

# CONSTRUCTION CONNECTIONS

Volume 1, Number 4

## Note from the Director —

The Construction Center of Excellence (CCE) was assessed by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and industry and college peers in early June. This assessment was conducted to measure our impact in sector-based workforce development statewide.

We are pleased to report that the assessment team recommended Renton Technical College should retain its designation as the CCE for an additional four years, based on our strong public/private partnerships, and our range of construction workforce products and activities.

This doesn't mean we can rest easy – in fact, it clearly shows our ability to convene stakeholders across Washington is gaining recognition, and we need to continue to produce and disseminate meaningful resources. We need to focus our efforts on clear workforce gaps. To this end, our Steering Committee met in late June to begin work on its two-year strategic plan. They identified these two key priorities for 2006 - 2008:

**Priority One:** Making construction employment opportunities and job progression transparent and open to all of Washington's citizens; and

**Priority Two:** Enhancing the image of construction in a way that attracts and retains a well-trained workforce, and improving the public impression of this vital industry.

There is a range of complex and intersecting issues within each workforce priority. Working groups of committee members and associated experts have been formed to address these issues with **new** and **innovative** strategies. A draft of this plan will be posted on our website for public comment in late August.

~Heather Winfrey

## New! Free! Construction Math Lesson Plans Now Available on CCE Website

We are delighted to offer four hands-on lesson plans designed for middle and high school students, and based on our textbook, **Laying the Foundation: Construction Math**. These fun lesson plans include student worksheets, instructors' keys, a list of recommended materials for hands-on activities, and additional visual cues.


The plans were created by Katherine Swan, Ph.D., who is a published author of several textbooks, a journey-level carpenter, and whose extensive career includes teaching at high schools, colleges and universities.

These lesson plans, and our textbook, can be downloaded from the **Resources** section of our website:

[www.rtc.edu/CommunityResources/CCE](http://www.rtc.edu/CommunityResources/CCE).

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## If I Had a Hammer Offers Women and Girls Opportunities to Explore Construction Jobs

The Washington Construction Workforce Network (Network) is an affiliation of the Construction Center of Excellence and the Workforce Development Councils and community colleges overseeing construction skill panels in the Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane and the South Central workforce development areas, and the Youth Council of Seattle-King County.

To date, the Network developed topics for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Washington Construction Workforce Conference, held last March, a Speakers' Bureau, and has just completed a three-day series of "If I Had a Hammer" with the Associated General Contractors of Washington Education Foundation (AGCEF).

Normally presented to middle school students as a career awareness activity, "If I Had a Hammer" was modified for women of all ages. Three sessions were held in late June at Bates Technical College, Perry Technical Institute, and Renton Technical College. In two hours, participants build an 8' x 11' foot house with a master carpenter, and industry or college faculty volunteers. In total, 31 women attended these sessions.

This project provides a new way to recruit women into pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and construction training programs by giving them a structured but comfortable environment in which they can try out basic technical tasks, such as using power tools, and can ask questions about the industry and/or the training that may impact their decision-making.

Because of joint planning, the events were highlighted in the Renton Reporter and the Tacoma Weekly newspapers, and on two Yakima television stations.

The Yakama Nation Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO) also hosted an "If I Had a Hammer" event for 29 ten – twelve year old girls in early June. They spent time with the AGCEF to learn how to replicate the model at Chapperal Camp, which is located at the base of Mt. Adams, and is a training center exclusively for members of the Yakama Nation. Their tremendous success with recruitment and participation was due to the TERO's close connections to local contractors and apprenticeship coordinators, who are now committed to continuing this project.

