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Construction
Contractors
of New Jersey

FEATURE

Cultivating a Future Workforce for Signatory Union Contractors

PAGE 14



AWARDS
Members' 2024
Award-Winning
Projects

PAGE 28

EVENTS
ACCNJ Annual
Convention

PAGE 68

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER
EXPERTISE**
Onboarding Success:
The Crucial Steps
Beyond Hiring

PAGE 92



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Moving Forward...

BY | MIKE DEVITO, EDITOR



As the construction industry continues to evolve, so too does your Association. The Associated Construction Contractors of New Jersey has led the way in educating its members on new methods and techniques being utilized in the industry. ACCNJ has gone further in its educational efforts. In his CEO Message, Jack Kocsis reviews in detail the educational pursuits of our organization that assist our members in improving their business and technical practices.

With a thriving workforce needed to achieve the goals of our industry, the feature article focuses on the efforts by our labor partners to recruit, train and retain workers for their respective trades. Looking back on 2024, the Association has unveiled new types of networking events. Jeff Waters' Chairman's Article provides commentary on these events, including the increase in member participation. The Association's recent convention is covered in this publication as well. Also published in this issue of New Jersey Construction is a snapshot of the CIAP Summer Program, with information on the interns' work experiences with ACCNJ members. This past summer, 65 interns gained invaluable industry knowledge.

In our Associate Member Highlight, we are pleased to present the 100th anniversary of Milwaukee Tool. This firm actively contributes to advancing the trades.

We are always proud to showcase the successes and achievements of our member firms. We are thrilled to publish an article on award-winning projects constructed by our contractors in the past year. We continue to feature Member News and Giving Back columns that both shine a bright light on individuals and companies active with ACCNJ.

The Fall/Winter 2024 edition also contains an Associate Member Highlight on Milwaukee Tool, as well as an Associate Member Expertise article provided by Heron Wolf. In his Legal and Insurance feature, Jon Slater, Esq. reviews the effects of the President's Executive Order mandating Project Labor Agreements on federally funded construction projects. Abby Adams reminds supporters of the importance of funding our Political Action Committee (PAC) in her Government Affairs report.

In the previous edition of New Jersey Construction, we unveiled a new feature titled Public Agency Perspective. We are grateful to include an article from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development on their efforts to combat the misclassification of workers.

Our Association continues to thrive and grow. We happily welcome seven new members into the organization and believe they will find their membership to be a valuable tool for their businesses. These new members will quickly observe the services our staff provides.

As 2024 comes to a close, we wish all a safe and healthy holiday season. ■

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In this Issue

- 2 ACCNJ Leadership
- 4 Editor's Note
Moving Forward...
- 9 Chairman's Message
Strength in Numbers
- 11 CEO's Message
Building Strong Foundations: ACCNJ Offers Educational Opportunities to Members



14

Feature Article

Cultivating a Future Workforce for Signatory Union Contractors

- 24 **Public Agency Perspective**
Combatting Worker Misclassification: Our Commitment to New Jersey's Contractors and Their Workers
- 28 **Members' 2024 Award-Winning Projects**
- 35 **Legal and Insurance**
Mixed Opinions on Government Mandated Project Labor Agreements
- 38 **Education & Workforce Development**
Building Futures: The Impact of New Jersey's Construction Industry Advancement Program

- 44 **Associate Member Highlight**
Milwaukee Tool – 100 Years Strong, But Just Getting Started
- 47 **Contractors and Unions Complete World War II Memorial**
- 50 **Labor Management Cooperative - IMPACT**
Breaking the Mold: Why We Shouldn't Limit Our Future Generations to Traditional Career Paths
- 54 **Labor Management Cooperative - CCT**
Veteran Recruitment and UCAN: Key Drivers of Membership Retention in Carpenters Union
- 58 **Labor Management Cooperative - LECET**
LIUNA Adds Paid Maternity Leave Benefit for Women Members
- 62 **Labor Management Cooperative - Bricklayers**
Crafting a Competitive Edge: Enhancing Recruitment and Retention Strategies for BAC ADC Members
- 65 **Labor Management Cooperative - ELEC**
Flashback – When Superstorm Sandy Knocked Out New Jersey's Largest Sewage Treatment Plant
- 68 **Events**
ACCNJ Annual Convention
- 75 **Government Affairs**
Unpacking the Importance of Contributing to ACCNJ PAC
- 80 **Giving Back**
- 83 **Welcome New Members**
ACCNJ Welcomes Seven New Members in this Issue
- 88 **Member News**
- 92 **Associate Member Expertise**
Onboarding Success: The Crucial Steps Beyond Hiring
- 96 **Membership Roster**
- 100 **Advertiser Index**

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Strength in Numbers

BY | JEFF WATERS, CHAIRMAN



Everybody wins! Everybody gets a trophy! All you need to do is participate! We have heard these messages in recent years, especially in the world of youth sports. However, in the business world, everybody does NOT win. We are in a competitive environment in which there are winners, runners-up and losers.

But there is one instance where everybody DOES win just for participating – the events conducted by the Associated Construction Contractors of New Jersey (ACCNJ). The Association has seen a dramatic increase in attendance at our events. Encouraged by the renewed interest in meeting in person since the fading of Covid-19, we have expanded the total number of events hosted this past year, while also offering different gatherings with new, interesting and entertaining experiences.

Every year we conduct four general membership meetings. In recent years, we have explored new venues and attracted overflow crowds. One of the most popular events is the March Meeting held at Triumph Brewing Company in Red Bank. With no formal program or speakers, the evening allows colleagues to casually interact with each other while enjoying a wide array of seasonal brews and food. Registrations for this meeting exceeded 200 people in 2024.

The Annual Convention held in Atlantic City, has increased in attendance each year and boasts a program filled with informative speakers, sumptuous food, a scholarship raffle and numerous chances for members to mingle and make contacts for future business

opportunities. Total attendance increased by 19% compared to 2023!

At our December Meeting every other year, we host an open house at the ACCNJ offices. This allows members to visit the Association headquarters and interact with staff and industry colleagues, while enjoying an elaborate buffet and cocktails ... a great start to kick off the holiday season.

Aside from quarterly membership meetings, we continue to host our traditional social activities including Spring and Fall Golf Outings and the ever-popular Sporting Clay Shoot, which are typically sold out.

It doesn't stop there. In recent years, new events have been added to the calendar, which offer more localized and exclusive networking opportunities for members. In the South Jersey area, we conduct a lunch each May that provides an update on Association activities and initiatives. "Beef & Bourbon," first hosted in 2023, includes a four-course meal with bourbon pairings. Our very first "Pop-Up Happy Hour" this past August at Grano Pizzeria & Italian Tavern in Scotch Plains, was a huge hit. Due to its immediate success, an additional Pop-Up Happy Hour was held in November at Bar Bella in Holmdel.

While a great deal of time and focus has been placed on enhancing the Association's social events, ACCNJ's educational arm has not been neglected. In his CEO's Message, Jack Kocsis discusses the series of new educational programs offered by ACCNJ this past year.

We also continue to hold quarterly Safety Council meetings offering networking and educational opportunities for our members' safety professionals, ACCNJ's Annual Safety Awards are presented at the meeting in July.

As the old saying goes, "there is strength in numbers." Your increased participation in Association events makes ACCNJ stronger. I urge members to attend as many social functions and educational programs as you can. Also, please share with us any ideas or thoughts you may have for future events. Your continued support is always appreciated. ■

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Building Strong Foundations: ACCNJ Offers Educational Opportunities to Members

BY | JACK KOCSIS, JR., CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Investing in your employees' education is important for their growth and development and is often cited as crucial for improving retention. Part of the Associated Construction Contractors of New Jersey's (ACCNJ) mission is to promote the skills of our membership by offering opportunities for lifelong learning. Subsidized by ACCNJ's Industry Advancement Trust, ACCNJ developed an Educational Workshop Series focused on soft skills development in partnership with Business Training Works. We also coordinated with several instructors to offer basic blueprint reading courses.

With the fading of the pandemic and employees' return to the office, we realized there was a real need for soft skills training after remaining in isolation for so long. ACCNJ's 2024 Educational Workshop Series covered Time Management & Organizational Skills, Holding Difficult Conversations, and Email Etiquette.

The first workshop in the series was Time Management and Organizational Skills, where participants learned how to make the most of their time by organizing their workflow, using a planner, and delegating tasks. The course sold out quickly, resulting in the addition of two sessions. Companies were eager to send employees new to the workforce to develop these skills early to create a foundational base for the rest of their career. In total, 75 people completed the workshop.

Holding Difficult Conversations was another sold-out course. This course focused on how to approach tough conversations and give feedback to positively address a range of issues and behaviors with coworkers, clients, and other people in the workplace. While communication is another foundational skill the younger generation is perceived to struggle with, a number of executives participated in the course as well to enhance their communication skills and promote a better work environment where employees can thrive.

In August, we hosted the third workshop in the series – Email Etiquette: How to Send and Not Offend Online. This course covered the ins and outs of writing courteous communications and provided an overview of etiquette and best practices for sending digital correspondence and offered tactics for organizing and managing an inbox. An invitation was extended to interns participating in the Construction Industry Advancement Program of New Jersey (CIAP). After participants completed the course, we collected feedback regarding the content, facilitator, and future course ideas.

In addition to soft skills, continuous learning opportunities are highly requested in the construction industry. Recognizing this need, ACCNJ worked with three instructors to offer blueprint reading courses to members focusing separately on Building, Highway/Structural, and Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing (MEP). The Highway/Structural Blueprint Reading Course was taught by Daniel Grek, a former 2009 CIAP intern. Danial Spall, another former CIAP intern with Michael Riesz (2022), taught the Building course. Both courses were taught over three 2-hour long sessions while the MEP course, taught by Troy Aichele of Aichele and Associates, LLC, was a half-day workshop. Based on feedback from participants, we are refining and streamlining the course schedule and offering it again in a different format tailored to suit our members' needs.

More foundational soft skills workshops will be offered as well. If there are any workshops or trainings you hope to see from ACCNJ, we would be happy to work with you. Make sure to keep an eye on our 2025 Events Calendar for more courses added throughout the year! ■

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FEATURE

Cultivating a Future Workforce for Signatory Union Contractors

BY | JILL SCHIFF, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND DARLENE REGINA, EXECUTIVE ADVISER



Contractors today face many challenges. From sustainability and environmental regulations to rising materials costs and supply chain disruptions, being a contractor seems to become more complex every day.

One concern topping the charts for many construction companies is the industry is and will continue to face a shortage of skilled workers. Young individuals simply are not choosing a career in construction to keep up with the pace of an aging workforce that is reaching retirement.

We recognize there are many reasons young men and women choose not to pursue a trade-related profession. Some lack adequate knowledge on how lucrative and rewarding learning a trade is. Others just may not have the appropriate guidance on how to launch a meaningful construction career, and others are guided by educators and parents to take the route of higher education by enrolling in two or four-year colleges and universities.

While we believe a future workforce is a serious issue for many construction contractors, signatory union contractors can breathe a sigh of relief as the individual trade unions, along with the Association, aggressively work to ensure your workforce needs will be met now and in the future.

Associated Construction Contractors of New Jersey (ACCNJ) is the official bargaining agent, on behalf of members, with the general construction trades. As such, we have the opportunity to see firsthand what they do on a daily basis to attract and retain their members, while providing them with the training and skills employers need in this highly competitive industry.

In this article, we want to share with you a snapshot of what the Unions with whom you affiliate do to make sure signatory employers never face a workforce shortage.

Eastern Atlantic States (EAS) Regional Council of Carpenters

The EAS Regional Council of Carpenters has jurisdiction throughout New Jersey. Their membership boasts 1,200 apprentices and close to 14,000 journey workers.

Those interested in becoming an apprentice begin by signing up for an available information session. After learning more about the four-year apprenticeship program, they can continue the application process which includes an interview and an assessment of one's math skills and physical abilities.

The Carpenters showcase and promote their trade in many ways. Once a year, the Carpenters host an open house and apprentice contest to show off their training centers. They also participate in Construction Industry Career Day, an event spearheaded by ACCNJ for decades. Individuals are always welcome to visit one of the Training Centers to learn more about the apprenticeship programs and take a tour of their state-of-the-art facilities. Local high schools often take students on a day trip to one of the Training Centers in Edison or Hammonton as a way of showing them what a career as a Carpenter looks like.

Another way EAS Council Representatives promote apprenticeship opportunities is through various school districts by promoting the United Brotherhood of Carpenters Career Connections Program, curriculum that prepares students for a career in the building trades.

