



# UNION NEWS

Union Steward

Approved for posting,

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## Nothing Was a Gift: The Evolution of Education Benefits

One of the richest benefits of our IAM-Boeing contract, remains education benefits available to our members using Education Assistance and Heritage Learning Together Program benefits (the only payroll at Boeing to still have these). Each benefit has been hard fought and won by those who came before us. Again, nothing was a gift from the company and our union contract is why members continue to enjoy these benefits to pursue their educational and career goals.

Prior to our 1989 contract which created the IAM/Boeing Joint Programs, the only education benefits provided to our members working at Boeing was through a Boeing policy that could be changed or altered at any time. Training at that time was limited to classes or subjects management approved for training that pertained to your current job or approved Boeing fields of study. Members paid for the classes up front and were reimbursed after the class ended, if they received a grade of C or better.

**1989** – Our contract established IAM-Boeing Joint Programs and truly changed how our members obtained training.

**1992** – Joint Programs introduced Education Assistance which provides our active and laid-off members opportunities for training and education to advance their personal and career goals whether it is for a different job at Boeing, a complete career change or just a subject they are interested in learning more about. The premise is to encourage members to pursue additional education they may have hesitated to take in the past by removing many of the obstacles. EA changed how Boeing looked at training. The program at that time included:

- \$2,000 a year for active members in tuition and education assistance costs for all hourly employees. At that time members had to be on the payroll six months to qualify for EA benefits or have six months seniority prior to layoff.

- Laid-off employees were eligible for \$2,500 per year up to three years after layoff, even if they find other employment.

- Tuition fees are prepaid directly to the school. This was the first Boeing initiative to pay tuition directly to the school so members did not incur out-of-pocket expenses that might have prohibited them from taking training.

- Course required books and materials are fully covered.

- Training and course selection is employee's choice.

- Members can attend any school listed in the current "Accredited Institution of Post Secondary Education," any licensed and/or regulated institution such as vocational schools, proprietary trade schools, approved vendors, or training provided by local community agencies such as Red Cross or the Coast Guard.

- Employees are not required to provide

grades and are not required to reimburse tuition costs if they drop the class or fail.

**1993** - In addition to EA, Joint Programs introduced other educational opportunities that can still be utilized today, which included:

**SELF-PACED PROGRAMS/COMPUTER LABS** – Joint Programs has continually offered self-paced programs, computer labs and skill enhancement labs to increase educational opportunities – whether a member was looking for remedial training, learning new computer skills, or a host of other curriculum. Members can take self-paced courses on nearly every topic. Instructors are always on-hand to answer any questions, help locate a course or provide tutoring in various subjects. Joint Programs continues to develop and convert appropriate ERT curriculum available in a self-paced format to continuously deliver training our members want to fulfill their career goals. Computer lab classes include keyboarding classes, Windows, Word and Excel, as well as refresher courses in math, English and study skills.

Structured classes were also offered in the labs to help:

- Prepare to go back to school and brush up on study habits;

- Refresh your reading, writing, history, or math skills;

- Use a computer to complete homework;

- Find a quiet place to study;

- Perform a job search on the internet;

- Update your resume or

cover letter.

**1993** – Horizons was established to provide advising services for both active and laid-off members so members could develop a training plan and locate education programs to meet their goals. Horizons offered assessment, career-development assistance, skill enhancement, referral, one-on-one tutoring, brush-up courses, and other advising services to meet the needs of members with different interests, goals, and skill levels. Horizons began in Everett and opened at the Quality Through Training Program office in Tukwila in June 1993. Eventually this morphed into the IAM-Boeing Joint Programs Career Advisors who now offer a much broader array of services for our members.

**1997** – EA eligibility changed so members are eligible as soon as they are on the hourly payroll (previously needed six months seniority).

**1999** – Contract included a Letter of Understanding that remains in place today offering Heritage Learning Together Program (LTP) education benefits that are virtually unlimited. No set limit on tuition and fees for courses/classes that meet accreditation requirements. No other payroll at Boeing has these LTP Benefits. IAM Benefits include:

- NO Waiting Period! Educational benefits



available on your first day of work! (Other payrolls have a 1-year or 3-year wait depending on the degree).

- NO "Preferred" schools and "Strategic Fields of Study" restrictions, but it must be at an accredited school.

- No annual funding limit making LTP benefits virtually UNLIMITED funding, including getting a Masters' Degree or PhD.

- Earn Restricted Stock Options (eliminated for other payrolls in 2010).

- Your educational plans do not need approval from management.

- NOTE: When using LTP, you must attain, for each course, a minimum grade of C- or "Pass" for courses not graded.

**1999** – IAM members who are laid-off were able to get additional retraining money following layoff through multiple government grants that included Trade Adjustment Assistance, National Reserve Grant, and National Emergency Grants to name a few. Our members laid-off today still qualify to use Trade Adjustment Assistance as our Union has continually filed additional petitions to ensure this benefit remains should members get laid-off.

**2003** – EA benefit raised to \$2,500 for both active and laid-off members.

**2009** – NOTE: LTP was revised for all other payrolls (salaried and non-union) at Boeing with a cap of \$15,000 per year. Courses must be in programs Boeing deems as "strategic" to its business. For non-IAM members, you have to be on the payroll a certain number of years to be eligible and also must remain at Boeing so many years after graduation or repay the tuition. (NOTE: In 2010, SPEEA members LTP benefits faced similar cuts and restrictions with only unlimited funding left in pursuing a master's degree or certificate program in computer science, physics, chemistry, math and engineering. IAM 751 LTP benefits remain unchanged.)

**2012** – EA benefit raised to \$3,000 a year for both active and laid off members.

**2017** – In addition to the EA and LTP benefits, starting in 2017 Machinists Union members and their families can also obtain a free college benefit through the IAM. This online program allows members and their family members to earn an associate degree (or any number of certificate programs) free of charge from Eastern Gateway College. The degree is transferrable to a four-year degree, and the program is hoping to expand to a four-year degree program in the fall of 2018. The benefit is available to IAM members, retirees and their families (defined as spouse, children, stepchildren, children-in-law, dependents and grandchildren). Learn more by visiting [freecollege.goiam.org](http://freecollege.goiam.org) or call 1-888-590-9009.

To pursue any career or educational goals, make an appointment with an IAM-Boeing Joint Programs Career Advisor (1-800-235-3453). Advisors offer a wealth of resources to determine a plan to achieve your goals.

