

Construction Center of Excellence  
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes  
January 31, 2005, RTC Board Room

Present: Andries Breedt, Bill Bowser, Dick Chamblin, Sandra Husband, Steve Ignac, Gaye Ishimaru, Mark Kearns, Rodd Kippen, Larry Leet, Leanne Liddicoat, Lee Newgent, Linda Nguyen, Doug Steinmetzer, John Schaufelberger, and Ed Thomas  
Staff: Judy Amico, Beth Arman, and David Dickson

**Topics of Discussion:**

Welcome/Introductions

Election of a Chair and Vice Chair

Review of Grant Activities

New Business

- Results of Construction ESL Survey
- Instructor Job Announcements
- Spring Construction Industry Conference
- Related Activities
- Possible Math Project

**Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting opened with introductions:

Judy Amico – Administrative Assistant, RTC

Beth Arman, Dean, RTC

Andries Breedt – Owner, BPT Design

Bill Bowser – Training Director, Puget Sound Electrical JATC

Dick Chamblin – Associate Director, Bates Technical College

David Dickson – ESL Instructor, RTC

Sandra Husband – Labor and Industries Apprenticeship Coordinator

Steve Ignac – Coordinator LADS Apprenticeship

Gaye Ishimaru – Snohomish County Workforce Development Council (WDC)

Mark Kearns – Iron Workers Local #86, AFL-CIO

Rodd Kippen – President Pro-Cost

Larry Leet – Chief Boiler Inspector, City of Seattle/Department of Planning and Development

Leanne Liddicoat – Executive Director, AGC of Washington Education Foundation

Lee Newgent – IronWorkers Apprenticeship Coordinator

Linda Nguyen – Pierce County WDC

Doug Steinmetzer – Coordinator, Heat and Frost JATC

John Schaufelberger – Professor, Dept. of Construction Management/ University of Washington

Ed Thomas – retired welder

**Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Beth asked for volunteers for chair and vice chair. She explained that the chair would lead the meetings and may occasionally be asked to sign letters on behalf of the committee. The vice chair would fill in when said chair was not available. Beth explained that we typically meet once a quarter. Since the funding came later than planned, the first meeting did not happen till winter. Today the committee should decide if they want one more meeting this quarter, and one in the spring. Lee Newgent was nominated as chair and Bill Bowser as vice chair; everyone concurred.

Beth said that she hopes everyone present will be able to make it to all the meetings and offer any names of individuals that may be interested in joining the committee. Lee asked how she got the individuals that were present; she said that many were contacts that RTC already had, but she was also looking forward to expanding and having more people from different aspects of the industry, and different parts of the state. Steve made the point that sometimes there may be too many people for a committee to be effective and reach a quorum. Beth said that some work may be done in subcommittees instead, for anyone that was interested.

### **Review Grant Activities**

Beth had sent out a list of grant activities to be done between now and June '05. During the spring meeting, she will share a proposed budget and activity list for next fiscal year, for the committee's review and feedback. Below are some of the things listed:

1. Put together a survey.
  - ✓ The survey has been sent out, with several responses received.
2. Hire an Administrative Assistant 3.
  - ✓ Judy Amico started last week in this position.
3. Put together a Steering Committee and have at least two meetings.
  - ✓ Today is the first meeting.
4. Classes:
  - ✓ We will be creating some classes, including online classes.
  - ✓ Instructor job announcements have been posted on the RTC website. Beth shared copies with the committee and encouraged them to refer potential candidates.
  - ✓ The online boiler refresher class has been approved by City of Seattle.
5. Training Survey
  - ✓ We will put together a survey for training providers. The results will be on our website for individuals to see where they can get training.
6. Website
  - ✓ We are looking into putting together a website, including looking at other colleges with Center of Excellence grants to see what they have done.
7. Promote construction industry, including developing and disseminating materials to demonstrate a career ladder for construction industry.
  - ✓ We will be promoting the construction industry to high schools.
  - ✓ We had planned to make our own brochures, but Beth suggested it might be better to use one that the AGC developed. Leanne shared a few copies with the group.
  - ✓ Judy has begun to research scholarships related to the construction industry. This information will go on our website as a resource for potential students.
8. Host conference for construction industry
  - ✓ We will be talking about that more in this meeting. Beth is looking for suggestions for dates, topics, speakers, etc.

Steve asked what the mission of Center of Excellence was. Beth explained how we want it to be a clearinghouse for construction-related information, for people already in the industry, people wanting to get into the industry, and other colleges. For example, we would have information on where you can go for classes, what resources are available, and what is needed to get into the construction industry. She knows we will not have all the answers but hopefully we will be able to point people to the place where they can get help. The center should not be all about RTC; it needs to be a statewide that resource that helps other colleges too. Having online classes will give more individuals that work or live far from the campus the chance to take classes.

