

# *Exmeyer part of new class to earn journeyman's card*

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For five years, Chad Exmeyer has taken classes and worked as an apprentice with the goal of becoming a journeyman wireman through the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Exmeyer, 28, recently received his journeyman's card and will be among six men who will take part in Local 873's annual "Top Out" banquet.

He was working this past week with Huston Electric on a job on the Grissom Air Reserve Base.

"I worked in a couple of factories and decided that wasn't for me," he said. "We had a couple of family friends that suggested I apply for the apprenticeship program. It sounded good at the time."

Exmeyer said when he first started on-site training as an apprentice, it meant a lot of picking up trash and other cleaning.

"It was the grunt work at first," he said with a laugh.

During his apprenticeship, Exmeyer took classes on electrical theories, code and mathematics. Additionally, he said, 8,000 hours of on-the-job training was required to complete the program.

Exmeyer's pay increased as he completed each year of the apprenticeship program.

"It felt great," he said of receiving his journeyman's card. "It was a long time coming."

The journeyman's card will allow Exmeyer to work anywhere in the country, but he would like to remain in the Kokomo area.

"This is a real good job," he said. "I love what I do. There is a lot of training that goes into it."

Jeff Cook has been a journeyman wireman for 26 years, and worked with Exmeyer during his apprenticeship.

"I helped him learn the trade and the safety measures that are required," Cook said.

"Chad is going to be a good journeyman."

Bill Thompson, business manager for IBEW Local 874, said prospective apprentices have to go through a selection process.

Requirements include residence in the union's jurisdiction, one year of algebra and a high school diploma or equivalent, he said.

"It's a five-year program," Thompson said. "There are two nights of classes and on-the-job training. Apprentices also take classes at Ivy Tech to receive an associate degree."

A committee consisting of three contractors and three journeyman wireman back the final selection of who will be in the apprentice program.

Local 873 covers Howard, Tipton, Wabash, Miami, Clinton and Grant counties.

Thompson said the size of the apprentice class depends on the economy, with the highest number in a class being 20. He said there are 10 enrolled in the class of 2011.

Joining Exmeyer in the graduating class this year are David Cox, Brent Fye, Jared Helmberger, Zachary Walker and Christopher White.

The “Top Out” banquet is set for April 20 at Martino’s Italian Villa.