

SEPTEMBER 18, 2025

A Journey to a Career in Skilled Trades Through GST Michigan Works!

Henry, a recent high school graduate, was exploring career options when his mother—an active member of the Fenton & Linden Chamber—reached out for support. Henry had an interest in the skilled trades but wasn't sure which direction to take.

After meeting with GST Michigan Works!, Henry expressed a strong interest in becoming a Heavy Equipment Operator. Motivated by the possibilities, he took the initiative to research the field and returned the next day ready to pursue training.

Through support available via the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Henry enrolled in the AIS Heavy Equipment Operator Training Center's 6-week program. There, he gained hands-on experience operating a variety of heavy equipment, including bulldozers, backhoes, large excavators, skid steers, and more. Encouraged by his progress, Henry extended his training to complete AIS's full 10-week program.

Eager to continue building his skills, Henry applied and was accepted into the GST Michigan Works! Apprenticeship Readiness Training Program in early 2025. Over 11 weeks, the program helped him earn additional certifications, gain exposure to the building trades, and connect directly with local unions and employers.

Through these connections, Henry secured a position with Fessler and Bowman, a leading Genesee County-based contractor specializing in concrete and civil services. He officially began his new role as a Heavy Equipment Operator on May 5, 2025, working under Operating Engineers Local 324.

"I am honored to say I was hired by Fessler and Bowman and excited to start my journey. The opportunities are amazing, and I feel I was well-prepared to enter a union apprenticeship and start earning a solid wage from day-one. I highly recommend Roy and the Fenton team at GST Michigan Works! and am thankful for the opportunities they provided me." – Henry