

# ACCWPA

Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

March  
2026

Inside:

- 2026 Meetings Update
- Federated Insurance
- Good People?

Volume 21, Issue 4

## 2026 Meeting Dates

### 2026

#### March 12<sup>th</sup>

Federated Insurance  
Screening, Hiring, and Retaining  
Employees

*The Sports Grille – Cranberry*

#### April 9<sup>th</sup>

*Broccoli*

Empower your business with AI  
agents that answer every call ...

*Rival Sports Bar – Bridgeville*

#### May 14<sup>th</sup>

ACCWPA APPRENTICE  
GRADUATION

*Carmody's*

#### June 11<sup>th</sup>

ACCWPA Social –  
Giant Oaks Winery

*Finleyville*

## ACCWPA

Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

*The mission of the Air Conditioning Contractors of Western PA is to assist its members in managing their companies more efficiently, therefore becoming more profitable, together with increasing their exposure and credibility within the community.*

**FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION...**  
**ACCWPA**

**724-687-7860**

**[pforker@accwpa.org](mailto:pforker@accwpa.org)**

## Screening, Hiring & Retaining Employees

### ACCWPA General Meeting Thursday – March 12<sup>th</sup>!

A company's hiring and employee retention practices communicate a lot about its culture. May employers agree that bringing qualified applicants into their business is one of their primary challenges, and today's competitive employment market can make it even harder to land top talent. This discussion focuses on ways to find quality applicants in your industry, establish strong and consistent hiring practices, and reinforces the value of continuous recruiting and employee retention to distinguish you as an "employer of choice."

Guest Speakers:

### **Anthony Papeo & Jacob Ritzel**

Federated Marketing Representatives will  
co-present the evening topic.

### **Registration Form on Page 3**

Please RSVP no later than **February 9<sup>th</sup> noon!**





## Not a Contractor or Associate member?

We'd love to serve you, too.

For additional information visit

[www.accwpa.org](http://www.accwpa.org)

or call 724-687-7860

Email: [pforker@accwpa.org](mailto:pforker@accwpa.org)

### Additional reasons for membership are:

- Company membership applies to all employees of your firm.
- **NEW!! Contractors Free Associate Membership in Service RoundTable!!**
- Networking!!!
- Monthly meetings with informative presentations that benefit both the Contractor and Supplier.
- Relevant technical training and educational classes.
- 4-year Apprenticeship School with curriculum that is focused only on the HVAC industry!
- Monthly newsletters and email communications filled with industry information and updates.
- Insurance for member's company discount.
- Social Outings that everyone can participate
- And much more to come!



**Join today!**

**ACCWPA is the Professional Alliance designed exclusively for today's HVAC/R Contractor!**

## 2025 / 2026

### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

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# ACCWPA General Meeting

## Thursday – March 12<sup>th</sup>!

### Screening Hiring and Retaining Employees

A company's hiring and employee retention practices communicate a lot about its culture. May employers agree that bringing qualified applicants into their business is one of their primary challenges, and today's competitive employment market can make it even harder to land top talent. This discussion focuses on ways to find quality applicants in your industry, establish strong and consistent hiring practices, and reinforces the value of continuous recruiting and employee retention to distinguish you as an "employer of choice."

### **Anthony Papeo and Jacob Ritzel**

Federated Marketing Representatives will co-present the evening topic

Join Us at

### **The SPORTS GRILLE** - CRANBERRY

1294 Freedom Road  
Cranberry Twp., PA 06066

3:00 pm – Board Meeting ♦ 5:30 – 6:00 pm - Social (cash bar)

6:00 - 7:00 pm – Guest Speakers Anthony Papeo & Jacob Ritzel

7:00 pm – Dinner and Social resumes (cash bar)

**Dinner - \$55.00**

**RSVP – 724-687-7860, fax or email • No Cancellations after March 9<sup>th</sup> noon!**

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### **\* Important – RSVP is a must! \***