## Spotlight On: Associated General Contractors of Washington – Education Foundation

*Submitted by Leanne Liddicoat, Executive Director, Associated General Contractors of Washington Education Foundation (AGCEF)*

The AGC Education Foundation (AGCEF) was established in 1980 to promote construction as a career, and to provide educational opportunities for people within the industry. To fulfill this mission, AGCEF offers:

- A wide variety of continuing education classes in subjects such as blueprint reading, estimating, supervisory leadership, contract administration, stormwater, first aid, and safety management. In 2005, the AGCEF offered 177 classes to over 2,400 students.
- A promotion campaign tying academic achievement, construction career awareness, and future career planning for young people. AGCEF develops and distributes top-notch construction career marketing materials to schools, which will be used in this initiative, including the nationally recognized, biannual STEPS Magazine and the Hot Jobs/Cool Careers brochure.
- AGCEF also coordinates "If I Had a Hammer" events with middle schools, which is a daylong, hands-on activity where students build a playhouse. This activity earned the 2006 Excellence in Construction Education Award for Innovator of the Year – Private Sector Training category.
- Support of future construction leaders through a scholarship fund, which is awarded to students entering construction management or construction skills programs at community and technical colleges and universities.

Every year the AGC Education Foundation adds new classes and develops new relationships with construction companies, schools, cities, and agencies. Promoting the construction industry is a long-term goal that the AGC measures in new employees, and in well-educated incumbent workers. To access AGCEF resources, go to: <http://www.agcwa.com/public/education/index.asp>.

## Construction Still Outpacing All Other Sectors in Employment Growth

There were no surprises in the Washington State Economic Revenue and Forecast Council's June 2006 report concerning construction's employment growth, which outpaced all non-manufacturing sectors at a sizzling 19.6%. And once again, construction and real estate tax revenue collection accounted for a stronger than expected economic outlook, both in Washington State, and nationally.

While some may argue this high growth is seasonal, past economic performance in construction over the last two years indicates otherwise. Statewide population growth offset concerns about rising interest rates, and even in the fourth quarter of 2005, residential construction and maintenance employment remained high.

What does this mean for Washington? With highly publicized public works projects underway, and nearly every apprentice on the job, our contractors are in need of skilled workers across occupations now. Workforce gaps often lead to construction delays, especially on tightly scheduled, complex projects. This impacts all other Washington sectors, including expansion in health care and information technology.

Can we find support for increased recruitment for construction training, especially in our pre-apprenticeship programs at the high school and post-secondary levels?

The Herman Trend Alert reported in late July that an over-emphasis on universities as the only route to post-secondary certifications may be part of the problem. Too many young people are not being advised to pursue their careers in community /technical college or apprenticeship programs upon high school graduation. When they drop out of universities, they are not being recaptured into these training programs. As a result, they do not have the high technical skills required for many construction jobs.

## Op-Ed: Career Guidance is about Setting Expectations

*Submitted by Arne Reyier, Rushforth Construction*

I'm pretty opinionated. And if I were to sum up my thoughts on career guidance, it would be this: it's okay to set high expectations for and of young people. It's okay for employers, parents, and education to define what skills and behaviors are expected at work, home and at school – and in the community. In fact, it's everyone's job to set these definitions, and reinforce them.

This is a root problem for career guidance – expectation. Too often, we point to teachers and counselors and say, "You are expected to provide students with all they need to know about life and work after high school." Too often, we expect parents will know how to navigate post-secondary education with their children, let alone not make assumptions that the only people who are "successful" later in life attended a university. And too often, employers are not stressing the importance of improving skills and attitude on the job, in order to professionally progress.

Career guidance is a shared responsibility – including the person who receives it. Eventually, we all have to learn how to "guide" our own careers in a direction that satisfies us financially, and personally. Finding a connection between work opportunities and personal aptitude doesn't come easily for most young people.

We expect young people to understand how to be work ready – to show up on time, to look and act appropriately, and to be motivated to do a good job. Being work ready is key to choosing a career, following a path, and having the perseverance to be successful in any job. But it is an acquired skill – it is (or should be) modeled, and connected through examples, conversation and recognition to success in life. This isn't happening often enough in today's society, and everyone, parents especially, need to have frank conversations with kids about behavior and appearance.

