

Bühler Honored with 2026 German American Apprenticeship Award

Plymouth, MN / Chicago, IL, May 1, 2026 — The German American Chamber of Commerce (GACC) has awarded Bühler the 2026 German American Apprenticeship Award, recognizing the company's outstanding leadership and innovation in workforce development through its German-standard apprenticeship programs in the United States.



The German American Apprenticeship Award honors one company annually for excellence in implementing German-standard apprenticeships in the United States and spotlighting the transformative impact these programs have on individuals, businesses, and communities.

Bühler is a global provider of process technologies, equipment, and services for the food, feed, and advanced materials industries. Working in close partnership with their sales and service teams, the company's U.S. engineering, manufacturing, and workforce development operations support Bühler customers across North America.

Bühler was selected by an independent jury of industry, education, and government experts from Germany and the United States for its long-standing commitment to high-quality apprenticeship training and for operating a comprehensive Apprentice Academy at its Plymouth, Minnesota site. Jurors highlighted the strength of Bühler's training infrastructure, including two full-time trainers, a broad network of ICATT®-certified mentors, and dedicated training and examination facilities.



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“The Bühler team in North America is proud to be honored with this award. It's wonderful to be recognized for the long-term investment we as a group have made into creating the skills necessary to support U.S. manufacturing. Special thanks should go to our apprentice leaders Patrick Bolt and Cory Stammer in Minneapolis, and of course Mike Taylor in Raleigh.”

— **Andy Sharpe, President & CEO, Bühler North America**

A key differentiator identified by the jury was Bühler’s systematic train-the-trainer approach, in which former apprentices complete ICATT® certification and go on to mentor new cohorts. This model was recognized as a sustainable, long-term investment in workforce development that supports continuity, knowledge transfer, and program excellence. Bühler’s close collaboration with Hennepin Technical College, including involvement on advisory boards, further strengthens the alignment between academic instruction and industry needs.

The jury also noted Bühler’s dual-pathway apprenticeship model, which combines a Mechatronics Technician Apprenticeship and a Business Apprenticeship and reflects the company’s holistic approach to developing both technical and commercial talent.

Bühler has offered apprenticeship opportunities since 2012 and partnered with ICATT® in 2019 to bring German-standard structure to its program. To date, the company has graduated 44 apprentices and currently employs 14 active apprentices across both pathways. Apprentices earn internationally recognized credentials while gaining hands-on experience and earning competitive pay and benefits throughout the program.



The jury repeatedly cited the career progression of Omar Lopez, a graduate of Bühler’s inaugural apprenticeship cohort, as a compelling proof point. After completing the Mechatronics Technician Apprenticeship, Omar advanced to a Junior Automation Engineer role, became ICATT® Train-the-Trainer certified, and now mentors current apprentices while continuing his education. Jurors described his path as an example of the program’s long-term career impact and effectiveness.

“Bühler exemplifies what it means to build a truly sustainable workforce development culture — not just by training apprentices, but by turning graduates into the next generation of mentors and program leaders. This is exactly the kind of long-term commitment that makes German-standard apprenticeships so transformative for American manufacturing.”

— **Sascha Alexander Kuhn, Deputy Director of Apprenticeship Networks, GACC Midwest**



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As part of the award, Bühler will host a German American Apprenticeship Roundtable on May 1, bringing together apprenticeship stakeholders to share best practices and foster collaboration.

German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs)

The main offices of the German American Chambers of Commerce are in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC, alongside their branches in Detroit and Houston. The GACCs cater to a vast network of members and National Partners with a wide variety of services for U.S. market entry, apprenticeships in the United States, and industry events for the German American business network. Learn more at <https://ahk-usa.net/>.

ICATT® Apprenticeship Program

The Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training (ICATT®) is the leading apprenticeship program for manufacturers and companies with complex administrative processes. It is the largest program in the U.S. fully benchmarked on the German Dual Education System—an approach recognized globally for its combination of company-specific knowledge, theory, and hands-on learning—resulting in highly trained and flexible employees. Learn more at www.icattapprenticeships.com.



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