



2002 Annual Report

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Highlights

Awards. 2002 has been another award-winning year for the Oregon Building Congress (OBC).

- In January, the Oregon-Columbia chapter of the Associated General Contractors (AGC) at its Annual Conference presented the Paul Emerick Award to OBC for its outstanding educational contributions.
- In April, Executive Director Dick O'Connor traveled to Washington, D.C., to receive the Distinguished Service Award granted by the 50 State Directors of Professional/Technical Education. Ron Dexter, Oregon's Professional/Technical Education Director, nominated OBC for this honor, OBC's first national award.

Business Plan. Under the leadership of Board member Neil O'Connor, a special committee of the Board spent the first four months of the year developing a comprehensive Business Plan for OBC.

Major Programs. Under the new Business Plan, OBC continued to focus on its three core programs: the Summer Math Workshops for Teachers, an expanded Construction Academy, and a revised format for *Building Futures* for the fall 2002 issue.

Grants. Washington Mutual and PG & E-National Energy Group awarded OBC grants of \$2500 each to support the Summer Math Workshops. The Washington Mutual grant helped to promote the workshops, and the PG & E grant supported teacher scholarships.

Senator Smith's Support for Construction Academy. With the help of Neil O'Connor, OBC contacted Senator Gordon Smith's office to help in expanding its Construction Academy into more areas of federal lands. Senator Smith and his staff have been very supportive in this effort to expand the Academy.

Residential Electricians' Apprenticeship Program. OBC gave important marketing assistance to one of its members, NECA/IBEW Local 48 JATC, in the creation of its new residential electrical apprenticeship program that was marketed exclusively to graduating high school seniors.

New Members

This summer the Oregon Building Industry Association voted to become a member of OBC. With over 4300 business members statewide, OBIA will be an important partner in helping OBC spread its programs throughout Oregon. OBC now has among its members the largest commercial contractor association, AGC, and the largest home-builder association, OBIA.



Batzer Inc., a design/build contractor in Medford, Oregon, has also decided to join OBC. Batzer is very committed to creating construction academies and summer math workshops in the Medford area.



OBC is delighted to add the Sheet Metal Training Fund as a member. The Sheet Metal Training Center has participated in OBC's Construction Academy and was one of the original training centers involved in the first math workshops OBC held for teachers. Ralph Shaeffer, long-time sheet metal instructor and author of three books on the uses of geometry and trigonometry in

sheet metal construction, was the inspiration for these highly successful workshops.



Business Plan

During the winter and spring months, consultant Duncan Smith led Board members Neil O'Connor, Dan Graham, Bob Strader, Denise Curry, and Dick O'Connor through the arduous process of drafting a comprehensive Business Plan for OBC. The plan included: 1) a new mission statement, 2) revised goals and objectives, 3) a new organization chart of present and future responsibilities, 4) a revised budget format for better tracking of revenues and expenses, and 5) suggestions for more stable funding. As painstaking as it was, this critical work resulted in a clear realization that OBC is in "the education business."

Mission Statement and Goals. This is the new mission statement for OBC:

"To partner with educators to increase the quality and diversity of entrants into the building industry." Three goals support the mission:

- **Goal # 1.** To support an educational approach that integrates academic and technical education.
- **Goal # 2.** To educate parents, educators, and students about career opportunities in the building industry.
- **Goal # 3.** To attract applicants to the building industry who have a good work ethic, are academically prepared, and are culturally diverse.

The final two goals (Goals 4 and 5) relate to increasing membership and building a sustainable organization capable of carrying out its mission throughout Oregon and South-west Washington.

OBC's core programs and other activities reflect the implementation of the new mission and goals.

Summer Math Workshops



Joe Pence, BPA Instructor, and Salem Summer Math Class.

