



Excellence in Construction Education 2006



2nd Annual
**Washington State
Construction Workforce Conference**

Construction Center of Excellence
March 1 and 2, 2006 ♦ Renton Technical College

Company of 2006

Mountain States Construction Company Sunnyside, Washington

Contact: Rick Sartain, 509.837.6822 or www.mtstates.com

In partnership, the Laborers' International Union #614 and the Associated General Contractors of Central Washington nominated **Mountain States Construction Company** for the Excellence in Construction Company of 2006 Award. Mountain States is a general contractor from Sunnyside, WA.

The construction industry, like many other sectors, is beginning to experience a lack of skilled workers coupled with an aging workforce. Mountain States recognized that strategies must be implemented to promote the construction industry to future workers. They have participated in a number of activities and initiatives to engage young people, including:

- Mountain States employees participated in a day long career fair at the Grandview Middle School in 2005, showcasing the job opportunities within the construction industry to the students.
- Mountain States sponsors high school and college student visits to their job sites, and supports the job shadow programs for Grandview and Mabton high school students.
- Mountain States supported a female student who studied their company procedures and business practices as her senior project graduation requirement.
- Mountain States helped implement the "If I Had a Hammer" program at the Sunnyside Middle School "Gear-Up" program.

Mountain States was one of the first employers to offer their support to the South Central (formerly Tri-County) Workforce Council's TAPIT project. Mountain States made a commitment to identify and endorse incumbent apprentices and/or journeymen to participate in training, and provided instructors for many classes. They opened their job sites to tours for the unemployed workers, and assisted in the development of technical training that was not currently available. In 2005 alone, Mountain States provided training to at least 69 employees, utilizing training from the Northwest Laborers, Associated General Contractors, the TAPIT project, and their own in-house training.

Absher Construction – Company category

Absher has long been a supporter of construction education initiatives. The nomination submitted by the Puyallup School district highlights their specific support of the Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) magnet program at John R. Rogers High School. Absher's Executive Vice President, Tom Absher Jr., has been an enthusiastic supporter of this program. In particular, Absher hosts the ACE advisory committee meetings, produces outreach materials for the program, and offers training for both teachers and students. The ACE academy is now in its third year of operation. **For more information**, contact Absher Construction at 253.845.9544

ACE Academy – K-12 category

In 2004, dedicated staff of the Puyallup School District, and their partners at Absher Construction launched the Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) magnet program. This nomination specifically thanked Connie Saari of the ACE academy for her work. The academy exposes youth to the many facets of the construction industry, and has lead to an increased number of graduates from John R. Rogers high school pursuing a career in construction. The academy has developed strong partnerships with local businesses and trades, who oversee a blended, industry-based curriculum. **For more information**, please contact the ACE Academy at 253.841.8650

Honorable Mentions of 2006

These submissions are also worthy of recognition:

STEPS Magazine – Private Sector Training category

STEPS was launched in 2005 by the Associated General Contractors of Washington Education (AGCEF) Foundation, promoting construction career pathways. This showcase magazine features promising practices from a variety of schools and training providers, and provides career information for high school students.

For more information, contact the AGCEF at 206.284.4500.

Construction Math for Teachers – Private Sector Training category

Since 2004, the AGCEF, the Tacoma-Pierce Workforce Development Council, and the Northwest Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Team have organized a five day construction math workshop for secondary teachers. This math workshop provides hands-on activities and applied learning examples that can be replicated in classrooms.

For more information, contact the AGCEF at 206.284.4500.

Rainier Valley Community Employment Coalition – Partnership category

In 2004, a partnership was established to help low-income Rainier Valley residents succeed in construction jobs, particularly on projects in their community. This partnership includes: the Center for Career Alternatives, South Pacific Islanders Intervention and Resource Services, Asian Counseling and Referral Services, Refugee Women's Alliance, Refugees Social Development Resource Center, Renton Technical College and the Legacy of Equality, Leadership and Organizing. The coalition currently has 67 active clients; to date, 26 people have been placed directly into jobs, with an average wage of \$15.22/hour.