You see, I don't think career guidance is limited to information about training or what classes to take. Sure, we must provide clear steps to earn credentials or degrees – this is essential. But it can't be limited to course or college selection. Career guidance must integrate academic, technical and attitude expectations. The "success" recipe calls for these ingredients.

~Arne Reyier

## Pilot Projects Will Support Established Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

*Submitted by Michael Thurman, Customer Service Specialist, Washington State Labor and Industries*

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) awarded four grants to two community and technical colleges and two secondary established programs in order to increase “direct entry” relationships between high schools and apprenticeships. These projects described below were made possible by funding from the 2005 Legislature in the passage of Bill 2789.

**Lynnwood High School-Edmonds School District 15** in collaboration with Edmonds Community College, North Puget Sound Carpenters' JATC, and Rotary Club of Lynnwood is developing an integrated high school/college Construction Trades pre-apprenticeship program providing direct entry into apprenticeship training for program graduates

**New Market Vocational Skills Center** in collaboration with North Thurston Public Schools, Olympia School District, Shelton School District, Tumwater School District, and Yelm Community Schools are creating a "Building Trades Center of Excellence" for K-12 using Renton Technical College's "Construction Center of Excellence" as a model. The CCE will partner with this project.

**Seattle Community College District Vocational Institute's** Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Trades (PACT) program is expanding its training already serving low-income minority women and men. Its Advisory Board has put together a development plan to fully fund the program and to increase the training capacity by 50%.

**South Seattle Community College** in collaboration with ANEW/Apprenticeship Opportunities Project, Seattle Vocational Institute, and Seattle Public Schools is expanding pre-apprenticeship outreach efforts and curriculum development with the Puget Sound Careers Consortium's Highline, Renton, Tukwila, and South Kitsap school districts as well as the SeaTac Skills Center.

For more information, please contact OSPI at (360) 725-6245.

## Transition Math Project Awards the CCE Capacity Grant

The Transition Math Project, a public-private partnership whose goal is to reduce remediation in Washington State, awarded the CCE a one year, capacity-building state grant to launch “The Blueprint for Success – Construction Math Initiative.” The project partners to this grant are the Associated General Contractors of Washington Education Foundation, and the Washington Construction Workforce Network.

The initiative will target school districts in the King, Pierce, Snohomish, South Central (Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania and Yakima Counties) and Spokane workforce development areas. During this year, the partners will host two FREE week-long Construction Math Institutes for math instructors in Eastern and Western Washington, a series of FREE In-Service Day workshops, and development of a comprehensive FREE “toolbox” designed to offer rich, context-based math in the classroom. These resources will be available for through the CCE website as they are developed. Stay tuned!

## Celebrate Careers in Construction with the CCE – October 16 – 20, 2006

Last year, Governor Gregoire proclaimed the third week in October as “Careers in Construction Week.” This annual observation is the perfect time to promote construction workforce issues and accomplishments statewide.

To this end, the CCE is developing a Schedule of Events as a large-scale promotion tool for this exciting week, and you can be part of it! If you are planning a construction workforce activity in your community, contact us. We will list your event with a brief description, your target audience, and contact information in this schedule, **free of charge**. Call 425.235.2352, extension 2217 or email [hwinfrey@rtc.edu](mailto:hwinfrey@rtc.edu).

## ATTENTION TRAINING PROVIDERS: “What about Tomorrow?” Snohomish County Career and College Fair Planning Underway

*Submitted by Sam Samano, Snohomish County Workforce Development Council*

Everett Public Schools and WorkSource Snohomish County are pleased to host the Second Annual “What about Tomorrow?” Career and College Fair on Wednesday, October 25, 2006, from 11:00am to 7pm at the Everett Events Center.

Designed to bring high school students from many schools to a central location, the fair promotes the myriad of high demand opportunities available to them after high school graduation. Last year, this event attracted 1,700 students and their parents.