Email: pforker@accwpa.org or fax (724) 687-7860

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

**The Sports Grille - \$55.00**

**NO Cancellations after March 9<sup>th</sup> - NOON. No shows will be billed.**

**IF YOU ALREADY MADE YOUR RESERVATIONS, THANKS!**

# ACCWPA

Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

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GREENSBURG.....	990 Broad St.....	724-836-6319
MONROEVILLE.....	1616 McClure Rd.....	724-733-7577
PITTSBURGH.....	952 Noblestown Rd.....	412-922-0500
WHEATLAND.....	10 Mill St.....	724-347-3774
WASHINGTON.....	84 Stewart Ave.....	724-222-6720

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Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

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Service Roundtable Affiliate Association



**AWESOME CONTRACTOR BENEFIT!**

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Ken Swank - 724-331-1663

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PENN COMMERCIAL INC.  
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WESTERN AREA CAREER  
& TECHNOLOGY CENTER  
Rob Rossell - 724-809-4047

## Be There Fund™

(Must be an ACCWPA member to Win!)

Next General Meeting - \$120.00

## Why Can't I find (or Keep) Good People?

Service Nation by EverPro

Part 1

### Solving the Home Service Staffing Problem

Running a home service business already pulls you in a hundred directions. You're handling customers, watching cash flow, dealing with equipment, and trying to grow. On top of all that, finding and keeping good employees feels harder every year.

If it feels like you're always short-staffed, constantly rehiring, or stuck covering jobs yourself, you're not alone. This is an industry-wide problem, but it's one you *can* get control over once you understand what's really causing it. Below are the biggest reasons staffing keeps breaking down, and what may actually help fix it.

### Why It's So Hard to Find Good People

Hiring problems usually don't start with a worker's attitude or work ethic. They start with **supply, time, and systems**. But what does that actually mean?

### There Just Aren't Enough Qualified Workers

Licensed plumbers and experienced technicians are in short supply everywhere, especially in smaller areas. When you can't find people, you end up filling the gap yourself: running calls, covering installs, and putting out fires instead of working ON your business. That's exhausting, and it stalls your company's growth.

### So What Actually Helps Fix These Problems?

There's no single silver bullet, but there are a few key points that can make a huge difference:

- Stop hiring out of desperation
- Be clear about what the job really requires
- Train people intentionally, not casually "on the job"
- Build pay plans that reward performance and provide stability
- Use systems that reduce admin work and decision fatigue

### A Better Way to Handle Hiring

If you're a home service business having trouble hiring, don't worry. The best place to start is by **standardizing your process**, and the best way to standardize is by finding an all-in-one platform. Don't try to manage hiring from memory, sticky notes, or inbox chaos.

### Our Recommendation: Recruiting Path

Recruiting Path is a dedicated recruiting platform built specifically for small home service businesses, not corporate HR. Its hiring system helps you stay organized, consistent, and proactive so you're not starting from zero every time someone quits.

### How Recruiting Path Helps You Hire Smarter

- **Build a real candidate pipeline**  
Every applicant and reference you've ever received stays in one place, so you're never scrambling when you need help fast.
- **Cut the admin work down drastically**  
Post jobs, track applicants, and manage everything from one dashboard instead of juggling emails, scattered messages, and paperwork.
- **Mobile-friendly for real workers**  
Most tradespeople apply from their phones. Recruiting Path is built for that, so you don't lose good candidates before they finish applying.
- **Built-in references and background checks**  
References are collected automatically, and background checks can be ordered directly in the system, reducing risk without adding more work.

### Get Control of Your Hiring Again

Recruiting Path is available for home service pros exclusively through Service Nation and is designed to help you hire better people with less stress and fewer mistakes.

- **If you're already a Service Nation member:**  
Activate your [free trial here](#) and start building a real hiring pipeline today.
- **If you're not a member yet:**  
Book a consultation to get a business assessment and learn how Service Nation's tools help you stabilize staffing, protect margins, and grow with confidence.

