

CRAVE

The Leading Source for the Crane, Rigging, and Specialized Transport Industry

HOT LINE.

Heartland
Communications Group, Inc.



Helping Hand

Small Cranes
Play a Big Role

Training for Safety's Sake

**Top
Trainer** 2016



Top Trainer Honorable Mention
Larry Petkovsek engages students
through the use of props.



Professional Top Trainer Matt Schmitt's training style has been described as innovative and hands-on.

Top Trainers applauded for their passion, professionalism, and practical knowledge in the 2016 annual recognition program

With the crane operator certification requirements in the Cranes and Derricks in Construction final rule going into effect in November 2017, quality crane training is more important than ever. Technology-based training tools, like computer-based simulators and virtual reality, aid the process, but the real heroes are the men and women who bring the classroom to life.

Each year, *Crane Hot Line* recognizes industry trainers for having a positive impact on students, the work environment, or the industry. They do this through the use of innovative training techniques or hands-on instruction, by encouraging peer or corporate accountability, and/or through quantitative or anecdotal evidence that shows successful training.

Since the Top Trainer award was established in 2008, trainers from crane dealers, rigging suppliers, crane rental companies, contractors, insurance companies, inspection companies, manufacturers, heavy haulers, training organizations, and other companies involved in construction and heavy industry have been recognized.

Nominations are categorized as either Corporate, in which the primary employer is a construction company, crane rental company, manufacturer, or other industry-related business, or Professional, meaning the primary employer is a training company. Nominees are judged on a scale of 1 to 10 for their use of innovative or hands-on instruction; encouragement of peer or corporate accountability; evidence of successful training; and overall impact



Top Trainer Honorable Mention Jesse Garcia talks to students taking a practical exam.

on the students, environment, or industry.

Individuals who were considered for the award must have been actively engaged in crane, rigging, lifting, or construction safety training between Aug. 1, 2015, and July 31, 2016. Individuals were nominated by customers, former students, colleagues, or employers, or by themselves. Previous Top Trainer winners are ineligible for five years after being recognized, although previous Honorable Mentions are eligible.

The annual training excellence award is endorsed by the Association of Crane & Rigging Professionals, a non-profit association whose mission is dedicated to improving crane operations and rigging activities in all industries by providing educational opportunities to its members and the public. ACRP has provided

a complimentary registration to its 2017 General Assembly to the two Top Trainers, and winners are recognized in an award ceremony at the meeting.

Corporate and Professional Top Trainers also receive a scholarship, made possible through donations by the 2016 sponsors (see box at right). Scholarships may be used by the recipient for continuing

education, or donated to a student.

In addition to the winners, three trainers in each category received an Honorable Mention for their positive influence on crane and rigging training.

For more information on the awards, or to submit a nomination for 2017, visit www.toptraineraward.com.



Corporate Top Trainer Ralf Notheis

Manager – Crane Academy
Bigfoot Crane Co. Inc.,
Abbotsford, British Columbia
Nominated by customers
and colleagues

With more than two decades of experience in the heavy equipment industry, Ralf Notheis has the knowledge and personality to take a complicated subject and relate it to a group of trainees, no matter what course they are studying. His background, which includes positions at Canada's largest crane rental companies, has given him the practical experience and technical expertise that are highly sought after in crane and rigging training.

"Ralf understands that not everyone learns the same way or comprehends the material at the same pace, so by applying different training methods for different people, he can still achieve the same results in the same time frame," says Gerry Wiebe, director of business development for Bigfoot Crane Co. "This ability to adapt is what truly sets him apart from other trainers that I have worked with."

Earlier this year, for example, Ralf received a call from a potential student who wanted to become a crane operator, but he lacked self-confidence due to dyslexia and low reading levels. Ralf encouraged the young man to tour the Crane Academy, watch current students in training, and review the program material. He then registered for the next course. "Once the course began, it was difficult to slow him down, as he would stay

up most nights doing quizzes and trying to comprehend the material for the next day," Ralf says. "Using his smart phone to decipher words, he worked harder than any student."