OBC held two Summer Math Workshops for Teachers this past summer, one in Portland and one at Chemeketa Community College in Salem, with a total of 22 teachers. The workshops this year reflected increased emphasis on the concept of integrating the academic and technical curriculum (Goal #1). Each teacher binder included a statement of OBC's mission and a two-page overview of OBC's educational philosophy. Each math and construction teacher learned how math is used in the various trades, and the workshop binder and instructor lesson plans included numerous hands-on activities teachers can use in the classroom. The idea is to have each teacher become an exemplar of "integrated teaching." In addition, the binder materials and the industry training center instructors described both the skill requirements and the job opportunities in the construction trades (Goals #2 and #3).

A total of 222 teachers have now attended OBC workshops since their inception in 1997. As has been true in past workshops, the overwhelming majority of teachers rated the workshops in the upper 10% of all their professional development experiences. Moreover, many teachers expressed their intention to share with their students their newly acquired knowledge about the advanced skills needed in the trades and the tremendous job opportunities for students who have a good work ethic and take the tougher math and science courses. The success of the workshops resulted from the outstanding work by Duncan Smith in organizing and planning them and the masterful instruction by the apprenticeship trainers. The latter include John McCamish of NECA/IBEW Electrical Training Center in

Portland, Alex Harris of the Laborers Training Trust in Corvallis, Ralph Shaeffer of the Sheet Metal Training Center in Portland, Kirk Garrison of Portland Community College's Building Construction Technology Department, Joe Pence of the BPA Technical Training Center in Vancouver, Carolyn Kidd of the Operating Engineers Training Center in Eugene, and Tom Day of the Willamette Carpenters Training Center in Portland. Special thanks to Marilyn Hart Reed of Chemeketa Community College for arranging for the workshop held at the college for the first time.



John McCamish exclaims, "Ohm my! Look at all those fractions."



Teachers check the pitch of rafters at Triplett Wellman construction site.

Board member Neil O'Connor of Western Partitions helped to arrange the construction site visit for the Portland teachers at the new Convention Center extension. Ken Triplett of Triplett-Wellman Contractors provided a review of the planning for the construction work by his company at a nursing home in Salem, followed by a complete tour and explanation of the work going on.

In accordance with OBC's mission, the training centers' commitment to the workshops gives the industry a great opportunity to partner with educators. Educators, in turn, learn how important math is to the successful tradesman, as well as learning the requirements for entry into apprenticeship. The training centers supply the teachers with "tons" of applied

curriculum to take back to their classrooms. When students ask—"When am I ever going to use this?"—the teachers now have a ready answer.

The workshops also play an important role in counteracting the stereotype among some educators that, if a student can't do anything else, he or she can always work in construction. Teachers leave the workshop with the knowledge that the skilled trades require intelligent and knowledgeable students who are college capable and who are good at working with their hands.



Carolyn Kidd shows math workshop class how to lay out survey stakes.



Alex Harris instructs on the fine art of reading elevations.

Construction Academy

Begun as a pilot in 2001, thanks to a grant from the City of Portland, the Construction Academy expanded this summer to five classes totaling 56 students. Because of its own fiscal problems, the City was not able to continue the grant this year. However, OBC considered the program so important that it decided to continue the Academy on its own. While this put a major strain on OBC's own financial situation, continuation of the program was essential in meeting OBC's goals to educate students about careers in the construction industry and to attract the best candidates to the industry.

In this connection, OBC developed selection criteria for applicants to the Academy, based on several requirements of the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM), approved by the Oregon State Board of Education in December 2001. In particular, the Academy stressed:

- that students meet CAM Requirements 3 & 4 concerning career-related knowledge and skills (proper work ethic and behavior, decision-making and problem-solving, communication skills, and teamwork) and
- that students connect classroom learning with real life experiences in the workplace.



Clackamas sheetrock team in action.

The Academy program consisted of two major sections, one for younger high



"If you build it, they will come."