For more information, contact the Center for Career Alternatives at 206.322.9080.

Renton Technical College Welding Department – Post-Secondary category

The Welding Department at Renton Technical College (RTC) offers a range of part and full time classes, in order to meet increased student and employment opportunity demand. Job placement in welding is strong – over 86% between 2000 and 2003 – and it is anticipated that opportunities in welding will increase by 3.4% between 2007 and 2012. The department offers vocational ESL courses, and specialty courses in blacksmithing. Two of the departments instructors – Dave Parker and Rick Geist – have won statewide teaching awards from the Washington Association of Occupational Educators.

For more information, contact Renton Technical College's Welding Department at 425.235.2341.

Innovators of 2006 – K-12 Education

Educational Service District 101 – Spokane Service Team Spokane, Washington

Contact: Anne Millane, 509.456.7660 or amillane@esd101.net

The Spokane Service Team (SST) is an AmeriCorps national service program engaging young adults, 18-25 years of age, in the construction and rehabilitation of housing for low-income residents as well as capital improvement projects for agencies that serve the economically disadvantaged. SST began in the summer of 1992 in an effort to address the critical need for affordable housing in the greater Spokane area utilizing AmeriCorps members in need of skills training to succeed in the workforce.

The SST is unique in Washington State, as it combines construction skills training, post-program transition into the construction workforce and AmeriCorps national service while addressing an incontrovertible need for housing for low-income families and developmentally disabled adults.

Addressing this need is a prime concern of the SST in partnership with housing service providers. Two longstanding partners have been the City of Spokane Community Development Department and Inland Empire Residential Resources (IERR). Other partners during the 2004 -2005 program year included Spokane Housing Ventures, the Coalition for Responsible Disabled, and the Northeast Community Center. The Spokane Homebuilders Association provides credit for the hours of hands-on and classroom construction skills training crewmembers receive while in SST. Applicants for apprenticeship are reviewed and given advanced placement based on the number of hours completed along with their work evaluations and SST staff recommendations. As crewmembers can serve up to two national service terms totaling 3,400 hours, this has made apprenticeship a viable option for these young adults, who in turn can use their AmeriCorps education award to pay for required coursework at the Community Colleges of Spokane's Apprenticeship Training Center.

Data collected on the AmeriCorps members who served in the SST during the 2004-05-program year is impressive. Of the 42 completers, twenty-eight were employed at the end of their term or within 45 days of exit. Twelve completers were enrolled in full-time post-secondary education and seven had entered formal apprenticeship training. Eleven program completers committed to serving a second term of national service in the SST. In the 2004-2005, two new 4-bedroom homes for developmentally disabled adults were built, five vacant houses were rehabilitated, and 29 multi-family properties were maintained and/or renovated. Seven of these properties received major upgrades and repairs. These housing construction activities impacted an estimated 196 Spokane county residents. Additionally, three capital improvement projects were completed benefiting countless economically disadvantaged people residing in the community.

Innovators in 2006 – Post-Secondary Education

Aviation, Construction Engineering, and Safety (ACES) Career Academy for Young Women Ellensburg, Washington

Contact: William Bender, 509.963.1756 or benderw@cwu.edu

Central Washington University (CWU) hosts a summer workshop called “Aviation, Construction Engineering and Safety” (ACES) to engage young women between the ages of 13 to 17 in discovering the fields of aviation, construction, safety and engineering.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004), women make up 49% of the professional work force. However, 10% of construction professionals are women (ENR, 2003) and 10% of engineering professionals are women (BLS, 2004). The purpose of this event is to show young women they have the potential to become leaders in professional technical fields.

The workshop provides hands on learning experiences and activities to spark interest in technical career fields. The 36 young women who attended the second ACES Academy in July 2005 stayed in CWU residence halls. Activities included an airplane flying lesson, practice in hazardous materials handling and cleanup, designing and launching water rockets, and using modern navigational systems to orienteer their way around campus on a “high-tech” treasure hunt. In the construction portion of the academy, the young women learned about construction careers, met current female construction professionals, took a field trip to an active construction site, tested construction materials in the laboratory, formed and poured a concrete step, and operated a backhoe.