Booth space is free, but limited. There are charges for internet and power access. Please contact Sam Samano to be part of this exciting event at 425.921.3419, or [lsamano@snocowdc.org](mailto:lsamano@snocowdc.org).

## Other Upcoming Events...

See the CCE Events page at [www.rtc.edu/CommunityResources/CCE](http://www.rtc.edu/CommunityResources/CCE) for a regularly updated listing of conferences and workshops around the Pacific Northwest. Have an event to add? Contact Judy Amico at 425-235-2352 x2217 or [jamico@rtc.edu](mailto:jamico@rtc.edu).

### **City of Tacoma – LEAP Brownfields Environmental Training (for Tacoma/Pierce County Residents)**

Contact Cynthia Neubauer-Lee at Metropolitan Development Council at 253.284.9017

### **WA-ACTE Summer Conference – Spokane, WA**

August 6 - 9, 2006

To register online go to <http://www.wa-acte.org/summerconf.html>

### **Office of the Governor - Economic and Workforce Development Conference – Vancouver, WA**

Thursday, September 7, 2006

<http://www.governor.wa.gov/priorities/policy/economy/conference/default.htm>

### **Washington Small Business Fair/BIZ Fair at Renton Technical College**

September 9, 2006

For more information go to [www.bizfair.org](http://www.bizfair.org)

### **Sound Transit & Multi-Trade Event – Rainer Beach Community Center Evening Event – Seattle, WA**

Tuesday, September 12, 2006

Contact Carol O'Neill, Washington Women in Trades/Local 699 Sprinkler Fitters for more information at 206.441.0737 or [carol@ualocal699.org](mailto:carol@ualocal699.org).

### **55th Annual Governor's Industrial Safety and Health Conference – Spokane, WA**

September 27 and 28, 2006

For conference overview go to: [www.wagovconf.org/overview.htm](http://www.wagovconf.org/overview.htm)

### **Construction Career and Resource Day Fair at Seattle Vocational Institute**

September 29, 2006

Call 206.587.4950 for details.

### **Snohomish County Job Fair at Everett Community College**

October 12, 2006

[www.snocojobfair.com](http://www.snocojobfair.com)

### **Northwest Environmental Summit – Tacoma, WA**

October 18 - 19, 2006

For more information, go to [www.awb.org/ecwashington/](http://www.awb.org/ecwashington/)

### **Building the World's Best Workforce – Seatac, WA**

October 19 -20, 2006

Go to [www.washingtonworkforce.org/conference/index.php](http://www.washingtonworkforce.org/conference/index.php)

### **Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council Quarterly Meeting**

October 19 - 20, 2006

Pasco, WA

For additional information go to the [www.ini.wa.gov/Main/ContactInfo/TradesLicensing/Apprenticeship.asp](http://www.ini.wa.gov/Main/ContactInfo/TradesLicensing/Apprenticeship.asp)

## Resources

The **Workforce Strategies Initiative (WSI)** of the **Aspen Institute** offers extensive research on sector-based training. Its recent toolkit, called the Business Value Assessment, offers users a clear methodology to measuring the value of training programs. You can order a hard copy of this toolkit, or download it for free at <http://www.aspenwsi.org/BVAToolkit.asp>

The **CCE** videotaped a recently moderated panel called “**Reflections from Women: Learning from the Past, Looking towards the Future**” featuring women in a variety of leadership roles who have worked in and advocate for diversity in construction. There are limited quantities of this FREE DVD available – contact us at 425.235.2352, extension 2217 to request a copy.