After passing his Core Theory Test with a 91%, the student started the practical training portion. "The following weeks were spent with him operating cranes in the day and the two of us reviewing theory in the evenings until the day of the final assessment, which he also passed (practical with ease at 100% and theory by 80%)," Ralf says. "The entire experience still puts a smile on my face to this day. Hard work does pay off in many ways."

In his training courses, Ralf emphasizes the dangers of not following the exact procedures by using videos, regulations, reviews of accident investigations, and personal anecdotes. "This adds a critical, real-life perspective that keeps new operators from taking shortcuts or being pushed into an unsafe situation by other workers on jobsites," Wiebe says.

Ralf creates his own teaching materials using real-life scenarios to make the material relevant. "Once a student uses what they have learned to solve creative real-life problems just like what they will face on a jobsite, their interest level goes through the roof and they feel more competent and eager to attack the next challenge," he says. "This style of learning is preparing our operators to say yes when everyone else says no because they have found the correct solution, and say no when everyone else says yes because they have identified the hazards that no one else could."

His theory content covers everything from correct maintenance procedures to always being early so that mistakes are not made while rushing to make up lost time. To date, not one of Ralf's students has been involved in a serious incident.

On-site training gives him the opportunity

Judge's Comments

"Creating reward-based safety challenges for his clients and their employees shows Ralf's ability to gain buy-in and commitment from client management, which ultimately benefits the crane and rigging industry as a whole."

2016 Top Trainer Sponsors

PLATINUM



Lifting Gear Hire

GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



to bring management up to speed on current safety and operating methods. On several occasions, Ralf has helped companies make safety more appealing to their employees by issuing a site-wide challenge, with monthly safety bonuses issued to those operators who have performed flawlessly, with no negative feedback from customers, no damage to equipment, and no accidents. Businesses report a significant reduction in repairs and lost customers, while the operators are much more focused on performing well each day.

Corporate Honorable Mention

**Chris Smith,
Director of Training
and Corporate Service
Manager, Morrow
Equipment Co.**



After 35 years in the crane and rigging industry, it is hard to stump Chris Smith. In fact, he encourages his students to bring their toughest questions to class when they book their training. "He does not get stuck in a training syllabus format style, and his students are encouraged to ask him questions," says Leena Ellis, training administrator for Morrow Equipment Co. "[By letting] the questions lead the class to get to all of the subject areas, this engages the class and keeps them energized and interactive."

His students also commented on their success with Chris' unique style of training. "I have had a lot of different training over the years, and just wanted to say this is one of the best classes I have had," said Ness Campell's tower crane operations manager. "Your teaching style kept me in tune and [kept] my attention."

In addition to his experience as a trainer for 25 years, Chris also has been a crane operator, inspector, and an NCCCO practical examiner. He has served on the ASME B30 committee and several NCCCO committees and task forces.

For eight years, Chris has been with Morrow Equipment, and was promoted to corporate service manager this year. At Morrow, he takes information provided by field personnel, and their safety issues, to steer policy changes within the company.

"Chris is the person who communicates with all the stakeholders in our company, which is why he's the best person to be the advocate for the employees and the company, in regards to our safety and training programs," Ellis says. "He not only changed our safety culture, policies, repair costs, and accident rates here at Morrow; his classes are intended to help all of the companies that send their employees to be trained by Chris."

Judge's Comments

"Most impressive to me is Chris Smith is considered the 'trainer to trainers.' Not only does he produce repeat customers, but a demand for his services at the university and OSHA level are a testimony to his reputation as a first-class instructor."

**Don Horn, Senior
Technical Trainer,
Link-Belt Construction
Equipment**



With an approachable manner and easygoing nature, Don Horn is known for making the learning environment great for his students. He uses a variety of training techniques—from lecture-based training to hands-on scenarios—but what David Tripp, training manager for Link-Belt Cranes, says sets him apart is how he reinforces key points of the lesson with actual accounts from his past experiences. "Don's ability to lead classroom discussions on subjects such as the advanced troubleshooting of crane hydraulic systems while integrating storytelling ensures that all students are engaged and learning," Tripp says.

As the senior instructor at Link-Belt, Don has been the backbone of its training programs for more than 20 years. A field technician for Equipment Sales & Service, who first trained with Don 13 years ago, says he has learned the Link-Belt system and how to find the information required to perform his job duties through Don.

