

Career Profile: Industrial Distribution

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This is the second article in my series of profiles on career opportunities, selected from a workshop I attended entitled “Careers Your Students Need to Know About” at the 2017 ASCA conference.

Industrial Distribution (ID) is another career path that I discovered at ASCA this summer. In a sense, you can think of ID as an industry that allows other industries to operate successfully. Industrial distributors provide products that are necessary for businesses, manufacturers, and Government entities. ID is responsible for moving products from manufacturers to users.

The products and services provided by ID companies typically fall into two areas -- maintenance, repair, and operation of production facilities or manufacture of equipment, machinery, goods, and products. In the US and Canada alone, there are more than 81,000 ID companies, including small local business and large global enterprises. Some ID companies serve a large geographic region and offer many products, while others may serve a small region or offer a specific product line. In short, industrial distributors are everywhere! ID companies must be innovative, continually offering new services and solutions. The ID channel is

the most efficient and cost-effective means of moving products from manufacturers to users.

No matter where you live or



where you'd like to live, Industrial Distributors are everywhere. The Industrial Careers Pathway website provides an employer database, where you can search for ID companies. I discovered that there are 11 Industrial Distributors within 50 miles of my school's zip code (not including the manufacturing companies that work with the distributors).

Over 3.3 million individuals are employed in this field. The field of ID allows individuals to start in entry-level positions and work their way up with on-the-job training. It is not necessary to attend college to get into this field. However, certain positions within the industry would require college (or beyond) such as executive, financial, or legal positions. There are so many different jobs within the field that it is tough to summarize the skills one should

have. However, the Power Transmission Distributors Association provides a skill sets and training matrix on the website, www.ptda.org.

However, for those interested in receiving education to prepare for a career in the ID field, community colleges and technical colleges offer certificates and associate's degrees in ID. At Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, Michigan, students can pursue a Certificate of Achievement as a Supply Chain Management Technician or an Associates in Business degree in Supply Chain Management.

And of course, what students really need to know is how this career path will impact their lifestyle! Starting salaries in ID are between \$28,000 and \$35,000, but that increases for technical sales, and sales management positions exceed \$100,000. More good news is that workers in this field are in it for the long haul. The 2016 Cross-Industry Compensation report shows that this industry experiences low turnover rate, which means that people are satisfied in their jobs and tend to stay. This survey is conducted every two years and includes 900 ID firms with 6,000 US locations. More information can be found by visiting www.industrialcareerpathway.org and www.ptda.org.

SCHOLARSHIP (cont'd from page 10)

CrowdAI, and the nonprofit energy organization Equitable Origin.

The Thoreau Foundation assists its scholarship winners by identifying environmentally-related internships, offering internship stipends, and providing networking opportu-

nities. A sign of success of the Thoreau Foundation's mission to foster environmental leadership is the support past scholarship winners provide to present scholarship winners.

To learn about the Henry David Thoreau Foundation and Scholar-

ship, please visit www.thoreauscholar.org. Information about the scholarships and how to apply will be mailed to all high school counselors. An online application will be available in October. Students have until February 1, 2018 to apply.