Most interesting is the Eastern Atlantic States Carpenters Training Center (EASCTC) has been accredited by the Council on Occupational Education, which offers advantages to members seeking higher education. An apprentice's numerous certifications are issued through the program including the OSHA 10 & 30-Hour training,

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Carpenter apprentices work with industry professionals that offer real-world expertise and mentorship. They can earn family-sustaining wages and receive great health and retirement benefits. Being part of a union offers them continuity of wages and benefits, while being able to work for multiple employers.

The cost is free to a new apprentice, however the four-year cost to the training fund per apprentice can exceed \$20,000. Since 1945, this apprenticeship has been supported by union contractors' commitment and contributions to a partnership in workforce development training.

That is why Taylor McEwing, who joined the Carpenters Apprentice Program in June of 2022 after completing the Carpenter Apprentice Ready Program (CARP), is so thankful for this opportunity. "Growing up, I was always taught that after high school comes college, so after receiving my BFA in Dance from Temple University, I had a successful career as a dance teacher and studio owner. However, I always had a love and talent for crafting, tinkering and building, so I signed up for an evening Carpentry Level 1 class at GCIT and instantly knew I wanted to pursue carpentry as a career."

▼ Taylor McEwing



Taylor points to the great pay and awesome benefits as one reason why a career in construction is such a smart decision. But she doesn't stop there. "Throughout my apprenticeship, I have been fortunate enough to have many incredible mentors and teachers, as well as meeting and working alongside amazing Brothers and Sisters." She continues, "the camaraderie and support within the Union has made it such a welcoming and empowering experience." She adds, "it opens the door to many different paths and opportunities within the industry. Most importantly, it allows for you to be part of a community and family, full of passionate, talented, hardworking Brothers & Sisters."

It's no wonder the Carpenters have more than enough candidates for a career in the UBC trades. And while they are always looking to expand their programs, employment is a quintessential component of a registered apprenticeship, which is why they keep their pulse on upcoming construction activity to support the needs of the industry.

In addition to the time and attention dedicated to cultivating a future workforce through apprenticeship training, there are numerous programs for journey workers to attend. Skill enhancement classes, from safety to trade skill-based, are held routinely. Continuing education pathways exist with Thomas Edison University, Rowan University and College Unbound for Construction Management or Organizational Leadership.

The best part of being a Carpenter is the sky is the limit for where you can go in this industry from foreman, general foreman, and project superintendent, to elected local union official, local delegate, union representative, and beyond. The careers are very diverse to meet one's skill sets, hopes and dreams.

Ironworkers, Local No. 11 **Ironworkers, Local No. 399**

Ironworkers, Local No. 11 is headquartered in Bloomfield, New Jersey. The Union's jurisdiction covers Northern and most of Central New Jersey. Currently, the Union has more than 150 apprentices and 1,100 journey workers.

Local No. 399 is headquartered in Hammonton, New Jersey. The Union's jurisdiction covers some parts of Central New Jersey and South Jersey. Currently, the Union has 65 apprentices and 50 journey workers.

The locals recall no time in history where attracting men and women to the trade was a problem.

For Local No. 11, individuals can apply for apprenticeships every January during the Union's open enrollment period. The apprenticeship is four years in duration and valued in terms of cost to exceed \$15,000

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per apprentice, absorbed by the Union through employer-paid contributions earmarked for training purposes. Local No. 399's program is three years and available through an application process.

Throughout the year, Training Coordinators attend job fairs as well as invite schools to their training centers to spend time in the shop with hands-on activities. They also attend Construction Industry Career Day each May with hands-on activities, which allows students to experience firsthand some of the tasks this trade performs.

An apprenticeship with Local Union No. 11 or Local No. 399 affords individuals many resources, from certified instructors who teach them all aspects of the trade to having full access to their state-of-the-art training centers and shops at any time. This training yields many certifications including Welding, Post Tension, Haz-Mat, Lead license, First Aid, CPR, Rigger, and Signalman. The training they receive helps them succeed and instills knowledge to make informed decisions on how to effectively perform their job safely.

Andrew Hychun, who immigrated to the United States from the Ukraine 10 years ago, started his apprenticeship with Ironworkers, Local No. 11 in 2020. As a welder, he worked for non-union contractors prior to his apprenticeship. "I enjoy heavy construction and appreciate the training I've received through my apprenticeship these last four years. In addition to perfecting my skills, the Union instills how to perform your job safely and productively. By choosing this career path, I can earn good wages, have excellent benefits and can provide a great future for my family."

Jess Hedum will graduate from Local No. 399's apprentice program in August 2025. She chose a career as an ironworker after graduating college during the COVID pandemic. "Finding a job was difficult with my degree, so I went to trade school for welding

certifications. I had enjoyed welding, fabricating, and creating metal sculptures in college so I knew having a career as a welder would be ideal." Jess points to the livable wages and benefits as another reason she chose this career path. "This entire experience has been very humbling. It truly is a brotherhood within the Union, and I appreciate every day I'm out in the field as I find labor-intensive work rewarding both physically and mentally. To be able to learn and grow from some of the strongest and clever-minded men and women is an opportunity no one can replace."

Learning the trade doesn't end once an Ironworker completes their apprenticeship. Journey workers are invited to upgrade classes for Welding, Blueprint, Foreman Training, Post Tension, Haz-Mat, Lead license, First Aid, CPR, Rigger, and Signalman throughout their tenure. The more interest and commitment Ironworkers have, the more opportunities become available.

Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers, Locals No. 4 & 5

The Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Union of New Jersey (BACNJ) represents craftworkers in the trowel trades across the State. The Union currently has more than 70 active apprentices and more than 1,200 journey workers.

Individuals who chose to begin a career as a Union Bricklayer start by completing an application and upon acceptance commence a 12-week pre-job program. During this time, the prospective apprentice learns more about the trade and can determine if this is the appropriate career path for them.

The BACNJ knows how important it is to promote apprenticeship to young men and women and maintain an ambitious social media platform, as well as attend numerous career fairs throughout the year. They have



been a long-time supporter of Construction Industry Career Day where their exhibit is one of the most sought after by students who get to experience what it takes to lay brick and block, as well as other aspects of the trade.

Throughout one's apprenticeship, certifications including OSHA 30-Hour Training, Flashing and Grouting, and Scaffold User are issued. And understanding being an apprentice, working side-by-side with journey workers and other crafts at a project site can sometimes be challenging, each apprentice is assigned a representative to mentor them in the field.

Stewart Turner, who entered the trade in September of 2021, cannot be more pleased with passing by the Training Center one day and randomly stopping in to fill out an application. "I always enjoyed working with my hands, although I did not have a plan on what career I should pursue. Now, not only do I have a plan, but I also have goals and objectives and am seeing the value hard work and commitment brings." Stewart shares, "Construction is an excellent path for individuals to pursue. There is an abundance of opportunities to learn and grow, while being compensated well with excellent health and retirement benefits."

Classes and programs are also available to journey workers to upgrade their skills, whether it's flashing, grouting or welding classes or historic masonry preservation certification. With this continued commitment to perfect their skills also comes advancement opportunities to become a foreman, superintendent or project manager.

Being taught how to work safely with proper training, good wages, and health and retirement benefits continues to attract individuals to the trade and will for decades to come.

Operating Engineers, Local No. 825

Operating Engineers, Local No. 825 has jurisdiction throughout the entire State of New Jersey. The Union is comprised of more than 7,800 operators and 140 active apprentices.

Those seeking a career as an Operating Engineer with Local No. 825 complete an online application, followed by an aptitude test and interview. From there, individuals are scored and invited to join the Union as part of the four-year apprenticeship program.

Through outreach, career days and job fairs, the Union has absolutely no problem attracting interested candidates. They routinely post to their website, advertise in local newspapers and use many well-visited and popular social media sites.

Those selected and eligible to begin their career through the Union's apprenticeship program have two state-of-the-art training centers as well as the International Training Center to learn and cultivate their skills. The training program offers equipment simulators, Moodle Portal, online classes and access to degree-granting classes.

Throughout their apprenticeship, Operators receive numerous certifications including the OSHA 30-Hour, Hazmat 40-Hour, Forklift A, CDL, Qualified Hand Signal, Qualified Rigger, Asbestos Awareness, TWIC, SWAC, and Fire Watch/Temporary Heat. Many of these certifications are routinely required by public and private owners, contractors for whom the Operators work.

While those having an interest in operating heavy equipment can work non-union for contractors willing to take on the training, being part of the Union offers



job security, skill and safety training, excellent health and retirement benefits, access to multiple contractors, and excellent wages that allow one to live and raise a family in this State.

Being part of Operating Engineers, Local No. 825 not only provides a career, but also offers a lifetime of relationships through many different opportunities offered by the Union that assist young men and women who want to enter the trade as well as help the communities in which they work. The Operating Engineers also created a Member Assistance Program (MAP) that is a free, confidential program offering support, referrals, and information to help members and their families with personal issues that may affect work or home.

Ally Stroessenreuther wanted a career that would allow her to support herself and work in an outside environment, which is why she chose to follow in her dad's footsteps and apply for an apprenticeship with Operating Engineers, Local 825. "I've grown up seeing what Local 825 offers and I wanted that for my future as well." Delayed by the COVID pandemic, Ally began her apprenticeship in June of 2020. "Becoming a member of Operating Engineers, Local 825 was the best decision I ever made. It changed my life for the better. I have had my challenges, but every day I am growing as a person, becoming a better operator and using the resources available to me." Ally reflects on the brotherhood and sisterhood of the Union, stating, "We are always there for each other and no other career has this type of unity." Affording her so many positive benefits, Ally encourages others to pursue a career in construction. "You may have to adjust your life in some ways, but a career in construction is allowing me to live the life I have always dreamt of living."

**LIKE MOST
UNIONS, THE
OPERATING
ENGINEERS KNOW
CONTINUED
TRAINING BEYOND
APPRENTICESHIP
IS A MUST.**

Like most unions, the Operating Engineers know continued training beyond apprenticeship is a must. In fact, they are likely the most prevalent trade required to keep up with advances in equipment and technology. That is why you are likely to see as many journey worker operators at their training centers as you see apprentices, always looking to perfect their skills and knowledge of the industry. There are many paths for leadership available to members. The more active and involved one is, the more opportunities await them.

Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA)

LIUNA's Eastern Region represents more than 40,000 members in Delaware, New Jersey, New York City, Long Island and Puerto Rico, providing skilled workers to thousands of signatory employers.

In New Jersey, Locals 472 & 172 provide laborers to heavy, highway and utility contractors. They have close to 8,000 journey workers and more than 300 active apprentices.



On the building side, Locals 3 & 77 represent close to 3,000 laborers and have more than 225 active apprentices.

The New Jersey Construction Craft Laborers Apprenticeship Program (NJCCCLAP) accepts applications annually online. After the application period, a standardized reading and math assessment is given to the applicants followed by an interview. Those that successfully complete the process are placed on a rank standing list.

The NJCCCLAP is 400 hours of classroom instruction and 4,000 hours of on-the-job learning. Throughout one's apprenticeship, they have access to the Apprentice Director and Field Coordinator in addition to the resources available at the state-of-the-art training centers. They are instructed by ANAB-accredited instructors who use an accredited curriculum. The Union also conducts "apprentice only" meetings that are helpful in addressing issues pertinent to those newer to the industry.

During their apprenticeship, Laborers receive numerous certifications including First Aid/CPR, Flagger Training, Scaffold User and Builder, 30-Hour OSHA, 80-Hour Pipe and Trench, Concrete, Mason Tending, Blueprint, Line and Grade, Fall Protection, Pneumatic Tools, and anti-harassment training. It's no wonder the cost for an individual to complete their apprenticeship is close to \$13,000, funded by employer contributions dedicated for apprenticeship training and journey worker upgrades.

The Laborers in New Jersey promote apprenticeship in many ways and have never experienced problems with attracting individuals to the trade. They routinely

work with high schools and vocational schools, attend career fairs, and attend both industry and government sponsored events. The Laborers have supported Construction Industry Career Day from day one and actively participate in planning the event. Over the years, the Laborers have increased their focus on special emphasis programs that target underrepresented groups such as women and minorities.

LIUNA recently announced it will implement the most expansive maternity leave policy in the unionized construction industry. The policy, which will go into effect January 1, 2025, is an effort to bring more women into LIUNA as construction craft laborers and to better the lives of the women who already belong to the Laborers Union. Funded through the union treasury, the program will pay \$800 a week for at least 12 weeks of maternity leave. The Union expects the program will make a material difference in the lives of women members and their families and also help recruit and retain more women into the profession.