"Don has also helped me with additional training material for home study to improve my skills," he says. "I believe I am a better all-around mechanic, using troubleshooting techniques and problem-solving skills that I have learned from him. I have been to the Link-Belt training facility several times over the years...I learn something new every time."

Another student with Dawes Rigging & Crane Rental says Don goes above and beyond, bringing in field technicians, engineers, or other professionals to answer questions asked during training.

"In doing this, he encourages discussion in the training room so that all students are able to share their personal experiences about repairing cranes," the student says. "Don ensures that all questions that are asked are answered—and they are answered thoroughly."

Judge's Comments

"Although many of his students are not crane operators, he ensures the technicians know the concepts behind making lifts and learn to read and understand load charts to keep them safe, in case they have to operate a crane during setup or troubleshooting."

**Larry Petkovsek, Lifting
Specialist, Mazzella
Lifting Technologies**



When training new students, Larry Petkovsek doesn't travel lightly. Bringing with him four heavy-duty crates of rigging samples from the field, Larry will set up several tables with these examples to provide stories and insight into how a hook, shackle, or sling was damaged. To demonstrate the dynamics of a crane or lifting beam, he develops props that show the effects of different angles on the load and how the sling reacts to those effects.

Larry's experience in the industry goes back 40 years, when he worked at a steel warehouse. "None of the employees were trained or understood the loads we were moving or the influence the angles had on sling capacity," he says. "I always have felt the need to make sure the students get a real understanding of the forces involved...and think about these forces when they plan their lift."

Out of 40 student assessments submitted for the Top Trainer award, more than half commented on Larry's hands-on and visual demonstrations. "Larry didn't just show pictures and talk about the products. He had several samples of equipment that was damaged due to misuse," one student says. "I could actually see the effects of improper use."

Ben Dressman, sales manager for Mazzella Lifting Technologies, nominated Larry for the award for his unique presentations and ability to drive home the importance of safety. "Larry's enthusiasm for rigging is infectious," he says. "He eats, sleeps, and breathes rigging, and has a knack for helping others understand the risks associated with lifting."

His impact on his students is evidenced in the activity after training. For example, before training a group of millwrights, an outside company performing quarterly inspections pulled a large number of items out each quarter at the mill. "After the training, there was a significant drop in damaged product being found during quarterly inspections," Larry says. "The employees themselves were taking bad product out and not allowing it to remain on the rigging racks."

Judge's Comments

"The change in the safety culture among his students shows the positive impact Larry Petkovsek has on his clients in particular and on the industry in general."



Professional Top Trainer Matt Schmitt

Instructor - Overton Safety
Training Inc., Aloha, Ore.
Nominated by colleagues
and customers

Communicating a complex technical subject in a simplified manner has gotten Matt Schmitt far in his training career. His knowledge of technical lifting combined with his unique style of teaching has enabled him to bring clarity to a group of students who may not have passed a difficult certification process without expert instruction.

Matt was tasked in Chicago with bringing up to speed crane operators who must comply with city rules and regulations. Many students have a primary language other than English, and their background is in material delivery with limited education on other types of equipment. To be compliant, these operators needed to learn about many types

of equipment and material-handling concepts they were unfamiliar with, and the training required a different curriculum and approach to instruction.

Using some of Overton Safety Training's base materials, Matt worked with the operators to develop a training program that improved their previous training and testing by more than 200%. By consulting with these Chicago operators, he improved the program to a point where other instructors now have a solid template for training. This was all done through Matt's efforts to listen to students, adapt the materials, and coordinate with Overton's curriculum designer.

With these new materials, Matt has conducted seven classes in 2016 with more than 30 students. Their passing rate is five times better than before his instruction. His last class of 16 students had a passing rate better than seven times the average for this exam.

One of his recent students called Matt "an excellent instructor who teaches the material in our terms in ways that we understand it, not just words from a book." Another says that Matt is straight-forward in his instruction. "His knowledge of the information and ability to keep us focused on the material with

humor and timely examples has helped me immensely," he adds.

