

As Seen In



Their in-demand skills could have taken them anywhere.

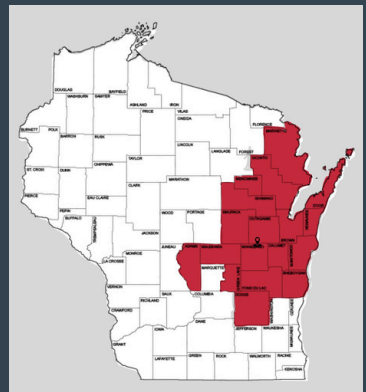


A UA & AWS-certified Local 400 welding instructor works with a pipe fabricator in preparation for upcoming welding certification testing.

They Chose Here

What makes a region worth calling home? After 20 years in the U.S. Army, Kris Carbine could have lived anywhere. He chose Northeast Wisconsin. So did Jared Knox, who left Colorado, and Robert Mattingly, who came up from Alabama. Whether you're an experienced pipetrades professional or someone ready to learn the trade, Northeast Wisconsin offers something beyond a paycheck: stability, opportunity and a community worth coming home to.

Since 1997, Plumbers & Steamfitters United Association Local 400 (UA Local 400) has been making that possible, connecting journeymen with more than 100 contractors across 18 counties in Wisconsin. Their 2,700 members chose to join UA Local 400. These three members share why they chose to make Northeast Wisconsin home.



Local 400's jurisdiction covers 18 counties in Northeastern Wisconsin. Wisconsin ranks #1 in the nation for manufacturing employment in fabricated metal products and these counties house 14 off-site manufacturing shops specializing in custom fabrication, providing endless opportunities for pipe fabricators.



Kris Carbine traded the West Coast for Wisconsin, and the 1st year HVAC/R Service apprentice says Wisconsin's lower cost of living is now making home ownership a real possibility.

MEMBER PROFILE 01

Kris Carbine

HVAC/R Service Apprentice | Army Veteran | California Native

Steady Work in a Family-Friendly Community

After spending 20 years as a vehicle mechanic in the U.S. Army, Kris Carbine started a new career and a new life in Northeast Wisconsin. Not only is he now an HVAC/R Service apprentice through UA Local 400, he's also a dad to two preschool-age children.

"After retiring from the Army, I could have gone anywhere I wanted," says Carbine, who was born and raised in California. "My wife has relatives in Wisconsin, so I started looking into living here. It's very safe, everyone is super nice and there is so much gorgeous nature. I realized that this is a great place to raise a family."

Carbine also discovered that UA Local 400 offers a great way for him to further his trade skills. After barely a year in the apprenticeship program, Carbine says he already has steady work, primarily on large industrial cooling machines known as "chillers."

"The training coordinators and instructors at UA Local 400 have always been very informative whenever I've had a question," Carbine says. "They do a good job of recruiting talent and then bringing you along."

"There is a lot of metal fabrication and processing work here. Things are being built all over the place. It's really cool that I have a part in that by working with my hands to help that process of building things and improving the community."



A UA 400 member preps a large-bore carbon pipe in a safe and controlled pipe fabrication shop.

In fact, that community connection is one of the things Carbine enjoys most about being part of UA Local 400. For example, the annual Heat's On event provides free furnace inspections and replacements for low-income and disabled homeowners.

"I really enjoy doing work that helps members of the community," Carbine says. "For 20 years I helped by serving my country. Now I get to put my hands on something and see the results, and then see the smile that puts on somebody's face."



Jay Rothlesberger, a Local 400 Steamfitter, enjoys work-life balance in Wisconsin's great outdoors on a turkey hunt with friend and fellow Local 400 Steamfitter Max Sevald.

MEMBER PROFILE 02

Jared Knox Steamfitter Foreman Colorado Transplant | Indiana Native

Having a Variety of Nearby Jobs is Invaluable

The road was a constant companion for Knox while living in Colorado, where job sites often were several hours and some treacherous mountain passes apart. Eventually, Knox decided he wanted to become more of a homebody. He found that home in Northeast Wisconsin through UA Local 400.