Each participant was awarded a certificate by the President of Central Washington University, and the event was highlighted in the Associated General Contractor’s STEPS Magazine, as well as local news reports. Because of the success of the first two years, the academy will be expanded in the summer of 2006.

Special Recognition – The Lee Newgent Community Service Award

We are proud to recognize the efforts of an extraordinary construction community member: Lee Newgent. Because of his advocacy for construction, Mark Maher of the Western Washington Cement Masons apprenticeship submitted a special consideration to the CCE, in order to recognize Lee’s ability to promote our industry through activism.

Lee has participated in disaster relief and clean up efforts at both the Murrow Building in Oklahoma City, and at ground zero of the Twin Towers in New York. At both sites, Lee saw a great need to improve coordination of response and safety in times of crisis. Upon his return from New York, Lee coordinated local trades typically involved with clean up to establish the Puget Sound Disaster Response Training system. This system is helping our region become better prepared for disaster relief and reconstruction.

Lee is a strong partner to the Safety Training Coalition, a partnership of business, labor and education leading the development of a state of the art Industrial Safety Training Center at the Duwamish Campus of South Seattle Community College.

Lee was among several key leaders advocating for a direct entry process policy in Washington for military veterans entering apprenticeships, through the Helmets to Hardhats program. This policy was adopted by the Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council, and supported by the Governor in 2005.

Lee was recently nominated for a Humanities award by the Tacoma United Way and the Tacoma City Council. This award recognizes the volunteer work Lee coordinated with other Ironworkers, Electricians and Sheet Metal workers donated to improve facilities for the Metropolitan Development Day Care Center. This center supports young children with multiple developmental and emotional barriers.

Because Lee gives of his time and talent, the CCE will formally establish a category within the Excellence in Construction Education Awards in Lee’s honor, beginning in 2007.

- Two core classes were taught specifically targeting the Yakama Nation. As an outcome, a Native American-led mentoring program for the construction industry was developed. Native Americans across Washington who are successful in the trades volunteer time to share their stories and offer support to others entering the construction industry.
- The Yakama Nation Housing Authority now recognizes the value of apprenticeship programs, and the TAPIT project has been the catalyst in the development of a Building Apprenticeship Training program for the Yakama Nation Housing Authority. Currently, there are 35 certified new apprentices in the program.
- Other core classes have been offered in Yakima, Kittitas, and Klickitat counties. Forty-seven people received core training, and 91% of those successfully completed the training. At least 78% of those have entered employment and/or apprenticeship programs.
- Over the past year, 353 incumbent workers received skill upgrade training in areas identified by their employer or their respective trade, and 100% of those workers earned a credential and/or certification recognized by the construction industry.
- Public and private industry funds were combined to elevate the work of this partnership. The initial construction trade industry match to training costs is over 70%.

Construction industry employers report that the TAPIT partnership assisted them in providing a “level of certainty” to consumers. The “level of certainty” comes from having construction workers certified in safety classes, environmental classes and personal improvement skills, taught to each employee and supervisor. These employers feel they have a locally-based, knowledgeable, and skilled workforce providing quality service and craft to current and future projects.

Innovators of 2006 – Apprenticeship

Get Electrified School to Electrical Apprenticeship Program

Pierce County, Washington

Contact: Trudy Johnson, 253.404.3988 or tjohnson@pic.tacoma.wa.us

In 2002, the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and the Southwest Washington Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee initiated a school to electrical apprenticeship program called “Get Electrified,” in partnership the Pierce County Workforce Development Council to identify and develop talent from Pierce County high schools.