In the classroom, Rob Scherbarth, senior instruction for Overton Safety Training, says: "Matt uses timely voice inflection and body language, artistic illustrations, and other visual and hands-on demonstrations to effectively demonstrate the complex crane and rigging scenarios these operators have never been faced with in the past. As a result, these students not only have learned the information needed to achieve certification in that area, but they have learned lifting concepts that will enable them to work more efficient and safely in the future."

In addition to this specific regional exam, Matt conducts other classes offered by Overton Safety Training. In the last 12 months, Matt's students who took the NCCCO Articulated Boom Crane/Loader and NCCCO Mobile Crane Operator classes achieved a 90% passing rate, and he has

Judge's Comments

"With the need for a new training program in Chicago, Matt's efforts to bring materials that improve the operator's understanding of new concepts and equipment is commendable."



CONGRATULATIONS
to AICB's Amanda Jordan
on her Professional
Top Trainer 2016
honorable mention.
Thank you for all that
you do for the crane
and rigging industry!

2016 Honorable Mention **Top Trainer** AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL CRANE BUREAU

281-871-1863 office@cranebureau.com cranebureau.com

Amanda has grown up around crane and rigging through the guidance of her father, Don Jordan, who is the 2012 Professional Top Trainer award winner and President of AICB. Shortly after college at Texas A&M she began instructing courses for AICB and everyone quickly realized she was a natural. Amanda is always increasing her wealth of knowledge by continually reading and staying up to date with current regulations and standards. Her expertise has led her to be a valued resource in the industry that is called upon for clarification and assistance by field operators, corporate safety directors and everyone in between. She also sits on numerous industry committees and board of directors, including roles with NCCCO and ACRP. Amanda has an extreme amount of passion behind every course she teaches, regardless of size or scope, and makes it her goal to ensure each student expands their knowledge base and can be safer in the field because of it. Amanda is thankful for the Top Trainer 2016 honorable mention and will continue on her mission to make the lifting industry a safer place through sharing her knowledge with others.



AICB
Contact Us Today!
281-871-1863



NATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR THE CERTIFICATION
OF CRANE OPERATORS (NCCCO)

The International Crane Bureau (ICB) fully endorsed by the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO), and will prepare candidates for the NCCCO exam.

Full service training and consulting for all your crane and rigging needs!

received countless positive reviews regarding his style and passion in each class.

"Matt Schmitt was without question one of the best trainers we have ever used," says a Chicago-based fleet director for a construction materials distributor. "He was easily approachable and laid out this extremely difficult topic in a fashion that made sense to all in each class. A great base of knowledge and technical competence that was displayed in a very positive manner. His training style is both innovative and hands-on—the perfect combination for our operators."

Professional Honorable Mention

**Amanda Jordan,
Vice President of
Operations, American
International Crane
Bureau (AICB)**



When students describe Amanda Jordan's style of training, the first word that comes to mind is 'interactive.' "She is able to connect with her students at whatever level is necessary to help the students grasp and understand the training material," says Johnny

Galan, maintenance training coordinator for Chevron Phillips Chemical Co. and one of Amanda's Top Trainer nominators. "It is this ability to teach and help students to become better and safer at their job through her training that sets her apart from others."

Making use of several different training techniques, Amanda employs hands-on demonstration, videos, involving students with question and answer, anecdotal evidence, and guest speakers to share their work experiences. "During the training class, Amanda will use model cranes and equipment for demonstration during her presentation to show students the message she is trying to deliver, whether it is boom deflection, crane stability, operation of quadrants, [pendant] lines, or boom stops on crawler cranes," says James Bundrick Sr., hourly rigging superintendent for Brown & Root and another nominator.

Following the training at Chevron Phillips Chemical, Galan says that it was evident Amanda's classes made a positive impact on the plant. "After our craftsmen attended Signal Person/Rigger 1 classes with Amanda, they have made a conscious effort to change the safety and accountability culture at our plant," he says. "She has influenced our plant

safety culture for the better, and this is evident by the reduction in our rigging related incidents by 30%."

Judge's Comments

"Amanda Jordan carries on the legacy of top-notch instruction, passion, and a commitment to safety that AICB is known for in the industry."