Continue on Page 6

ACCWPA

Corner



*Integrity is the  
essence of  
everything  
successful.*

**PEACE, LOVE  
and JOY  
thru out 2026!**

SmartWords  
One Kind  
Word can  
change  
someone's  
entire day!

**Inspiration**



**Hiring Takes Way More Time Than You Have**

Posting jobs, sorting applications, calling people back, chasing references, ordering background checks—it all adds up *fast*. For many owners, hiring becomes a second full-time job that you never signed up for.

When you're overwhelmed, hiring decisions can get rushed.

**Burnout Leads to Bad Hires**

When you don't have the time and you're tired of looking, it's tempting to "make someone work" instead of waiting for the right fit. One bad hire can drag down morale, hurt customer experience, and cost you way more than the position is actually worth.

Remember that your company culture is an important part of attracting and keeping good people.

**The Smarter Approach to Recruiting**

Instead of trying to poach experienced techs from competitors (many of whom often bring old habits and resist change), many successful companies focus on hiring entry-level or maintenance techs. These employees are typically easier to train, easier to coach, and are more likely to fit into your systems if you train them the right way from day one.

**Why Good Employees Still Leave**

So now you know why it can be tough to find good employees, but hiring someone is only half the battle. *Keeping* them is where most companies actually struggle.

**Pay Is Competitive: Even Small Gaps Matter**

Good technicians know their value. If a competitor offers \$4–\$6 more per hour, or promises more consistent income, people listen. It's not just hourly pay, either. Many techs rely on overtime to make ends meet, so when work slows down, their paycheck drops, forcing them to start looking elsewhere.

**Pay Plans Often Aren't Clear or Balanced**

Many companies struggle to build pay structures that feel fair *and* protect the business. Straight hourly doesn't reward productivity and commission-only can feel unstable. Hybrid systems—like hourly plus performance pay—tend to work best (but only if they're simple, transparent, and tied to clear expectations.) If your employees' pay feels unpredictable or confusing to them, they may start to lose trust in your business.

**Lack of Training Pushes People Out Fast**

If your onboarding process is basically "ride along and figure it out," your new hires WILL struggle. When people don't feel confident or supported early on, they leave, often within the first 90 days. Creating and sticking to a clear, structured onboarding process that goes through everything they need to know will help build trust, clarity, and confidence.

**Accountability Breakdowns Create Frustration**

When rules aren't followed consistently, good employees get frustrated and leave. If standards exist but aren't enforced, the people doing things right feel punished while others skate by. Holding all staff accountable by the same set of rules will help everyone understand exactly what they should or shouldn't do.

**Safety, Risk, and Hidden Labor Costs**

Staffing problems don't just hurt morale, they create real financial and legal risk for your company.

**One Incident Can Change Everything**

If a technician causes a serious accident in a company vehicle, especially due to distracted or unsafe driving, the liability can be massive. Many owners underestimate how exposed they are to risk until it's too late.

**Losing Key People Hurts Capacity and Cash Flow**

When someone quits, gets hurt, or is let go unexpectedly, your ability to run calls drops immediately. That means missed revenue, stressed customers, and pressure on the rest of your team.

**You don't need perfect people. You need better systems, and the right tools to support them!**

Every Job is a

**SELF-  
PORTRAIT**

Of the Person  
who does it.  
Autograph your  
work  
with  
Excellence!

AUTHOR UNKNOWN



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[pforker@accwpa.org](mailto:pforker@accwpa.org)



## Membership Benefits...

### Air Conditioning of Western PA

will continue to be your local industry partner,  
as we have been since 1950.