Apprenticeship is critical in developing a skilled Laborer but it doesn't stop after one completes the program. Journey workers continually visit LIUNA training centers in New Jersey where they are offered more than 60 industry credentialed courses. Some examples are Traffic Control Coordinator certification, compact utility loader training, rough terrain forklift, solar and green energy training, robotics demolition, hazardous waste worker, lead asbestos training, GPS, total station, ground penetrating radar, mobile elevated work platform, advanced scaffold training, CDL, as well as many others relating to the core of the construction craft laborers' work.

Beyond the journey worker level, there is a path for leadership. There is access to a foreman skills training program, as well as opportunities to take part with college articulation agreements where they are eligible to receive partial credits for completing their USDOL-recognized apprenticeship program, which can be used toward certificate and degree programs.

Members can also become part of the Union's affinity groups including LIUNA's Women's Caucus, Latino Caucus, and African American Caucus. Members can participate in both LIUNA's RISE program (Regional Initiative for Strategic Education) and Brigade Programs which help members become more knowledgeable and active members.

Chris Scalera, an apprentice with Local 172 since March of 2023, turned to the Union after graduating college with an agricultural degree and finding employment opportunities to be less than rewarding in terms of pay or future prospects. A family member guided him to the Laborers Union. He views this as one of the best moves he made. "I enjoy working with my hands and being

outside. There are so many different types of projects you can work on as a member of the Laborers Union." Chris has been actively working in the field while completing the required classroom instruction and related training. "In addition to loving what I do every day, I am thankful for the excellent wages and health and retirement benefits. I would encourage others to consider the construction trades as a career option."

Paulette Pierre-Paul was introduced to the Laborer's Union, Local 3 through a Women in Construction program offered through Union and Essex Counties while working for a non-union general contractor. She began the program right before the pandemic in 2019. "We had to complete a vigorous training course prior to earning an apprenticeship status. I was very eager and excited when I was sent to a project in my local area." Since then, Paulette has worked in many different facets of construction. "I appreciate the training I received that has prepared me for the field. I am confident when I go to work and know there are people in my corner to ensure I am receiving proper instruction and safe equipment." Paulette recognizes the excellent pay and benefits that allow her to provide for her family and plan for retirement later in life. "The Union offers continued training allowing you to evolve your career role. And most important, safety is top priority on Union job sites." Paulette advises those considering a career in the construction trades to go for it. "The skills you obtain are invaluable and it is always an exciting journey to be part of a project from groundbreaking to ribbon cutting."

Those choosing a career as a Construction Craft Laborer have great support and resources during their journey. At the same time, they earn living wages, excellent health and retirement benefits and the ability to cultivate relationships with their colleagues and peers for a lifetime.

Unions and their Apprenticeship Programs Ensure a Future Workforce

As you can see, signatory contractors can be unquestionably certain their Union partners are working every day to ensure they have a skilled and ample workforce. Many of the labor management columns in this issue also touch upon this important matter and we encourage you to read them as well. ■

**THOSE CHOOSING
A CAREER AS A
CONSTRUCTION
CRAFT LABORER
HAVE GREAT
SUPPORT AND
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DURING THEIR
JOURNEY.**



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Combatting Worker Misclassification: Our Commitment to New Jersey's Contractors and Their Workers

BY | ROBERT ASARO-ANGELO, COMMISSIONER OF THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT
OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



New Jersey continues to be a national leader in addressing employee misclassification, ensuring workers receive the benefits and protections they are entitled to, while maintaining a level playing field for employers.

Since taking office in January 2018, Governor Phil Murphy has prioritized combatting misclassification. Recognizing the need for comprehensive action, he established the Task Force on Employee Misclassification, which I had the privilege to chair. The Task Force's recommendations led to legislative measures bolstering enforcement capabilities. These measures gave the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) increased authority to issue stop-work orders; required employers to clearly display notices about misclassification; and introduced a pioneering misclassification penalty that benefits the most direct victims, the workers. Since September 2021, we have assessed nearly \$10 million owed

to about 11,500 misclassified workers. The laws also hold both client employers and labor contractors accountable for violations.

Further legislation enhanced NJDOL's enforcement toolbox, allowing for broader application of stop-work orders across all job sites of an employer in cases of widespread violations – a power NJDOL has exercised on three occasions to date. Since July 2019, stop-work orders have halted worker exploitation at 177 workplaces, including at 114 construction sites. These orders have been effective across various industries, prompting many employers to settle what they owe rather than face site closures.

Streamlined communication among state agencies has enhanced our ability to collaborate and share information to address violators. Partnerships with the Treasury, the Department of Banking and Insurance, the Economic Development Authority, and particularly, the Attorney General's Office have been key. A multi-agency investigation of a construction project at 88 Regent Street, Jersey City, led to more than \$1.3 million in back wages and penalties for 20 contractors.

In December 2023, NJDOL and the Office of the Attorney General filed the first lawsuit under a 2021 law allowing the state to sue employers who misclassify workers. The suit targeted STG Logistics Inc. and STG Drayage LLC, shipping and logistics companies. Since then, additional suits have been filed, mainly in the transportation sector, but rest assured, we are going after misclassification in all industries.

Recognizing the limitations of complaint-driven enforcement, NJDOL's Wage and Hour Compliance Division has adopted Strategic Enforcement to proactively target industries and locations with known violation patterns. These initiatives are yielding

results, especially in the construction sector, and more specifically, the drywall industry. At The Wave, a residential project in Jersey City, four subcontractors were served with stop-work orders for multiple violations, including improper classification of workers. Similarly, at The Enclave at Raritan, a luxury apartment development, NJDOL issued 10 stop-work orders to a first-tier subcontractor and nine second-tier subcontractors for similar issues.

NJDOL also focuses on education, providing employers with tools to prevent future violations. The department drives compliance across the construction industry by urging general contractors to ensure their subcontractors follow labor laws to protect workers' rights and promote fair business practices.

In 2023, NJDOL reached an enhanced compliance agreement with Donald Drywall LLC, involving a three-year debarment from public construction and other compliance measures. In a separate settlement, Concrete Rising LLC entered a compliance agreement requiring a timekeeping system and an independent integrity monitor. Euro Concrete was held jointly liable for violations by its subcontractors and took proactive steps to revise subcontractor agreements to ensure future compliance.

Additionally, initiatives like The WALL, the Workplace Accountability in Labor List, publicly name and shame companies that fail to address outstanding liabilities to promote employer responsibility. Updated monthly, The WALL currently lists 210 employers who owe a collective total of nearly \$2.2 million, including unpaid contributions, penalties, and interest to the Unemployment Compensation Fund and State Disability Benefits Fund. Learn more at nj.gov/labor/wall.

NJDOL also entered agreements with neighboring states to prevent out-of-state operations from exploiting New Jersey workers and dodging penalties by crossing state lines. In April 2023, Governor Murphy and Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro announced interstate efforts to combat wage theft and misclassification, with Governor Shapiro calling New Jersey the “gold standard” for addressing worker misclassification.

New Jersey’s strong stance on misclassification not only protects workers but also supports a thriving business ecosystem that rewards integrity and fair competition. Honest employers – most businesses – are protected from being undercut by the few that reduce labor costs through misclassification. The state’s robust regulatory framework supports a healthier business environment that enables the growth and success of businesses and workers.

As New Jersey continues to lead the nation in fair labor practices, it sets an example for other states to follow. Through collaboration and commitment, New Jersey is building not only robust infrastructure but also fair and equitable labor practices for all.

For more information, visit nj.gov/labor. ■



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Members' 2024 Award-Winning Projects

ACCNJ is proud to showcase in the Fall/Winter issue of New Jersey Construction the member projects that won awards in the past year.



Rutgers University Cancer Institute

Contractors: Joseph Jingoli & Son/State Line Construction Co.

Project: Jack and Sheryl Morris Cancer Center, New Brunswick, NJ

Award: 61st Annual NJ Concrete Award – Healthcare

The 520,000 square-foot Jack and Sheryl Morris Cancer Center will accommodate inpatient and outpatient treatment, research laboratories, retail space and ancillary services. This 12-story facility has a large internal four-story atrium through which a spiral staircase will rise. Interior pedestrian bridges cross the large open atrium and laterally tie the sides of the building together, which are connected via pedestrian bridges to a parking garage and the nearby Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey.

Princeton University Racquet Center

Contractors: Torcon, Inc./State Line Construction Co.

Project: Princeton University Racquet Center, Princeton, NJ

Award: 61st Annual NJ Concrete Award – Athletic Facility

The Racquet and Recreation Center is home for Princeton's Varsity Squash and Tennis teams, which relocated from their previous facilities at Jadwin Gym in Princeton. The 180,000 GSF facility includes indoor tennis courts, indoor squash courts, locker rooms, coaches' offices, sports medicine facilities, and a fitness center serving the campus. Outdoor tennis courts and associated bleacher seating are connected to the east side of the building. The racquet and fitness areas are both served by a common lobby and concession area.

VRH Construction Builds Car Rental/ Parking Garage

Contractors: VRH Construction Corp.

Project: Newark Liberty International Airport – ConRAC Rental Car Facility/Public Parking Garage, Newark, NJ

Award: ENR Merit Award – Airport/Transit

This six-story facility along with the Quick Turnaround (QTA) maintenance/fueling area is solar powered, which was installed on the upper-level rooftop in 2022. Additionally, there is intent to offer 65 electric vehicle (EV) chargers at the rental car center in the future and the public parking levels feature more than 150 EV chargers.

Newark Liberty International Airport's ConRAC Facility is the first of its kind among the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey airports and is an integral component of the Terminal A Redevelopment Program, creating a world-class airport experience.

Kiewit Completes Design-Build Project In Brooklyn

Contractors: Kiewit Infrastructure Co.

Project: Replacement of Tower Elevators & Misc. Rehab at the Marine Parkway-Gil Hodges Memorial Bridge, Brooklyn, NY

Award: ENR Best Project Award – Highway/Bridge

Gil Hodges Memorial Bridge, a 540-foot-long vertical lift bridge, needed urgent repairs to continue to provide safe and reliable service. The bridge's span locks desperately needed an upgrade. In addition to the issues with the span locks, the bridge's tower service elevators were broken and several structural steel components on the bridge needed replacement. The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) wanted to complete the renovations to the bridge on a very aggressive schedule to accommodate the increase in traffic and marine vessels that typically occurs during the summer months. Through a design-build process, construction was completed in 17 months.





Skanska Completes East Midtown Greenway Project

Contractors: Skanska USA Building

Project: East Midtown Greenway, New York, NY

Award: ENR Best Project Award – Landscaping/
Urban Development

This \$166 million project involved the construction of a new in-water structure that serves as a public esplanade along FDR Drive and a new public park space that spans approximately nine city blocks. The work consists of the construction of the Outboard Detour Roadway Esplanade between 53rd and 59th Streets, the UN Esplanade located between 41st and 51st Streets, and the Waterside Pier, which sits between 38th and 41st Streets.

Honorable Frank J. Guarini Justice Complex

Contractors: Nordic Contracting

Project: Honorable Frank J. Guarini Justice Complex,
Jersey City, NJ

Award: 61st Annual NJ Concrete Award – Government

The new Frank J. Guarini Justice Complex on Newark Avenue in Jersey City will officially open in 2025. Construction of the 600,000 square-foot structure, which includes 24 courtrooms, a 459-space parking garage and various county offices currently housed in the county Administration Building across the street, was completed in 42 months.

Epic Builds New School In New Brunswick

Contractors: Epic Management, Inc.

Project: Blanquita B. Valenti Community School

Award: NJBIA 2024 Good Neighbor Award

Epic was proud to serve as design-builder for the new \$55 million Blanquita B. Valenti Community School, a K-8 school to serve the New Brunswick Board of Education. The 127,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility, designed by DMR Architects, replaced the Lincoln School Annex, providing greater space, parking and programming, such as a multi-purpose assembly room and a 14,000 square-foot playground, neither of which the previous facility had.

In addition to offering an expanded cafeteria, science demonstration labs and improved traditional educational spaces, the centerpiece of the facility is the media center. The 3,000 square-foot space, featuring wraparound, floor-to-ceiling windows, provides a stimulating space for STEM education adaptable for students from

kindergarten to middle school tackling advanced classes. Bookshelves are incorporated into the backs of seating and a classroom offers electronic whiteboards for small-group instruction. An adjacent makerspace is enclosed in glass and filled with virtual reality tech and 3D printers

Princeton University East Campus Hardscape

Contractors: Whiting-Turner Contracting Company/ Let it Grow, Inc.

Project: Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

Award: 61st Annual NJ Concrete Award – Education

On this project, approximately 50,000 square feet of exposed aggregate pavement and 30,000 square feet of asphalt were installed at various locations. The exposed aggregate was placed in multiple phases, with weather conditions providing a challenge during multiple pours. Careful coordination between the concrete company and field crew was necessary to complete the exposed aggregate project..