Pete Anderson, Instructor, and ESD-1 students rest after completing a large deck at Columbia Springs Fish Hatchery

(Photo by Dan Carter)

school students (9th and 10th grades) and one for older high school students (11th and 12th grades). In the younger section, 15 students from Portland, Gresham-Barlow, and Reynolds school districts and 13 students from high schools in Vancouver's Educational Services District 112 enrolled in two summer school classes that rotated through apprentice training centers each morning from 8:00 AM to Noon over a three-to four-week period. At each center, students learned about the application of math and science in construction and performed hands-on activities to demonstrate those applications. The instructors also informed students about the requirements for entry into each center's apprenticeship program.

The other section consisted of three separate groups of older students in eight-week work/study programs, one from Clark County (ESD-1), one from Cowlitz County (ESD-2), both part of ESD 112, and one from Clackamas County. Students worked four days per week at a variety of sites and then spent a half to a full day at different apprenticeship training centers.

The Clackamas group consisted of 13 students from different high schools in Clackamas County. Molalla High School had the highest number of participants; so its construction technology program received three power tools donated by

Northwest Builder magazine. The Clackamas contingent worked in the Wildwood Recreation Area, operated by the Bureau of Land Management. The major task was to complete the sheetrocking of a maintenance facility on BLM land. The students also repaired pedestrian bridges and pay stations and designed and built a deck for a BLM office structure.

Dave Duty from Milwaukie High School and Terry Nimz from Estacada High School were recruited as crew foremen. Cody Reynolds, who completed the Construction Technology program at Clackamas Community College and will now begin work towards his baccalaureate degree at Portland State University, assisted them. Both teachers commented that they liked working the whole day with the same group of students rather than just a period or two, as in the normal school day. Lee Shepherd, the BLM manager at the Wildwood site, praised the students' completed work as "rivaling that of professionals."

At the Columbia Springs Environmental Learning Center students from ESD-1 worked under the leadership of Pete Anderson, an experienced apprenticeship trainer with Associated General Contractors. This group consisted mostly of immigrant students from Italy, Ukraine, and Latin America. Pete noted that, during the course of any given hour, four differ-

ent languages were spoken! They exemplified the type of students described in OBC's Goal #3—good work ethic, academically prepared, and culturally diverse.

The major assignment for these students was the construction of decks next to the pond at West Middle Lake. Students designed and built the decks as well as doing the cost estimates for construction. They had to level the pad, place the footprint of the deck, lay out the support post holes, apply the 3-4-5 (or Pythagorean) method to square the structure, mix the concrete, and set the posts and beams. As a special "touch" they designed, at the viewing spot from one deck, a railing tilted to allow for a more comfortable resting of one's arms while viewing the pond. They also conceived another innovative feature—they designed the 2x2 newall posts to rotate, a big hit with smaller children. Once they discovered one would rotate, they would rotate all of the posts on the deck, about 70 in total!

Pete remarked that one of the important lessons learned by the students is that "close" is not good enough; measurements need to be precise. Like all good teachers, he gave his students the latitude to fail so that they could learn from their own mistakes. Pete praised the work ethic of his students, noting the number of projects they completed while struggling a bit with a new language. These students were excited about future construction careers; they will make excellent candidates for apprenticeships.

The ESD-2 group, working under the leadership of Jim Stanaway of Kelso High School and Rob Johanson, spent the summer constructing sheds for sale to the local populace. Starting with a pile of lumber, students were required to build the shed to specifications provided to them by Jim. A few more advanced students built add-ons, including cabinets for the sheds. Bob Johnson, a recent high school graduate, was the construction crew foreman. Bob had built over 100 decks. (As a result of the information he received during the construction academy program, he applied to and was accepted in AGC's carpentry apprentice program.) Not only was he responsible for the work of the senior crew members, but during one week, his crew was joined by the younger ESD summer school class that had rotated through ap-

prenticeship training centers. This gave the older students a chance to teach the younger students. Shelby Gates, lead instructor for the ESD class, said that a "lot of lights have gone on for her students." The visits to the apprenticeship training centers were particularly eye-opening.