#### Annual Membership Brings You the Following Benefits:

- Networking events
- Discounts on seminar
- Current info from local suppliers
- Legislative efforts
- Local website
- Technical training courses
- Apprenticeship program  
State recognized
- Monthly newsletter
- Information of industry news  
changes within the industry
- Insurance for member's company discount
- Code enforcement updates • Local lobbying
- ACCWPA Apprenticeship School
- Voice for the local contractors
- Golf Outing / Trap Shoot
- Education opportunities for your technicians  
office staff – Associates bring in Mfg. Reps.
- Advocacy agenda promote contractor interest.
- Labor and HR legal advice before utilities
- Helping members to stay ahead of the curve
- 6-8 Monthly informative meetings



## Question of the Month . . .

By Zyware

### Question

Our workplace now has two employee couples; these individuals met each other at work and started dating. So far, there have not been any issues in the workplace, but we want to plan for potential issues in the future. Are we allowed to have employee dating policies? If so, what should we consider in such a policy? We do not want to infringe on employees' privacy outside of work, but we want to make sure we maintain a professional work environment.

### Answer

Employers may elect to devise an employee dating policy to help prevent issues in the future and maintain a professional environment. Employers may wish to consider the following points when enacting a policy:

- Establish guidelines on paper in an employee handbook or memo distributed throughout the company.
- Specify the preference for dating: not tolerated at all, not tolerated among subordinates and managers, or no preference.
- Consider requiring subordinates and managers who are permitted to date to sign a contract outlining that the relationship is consensual. This may help protect against future sexual harassment claims.
- Ask employees to be professional during the relationship and if the relationship ends.
- Ask that other employees refrain from gossip as a way of respecting the daters' privacy and maintaining a professional environment.
- Request that dating employees be discreet and maintain a sense of professionalism in the workplace. Make clear that the relationship must not interfere with the employees' duties and responsibilities.
- Although drafting a policy regarding intra-office dating may be a wise decision, employers should be cautious that policies do not infringe on employees' right to privacy outside of work. Employers are strongly advised to have legal counsel review any such policy before implementing it in the workplace.
- **Published Date:** February 17, 2026

- *These articles are for general information and risk prevention only and should not be considered legal or other expert advice. The recommendations herein may help reduce, but are not guaranteed to eliminate, any or all risk of loss. Examples shown are for illustrative purposes only. The information herein may be subject to, and is not a substitute for, any laws or regulations that may apply. Qualified counsel should be sought with questions specific to your circumstances. ©2025 Federated Mutual Insurance Company. Published Date: October 15, 2025*

## Upcoming Meetings!

### 2026

### Meetings Schedule!

#### March 12<sup>th</sup>

Federated Insurance Screening,  
Hiring, and Retaining Employees  
*The Sports Grille – Cranberry*

#### April 9<sup>th</sup>

##### Broccoli

Empower your business with AI  
agents that answer every call ...  
*Rival Sports Bar – Bridgeville*

#### May 14<sup>th</sup>

Apprentice GRADUATION  
Carmody's – Nevelle Island  
Speaker - TBA



**Work Hard in  
Silence, Let  
Success makes  
the Noise!**



**FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION...**

**ACCWPA**  
**724-687-7860**  
[pforaker@accwpa.org](mailto:pforaker@accwpa.org)



# Happy St. Patrick's Day!!!



126 Resolution Drive • Mars, PA 16046-3719 • 724-687-7860

## ACCWPA is the Professional Alliance designed exclusively for today's HVAC/R Contractor!

### Membership Advantages:

Networking with other contractors. This source of information is invaluable in handling problems within your own company. ACCWPA members help fellow members to be successful!



ACCWPA distributes ACCWPA Newsletters monthly to members and selected non-members, so that all those in the HVAC/R industry can keep informed of issues regarding our trade, and Chapter activities. We hope the non-members will see this newsletter as an example of the quality services that ACCWPA provides.

Contributions or suggestions can be emailed to [pforker@accwpa.org](mailto:pforker@accwpa.org)

ACCWPA is proud to be a Service Roundtable Affiliate Associate.



### ACCWPA Upcoming Events

#### 2026

##### March 12<sup>th</sup>

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Screening, Hiring, and Retaining Employees  
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##### April 9<sup>th</sup>

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*Carmody's*

##### June 11<sup>th</sup>

ACCWPA Social –  
Giant Oaks Winery  
*Finleyville*



### 2026 Officers and Directors



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