CS Energy Covers Landfill Into Solar Field

Contractors: CS Energy LLC

Project: Mount Olive Landfill Solar

Award: ENR Best Regional Project Merit Award – Renewable Energy

The Mount Olive solar project is the largest ever developed on a capped landfill in the United States. Consisting of approximately 57,000 ground-mounted solar panels built with union labor, this 25.6 MW array helped transform a United States EPA Superfund site into clean energy capable of powering more than 4,000 homes annually. The project also enabled the township to recoup nearly \$2.3 million in past taxes.

This project was safely completed on time, on budget, and effectively turned underutilized space into clean energy for thousands of homes in New Jersey and a revenue generating asset. Beneficial use projects like this also support the State's clean energy and emissions reduction goals.

Manasquan Bank Relocation

Contractors: Vericon Construction

Project: Manasquan Bank, Metuchen, NJ

Award: 61st Annual NJ Concrete Award – Commercial NJBIA 2024 Good Neighbor Award

Manasquan Bank decided to relocate its branch office from 442 Main St. to 429 Main St., including the transportation of a 10,000-pound antique Mosler Safe Company vault door that dates to its founding in the 1880s and serves as a centerpiece in the vestibule.

The new main building was completed in May of 2023 and is a 5,360 square-foot facility. The project employed 47 people, and the resulting \$3.7 million building has replaced conventional teller counters with innovative desk-like pods while also featuring two drive-through lanes, an ATM and a bike rack. ■



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Mixed Opinions on Government Mandated Project Labor Agreements

BY | JON SLATER, ESQ., LEGAL & INSURANCE AFFAIRS DIRECTOR



Since the enactment of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which allocated \$1.2 trillion towards various infrastructure initiatives, there has been a noticeable uptick in federally-funded construction activity across the country. As the federal government ramps up spending on these projects, it begs the question, who will be performing the work? The Biden administration provided some insight with Executive Order 14063, which, effective January 22, 2024, requires project labor agreements (PLA) on contracts that meet the definition of federal “large-scale construction projects,” or projects estimated to cost the U.S. government at least \$35 million.

Historically, PLAs have proven to be an essential tool in ensuring the successful execution of construction projects and sustained investment in the local economy. By setting clear terms and conditions for labor practices before work begins, PLAs help establish fair wages, benefits, and safety standards, which promote a stable and skilled workforce. Accordingly, President Biden’s directive aims to promote economy and efficiency in federal procurement by reducing the risk of labor-related disruptions, ensuring timely project completion, and

fostering cooperation between labor and management. As a result, the White House estimates the mandate will affect an estimated \$262 billion in federal construction contracting for nearly 200,000 workers that will benefit from fair wages and worker health and safety protections. The Association of Union Contractors’ CEO, Daniel Hogan, commended the Biden Administration’s “pro-PLA” stance, stating that PLAs can “streamline the negotiation process and give employers access to a highly skilled pool of craftworkers.”

However, while the Executive Order has been welcome news for union contractors across the country, various associations, including the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), have voiced their displeasure, seeking to strike down the Executive Order through legal challenges and bid protests. The AGC’s legal theory uses federal bid protests that object to project solicitations requiring PLAs to oppose the lawfulness of the government’s mandate as an unlawful socio-economic set aside it claims was unauthorized by Congress. In support of its position, the AGC argues that mandates and preferences for PLAs restrain competition, drive up costs, aggravate the existing nationwide labor shortage, and disrupt local collective bargaining. As the AGC continues its efforts to thwart the implementation of federally-mandated PLAs, the government has neither received nor granted any exceptions but, instead, supplemented sparse market research existing in the administrative record to justify the PLA requirement.

Conversely, the ACCNJ continues to see favorable results from the implementation of PLAs and remains an advocate for their use on both state and federally-funded construction projects. With significant industrial investment resulting from not only the IIJA but also the CHIPS and Science Act and Inflation Reduction Act, there is an opportunity to create tens of thousands of jobs for workers from all walks of life and generate good value on taxpayer-funded projects. So, while the government has shown no indication of rolling back the PLA mandate or granting exceptions, it will be interesting to see how the AGC’s bid protests play out in court. ACCNJ staff will closely monitor for updates and alert members of the court’s reaction. ■

¹ “Fact Sheet: Biden-Harris Administration Announces Action to Support Economic and Efficient Construction Projects While Creating Good-Paying and Union Jobs.” The White House, 18 Dec. 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/briefing-room/2023/12/18/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-announces-action-to-support-economic-and-efficient-construction-projects-while-creating-good-paying-and-union-jobs/>.

² Pilconis, Leah, and Brian Perlberg. “Seven Total Bid Protests Challenge the Government’s New PLA Mandate with AGC’s Legal Theory.” AGC News, 15 Oct. 2024, news.agc.org/news/seven-total-bid-protests-challenge-the-governments-new-pla-mandate-with-agcs-legal-theory/.

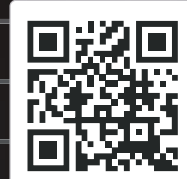
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EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Building Futures: The Impact of New Jersey's Construction Industry Advancement Program

BY | SHAMARA GATLING-DAVILA, EDUCATION MANAGER

In a rapidly evolving job market, the Construction Industry Advancement Program (CIAP) of New Jersey stands as a vital bridge between education and opportunity for aspiring professionals in the construction sector. With an average of 150 eager applicants each Fall, CIAP opens doors for students in disciplines like civil engineering, environmental engineering, construction engineering technology, and construction management.

In January 2024, about 70 of these talented individuals received the coveted invitation to the Career Fair, a pivotal event where they can connect directly with employers actively seeking summer interns. As the construction industry faces increasing demands for innovation and sustainability, CIAP works to cultivate the next generation of leaders. In this article, we explore the significance of CIAP, its influence on participants' careers, and the broader implications for the industry.



Kervens Alvernio, Fairleigh Dickinson University, NJ Turnpike Authority

Through the CIAP of New Jersey, I was able to work for twelve weeks during the Summer of 2024 at the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. My main duties as an inspector and office engineer intern were to organize,

review the plans, perform calculations, submit daily CapEx reports, concrete test sorting, and assist the resident engineer. During my time at NJTA, I developed several new abilities, including the ability to use Excel to calculate rebar data analysis, enhance my communication and presentation skills and have a deeper comprehension of the project lifecycle.”



Brian Anglim, Rutgers University, HC Constructors

“During my first few weeks with HC Constructors, I was shown the basics of estimating and project engineering. This included taking classes about Bluebeam, PDF editing software, and HCSS, which software used to build our estimates. I enjoyed the level of responsibility I was given, and I feel like I learned much more about the estimating process by going in and doing the work rather than watching and taking notes. Now I have a very solid understanding of what crews are needed for several different tasks, how fast they can work, and what machines they need.”



Emelin De La Rosa (center), Rutgers University, Northeast Remsco

“My internship at Northeast Remsco Construction was an enlightening experience that expanded my knowledge and skills in ways I hadn’t anticipated. My role primarily focused on point estimation. My role in preparing these bids allowed me to gain hands-on experience in one of the most critical aspects of the construction business, securing work. One of the most memorable aspects of my internship was the opportunity to visit several jobsites, where I could observe firsthand the construction processes and equipment in action.”

Daniel Marczak (left), Rutgers University, Northeast Remsco

“I spent my summer working for Northeast Remsco Construction on the estimating team. My primary responsibilities included reviewing plans and specifications and doing takeoffs for multiple projects, as well as learning to interpret a wide range of drawings including civil, structural, architectural and mechanical. An amazing site I got to visit was Caldwell Marine’s section of the Champlain Hudson Power Express on the Hudson River. Being out on the water surrounded by huge cranes, drills and other construction equipment was a unique experience that I won’t forget any time soon.”

Mann Sharma (right), Rutgers University, Northeast Remsco

“Working at Northeast Remsco’s sister company, Caldwell Marine International, gives a new perspective to the possibilities of what’s possible in construction. Throughout the 13 weeks, I spent a lot of time learning about marine construction and the volatile nature that it has, while also spending a great deal of time exploring construction sites. My task was to take the entire 6.2-mile cable path of the Harlem River and decide which locations allowed for burial and which locations did not. All the tasks that were given to me had great depth behind them, which allowed me to improve my skills in AutoCAD, Bluebeam, and Microsoft Office.”



Awwal Haroun, New Jersey Institute of Technology, E.E Cruz

“During the duration of my internship at E.E. Cruz, the primary objectives of the internship were to gain practical insights into construction methods and materials and apply academic knowledge to tasks. The Project Area, comprising the City of Hoboken and adjacent areas of Weehawken and Jersey City, intends to minimize the impacts from surge and flood events. Some of the tasks that I completed included: Test pit operations to locate underground utilities and archeological test pits to identify any archaeological features. The test pits were logged, and any discovered utilities were marked.”



Bryan Landaverde (center), Fairleigh Dickinson University, NJ Transit

“This summer I interned at NJ Transit as a Construction Management Intern under Joseph Sheedy. As Interns, we got to see many sites I wouldn’t have expected to see so early in my career. I appreciate the efforts of NJ Transit for these visits. We stayed in Secaucus as our main assignment was the Portal North Bridge. Here we had hands-on experience with scheduling software, how things are organized, and what is considered critical. Every week we went on different approaches and observed how each part of the bridge was constructed. I’m glad to be extending my internship into the fall semester.” Bryan is pictured with fellow CIAP Interns Alexander Dang (left) and Gulsher Khan (right).

installation progress using Assemble. Through the Assemble App I was able to monitor the progression of work based on installation dates, which allowed me to spend significant time in the field. This internship has been truly spectacular, helping me grow both professionally and personally. I am honored to have been part of such an important project, surrounded by exceptional people. I also want to express my gratitude to CIAP for creating a program that nurtures and supports young professionals in the construction industry.”



Daniel Olaya, Rowan University, Turner Construction Co.

“This summer, I had the privilege of working with Turner Construction. I spent 10 weeks at the Nemours Children’s Hospital in Wilmington, Delaware. One of the most exciting tasks I was given was tracking



Kimberly Salmeron, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Schiavone Construction

“Working as a Project Intern at Schiavone has made me realize that for a project to be successful a team must come together and work as one. Throughout this internship I have gained valuable skills. I completed a takeoff for underground drainage. I helped the team create Schedule C’s for some of the subcontractors and service providers that detail the scope of work they are to perform. As my first exposure to civil engineering in the workforce, it truly has been a wonderful experience, one I will always remember.



Mia Terrazzini, Rowan College at Burlington County, South State

“This summer I spent my weekdays at South State Incorporated. I worked every day in a field office trailer in Bellmawr. Aside from standard forms, I got to follow an entire construction project during my internship. This project was to construct an elevated timber walkway running along a cedar creek in Washington Lake Park. My goal was to become familiar with the physical construction aspect of a design project, as well as capturing the mindset held by contractors, where their values lie, what their priorities are, their biggest concerns, to name a few. I believe I achieved my goals and was quite satisfied with the experience.



Isidro Torres Amador, Ocean County College, Schnell Contracting

“During my twelve-week internship at Schnell Contracting, I began with estimating tasks, such as quantity takeoffs and preparing quotes for general contractors. At first the tasks would take a full day to complete but over time I became more efficient and was able to complete more quotes in a day. This hands-on experience left me with a thorough understanding of the project management process that takes place in construction. Additionally, VP Adam Newman’s supportive and patient mentorship significantly enhanced my experience. I am excited to continue with Schnell Contracting part-time while attending school, an opportunity which was made possible by CIAP.”



Bektur Totoshev, Rutgers University, Railroad Construction Co.

“This summer, through CIAP, I worked for Railroad Construction Company at the Newark Sewage Treatment Plant. My first day, I learned about contract specifications and drawings, specifically looking for spec sections that had contract closeout information. In addition to submittals, I had a variety of tasks assigned to me, not only by my mentor, but anyone who might’ve needed something done.” ■

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New Resources – Whereas other companies continue to dial back resources and furlough or lay off employees, Milwaukee® has continued investing in the growth of its teams. In the last two years the company has hired more than 4,000 people in the U.S. and now employs more than 10,000 people around the nation.

New Technology – In just the last year, the company has invested more than \$182 million in new technology to ensure its teams can continue to develop and deliver best-in-class solutions for users. This includes aggressive investments in battery cell technology, electronics hardware and firmware technology, motor development, AI and machine learning, Hardware-in-the-Loop testing, IoT, additive technology, automation, and more.

More Capacity – The company has also been rapidly expanding its footprint across the U.S. and overseas, investing more than \$800 million in the last five years. Specifically in the U.S., the company has recently completed seven expansions totaling 1.6 million square feet of new space dedicated to helping teams develop new technologies and solutions.

