

## Macro Roundup Article

**Headline:** [How Gen Z Is Becoming the Toolbelt Generation](#)

**Article Link:** [https://www.wsj.com/lifestyle/careers/gen-z-trades-jobs-plumbing-welding-a76b5e43?mod=hp\\_lead\\_pos7](https://www.wsj.com/lifestyle/careers/gen-z-trades-jobs-plumbing-welding-a76b5e43?mod=hp_lead_pos7)

Author(s)	Te-Ping Chen
Publication	Wall Street Journal
Publication Date	April 01, 2024

**Tweet:** Since 2019 enrollment growth in vocational-focused community colleges is up 16% compared to under 1% growth in four-year colleges. The median age of American electricians and plumbers started to decline recently.

**Summary:** The number of students enrolled in vocational-focused community colleges rose 16% last year to its highest level since the National Student Clearinghouse began tracking such data in 2018. The ranks of students studying construction trades rose 23% during that time, while those in programs covering HVAC and vehicle maintenance and repair increased 7%. The number of carpenters in the U.S. grew over the past decade, while their median age fell from 42.2 to 40.9. The same was true for electricians, whose ranks grew by 229,000 workers, even as their median age fell by 2.9 years, according to federal data. Other skilled trade occupations, such as plumbing and HVAC workers, have also trended younger.

**Related Articles:** America Is Trying to Electrify. There Aren't Enough Electricians and Talent Disrupted: Underemployment, College Graduates, and the Way Forward and China's Shipyards Are Ready for a Protracted War. America's Aren't

**Primary Topic:** Education

**Topics:** College, Education, K-12, News article, Unemployment/Participation, Wages/Income, Weekly, Workforce

**Permalink:** <https://www.edwardconard.com/macro-roundup/since-2019-enrollment-growth-in-vocational-focused-community-colleges-is-up-16-compared-to-under-1-growth-in-four-year-colleges-the-median-age-of-american-electricians-and-plumbers-started-to-decline?view=detail>

**Featured Image Link:** <https://www.edwardconard.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Trades-Making-Comeback.png>