

Workforce Development Solutions

National Construction Industry Workforce Summit

The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) convened its inaugural National Construction Industry Workforce Summit in St. Louis, Missouri on October 13, 2021. The event was designed to bring leaders in construction and workforce development communities together to identify effective existing solutions and craft potentially effective new solutions for the

Key Takeaways

Summit attendees self-selected the workforce development aspect that was of most interest: recruitment, training or retention. To follow is a summary of those conversations, including examples of strategies already in place that are working and suggested solutions that the Summit attendees crafted on site.

Recruitment

Strategies that are working

- Several construction firms noted they have had success putting in place these types of program that offer an hiring bonus and a comparable stay bonus when the employee has stayed for a certain length of time, such as one year.
- Firms and chapters are participating in Career Days with specific high schools, particularly technical schools. These firms develop strong working relation0 Gt.02 483.19 Tm0 G.07 Tm

- Some firms and chapters have worked with workforce investment boards, like the Texas Workforce Commission, to secure funding for scholarships for childcare so their parents can earn a living in careers like construction.
- AGC chapters have created special construction academies during the summer. These academies offer multi-week, paid-work opportunities for rising junior and senior high school students. The students split their time between CTE programs and being on actual construction job sites.
- The AGC Georgia chapter hosts Trade Talks where they bring in high school guidance counselors, explain the construction career opportunities that are available, what it takes to qualify for them and how much students can earn in their careers.
- Other chapters are working with local school districts to offer intro to construction careers programs to younger students. In one state, Georgia, students are being introduced to construction careers at the second-grade level.
- Construction firms are being more strategic about who they send to do the recruiting. They are sending diverse role models into school programs and other recruiting events to speak to increasingly diverse student populations.
- One school

Training & Development

Strategies that are working

- Several firms have created strong, effective partnerships to create construction-specific training programs in partnership with local community colleges. Sundt, for example, worked with Central Arizona College to create a series of trade-specific programs, all relying on the NCCER curriculum, to prepare future construction workers.
- As noted in the recruiting section, several AGC chapters have created construction academies, that offer a basic introduction to construction careers. These programs also offer basic levels of construction training so new hires have some idea of what is involved in these careers and can bring basic skills with them when they are hired.
- One firm in Western New York offers virtual workforce development. They created an app-based platform that offers basic video training on a range of construction activities, including traffic control, how to set up a trench box safely, etc. Their app is now being refined in partnership with Caterpillar. Other firms, including Whitaker Construction in Utah, are doing something similar with online platforms and video instruction.
- NCCER has 23 videos offering instruction in construction math and other topics. Some of the videos are more hands on, including ones focusing on topics like
- Several small and medium-size firms say they provide accelerated craft development programs. They do this by providing on-the-job training with the foreman and area managers teaching classroom training. These trainers are in turn receiving coaching from the executive team on softer skills like empathy and patience.
- The industry has worked with a number of school districts to create programs like UBC Pathways. That program offers 10 different tracks students can take starting as early as 9th grade. The program offers a stackable credentialing system. The students in the program are provided with internships with local construction firms. Eighty-five percent of those interns stay with their companies.
- Turner Construction is bringing union and open shop partners together at some of its Nebraska construction projects to identify obstacles to training, share resources, and explore broader challenges like transportation barriers and child-care needs.

New Ideas from Summit Attendees

- **Engage parents and other care givers in the training experience for new construction workers.** Getting them involved by inviting them to observe the training will help them understand the skills their loved ones are learning and appreciate the wisdom of the career path they are following.
- **Identify local, state and federal funding opportunities to help support**

TED TALK STYLE PRESENTATIONS

We also featured six TED

construction. The program is extremely comprehensive and provides training for adults, returning citizens and high school students (in partnership with several high school programs). These high school programs, one near Indianapolis and one near Fort Wayne, are pretty innovative in themselves and offer examples of how to create a stand-alone program in one case, and how to integrate construction educate into the mainstream curriculum in the other case. The Indiana DOT program is working to place people into union and open shop career opportunities.

Presented by: [David Dalton](#), Indiana DOT, & [Eric Fisher](#), Hamilton High School

Next steps:

AGC of America is urging all Summit attendees, and anyone else who is interested, to take at least one concept that was covered during the meeting and implement it locally. This document is intended as a resource to identify the broad range of strategies that are already being used successfully to develop the future construction industry workforce. It also outlines the many new strategies that Summit attendees developed during their working sessions.

After receiving this resource guide, please identify at least one strategy existing or new that you think will help address workforce development needs in your area. If available, use the links provided to find out more about those strategies. Contact AGC of America to be put in touch with firms and chapters that are acting on these strategies so you can learn more. And put them in place.

AGC of America will survey Summit attendees at the end of the winter to identify who is implementing new ideas based on the Summit, what ideas are being implemented, and learn more about how we can support those efforts.

We will use the results of that survey, plus the meeting survey sent out in early November, to scheduled to take place November 3 and 4, 2022, in Phoenix, Arizona.