

Badger State Industries Inmates at Redgranite Correctional Institution Certified in Power Wheelchair Repair

Badger State Industries at Redgranite Correctional Institution refurbishes manual and power wheelchairs and other durable medical equipment for the non-profit organization, Wheelchair Recycling Program (<http://wrp.org>). WRP is then able to sell this equipment at a reduced cost to those in need. BSI at RGCI also refurbishes state owned manual wheelchairs for 80.00 each.

On November 3rd, 2011 four of the ten inmates employed in wheelchair repair in BSI at RGCI obtained two separate certifications through Invacare! Invacare is one of the most prestigious and well known manufacturers of mobility equipment in the world. This certification is a huge acknowledgement of the skills the inmates have learned in the past several years. Power wheelchair equipment is very complex. These inmates are able to completely dismantle, clean and reassemble any and all wheelchairs, scooters and other durable medical equipment (both manual and power).

The specific certifications they received are: Power Mobility Repair and Basic Programming and MK6i Rehab Programming and Powered Seating. This is a very unique and rare skill. It is specific to this type of equipment. There are no technical or college programs that offer this. The certification involves: Battery and Charging Systems, Power Drive Systems, MK6i Consumer Electronics, Power Seating, Programming, Troubleshooting, Diagnostics, Maintenance and Repair of Power Wheelchairs.

It is our hope that this certification coupled with the Transition Program that BSI offers will help inmates in the future by assisting them in obtaining meaningful employment upon release. Giving inmates these skills reduces recidivism and additional victims while supporting the reentry initiative. The Wheelchair Recycling Program helps build job skills and a work ethic but also gives something back to the community. The inmates involved take their jobs and this opportunity for certification very seriously. They have been very appreciative and engaged in the process.

For more information please contact:
Christine Trinrud, Industries Specialist - BSI
Ph: 920-566-2600 x2300
Email: christine.trinrud@wi.gov