The **State Board for Community and Technical Colleges** offers an online magazine called **Creating Opportunities**. This e-periodical is dedicated to sharing best practices and providing in-depth coverage of issues and trends affecting the Washington State community and technical college system. To read the latest volume, go to <http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/Publications/COMag/2006May/default.asp>

## ***Did you know...***

- ...the National Science Foundation's Science & Engineering Indicators for 2006 reports 76% of postsecondary institutions must offer remediation courses in math, writing and reading? Go to: <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind06/c1/c1h.htm>
- ...the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's (CHCI) HOGAR initiative forecasts that the annual incomes of Latino families have increased by 80% since 1980 – three times the rate of the overall middle class? Learn more about CHCI research and resources at: <http://www.chci.org/about/about.html>
- ...the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs offers State/Tribal Government Training to further relationships with Washington's 29 tribes? Find out how your organization can access this training at: <http://www.goia.wa.gov/G-2-G-Training/G-2-G-Training.htm>
- ...the Institute for Workforce Development and Economic Sustainability (the nonprofit arm of the Association of Washington Business) co-hosts a web search engine with the State Board, showing users where to find workforce education at Washington's 34 community and technical colleges? Go to: <http://www.workforcecollege.com/>

## **The Construction Center of Excellence Steering Committee**

**Steve Baldwin**, [Snohomish County Workforce Development Council](#)

**Chuck Bailey**, [Ironworkers Local #86](#)

**William Bender**, [Central Washington University](#)

**Beth Blanchard**, [Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County](#)

**Lucy Bodilly**, [Northwest Construction](#)

**Bill Bowser**, [Puget Sound Electrical JATC](#)

**Ted Carroll**, [Seattle School District](#)

**Dick Chamblin**, [Bates Technical College](#)

**Pinky Dale**, [South Seattle Community College/Duwamish Apprenticeship and Education Center](#)

**Marvin Doster**, [Mortenson & Company](#)

**Willie Elliott**, [Tacoma Pierce County Employment & Training Consortium](#)

**Matt Gordon**, [New Market Skill Center](#)

**Melina Harris**, [Sisters In the Building Trades](#)

**Rebecca Harrison**, [Tacoma Pierce County Employment & Training Consortium](#)

**Ed Holmes**, [Seattle Area Pipe Trades](#)

**Mike Hudson**, [Institute of Workforce Development and Economic Sustainability, Association of Washington Business](#)

**Sandra Husband**, [Washington State Department of Labor & Industries](#)

**Uriel Iniquez**, [Washington State Commission, Hispanic Affairs](#)

**Steve Ignac**, [Lathing Acoustical and Drywall Systems Apprenticeship](#)

**Rodd Kippen**, [Pro-Cost](#)

**Sean Lewis**, [Absher Construction](#)

**Leanne Liddicoat**, [AGC of Washington Education Foundation](#)

**Kevin Managhan**, [Inland Empire Electrical Training Trust](#)

**Amy Martinez**, [Tri-County Workforce Development Council](#)

**Rachelle Leigh McGinnis**, [Bates Technical College](#)

## **The Construction Center of Excellence Steering Committee cont.**

**Lee Newgent**, [Seattle-King County Building and Construction Trades Council AFL-CIO](#)

**Kelcey Packineau**, [Yakama TERO Office](#)

**Dave Perrin**, [Construction Industry Training Council](#)

**Ken Pierson**, [Seattle-Tacoma Occupational Skills Center](#)

**Melissa Pressley**, [KIRO TV](#)

**Cal Pygott**, [Bothell High School](#)

**Arne Reyier**, [Rushforth Construction](#)

**Denise Salo**, [Sound Transit](#)

**Sam Samano**, [Snohomish County Workforce Development Council](#)

**Tawny Sayers**, [Northwest Laborers Employers Training Trust](#)

**John Schaufelberger**, [University of Washington](#)

**Dave Stahnke**, [Hermanson Company LLP](#)

**Doug Steinmetzer**, [Heat and Frost Insulators/Asbestos Workers Apprenticeship](#)

**Kathy Swan**, [Pacific NW Regional Council of Carpenters](#)

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**Kathy L .Thomas**, [Tri-County Workforce Development Council](#)

**Don Thompson**, Commercial Welding

**Jeff Thungc**, [Seattle Housing Authority](#)

**Colleen Vadheim**, [Pierce College](#)

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