Selected high school students are hired by NECA businesses as electrician’s helpers during the summer and senior year, earning \$8.25 to \$8.50 respectively. During their participation, these electricians’ helpers receive occupation specific training as well as employability skills training, both on the job and in a classroom setting. After successful graduation from high school, these helpers are offered full-time employment at \$9.00 per hour. At this time, they apply to the electrical apprenticeship program and are given special consideration for entry. Once accepted, they follow the electrical apprenticeship training tracks, earning \$10.00 to \$15.00 an hour.

Based on the success of this program model, labor and industry partners from other trades and counties have expressed interest in replicating the program. In 2005, the carpentry version, “Frame Your Future,” became available for students.

Partners are meeting to plan for replication in other trades, including Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning, Sheet Metal, and Ironworkers, which may join the Get Electrified and Frame Your Future programs as soon as this year.

Innovators of 2006 – Private Sector Training

If I Had a Hammer

Statewide initiative

Contact: Marc Logue, 206.284.4500 or mlogue@agcwa.com

The Associated General Contractors of Washington's Education Foundation (AGCEF) has long supported efforts to bring excitement and accessibility to construction pathways to students. The primary program recognized this year from the Education Foundation is "If I Had a Hammer."

The AGCEF, the Master Builders Education Foundation (MBEF) and the Seattle Central Community College Wood Construction Center collaborate on this project. Created by master carpenter Perry Wilson, it integrates academic learning with a fun, hands-on construction activity. Fifth to 8th grade students work as a team to build an 8 X 11 foot house in two hours. The finished product is a freestanding house, complete with windows, door, and a front porch, and the culmination of teamwork, communication and the direct application of math and science concepts. The AGCEF intends to provide this excellent learning experience to over 3,000 youth in the first two years; by February 2006, they will be close to meeting their goals, with over 1400 students having participated in the project.

AGCEF and its partners believe this program is an excellent opportunity for children to explore the real world application of classroom learning, and for the construction industry to promote itself as a viable and rewarding career choice. The program runs on Fridays at the Seattle Central Community College Wood Construction Center. Staff from the AGCEF, MBEF and the Woods Construction Center co-facilitate the sessions, and student volunteers from the community college serve as "crew chiefs" to help guide the students through the construction process. After the house is built, the students are treated to a tour of the Woods Construction Center and receive information on careers in construction.

Partnership of 2006

Tri-County Apprenticeship, Pre-Apprenticeship and Incumbent Worker Training (TAPIT) Project

Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat and Skamania Counties

Contact: Kathy Thomas, 509.574.1950 or kathy.thomas@co.yakima.wa.us

While the South Central Workforce Council region, comprised of Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat and Skamania counties, continues to see high unemployment and industry closures, the area has seen positive growth in the construction industry.

With many regional projects planned over the next two years, contractors are facing a shortage of local skilled workers to fill jobs. To address this shortage, the TAPIT (Tri-County Apprenticeship, Pre-Apprenticeship and Incumbent Worker Training) partnership was developed. Using the sector approach adopted by the then Tri-County Workforce Council, the project established a Construction Skills Panel, which serves as an oversight body in the development of career ladders, curricula for customized training, allocation of resources, identifying training needs, as well as outcome assessment and evaluation.

TAPIT's partnership is comprised of local business, labor organizations, the Yakama Nation, local community college, construction associations, and workforce development organizations, including: Laborers' Union Local No. 614, Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters, and Eastern Washington Northern Idaho Painters and Allied Trades, the Yakama Nation Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO), Associated General Contractors of Central Washington, Associated General Contractors Education Foundation, Yakima Valley Community College, WIA Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Service Providers, WorkSource, and 29 local Construction Industry businesses.

Prior to the TAPIT partnership, the local construction industry did not have a structure in place to address workforce needs. TAPIT focused and provided incumbent worker training in a range of construction occupations. The project also targeted unemployed, harder-to-serve residents, recruiting from those under-represented groups in the trades for the pre-apprenticeship /core training component.

There have been many successes achieved during the past year and half of the TAPIT, including:

- A Construction Trades Core Curriculum was jointly developed by the building trades and other TAPIT partners to ensure that the basic elements for entry into their respective apprenticeship programs were taught within an 88 hour core class.