education for welding teachers, welding consumables or equipment, safety PPE, and other resources. The program also builds long-term relationships with local education leaders and Airgas welding and safety experts. As more schools participate in this program, Airgas is fielding increased interest and support from customers, suppliers, government officials, and Air Liquide colleagues, stemming from shared interest in boosting career opportunities and cultivating the next generation of welders.

Congratulations to the 2022 Participating Schools representing 19 states:

- **Anniston High School - Anniston, Alabama**
- **Nikiski High School - Nikiski, Alaska**
- **Delta Junction High School - Fairbanks, Alaska**
- **Page High School - Page, Arizona**
- **Vista High School - Vista, California**
- **North Monterey County High School - Castroville, California**
- **Minico High School - Rupert, Idaho**
- **Keokuk Community Schools - Keokuk, Iowa**
- **Salina Tech - Salina, Kansas**
- **George Stevens Academy - Blue Hill, Maine**
- **Gateway Regional High School - Huntington, Massachusetts**
- **McCann Technical School - North Adams, Massachusetts**
- **Taconic High School - Pittsfield, Massachusetts**
- **Roseville High School - Roseville, Michigan**
- **Hazel Park High School - Hazel Park, Michigan**
- **West Branch Rose City Schools - West Branch, Michigan**
- **Bay Arenac ISD Career Center - Bay City, Michigan**
- **NRHEG High School - New Richland, Minnesota**
- **Berlin Regional Career & Technical Center - Berlin, New Hampshire**



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- **Union County Vocational School - Scotch Plains, New Jersey**
- **Hobbs High School - Hobbs, New Mexico**
- **Lake Arthur High School - Lake Arthur, New Mexico**
- **Journeys Soaring Impact School - Cincinnati, Ohio**
- **Euclid High School - Euclid, Ohio**
- **Ashtabula County Tech & Career Campus - Jefferson, Ohio**
- **Lima Senior High School - Lima, Ohio**
- **Benson Polytechnic High School - Portland, Oregon**
- **Father Judge High School - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**
- **Randolph High School - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**
- **Providence Career Academy - Providence, Rhode Island**
- **Veterans Resource Center Welding School - Dallas, Texas**
- **Barbara Jordan High School - Houston, Texas**
- **PSJA Elvis J Ballew High School - Pharr, Texas**
- **Indian Trail High School - Kenosha, Wisconsin**
- **Westosha Central High School - Salem, Wisconsin**
- **Nathan Hale High School - West Allis, Wisconsin**

While the welding industry is currently facing a shortage of skilled labor and STEM graduates, the field of welding is also undergoing a rapid transformation and evolution in manufacturing technologies.

[According to the American Welding Society \(AWS\)](#), there are 336,000 new welding professionals projected to be needed by 2026 and an average of 84,000 welding jobs to be filled annually between 2022 and 2025.

Jay Worley, Airgas Chief Operating Officer, commented: ***“We are excited to expand and include more schools than ever into this year’s class of the Airgas High School Welding Education Initiative. Our associates are very passionate about contributing to and advocating for welding education programs in their communities. We are grateful to be able to support students, teachers, and schools helping to shape the future of the welding industry.”***

Airgas, Inc.

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Air Liquide's ambition is to be a leader in its industry, deliver long term performance and contribute to sustainability - with a strong commitment to climate change and energy transition at the heart of its strategy. The company's customer-centric transformation strategy aims at profitable, regular and responsible growth over the long term. It relies on operational excellence, selective investments, open innovation and a network organization implemented by the Group worldwide. Through the commitment and inventiveness of its people, Air Liquide leverages energy and environment transition, changes in healthcare and digitization, and delivers greater value to all its stakeholders.

Air Liquide's revenue amounted to more than 23 billion euros in 2021. Air Liquide is listed on the Euronext Paris stock exchange (compartment A) and belongs to the CAC 40, CAC 40 ESG, EURO STOXX 50 and FTSE4Good indexes.