**Don Childers, Owner,
Nationwide Equipment
Training**



Don Childers has been in the crane business since the 1980s. His long history in the industry includes operating cranes to lift and move damaged aircrafts, working as a heavy rigger/equipment specialist on the FEMA Urban Search & Rescue California Task Force, providing search and rescue help in hurricane-stricken areas in New Orleans and Texas, and becoming a subject matter expert for cranes and rigging for FEMA.

As a trainer, Don has instructed more than 4,500 students since 2007. Not only does he keep them up to date on the latest OSHA regulations and ASME standards, but he makes

CICB Employs

5 "Top Trainers"



Training • Inspections • Certifications
Crane Inspection & Certification Bureau
Orlando, FL and Houston, TX
800-327-1386 - www.cicb.com

Top Trainer

2016

Jesse Garcia

- Crane/Equipment Operator & Rigger Training/Certification
- Customized Safety Training
- Inspection & Consulting Services



2014



Scott Crowder

2012



Larry Kime

2011



John O'Connor

2009



Jerry Longtin

Creating Safer Operations

Anywhere in the World



sure his students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them as operators.

Many students struggle with load chart questions on the NCCCO exams, and Don says he tries to break it down to a step-by-step procedure so they have a better understanding of the charts.

"I want my students to completely understand the physics and abilities of cranes, as well as their limitations," he says. "I explain what they can and can't do with a crane with answers and their consequences."

Professional, prepared, and practical is how one compliance officer described Don

after he provided crane operator training at a renewable energy company. She notes that during the training, Don was repetitious and creative in having employees memorize the load charts, regulations, and key words.

"We had other crane companies come and only one or two [workers] passed the classroom [portion], and previously, no one passed the practical," the compliance officer says. "We now have five maintenance/operators who are certified crane operators. We can use our own cranes to do the work here instead of having to hire it out. This has helped tremendously in equipment downtime."

Judge's Comments

"Don mixes up his teaching style by using videos and images to get his point across, but also incorporates humor in the classroom to keep the atmosphere relaxed."

**Jesse Garcia,
Instructor/Inspector,
Crane Inspection &
Certification Bureau
(CICB)**



Engaging and involving students in the learning process is one skill that Jesse Garcia has mastered. With several years in crane and rigging operations, he approaches students as a peer, sharing his experience and encouraging them to share their knowledge with the class.

"He believes when the content is accurate, current, and relevant to the student, the likelihood of successful learning and knowledge transfer increases drastically," says Camille Singletary, CICB's marketing manager.

Training programs can prevent a number of barriers, such as individual experience, language challenges, and cultural differences. Jesse often groups experienced students with new students during the training program, which builds confidence in the newer student and respects the knowledge of the veteran.

Jesse acknowledges that one size does not fit all when it comes to training and believes in using a blended learning approach to achieve the best results. Incorporating traditional formats with technological advances, Jesse's training relies heavily on the students participating in demonstrations, hands-on training, and the sharing of experiences/knowledge. The use of images, videos, and PowerPoint presentations support and add extra impact to textual information.

Interactive sessions which include demonstrations and hands-on training make the attendee more receptive to the new information and is effective, but Jesse says the biggest benefit of hands-on training is the opportunity for repeated practice. Hands-on learning allows students to directly observe and understand what is happening, he says. When Jesse combines this with questions and answers, it becomes a powerful and engaging session.

Judge's Comments

"As a bilingual instructor, Jesse has enhanced the learning process for Spanish-speaking students by revising training to include more visual aids and hands-on training."



DEFEND YOUR CABLES! WITH THE ONLY IP54 RATED CABLE CARRIER

WIN THE BATTLE FOR PROTECTION.

Defend against dirt, grime and all types of particulates with a carrier that has been proven to keep these items out (IP54 rated). Available in a range of standard and custom materials, the TKA Carrier Series features easy opening lids along with pin-and-bore connection and stroke system for quiet, dependable and easy-to-maintain protection. There is no better way to protect your mission-critical cables in even the harshest environments than TKA. Count on it.



ROLLER CHAINS • ENGINEERING CLASS CHAINS • BACKSTOPS • SPROCKETS • CABLE & HOSE CARRIERS • POWER TRANSMISSION PRODUCTS

TSUBAKI
Total Package
USTSUBAKI.COM



©2015, U.S. Tsubaki Power Transmission, LLC. All Rights Reserved.