Reinvesting in Customers like ACCNJ

Milwaukee® not only channels its remarkable success back into its teams but also invests in supporting organizations like the Associated Construction Contractors of New Jersey (ACCNJ). By partnering with groups like ACCNJ, Milwaukee® actively contributes to advancing the trades, promoting safety and productivity on jobsites, and ensuring the highest standards of performance. These investments go beyond tools—they foster stronger connections within the industry and build lasting relationships with the very professionals Milwaukee® is dedicated to serving.

As the company continues to innovate and expand, Milwaukee Tool's unwavering commitment to its users, people, and partners stands at the heart of its journey. This approach has defined a century of growth and will shape its trajectory for the next 100 years, ensuring that Milwaukee® remains the trusted leader in jobsite solutions. ■



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Contractors and Unions Complete World War II Memorial

Contractors and union craftworkers in South Jersey have worked together over the years to build the landscape of Atlantic City. So, it's no surprise that a little over two years ago, several contractors and the building trades were approached by representatives of a newly formed group, Friends of Bernie Friedenberg (FBF) for help. This ad-hoc group, composed primarily of U.S. Veterans, was formed for the sole purpose of overseeing all aspects related to the manufacture and erection of the Bernie Friedenberg World War II Memorial to be located in O'Donnell Park in Atlantic City. The Memorial was to remember and honor the sacrifices of US Army Staff Sergeant Bernard (Bernie) I. Friedenberg and all other Americans who served their country during World War II.



Having no experience in what it takes for this type of endeavor, representatives of FBF turned to the local building trades and **Massett Building Company** of Egg Harbor Township. Massett Building has constructed many notable landmarks in Atlantic County and South Jersey, ranging from casinos to hospitals, and much more. When Rich Nugent, President of the firm, was approached to support this project, he quickly agreed. His Dad, Frank Nugent, served in World War II and it was the company's way of recognizing those individuals who were part of World War II, many who sacrificed their lives for our freedom. Massett Building Company Executive Dave Jackson spent endless hours managing all aspects of the project from securing permits and obtaining necessary insurance to coordinating subcontractors and schedules.

DM Sabia Masonry, a family-owned, fourth generation business, also played an instrumental part in this project and is recognized for their generosity, commitment and dedication. The company has installed quality masonry since 1923 on more than 50,000 projects. Without them, the monument would not have been built.

Bruno Concrete Contractors of Galloway, New Jersey, known for providing an array of services such as concrete flatwork and core cutting, stepped up to the plate and joined the team lending their expertise and quality craftsmanship.

L. Feriozzi, a fourth-generation company who has served Atlantic City and surrounding southern New Jersey areas in general construction and as a concrete contractor building casinos, hotels, hospitals, and parking garages, willingly participated, bringing their knowledge to the team.

With more than 110 years of excellence in electrical contracting, **Calvi Electric** was called upon as well. Known for installing the electrical equipment that lights the casinos, hotels and condominiums that make up the glowing, world-famous contemporary Atlantic City skyline, this reputable, dependable electrical contractor lent their expertise to this meaningful project.

Tough Turf, of Mays Landing, New Jersey, who provides commercial and industrial bricklaying, interlocking paving stones, and masonry work also pledged their support and is recognized for their part in the erection of the monument.

Last, but certainly not least, as the backbone of any quality project delivered by signatory union contractors, are the trades who working directly for the above contractors or volunteered their time to see the monument through to completion.

The Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers, under the leadership of John Capo, were intimately involved from day one.

Reaching out to contractors and the other trades, Lynn Canfield, Treasurer of the Atlantic & Cape May Counties Building & Construction Trades Council, dedicated endless time to this worthwhile project.

Recognition also goes out to several other building trades including:

Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters, under the leadership of EST William Sproule,

Operating Engineers, Local Union No. 825, under the leadership of Business Manager, Greg Lalevee,

Building & General Construction Laborers, Local 77, under the leadership of Business Manager, Carl Styles,

International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Ironworkers, Local 399, under the leadership of Business Manager Richard Sweeney, and International Union of Electrical Workers, Local 351, under the leadership of Business Manager, Dan Cosner.

This project is one example of why ACCNJ is so honored to represent signatory union contractors and work in partnership with the trades with whom they employ. We applaud their generosity and expertise in bringing the Bernie Friedenberg World War II Memorial to reality. ■





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LABOR MANAGEMENT COOPERATIVE - IMPACT

Breaking the Mold: Why We Shouldn't Limit Our Future Generations to Traditional Career Paths

BY | JOSEPH N. MERLINO, VICE PRESIDENT, BAYSHORE REBAR, INC.

October was Careers in Construction Month. As we face a massive skills shortage in the industry, it is more important than ever to promote careers in construction.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a major disruption in America's labor forces as the phenomenon known as "The Great Resignation" took place. In 2022, more than 50 million workers quit their jobs, following the 47.8 million who did so in 2021. This trend persisted in 2023 and continued throughout 2024. This is happening in conjunction with a persistent skilled labor shortage we were already experiencing pre-pandemic – the result of a wave of baby-boomer retirements and workers switching careers during the last recession. Regrettably, non-traditional career paths usually aren't presented to those graduating high school today as a viable and lucrative alternative to college. Lack of awareness of the situation without a plan to build a pipeline of workers continues to disrupt the industry.

As a construction contractor with over 40 years of industry experience, I can attest to the fact that time is working against the industry. Growing project demand is dipping into a shallow pool of skilled labor, which has resulted in higher prices and longer construction schedules. Trouble finding skilled labor hurts the bottom line when companies can't meet the increasing project demand. The ongoing labor shortage has

caused a ripple effect on the U.S. economy, especially considering the uncertain political climate today. Funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act alone won't fix our crumbling infrastructure without a strong and skilled labor force.

Thanks to my background as an ironworker and connection with the Ironworkers Union, through which I received training, I have been fortunate to have a steady supply of skilled labor for my established rebar contracting business. The Union has an excellent Registered Apprenticeship Program where they train the next generation of skilled ironworkers. I am ever so grateful for this program as it has led to a long and satisfying career in construction, a successful business, and a comfortable life in New Jersey.

I was one of those kids for whom the traditional path to a desk job through an expensive four-year college career was not the most fitting or feasible option. In 1981 at the age of 15, I went to help my uncle with his job for 10 days at G & H Steel Services Inc., a general contractor in Pennsylvania. I learned many important skills during my brief time with the company, including blueprint reading and placing rebar. I was working with people more than 20 years older than me. I enjoyed it so much that when I returned home to Philadelphia, I quit 10th grade and joined Ironworkers Local 405.

THE UNION HAS AN EXCELLENT REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM WHERE THEY TRAIN THE NEXT GENERATION OF SKILLED IRONWORKERS.

I completed the apprenticeship program at Ironworkers Local 405 while making a decent living through their “earn-while-you-learn” program where we were put to work on real construction projects.

A lucrative career was waiting at the end of my training, and I did it all without accumulating college debt. I knew the traditional college route to a career that came with massive debt would not be for me. After a while, I started my own rebar construction company that flourished into the business it is today. I have achieved more than I ever dreamed of due to my training as an ironworker, which started with the Registered Apprenticeship Program at Ironworkers Local 405 in Pennsylvania.

According to the United States Department of Labor, apprenticeships are a proven path to secure careers: “87 percent of apprentices are employed after completing their programs with an average starting wage above \$50,000. The return on investment for employers is impressive. Studies from around the globe suggest that for every dollar spent on apprenticeship, employers get an average of \$1.47 back in increased productivity, reduced waste, and greater front-line innovation.”

The Ironworkers Registered Apprenticeship Program is one of the most recognized in the industry, spending more than \$90 million annually to train the next generation. The Ironworkers Union developed the Ironworker Apprenticeship Certification Program, comprised of a comprehensive internal and external evaluation as well as ten program standards to improve, which standardize the quality of training. This hands-on learning program ensures apprentices make a decent living with benefits while they train. The Ironworkers Union has over 5,000 apprentices during any given year and 20,000 trained apprentices overall in North America who help fill the skills gap.

Continued support from the new president and administration for Registered Apprenticeship Programs is the key to continuing to bridge the skills gap and training the future generation to build our nation’s crumbling infrastructure.

It’s time we stopped telling young people their only path to success is a four-year college degree. The earn-while-you-learn apprenticeship model works. I wouldn’t be where I am today if I hadn’t pursued my career in construction. We simply need to do better at promoting technical training and trades at the middle and high school levels to give them choices, so young people can find well-paying and fulfilling careers in construction and prosper. ■



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LABOR MANAGEMENT COOPERATIVE - CCT

Veteran Recruitment and UCAN: Key Drivers of Membership Retention in Carpenters Union

BY | CYNDIE WILLIAMS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CARPENTER CONTRACTOR TRUST

The Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC) in New Jersey is making significant strides in attracting and retaining members through a two-pronged approach: veteran recruitment and the Union Carpenter Action Network (UCAN) program. Veterans understand how to work hard and be part of a bigger community – two key traits that make a successful union member. The UCAN program encourages member engagement and adherence to union values. These efforts are crucial for the Union to attract skilled workers and ensure signatory contractors have the talent they need in the workplace.

Veteran Recruitment: Building on Strengths and Values

The military is the perfect pipeline into the trade because of its perfect synergy. Military veterans, particularly those in the infantry, have the work ethic, leadership and discipline that any good carpenter needs.

“Most veterans are brought in through personal referrals,” said Daniel Sebban, EAS Council Representative and veteran. “Our veterans often reach out to their military peers, encouraging them to consider the carpentry

trade as they transition out of service. These personal connections help create an authentic recruitment process that traditional advertising simply cannot replicate.” These referrals are a testament to how well veterans fit into the Carpenters Union.

Veterans transitioning into civilian life are naturally more inclined to trust advice from someone who has shared similar experiences, which makes the recruitment process more compelling and successful. This peer-to-peer approach significantly contributes to the high retention rates among veterans who join the Union. The EAS also recruits veterans through the Helmets to Hardhats program (<https://helmetstohardhats.org>), which has proven to be a strong recruitment platform that helps match veterans with construction jobs.

Mentorship plays a critical role in retaining veterans once they join the Union. It is a way to teach technical skills and offer moral support and practical advice on succeeding in the profession. This structured support system ensures that veterans feel welcomed and supported, creating a culture for long-term commitment to the Union.

MILITARY VETERANS, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN THE INFANTRY, HAVE THE WORK ETHIC, LEADERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE THAT ANY GOOD CARPENTER NEEDS.

MEMBERS INVOLVED IN UCAN TEND TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS THAT TRANSLATE INTO IMPROVED PERFORMANCE ON JOB SITES.

UCAN: Fostering Engagement and Leadership

While veteran recruitment is a cornerstone for attracting new members into the Union, the UCAN program is equally important in keeping them engaged and invested in the long term. UCAN focuses on member involvement through union advocacy, grassroots organizing, and leadership development. It allows them to participate in EAS initiatives that strengthen their connection to the organization.

For union contractors, UCAN provides a valuable advantage by nurturing a workforce that is not only skilled but also deeply committed to the industry's success. "The UCAN program keeps union members engaged with their locals and fosters a commitment to union values while guaranteeing that signatory contractors have the talent they need in the workplace," said Bruce Garganio, Regional Manager, EASRCC. "It serves to maintain and energize the carpenter ranks throughout their careers."

Members involved in UCAN tend to develop leadership skills that translate into improved performance on job sites. It is also a vital link in encouraging longevity in the Union because it contributes to a positive workplace culture. This sense of belonging is a powerful motivator, keeping members engaged and committed to the Union's mission.

A Successful Dual Track for Recruitment & Retention

Growing and maintaining members are equally important aspects of EASRCC's goals. With billions of dollars of infrastructure investment from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act, we are preparing the next generation of carpenters to build our communities. Through military recruitment and keeping membership engaged with UCAN, the Carpenters Union is staying ahead of construction needs and helping to build the next generation of local dignified workers. ■

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LABOR MANAGEMENT COOPERATIVE - LECET

LIUNA Adds Paid Maternity Leave Benefit for Women Members

BY | ROBERT LEWANDOWSKI, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, NJ LECET

The Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) General President Brent Booker delivered big news to the 5,000 attendees at the Tradeswomen Build Nations Conference held in New Orleans this past September. LIUNA announced it will implement the most expansive maternity leave policy in the unionized construction industry. The policy – which will go into effect January 1, 2025 – is an effort to bring more women into LIUNA as construction craft laborers and to better the lives of the women who already belong to the 550,000-member Laborers Union.