## **New Business:**

### **Results of Construction Survey**

A survey was sent out asking employers and apprenticeship coordinators about ESL classes. The consensus was to offer it on Monday and Wednesday nights. Beth handed out a list of proposed topics. We will hire two instructors to team-teach, one with a construction background and the other with an ESL background. Beth asked David to talk about his role in the Property Maintenance Assistant program, which is also team-taught. This program is 6 hours a day, 5 days a week, so it is much more intensive than the Construction ESL class will be. At the beginning, they keep the whole class together to teach safety practices and First Aid/CPR. Later, the class is divided into two groups. Two days/week, one group goes to an internship at an apartment site while the other group goes to ESL classes. It is reversed for the next two days, and then on Friday they all get together in the classroom to debrief what they have learned and to preview new vocabulary for the next week. David teaches English in the context of the property maintenance field, such as listening to a tape of people calling in problems to repair, writing work orders, or learning vocabulary to describe in job interviews the type of work they can do. Most students are Russian speakers, with some Spanish-speaking students too. The class is taught in English, so students become more proficient in English. Lee noted that the most common language in construction, aside from English, is Spanish. There was a discussion about ESL levels. In the Property Maintenance program, we usually admit individuals from level 3 and above, but David has sometimes brought in high level 2 individuals. David defined the levels: 1) Absolute beginner; 2) Can communicate very basic needs; 3) Can express most basic needs in an understandable way; 4) a little more advanced than 3; 5) Person is not totally fluent but can handle most situations. David said that there is a state standardized pre- and post-test, consisting of listening and reading, writing, and interviewing with the instructor. David bases his decision more on the interview because some individuals do not test well. Andrei commented that not everyone is capable of doing well in certain professions. Each occupation takes skills and not everyone has the ability to learn them. He feels there should be a test to see who would be competent in certain industries. Discussion followed about whether the Construction ESL class should target level 2 or 3 ESL students. Beth asked if they could be combined; David said it would be easier to combine 1 and 2 in one class, and 3 and 4 in another, than it would be to combine levels 2 and 3.

### **Instructor Job Announcements**

Beth is going to be hiring individuals for several classes. In response to a question on online training, potential instructors will need to be familiar with the subject matter and technology, and have the time to put it together. These individuals will be put through an online class in being an online instructor. Beth asked Linda if she could share materials that the Pierce County WDC developed for a customized ESL class for carpenters. Linda agreed to do so. She also mentioned that Tacoma Community College offers a Command Spanish class, which might give us ideas for the Spanish for Construction Supervisors class. Command Spanish is series of classes that focus on common commands and other vocabulary that people in a particular industry, such as health care or law enforcement, might use in talking to Spanish speakers. Leanne noted that the AGC will be offering a Spanish for Construction Supervisors class in the future as well.

### **Spring Construction Industry Conference**

We need to talk about topics and speakers for the conference, and figure out a date that works with everyone. Beth handed out a list of possible topics, based on discussions she has had with people in various aspects of the industry. Leanne said that the AGC is having a conference in May that will focus on green building, and Steve said that there is going to be a Wall and Ceiling conference in May also. Beth asked everyone to please email her dates/times of other events, to help avoid conflicts. She requested any suggestions about topics or speakers be sent to her also.

Lee said that there will be a lot of work needed to put together the conference and suggested a sub-committee be formed for the planning. This was approved, and Steve Ignac was nominated as chair person. Leanne, Linda, and Beth agreed to be members as well. Since the next meeting will be close to when the conference will be held, the sub-committee has the okay to make decisions, but they can also email updates or questions to other committee members. Bill Bowser said that he would be glad to be a part of the sub committee if they need any help.

### **Related Activities**

Linda says she has \$6,000 for the conference if we expand the scope. The grant money that was going to be used for the conference can be directed somewhere else. Originally, we had planned to have a one-day conference for people in the construction industry. Now, with the Pierce County WDC's additional money, we can have a second day, helping people from education and government learn more about construction. We also plan to have a smaller meeting on a third day, for three construction initiatives going on in different parts of the state: construction skills panels in Pierce County and Spokane, and the Construction Center of Excellence in Renton. This will help the groups complement one another, and not duplicate efforts.

### **Possible Math Project**

Beth said that RTC can get additional State Board funding to do a statewide project for the two-year college system. After talking with college employees, and with Mark Logue from the AGC Education Foundation, she recommended convening a group of college instructors (including apprenticeship instructors) who teach construction-related math. The money must be used before June 30, so it could not fund the AGC's Summer Math Institute directly, but it could be used to develop and print copies of a booklet with lesson plans from these instructors, so that K-12 teachers would have a better sense of what kind of math was needed for the construction industry and how they could begin introducing these concepts to their students. John said that this would be a good complement to the Summer Math Institute, because it would give the K-12 instructors something they could take home and use in the future. Lee mentioned that he has had some of his instructors teach trades math classes outside of the apprenticeship program to give people a better idea of the math level needed to be an ironworker. He would be happy to send instructors to such a conference. It was agreed that Beth will work with Mark and others on this project.

The committee decided to have another meeting in March instead of waiting till spring. Linda is not available on Mondays, so it was agreed by all to have it on Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005 at 1:30. Judy or Beth will get back to everyone on where it will be located. Also, Beth asked people to let her know if there is anyone else that might like to be on the Steering Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Cc: Marty Heilstedt

**Task List**

<b>TASK</b>	<b>WHO RESPONSIBLE</b>
Notify Beth of potential Steering Committee members.	All
Finalize ESL level for Construction ESL class.	Beth Arman and John Chadwick
Identify potential instructors and refer to Beth.	All
Follow up on curriculum ideas from ESL for Carpenters and Command Spanish.	Beth and Linda
E-mail dates of other conferences to avoid conflicts.	Leanne, Steve, and others
Continue planning spring conference.	Steve, Leanne, Linda, Beth, and Bill
Forward list of subcommittee members to Steve Ignac.	Judy
Work with Mark Logue and others on construction math project.	Beth
Notify Steering Committee members of next meeting location.	Judy