The feedback from the teachers and the students was extremely positive. Students were especially impressed with the kind of wages they could earn after they completed high school. The key learning for the students was hearing the requirements for entrance into apprenticeship, especially the math skills needed. Like college, apprenticeship is competitive. The better the students' experience and academic records, the better their chances of entry.

In addition to the instructors already mentioned, many others contributed to the success of the Construction Academy: Spencer Hinkle of Portland Community College; Dan Graham and Charlie Morrison of Associated General Contractors; Ken Fry and Mick Hemphill of NECA/IBEW Training Center; Doug Tweedy and Jim Murphy of the Willamette Carpenters Training Center; Vicki Smith, Marilyn Robinson, and Joe Pence of Bonneville Power Administration Training Center; Mark Holliday, Carolyn Kidd, Pat Doyle, Richard Perkins, Kevin Miller, Vern Manselle, and Jim Griggs of the Operating Engineers Training Center; Jerry Galarneau, Ric Olander, and Charley Johnson of the Sheet Metal Training Center; Merry McKay, Jeri Sooter, Dennis Quarto, Ray Shumway, Dave Lofgren, Joel Rotert, Aaron Sanford, Lynn Murphy, Gary Ftejrkal, Charles Miller, Walter Stong, John Blatti, Bill McKenna, Bob Hacker, and

Denise Steele of the Western Federal Lands Highway Division; Dan Clark of Portland's Environmental Services; Michelle McKenna and Will Danley of the Painters & Drywall Finishers Training Center; Katie Aylward of Employment and Business Training Services of Clackamas County; Kathy Jensen, Ryan Smith, Phyllis Goldhammer, Marlis Miller, and Cely Alfiler of ESD 112 in Vancouver; Ken Kline of Portland Public Schools; Linda Jessell of Gresham-Barlow School District; and Duncan Smith and Luke Fiorante of the Oregon Building Congress.



...the shed also rises...



...and carpenters raise high the roof beam...



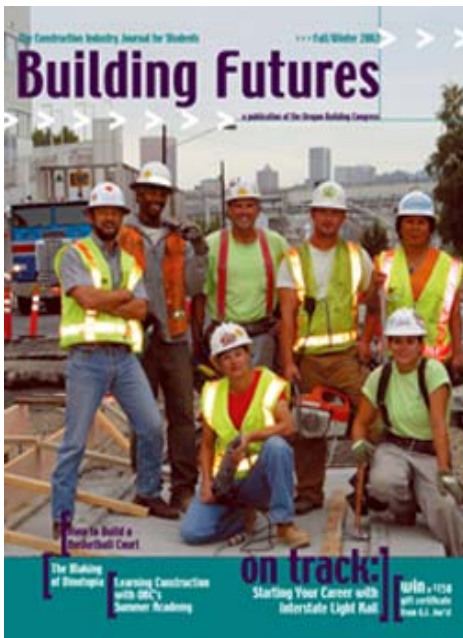
One wall at a time ...



... until the building is complete.

Building Futures

This fall marks the third year OBC has published *Building Futures* magazine, primarily designed for students. It provides the broadest outreach to students, educators, and parents of all OBC programs under Goal #2—educating parents, educators, and students about career opportunities in the construction industry. After publication of the inaugural issue, *Building Futures* was turned over to Northwest Sales and Marketing, publisher of *Northwest Builder* magazine. OBC Board member Denise Curry is the president of Northwest Sales and Marketing, and she has done a superb job in supporting and improving the magazine.



After each issue she has conducted focus groups with high school and community college students to get their feedback on the magazine. These sessions showed that the magazine's editorial content had to be more attuned to students' interests.

So Denise has encouraged industry executives to sponsor editorial content rather than advertise in the traditional sense. Students had complained in focus groups that there were too many ads. Instead of placing ads, these executives now sponsor a page or section on some aspect of construction that would be of interest to the students. This change has helped to increase editorial content and reduce the number of ads in the fall 2002 issue. It is part of the strategy to make the magazine more student-oriented.