“We want to be a union that doesn't make a woman choose between being a mother and being a laborer,” explained LIUNA Vice President and Eastern Regional Manager Mike Hellstrom. Funded through the union treasury, the program will pay \$800 a week for at least 12 weeks of maternity leave. The Union expects the program will make a material difference in the lives of women members and their families and also help recruit and retain more women into the profession.

General President Booker addressed the need to effectively meet the unique needs of a diverse membership. “We're looking to the future, and we want all members, including female members, to know we value them, we value their families, we value their children,” said Booker in his remarks at the Tradeswomen Build Nations Conference.

According to the Union, the maternity leave policy improves upon already favorable negotiated policies that benefit women workers. Through collective bargaining agreements, wage standards are set where, among other things, all workers get paid the same amount for performing the same work. These codified wage rates help eliminate the gender wage gaps and set the union construction industry apart from most competitors.

Over the course of several months of research and exploration, and by looking at issues of gender and the workforce more broadly, LIUNA identified the need for more equitable policies that addressed the different challenges women endure in construction. The maternity leave program was developed with feedback from union leaders, women members, and the contractor community, and is a source of pride and a signal of progress being made to not merely recruit a diverse membership but also find ways to better support them.

Staci Jett, a five-year LIUNA member, was present at the announcement and called the maternity leave policy a game changer for women. “Not having paid pregnancy and maternity leave has been a huge barrier for women construction workers,” she said. “I know women who chose different careers because they wanted to someday have kids.”

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EXPANSIVE
MATERNITY
LEAVE POLICY IN
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“Implementing a maternity leave policy is really an historic event,” said Tara Arslanian, a mother of two and a member of Laborers Local 172. “I am proud to belong to a union that recognized the need for change and took action. I suspect this will help LIUNA recruit more and a higher level of women into the trade.”

Joseph DeMarco, director of the New Jersey Construction Craft Laborers Apprenticeship Fund, was quick to praise the new approach: “We need to go beyond publishing pamphlets that recruit women workers and spend more time listening to them, mentoring them, giving them

opportunities to grow their careers – becoming leaders themselves – and making sure the industry is responsive to their needs and removes obstacles that are unique to their career development.”

LIUNA members are recognized for their versatility and involvement in many phases and sectors of construction. Women in the Union perform the same work as their male counterparts, including asbestos remediation, building and highway construction, and construction of energy infrastructure. ■





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LABOR MANAGEMENT COOPERATIVE - BRICKLAYERS

Crafting a Competitive Edge: Enhancing Recruitment and Retention Strategies for BAC ADC Members

BY | CHRISTOPHER J. NAGY, ED.D., M.A., – C.A.P.P. OF THE NAGY EDUCATION GROUP IN PARTNERSHIP WITH JOHN CAPO, DIRECTOR – BRICKLAYERS & ALLIED CRAFTWORKERS ADCNJ

Starting in August 2024, the BAC Administrative District Council (ADC) of New Jersey, under the leadership of John Capo for Locals 4 and 5, enlisted the assistance of Dr. Christopher Nagy – a successful former superintendent of the Burlington County Institute of Technology, Apprentice Coordinator for Burlington County, member of the Board of Directors of the Burlington County Regional Chamber of Commerce, and consultant of the Nagy Education Group – to create a proposal and strategic plan that addresses a comprehensive strategy to enhance recruitment, onboarding, training, retention, and recognition within the local ADC.

John Capo had a vision to address future generations in the workforce and to coordinate an effort that aims to attract high-quality candidates, ensure effective workforce integration, and foster long-term employee retention and performance recognition based on the latest research and best practices. This approach is informed by recent trends favoring Career and Technical

Education (CTE) over traditional college routes and front and back office processes, emphasizing a strong return on investment (ROI) for both employers and employees. In fact, recent studies highlight a shift towards CTE due to its cost-effectiveness and high job placement rates. CTE graduates often earn competitive salaries with less student debt compared to traditional college graduates, and BAC members specifically are capable of having a tidy nest egg for retirement between earnings, savings, and benefit packages.

In collaboration with the Nagy Education Group, the strategic plan addresses six key areas:

Recruitment Strategies

Hiring Process: Interview techniques will be evaluated based on relevancy and effectiveness to promote the BAC and benefits. A plan will be developed to follow the candidate throughout the process and maintain contact, allowing the individual to know he or she is valued.

Targeted Outreach and Partnerships: Collaborating with educational institutions like high schools and vocational schools is crucial to creating a pipeline of potential apprentices.

Participation in industry events and job fairs, along with digital recruitment campaigns, broadens the reach to attract diverse talent.

Employee Referral Programs: Incentive programs encourage current employees to refer candidates, while ambassador roles train enthusiastic employees to aid in recruitment efforts.

Promotion and Testimonials: Highlighting long-term employees' achievements inspires new recruits and showcases career growth opportunities within the union.

Onboarding Process

Structured Onboarding Programs: Comprehensive orientation sessions introduce new hires to company culture, policies, and procedures. Mentorship

programs pair new apprentices with experienced employees for guidance.

Customized Onboarding Plans: Individual Development Plans (IDPs) set clear goals for new hires. Continuous feedback mechanisms ensure smooth transitions and address concerns promptly.

Training and Development

Soft Skills Training: Workshops enhance communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. Customer service training emphasizes interaction excellence.

Technical Skill Training: Certification programs and continuous learning opportunities ensure employees meet industry standards. Partnerships with educational institutions offer courses leading to industry-recognized certifications.

Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Learning Modalities: The latest applications of technology not only mirror how current generations think and process, but also provide simulation experiences that mirror gaming technologies and interactive

learning, which promotes curiosity, creativity and new learning to apply to future emergent issues.

Retention Strategies

Career Advancement Opportunities: Clear career progression pathways and internal promotion policies support employee growth, especially considering many anticipated retirements.

Employee Engagement and Well-Being: Regular feedback and recognition foster a positive work environment. Work-life balance initiatives include flexible schedules and wellness programs.

Award and Recognition System

Performance-Based Awards: Programs like Employee of the Month recognize outstanding contributions. Monetary bonuses and non-monetary incentives further motivate employees, but the strongest incentive is to engage the employee to promote out of the box thinking and creative solutions to complex issues that emerge during ongoing operations and to

provide credit and recognition for such a major contribution.

Long-Term Service Awards: Celebrating service milestones with non-monetary awards and loyalty bonuses acknowledge employee dedication.

Implementation Plan

Research is clear that plan objectives cannot be met without the buy-in of employees and management. A task force comprising of apprentice leadership, instructors, HR, management, and employee representatives will oversee its implementation. Detailed action plans will be developed, pilot programs launched, and continuous monitoring conducted to ensure success. Regular updates will keep all stakeholders informed of progress.

When combined, this strategic framework aims to enhance the overall employee experience in the trades, ensuring that the organization attracts, develops, and retains top talent while adapting to evolving educational trends and workforce needs. ■

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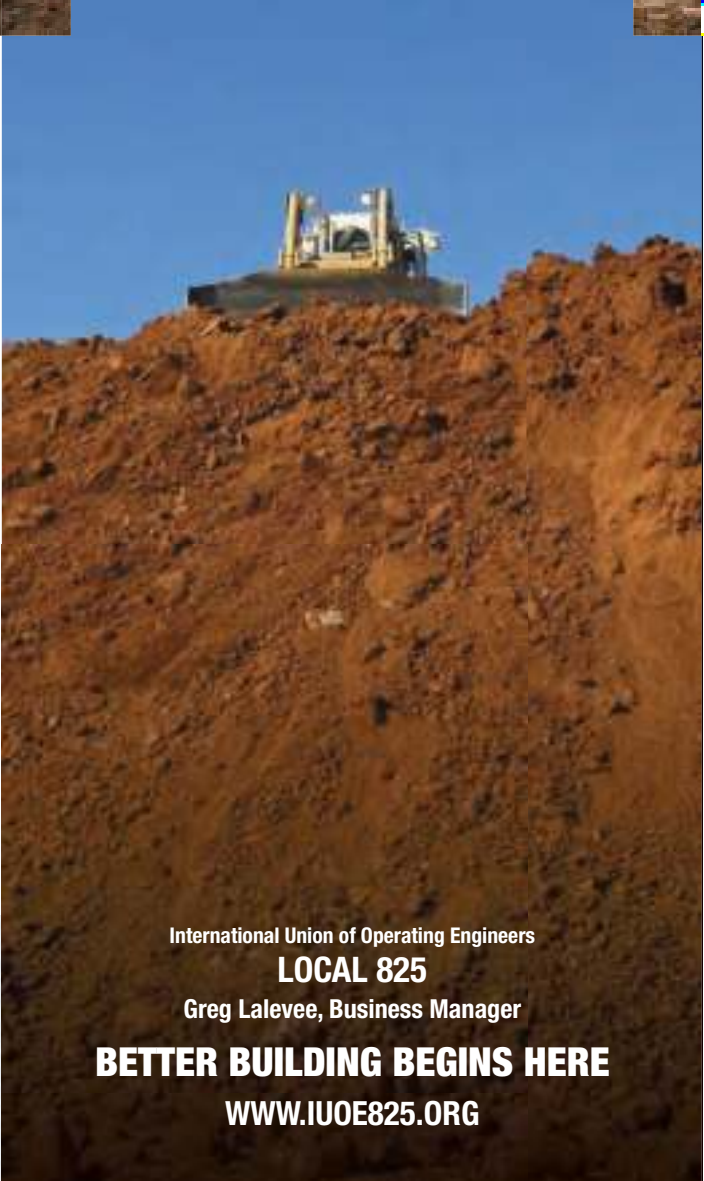


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Flashback – When Superstorm Sandy Knocked Out New Jersey’s Largest Sewage Treatment Plant

BY | MARK LONGO

In October 2012, Superstorm Sandy wreaked havoc on the northeastern United States, causing widespread devastation. One of the most significant impacts was on the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) in Newark, New Jersey. The storm surge from Sandy knocked the PVSC water treatment plant completely offline for almost three days. This power loss led to the release of approximately 840 million gallons of untreated sewage into the Passaic River, Newark Bay, and surrounding waterways. The untreated sewage posed severe public health risks, including the spread of harmful bacteria and viruses, and caused significant environmental damage.

The PVSC plant, one of the largest wastewater treatment facilities in the United States, serves over 1.5 million residents and thousands of businesses in 48 northeastern New Jersey communities. The loss of power not only disrupted the plant’s operations but also highlighted the vulnerability of critical infrastructure to extreme weather events. This incident underscored the need for a reliable backup power solution to prevent such disasters in the future.

In response to the catastrophic impact of Superstorm Sandy, the PVSC proposed the construction of a Standby Power Generation Facility (SPGF). This \$180 million project

aims to provide a reliable backup power source to ensure the continuous operation of the sewage treatment plant during power outages. The SPGF is designed to be fueled by natural gas, which was determined to be the cleanest and most efficient fuel source that meets the reliability requirements. The facility will also include additional pollution controls to reduce overall emissions such as upgrading sludge heat treatment boilers and removing outdated equipment.

The proposed solution has faced criticism from environmentalists and community groups, particularly those in the Ironbound neighborhood of Newark, which is already burdened by pollution. Opponents argue the natural gas power plant will contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and exacerbate climate change. They have called for the use of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power, instead of natural gas. However, PVSC consulting engineers evaluated these options and determined they could not meet the facility’s power requirements due to the large amount of power needed and the necessity for the SPGF to be available at all times, regardless of weather conditions.

Despite the opposition, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has given limited approval for the construction of the SPGF, with strict

conditions to mitigate its environmental impact. The DEP’s approval requires the PVSC to install a minimum of 5 megawatts of solar power and 5 megawatts of battery storage at the sewage treatment plant. Additionally, the PVSC must study how to transition from the natural gas plant to a renewable energy alternative, including the possibility of green hydrogen. These measures aim to reduce the overall pollution emitted by the facility and ensure the backup power plant is used only in emergencies.

The construction of the SPGF is a critical step toward enhancing the resilience of the PVSC and protecting public health and the environment. While the project has faced challenges and opposition, it represents a necessary investment in infrastructure to prevent future sewage disasters. The lessons learned from Superstorm Sandy have driven the PVSC to take proactive measures to ensure that such an incident does not occur again. ■

[This article originally appeared in Tristate Infrastructure News Network - <https://tristateinfrastructurenews.com/flashback-when-superstorm-sandy-knocked-out-new-jerseys-largest-sewage-treatment-plant/>]

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September 11-13, 2024, ACCNJ held its Annual Convention at Harrah's Atlantic City. The event provided a platform for members and labor partners to discuss key industry issues, hear insightful presentations on better listening, AI and the economy, and network in a social environment. Starting with the Wednesday night welcome reception, followed by lunch and presentations on Thursday and dinner at The Pool, the event concluded Friday morning, with feedback from attendees that was overwhelmingly positive. In addition, this year's sponsorship support was outstanding and appreciated, not only for the convention but for the scholarship foundation as well. ACCNJ looks forward to growing this important event and continuing to welcome both new and longstanding members to participate. ■



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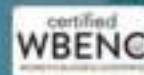


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Unpacking the Importance of Contributing to ACCNJ PAC

BY | ABBY ADAMS, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DIRECTOR



When it comes to political involvement, many people feel intimidated by the idea of contributing to a Political Action Committee (PAC). The word “politics” alone can often evoke feelings of uncertainty or discomfort, especially in the polarized world in which we live. But for trade associations, professional organizations, and other advocacy groups, a PAC amplifies a collective voice in the political process.