"There is so much work around here that you don't have to drive two or three hours for a job," says Knox, who works as a steamfitter for Hurckman Mechanical Industries, Inc. "You pretty much stay local, so you can have a life outside of work. I can't put a price tag on being home every night. It's allowed me to be grounded and able to plan my next step in life."

While Knox says his personal life has benefitted from the move to Northeast Wisconsin, he also is enjoying the work he has found through UA Local 400. He serves as a foreman at the Fincantieri Marinette Marine shipyard, leading a crew that runs system piping for naval construction.

"These are things that AI can't do," Knox says. "You're always going to need a steamfitter and a welder. This work is about as stable as you can get."

During his off time, Knox says he takes full advantage of the outdoor opportunities available throughout Northeast Wisconsin, especially the fishing, which he calls "some of the greatest you can find anywhere. And the people are just so genuine," he says. "I'm from Indiana originally. Living here gives me that hometown feeling I grew up with."

Knox has similar good feelings about being a member of UA Local 400. He says he comes from a family of trade workers and is proud to carry on that tradition.

"It's all about being able to come together as a unit and having a voice," Knox says. "This isn't just a job. It's a career you can be proud of. The job stability, the retirement package and being part of a brotherhood. That's what you get at UA Local 400."

"These are things that AI can't do," Knox says. "You're always going to need a steamfitter and a welder. This work is about as stable as you can get."

JARED KNOX

Foreman, Fincantieri Marinette Marine



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MEMBER PROFILE 03

Robert Mattingly

Welder/Fabricator | Single Father | Alabama Native

Unmatched Training Opportunities and Personal Support

Mattingly grew up in southern Alabama and got his start working at the shipyards in Mobile.

“I got into the trades through an apprenticeship and worked my way up from there,” Mattingly says. “I did a lot of road work across the country. On job sites, when I evaluated the prefab for that job, the quality of the welds and fabrication coming out of Northeast Wisconsin, from multiple different shops, stood out to me. Being a single parent, it just made sense for me to get in this area and elevate my skills.”

The region is home to 14 custom pipe fabrication shops, including TEAM Industries, Mattingly’s employer, a leader in high-quality pipe fabrication.

When Mattingly arrived in Northeast Wisconsin in 2024, he brought two decades of experience in welding and fabrication, providing more than enough opportunities to put his extensive skills to use. But as a single parent with two sons, he wanted to be able to do more. So Mattingly chose to become a trainee with UA Local 400 to expand his skillset and take advantage of the union’s 61,000-square-foot training center in Kaukauna, WI.

After living on the coast of Alabama, Mattingly admits it has taken some time to adjust to the Wisconsin winters. But he says everything else about living in the area more than makes up for the cold.



UA Local 400 Training Director Dave Brazzale keeps score for a fellow member at Local 400's annual sporting clays shoot, organized by the Fraternal Fund Committee.

“The education system is great. It’s very outdoorsy. And the people are so inviting,” he says. “There are so many things I can do with the boys. We like to do just about anything outdoors – kayaking, fishing, hiking, camping, disc golf – and all of that is great here.”

Mattingly also appreciates the support he has received from the Northeast Wisconsin community. He notes that his 7-year-old son was born without a right hand, and he quickly discovered several organizations in the area that have provided advice and assistance.

But most of all, Mattingly says he values everything UA Local 400 has been able to offer him, from training to work to personal understanding.

“Local 400 has been very inviting and helpful to my needs as a single parent,” Mattingly says. “They really go out of their way to look out for you and treat you like family.”

Room to Grow and a Career to Be Proud Of

Carbine, Knox, and Mattingly each had the skills to go anywhere. They chose Northeast Wisconsin. Through UA Local 400, they found something better than work-life balance. They found a family-friendly community of people worth knowing and a land worth exploring. And they're not going anywhere.

For information about pipetrades in Northeast Wisconsin, visit PipeTradeCareers.com/WI.



Travis Martin, steamfitter and Local 400 business agent, poses with son Jacob Martin, a steamfitter apprentice, and their prize-winning largemouth bass in front of one of Wisconsin's 15,000 lakes.