Industry sponsors also want to know how the magazine is distributed. So OBC has put forth a significant effort to establish a database that includes each high school that has construction or construction-related programs, the names of the construction teachers, the actual classes taught, and the number of students in each class. This effort resulted in increasing the number of magazines printed and distributed from 15,000 to 20,000 in the spring issue. OBC and Northwest Sales and Marketing are now confident that the magazine is distributed directly into the hands of students who have shown interest in pursuing careers in construction.

Residential Electrical Program of NECA/IBEW

In the late summer of 2001, Ken Fry, Executive Director of NECA/IBEW's Electrical Training Center, announced that the training center would make a new effort to revitalize its residential electrical program and that it would be marketed exclusively to graduating high school seniors. In late fall, several meetings with construction technology teachers were held at the training center in Portland. Teachers were invited to bring their students on tours of the training center and to have them learn about the new residential electrical program. However, few teachers responded.

So, in February and March 2002, OBC enlisted consultant (and former Portland Public School principal) Luke Fiorante to contact every area high school with construction technology programs to promote a March 19 Open House at the training center. Eighty students and 40 parents attended, thanks to the efforts of Jean Smith in creating and printing hundreds of flyers and Luke in visiting 23 high schools from Estacada to Portland to talk about the Open House. As a result, 29 students qualified for the program, and 13 were admitted. (And Goal #3 to attract qualified applicants to the industry was amply met.) Students began their apprenticeship immediately after graduation with two weeks at the training center. Then they began their work experience with a contractor. After students complete their apprenticeship in two years, they will earn over \$40,000 per year.

Fall Initiatives and the Coming Year

The biggest challenge facing OBC is to support its programs financially, a problem that the Business Planning Committee addressed in part under Goals 4 and 5. While OBC programs have earned significant praise and awards, both statewide and nationally, it has been difficult to devote the necessary time to raise funds. With the completion of the summer programs, it is now possible to fully address the challenge of increased funding. OBC will embark upon a two-part initiative. The initial part is to add several more member organizations to OBC to enable staff and consultants to work full time and then to bring on additional staff if necessary. Key Board members will support this effort to broaden membership. The second prong of the initiative is to solicit grants to support OBC programs. Ideally, member contributions will be devoted to ongoing operations and pilot programs, and grant contributions will go to support existing programs and their expansion.

Thanks to the great partnerships of OBC, its programs are very strong. No other industry can boast of such successful teacher and student programs and a statewide magazine delivered at no charge to 20,000 students throughout Oregon and Southwestern Washington. As a consequence, OBC is in a very good position to take advantage of grant opportunities to support programs that are a proven success. This past year OBC has identified the best funding prospects, and it is now poised to submit proposals.

Thanks to the support from Senator Gordon Smith's Portland office, OBC has been able to interest district representatives of the Bureau of Land Management in expanding the Construction Academy programs to the Salem, Roseburg, Eugene, Medford, and Coos Bay Regions. Planning with these regions will begin in the coming year to launch programs in their districts in the summer of 2004.

Diversity is a challenge for the construction industry and for OBC, but diversity continues to be a part of OBC's mission. OBC is conducting meetings with the City of Portland and Portland Public Schools this fall to explore ways the Construction Academy could be used to interest women and minorities in construction careers. One approach would involve expanding the Academy pro-

grams into middle schools. OBC has had very successful middle school programs in years past with many minority and women participants. If OBC can get the necessary funding, it can once again use its experience in implementing these programs.

Despite the obstacles, OBC will continue to move forward in the “education business” — creating programs to connect parents, teachers, and students with the construction industry.

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 USI Northwest

INDIVIDUALS:

Neil O'Connor

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OBC Mission Statement

**To partner with educators to increase the quality and diversity
of entrants into the building industry.**

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