Something you may be unaware of is all ACCNJ’s political activity is conducted through ACCNJ PAC, which is connected to the Association as a voluntary, nonprofit, unincorporated association without affiliation to any political party.

ACCNJ takes great pride in advocating for legislation and regulation that would raise the standards in the construction industry, while at the same time making it less burdensome to our members. ACCNJ PAC is a vehicle for that advocacy.

Contributing to ACCNJ PAC allows us to better support policies that benefit New Jersey’s union construction industry. Thanks to past support, ACCNJ has successfully authorized local governments to engage third parties to perform construction inspections, created an e-procurement process for public projects, developed a fair award process for design-build projects, and much more.

Additionally, with support to ACCNJ PAC, ACCNJ is provided with the tools to defend against harmful legislation. We have been able to successfully educate policymakers about the negative effects proposed legislation could have on construction and prevent bills from gaining traction before they can do significant damage. In recent sessions, ACCNJ’s efforts have prevented revising or eliminating certain aspects of time-tested procurement processes, allowing public bodies to use “price and other factors” to award contracts, and expanding a county improvement authority’s ability to contract for redevelopment purposes. These preventions have all kept a reliable landscape for construction bidding processes in New Jersey.

The perception that contributing to a political action committee is scary or intimidating is limiting to your participation in democracy and to your protection of New Jersey’s union construction industry. ACCNJ will always work to ensure your contributions to ACCNJ PAC are within the limits of the law. Should you contribute, there will be no hindrance in your bidding of public work as contributions to ACCNJ PAC are not subject to pay-to-play restrictions.

It comes down to this: the more ACCNJ members contribute to ACCNJ PAC, the more the Association can do in terms of protecting and advancing the interests of New Jersey’s union construction industry. ACCNJ PAC needs and appreciates your support. ■

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The Painted Bride Art Center (“the Bride”) has been an institution in the emerging visual, theatre and performing arts world of Philadelphia and the region for over 50 years. In 2022, the Bride sold its headquarters of over 20 years on Vine Street and moved into a rented space on Market Street in Philadelphia. Recently, the HVAC unit serving the building failed. The Bride has been working to replace it, but does not have the internal personnel to truly evaluate the HVAC options and the pros and cons of each. Resolution Management Consultants donated its expertise and services to assist the Bride in evaluating the initial replacement proposal, developing a scope of work and investigating possible avenues to garner utility rebates (for higher efficiency selections) and possibly IRA funding available to non-profits for energy conservation projects.



E. Mitchell Swann, P.E., Managing Director, Resolution Management Consultants

Signs and Safety Devices Makes Presentation to ARC of Hunterdon

Signs and Safety Devices partnered with the Knights of Columbus to raise \$6,000 in support of the ARC of Hunterdon and the NJ Special Olympics.

Special Olympics New Jersey is dedicated to bringing pride into the lives of all involved. They are a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to provide

sports training and athletic competition to children and adults with intellectual disabilities, completely free of charge.



Chris Virgo of Signs and Safety Devices, along with Bill Fitzsimmons of the Knights of Columbus, delivers a check for \$2,700 to The Midland School in North Branch

Wiss Personnel Work with Habitat for Humanity

Wiss has partnered with Habitat for Humanity for the past ten years, dedicating time and resources to build homes and improve communities. Spearheaded by Erin Silkowski, who has led the initiative since its inception, Wiss volunteers have consistently worked on various projects aligning with their service and community impact values. Erin’s leadership has been instrumental in keeping the partnership strong, organizing teams and ensuring that Wiss makes a tangible difference in the lives of needy families. The long-term commitment exemplifies Wiss’ dedication to giving back and fostering positive change in local communities.



Railroad Construction Company Continues Community Service Efforts

The Boys and Girls Club of Paterson and Passaic’s (BGCPP) 2nd Annual Back to School Bash distributed backpacks, school supplies, uniforms and sneakers, all donated by supporting companies and organizations. Railroad Construction Co., Inc. (RCC) collected more than 600 pairs of new sneakers and co-workers Lauren Elsaesser, Denise Santiago, Linda Ulm, Janice Elsaesser, Regina Strickland, Carl DiGirolamo and Maria Gil volunteered their time to help the BGCPP host another successful event.



Railroad Construction Co., Inc. co-workers volunteered on a Friday afternoon to mulch the playground at Eva’s Village. Laura Van Bloem, Senior Director of Development & Communications, shared the following: “Thank you all so much for your hard work in providing much-needed mulch on the Eva’s Village playground. Not only does it look amazing, but you also provided a nice, thick, safe layer for kids to run around (and fall down) on. As always, your team came and conquered the task at hand with muscle, determination and smiles! What a wonderful group!”

A month later, the RCC Charity Committee sent a follow-up team of volunteers to Eva’s Playground. Luz Carrillo, Dennis Leahy,

Kerry Smith and Carl DiGirolamo donated their time to clean-up garbage and did a general rake-out of the mulch within the playground apparatuses. Carl DiGirolamo shared, "We are happy to report that the mulch still looks great, and there were minimal weeds growing, which we addressed today." The team did an awesome job and RCC is already planning the next upgrade for planters and benches.

What better way to spend the evening than a night at the ballpark with co-workers, friends and family, who came together in support of the same mission of giving back with the 2nd Annual Charity Softball Game! McLaren Engineering laid down the challenge and Railroad accepted, resulting in a 10-1 RCC victory. Thank you to fans, McLaren Engineering and, of course,



Pictured left to right, Greg Fallon, Nilay Kantaria, Dale Errico, Andrey Moor, Carl DiGirolamo, Michael Smiley, Vonjae Powell, Dave Gentile, Aniel Luna, Blayne Binkiewicz and Marc Coogan

thank you to the tremendous team of RCC all stars: Adam Schmit, Amy LaRocco, Aniel Luna, Bob Paz, Brian Manning, Carl DiGirolamo, Cassie Moriarty, Dan Cocco, John Benas, Juan Lopez, Kevin Elias, Steve Da Silva and Steve Spirn. The winnings were donated to Variety the Children's Charity of New York, chosen by Brian Manning, RCC's MVP of the evening! ■





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ACCNJ Welcomes Seven New Members in this Issue

Since 1987, **C & C Supply Company**, a certified WBE firm, has been providing contractors with exceptional customer service and prompt delivery of industrial, welding, safety, and electrical products. Conveniently located between the Walt Whitman and Commodore Barry Bridges in Woodbury NJ, C & C Supply Company has the capability to deliver a wide variety of products rapidly to jobsites in the tri-state region. Cheryl Hoffmann Coniglio, President, represents the company and can be reached by phone at 856-384-0202 or by email at cheryl@candcsupply.com. Visit them on the web at www.candcsupply.com.

In business for nearly 60 years, **Graham Company** is an insurance brokerage and consulting firm committed to enhancing and customizing property and casualty, surety, and employee benefits programs for its clients. Representing the company is Vice President Shane Riccio. Shane can be reached by phone at 215-567-6300, by email at sriccio@grahamco.com or by mail at One Penn Square West, Philadelphia PA 19102. Visit Graham Company on the web at www.grahamco.com.

Since 1986, **Hampton-Clarke Inc. (HC)** has provided high-quality environmental laboratory and field sampling services to its clients in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. With more than 30 years of experience, HC remains a privately held Women-Owned, Disadvantaged, Small Business Enterprise focused on providing reliable laboratory data and superior customer service to a diverse range of clients. Rose DiMeo, President/CEO, represents the company and can be reached by email at rdimeo@hcvlab.com or by phone at 800-426-9992. The company is located at 175 US Highway 46, Suite D, Fairfield NJ 07004. Visit Hampton Clarke online at www.hcvlab.com.

Family owned and operated for more than 20 years, **Ram Industries LLC** is a total logistics provider offering trucking and rigging services, along with safe and secure warehousing services. President Craig Whitman can be reached by phone at 732-752-0840 or by email at craig@ramrigging.com. Their office is located at 1640 New Market Avenue, South Plainfield NJ 07080, and can be visited online at www.ramrigging.com.

Schiavone Lane Dragados JV located at 150 Meadowlands Parkway, 2nd Floor, Secaucus NJ 07094, is a heavy civil construction contractor. Daniel Peterson, Managing Member, represents the joint venture. Daniel may be reached at info@schiaivone.net or by phone at 201-867-5070.

Trinity Subsurface LLC is a subsurface utility engineering firm providing its clients a full suite of services. Trinity locates underground utilities and subsurface structures through various technologies and methods, including electromagnetic locating, ground penetrating radar, concrete scanning, and vacuum excavation. Business Development Manager Holly DiDonato can be reached by phone at 302-407-3697, by email at holly@trinitysubsurface.com or by mail at 14 Hadco Road, Wilmington DE 19804. Visit Trinity Subsurface on the web at www.trinitysubsurface.com.

Vulcan Materials Company is a leading producer of construction aggregates, primarily crushed stone, sand and gravel. The company is also a major producer of aggregate-based construction materials, including asphalt and ready-mixed concrete. Frank Prano, Area Sales Manager for NJ/NY, represents the company. Frank can be reached by email at franof@vmcmail.com, by phone at 201-615-4306, or by mail at 250 Pehle Avenue, Plaza One, Suite 507, Saddle Brook NJ 07663. Visit Vulcan Materials online at www.vulcanmaterials.com. ■

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Member News

Connell Foley's Real Estate Practice Under New Leadership

Connell Foley has announced that partner **George Garcia** will be joining **W. Nevins McCann** as co-chair of Connell Foley's Real Estate and Land Use practice group. With veteran real estate lawyers Garcia and McCann at the helm, Connell Foley's Real Estate Group's Land Use practice group prepares for a bright and busy future that includes expanding the team and servicing a broader geographical territory. **Kevin Coakley**, who served as the group's co-chair for over 20 years, will continue to contribute to the group's development in a co-chair emeritus role.

The already well-established group will continue to grow under the new leadership of Garcia and McCann, who will leverage their combined 40+ years of experience and broad network of relationships in New Jersey to enhance Connell Foley's extensive capabilities and long-held reputation as one of the region's premier real estate law service providers. The firm is confident the pair will enable the group to quickly respond to economic changes and provide a full spectrum of real estate law services to more clients than ever, according to firm Managing Partner Timothy Corrison.



▲ George Garcia

Construction Risk Partners Joins The Baldwin Group

Effective August 28, 2024, Construction Risk Partners (CRP) and its fellow partner firms have unified under one brand: The Baldwin Group. By uniting under one brand, CRP can better champion client's ambitions and achievements by leveraging the breadth and depth of its



▲ W. Nevins McCann

innovative solutions as well as the excellent relationships they have built with a wide range of insurance company partners nationwide. Clients benefit from the broader market access and value-added resources of the national firm, while still enjoying the entrepreneurial and family-oriented culture most already know and trust.

Signature Safety Among Best Places to Work by NJBIZ

For the third consecutive year, Signature Safety was named one of *NJBIZ*'s "Best Places to Work in New Jersey." The firm moved up 14 spots to number 35 on the list of medium-sized companies. This list is compiled solely based on employee surveys.



Brendan Murray Named CEO of Vollers

VOLLERS, a family-owned full-service provider of construction services, is pleased to announce key leadership changes. Brendan Murray, the current President of VOLLERS Excavating and Construction, Inc., HVI Services, LLC, and Layout, Inc., has transitioned to the role of Chief Executive Officer of VOLLERS, Inc., while

maintaining the position of President, effective immediately.

Mr. Murray joined VOLLERS, Inc. in January 2020 as Director of Construction, bringing over 20 years of leadership experience to his position as CEO. Prior to VOLLERS, Brendan served in various leadership roles in the construction industry, including founder of a multi-million-dollar commercial construction services firm. Having attended Rutgers University's College of Engineering, Brendan is known for his strategic vision and ability to foster both individual and organizational growth. Murray is committed to upholding VOLLERS' legacy while steering the company towards future innovation and success.



