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## Providing VDC Training to Journeymen and Apprentices

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International Training Fund

Stephan Schnell

Director of Training - UA Local 467  
Instructor – United Association

Eric Posey

President – FUSED  
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### Learning Objectives

- Understand what it takes in a combination of field experience and software proficiency to be a successful VDC drafter
- Clearly see the goals of a mechanical drafter training program
- Appreciate the employer/labor relations, training initiatives and cooperation
- Appreciate the value of field experience and software knowledge to properly design buildings

### Description

Drafting in VDC programs takes a combination of industry knowledge and software knowledge. In order to be proficient, a drafter has to pull from both knowledge sets and the best VDC personnel have some level of field experience in order to know how systems should be built correctly and efficiently. This session will moderate a discussion on ways to train union labor, both from the field and through the apprenticeship. In both cases, there is a need for some level of proficiency. For apprentices, more jobsites are incorporating coordination software in the field. They need to be able to use the software tools to read, interpret and build. For journeymen using their experience to become draftsmen, they need training on how to use software to design, coordinate and fabricate. The discussion will talk about how contractors around the country are approaching this training, what content should be taught to each set of people and how they approach bringing in labor to the office.



## Speaker(s)

### **Ken Schneider**

*Training Specialist - UA-ITF*

Ken Schneider, has been a Training Specialist with the UA-ITF since May 2015. Ken started his Building Trades career as an apprentice for Sprinkler Fitters UA Local 268, St. Louis MO. in June of 1984 and reached Journeymen status in 1988. He began his Training career in 1997 as a part-time instructor and in 2003, he graciously accepted the position of a full-time instructor. In 2005 he was appointed to the position of Training Director, a position he held until 2015. After spending a decade as a Training Director with Sprinkler Fitters UA Local 268, Ken understands what it takes to create relationships which helps build a training partnership that benefits both the UA and their Industry partners. It's creating a win-win relationship with manufacturers and vendors that has enabled him to be successful in Training. Ken brought that same approach as a Training Specialist with the United Association Education and Training Department.

### **Stephan Schnell**

*UA-ITF Construction Technology Committee, Director of Training - UA Local 467 JATC*

Stephan started his career as an apprentice plumber in the mechanical and plumbing industry. He worked on construction projects and in fabrication shops on a wide variety of project types. In 2006, he shifted his focus to design, prefabrication and all things construction technology related. He is passionate about education and construction technology serving as the Director of Training of UA Local 467 and on several educational committees on the local and national level. He also co-founded and launched a construction software company and currently serves as an advisor on different startups.

### **Eric Posey**

*Instructor - United Association, President - FUSED*

Eric is a building trades journeyman UA steamfitter with experience in the construction industry since 2002. Eric attended Purdue University's School of Engineering for Computer Engineering, but opted to jump to a career in the construction industry instead. He completed the apprenticeship at UA Local 440 Plumbers, Steamfitters, & HVACR Service Technicians in 2009 as a journeyman steamfitter with an Indiana plumbing license and several other industry certifications. Since that time, Eric has worked in a wide variety of roles on commercial and industrial construction projects. He has vast experience in Autodesk software, robotic total station layout, laser scanning, and much more. In 2010, Eric began teaching rigging and technology courses to building trades journeymen and apprentices. In 2015, he began creating courses and teaching construction technology nationally for the United Association - representing over 360,000 piping professionals. In 2016, Eric was a speaker at Autodesk University. In 2018, he was featured by the Autodesk Skilled Trades program. He is now both a Revit Certified Professional in Mechanical Design and an Autodesk Certified Instructor. In 2021, Eric founded FUSED, a union-signatory services and training company, specializing in all things VDC, reality capture, and construction technology.



## Agenda

### Meet the panel

A brief introduction to your speakers: Ken Schnieder, Stephan Schnell, and Eric Posey

### What is the United Association?

The United Association of Plumbers, Pipefitters, Sprinkler Fitters, Welders, and HVACR Techs (UA) has more than 360,000 members engaged in the fabrication, installation, and servicing of piping systems and is the leading skills training union in North America. The International Training Fund, which governs the UA's training programs, is a fully accredited higher learning institution, validating the superior level of education provided to its professionals. The training professionals who work for the UA Education and Training Department are field experts and stay abreast of industry changes and advancements. Whether training new apprentices or providing advanced programs for journey workers, UA members are privy to high-tech programs. These include specialized processes, accelerated welding training, virtual design and construction, management courses, certification programs, college degree programs, and more. Additionally, the Instructor Training Program (ITP), held each year at Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor, MI, is where UA instructors go to become certified coordinators and instructors. This program is another avenue for instructors' exposure to advancements in the industry. The UA Pipe Trades Training & Technology Conference also provides new material to staff. By facilitating the training needs of its members, the UA maximizes their employability, preparing them to support signatory contractors on complex projects. Training is a lifelong benefit for UA members.

### Industries Served

### Industry Partnerships

### Industry Challenges & Solutions

### Past, Present, and Future Training of the UA

### Mechanical Drafter Classification

### VDC Certification

### How to Join

[www.ua.org/join](http://www.ua.org/join)

### Questions & Answers Discussion