▲ Brendan Murray

Resolution Management Consultants Announces Personnel Changes

Resolution Management Consultants, Inc., which celebrated 30 years in business in 2023, has announced the following personnel changes: recent Widener Graduate, Rebecca S. Stallard, has started a full-time position as a Staff Consultant, while recent TCNJ Graduate, Molly R. Berlin, has started a full-time position as a Graphics Technician.

In addition, Daniel A. Merly, a Consultant with the company for two years, has been promoted to Senior Consultant. Mr. Merly has also recently received his Engineer-in-Training (EIT) certificate.

Anthony M. Ciampi, a Staff Consultant with the company for three years, has been promoted to Consultant.



▲ Rebecca S. Stallard, Molly R. Berlin, Daniel A. Merly, Anthony M. Ciampi

Railroad Construction Presents 2023 Quality Awards

- Jeremy Alonso Promoted
- Steven Spirn Obtains Professional Engineering License
- Sophia Bitler Named One of RT&S' 2024 Women in Railroad Engineering

To support the importance of Quality and promote the company's commitment to providing quality construction, two Railroad Construction Company co-workers, Tony Allgood and Jonathan Fischetto, each representing a different role in delivering a successful project, are acknowledged with a 2023 Quality Award.

In addition, RCC announced the promotion of Jeremy Alonso to the position of Quality Manager. Railroad has expanded the Quality department with the addition of Mr. Alonso who is overseeing quality control at the East Side Access, CH-058B project.

Steven Spirn, another key member of the RCC team, obtained his Professional engineering license.

Congratulations are also in order for Sophia Bitler who was selected as one of Railway Track & Structures (RT&S) 2024 Women in Railroad Engineering. This award honors some of the brightest women in railroad engineering. From freight and passenger rail to supplier and engineering firms, the list of honorees is built solely on peer nominations.

We are proud to congratulate all of these RCC employees on their achievements.

Vericon Announces Personnel Changes Company is Recipient of Several Awards
Vericon is thrilled to announce the

promotion of Robert Mikell to Chief Operating Officer. Since joining Vericon in 2010 and the Ownership Team in 2018, Rob has played a pivotal role in overseeing the operations of their Corporate and DC Metro offices. As COO, his leadership will now expand across all regions Vericon serves, driving growth and operational excellence.

The firm is also proud to introduce James Kiernan as Vericon's first Chief Financial Officer. With over 25 years of specialized experience in the construction industry, Jim will strengthen Vericon's financial foundation and help propel the company toward its strategic objectives while continuing to meet the high expectations of the company's clients.

Vericon is also the proud recipient of the following awards:

- ENR Southeast Top Contractors: Rank #97
- ENR New York Top Contractors: Rank #33
- ENR Mid-Atlantic Top Contractors: Rank #58
- NJBIZ Best Places to Work (Medium Companies: 50 – 249 employees): Rank #21

Withum Named Top 50 Construction Accounting Firm

Withum is proud to announce that Construction Executive, a leading publication in the construction industry, has once again named the firm in their annual list, "Top 50 Construction Accounting Firms." Withum has ranked in the top 20 since 2019. *Construction Executive's* Top 50 ranking is determined by an algorithm weighing key factors

such as construction and architectural & engineering practice revenue, percentage of total firm revenue, number of CPAs and Construction Industry Financial Professional Certifications, office locations and founding year.

Zentek Releases New Products

Zentek Consultants, a well-known construction technology specialist, has announced several new products that will help the industry.

ZenTek Revu Tools for Electrical - A simple to use, but very powerful takeoff system that appears as a tool chest, directly inside of Bluebeam Revu. These tools, designed specifically for the takeoff of electrical components, will save countless hours of effort on every project. (<https://zentekconsultants.net/zentek-revu-tools/>)

ZenEstimate Steel for Structural Material Manager - ZenEstimate Steel Tools for Bluebeam Revu and Structural Material Manager have partnered to close the takeoff/estimating loop in the structural space. Their popular ZenEstimate Steel tools can now be purchased with a profile specifically designed to output all takeoff data directly to a CSV file formatted and integrated with the Structural Material Manager pricing database from E.J.E. (<https://zentekconsultants.net/zenestimate-tools/>)

ZenEstimate for Concrete - A simplified takeoff system for Bluebeam Revu that incorporates over 200 takeoff symbols with associated finishes, admixtures, pricing, and size variants that all work inside Bluebeam Revu, using Imperial units. ZenEstimate Concrete comes with a dozen separate Custom Columns to track all your concrete-related work, that integrates directly with our concrete symbols. These custom metadata columns let you easily calculate volumes, lengths, and counts, as well as tag additional information like finishes, details and templates, and much more using simple clicks. Not only does ZenEstimate Concrete give you quantities, but it also lets you enter line-item costs and more for all your concrete components. (<https://zentekconsultants.net/zenestimate-tools/>) ■

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Onboarding Success: The Crucial Steps Beyond Hiring

BY | GREG BELPOMME, HERON WOLF



We often focus on how challenging it is to find the right talent, which is essential, but just as important is ensuring that once you've secured a 'yes' to your job offer, they actually start and stay! A well-executed onboarding strategy is critical, and it all begins long before the first day on the job.

The First Impression Counts—Even Before Day One

You've heard the saying, "You only get one chance to make a first impression." This principle applies just as much to a new employee's experience with your company. The journey doesn't start on the first day—it starts the moment they accept your offer. Their notice period is just as important as the interview process. If you've "sold the dream" in the interview, promising collaboration, support, and an engaging work environment, but fail to maintain

communication during the notice period, you risk sending the wrong message.

Who will be in their ear during this time? It's often their current employer, doing everything possible to make them second-guess their decision. Just because the offer letter is signed doesn't mean it's a done deal. In fact, it's far from over. According to research from the *International Journal of Behavioral Science*, 70% of people experience imposter syndrome, and doubts often creep in during the notice period and the first few weeks of a new job. This is where you need to step up and show your new employee they've made the right choice.

Pre-Onboarding: Stay Engaged During the Notice Period

Stay in touch with your new hire during their notice period. Take the time to check

in, answer questions, and provide useful information that prepares them for their first day. Even small details—such as where to park or what the first day's schedule looks like—can help ease any apprehension they may feel.

By staying engaged, you're not just offering support—you're building a relationship, one that makes them feel valued even before they've walked through the door.

Onboarding: Setting the Foundation for Long-Term Success

The importance of structured onboarding cannot be overstated. As noted by the *Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)*, effective onboarding programs reduce the time it takes for new hires to acclimate. While orientation might only last a few days, a candidate feeling fully 'settled' might take several months to a

year, so it's crucial a company finds ways to ensure employees fully settle into their roles and perform at their best.

Additionally, a study by the *Aberdeen Group* found companies with a structured onboarding process saw a 62% increase in new hire productivity and 50% greater retention rates. This proves onboarding isn't just about getting people up to speed—it's about ensuring long-term satisfaction and success. Within the first few weeks, new employees should be encouraged to ask questions, engage with the company culture, and start building connections.

Focus on Employee Experience to Drive Retention

If you want people to stay with your company, you need to invest in how they feel about working for you. Word of mouth in industries like construction is a powerful tool. When employees feel supported and valued, they're more likely to share positive experiences, attracting more top

talent to your company. On the flip side, neglecting the employee experience can result in dissatisfaction spreading quickly, particularly in close-knit industries.

By implementing and maintaining a robust onboarding strategy, you're setting the stage for success. It may take effort upfront, but the payoff is well worth it in terms of employee productivity, engagement, and retention.

We are fortunate to collaborate with an array of fantastic companies. Recently, I had the pleasure of working with a firm where senior management went above and beyond to welcome a new hire we had sourced for them. The manager sent a heartfelt email to the new hire, saying, 'We understand that starting a new job can be intimidating. If you ever feel the need to talk, just give me a call,' and 'Add me to your list of contacts—reach out anytime.'

I love this approach. It's simple yet incredibly powerful. Imagine moving to a new job and receiving such empathy from the boss you're about to work for. This not

only sets the tone for the type of leadership within the company but also gives the new hire a strong reason to feel valued and to buy into the company's culture. It's a great way to show you genuinely care about your employees from day one. It also takes about two seconds to send—a gesture that takes no time at all but yields huge positivity.

Retaining talent is a continuous process that begins the moment a candidate accepts your offer. By focusing on maintaining communication during the notice period, offering a well-structured onboarding process, and creating a supportive work environment, you not only set up new employees for success—you also build a foundation for long-term retention.

In a competitive job market, retention is just as important as recruitment, and with the right approach, you'll give yourself the best chance to hold on to the talent that helps your business grow. ■



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J.M. Ahle Co., Inc.
Alliant Insurance Services
Ambassador Medical Services, Inc.
American Global LLC
The Baldwin Group
Bayshore Recycling Corp.
BCA Insurance Group
Bell Supply
Boswell Engineering
Brent Material Company
Brown & Brown
C & C Supply Company
C & H Agency
CEM Business Solutions
Capital Steel Service, LLC
Caterina Supply Inc.
Chubb Surety
Churchill Associates
Clarity Testing Services Inc.
Cohen Seglias Pallas Greenhall & Furman, PC
CohnReznick
PC Collins Company, LLC
Compliance Management International
Concrete Scanning & Imaging, Inc.
Connell Foley LLP
Conner Strong & Buckelew
Construction Information Systems
County Concrete Corp.
DePri Steel, LLC
Dynamic Engineering Consultants, PC
ECI Technologies LLC
Earth Materials, LLC
eThink Technologies
Foley, Inc.
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.
Garden State Precast
General Contractors Association of NY
Genova Burns LLC
Glenn Insurance Inc.
Graham Company
Hafttek Concrete Washout Systems
Haydon Bolts, Inc.
Hays
HazTek Safety Management
Hedinger & Lawless LLC
Herc Rentals Inc.
Heron Wolf
Jesco, Inc.
K & L Gates LLP
R.S. Knapp Co.
Komatsu Northeast
Langan
Let It Grow, Inc.
Liberty Mutual Surety
Lockton Companies
Lum, Drasco & Positan
M&T Equipment Finance Corp.
Marcum LLP
Marinus Financial LLC
MAX USA Corp.
Milwaukee Tool
Mountain Hill Investment Partners
Mueser Rutledge Consulting Engineers
New Jersey Alliance for Action
New Jersey Steel Association, Inc.
NFP Property & Casualty Services, Inc.
Northwestern Mutual
Peckar & Abramson, PC
Pro Safety Services LLC
RMG CPA, LLC
Resolution Management Consultants, Inc.
Re-Steel Supply Co., Inc.
Sax LLP
Saxe, Doernberger & Vita, PC
Schultheis & Panettieri LLP
Signature Safety, LLC
Simple Safety Solutions LLC
Oliver L.E. Soden Agency Corp.
Southern NJ Steel Inc.
Steel Mountain Fabricators, LLC
Susanin, Widman & Brennan, PC
Taylor Oil Company
Traffic Safety Service LLC
Travelers
Trinity Products
Triumph Modular Inc.
USI Insurance Services
Vulcan Materials Company
Weldon Materials Inc.
Wiss & Company
Withum
ZenTek LLC
Zurich Surety/Insurance

Membership as of November 12, 2024

- 48 American Global LLC
- 5 The Baldwin Group
- 85 Bayshore Recycling
- 59 Wm. Blanchard Co.
- 61 International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
- 66 Building and General Construction Laborers Local Union No. 77
- 60 C & H Agency
- 53 Carpenter Contractor Trust
- 93 Central Salvage Co.
- 94 Churchill Associates LLC
- 34 Cohen Seglias Pallas Greenhall & Furman PC
- 1 Commerce Construction Corp.
- 73 Connell Foley LLP
- 46 Construction and General Laborers Union Local No. 172
- 55 Construction Industry Career Day
- 95 County Concrete Corp.
- 56 J. Fletcher Creamer and Son, Inc.
- 8 ECI Technologies
- 6 Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters
- 82 Eastern Landscape Contractors
- 21 Engineers Labor-Employer Cooperative (ELEC)
- 25 Epic Management Inc.
- 72 Fitzpatrick & Associates
- 36 Foley, Incorporated
- 43 Glenn Insurance, Inc.
- 42 H.C. Constructors
- Back Cover** Hall Construction Co., Inc.
- 3 HazTek Safety Management
- 43 Hays
- 71 Heavy and General Construction Laborers Local Union No. 472
- 91 Heron Wolf
- 49 Ironworkers Local Union No. 11
- 57 Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA)
- 94 Let It Grow
- 76 Masonry Contractors of NJ
- 72 Mountain Hill Investment Partners
- 37 NFP
- 70 Joseph A. Natoli Construction Corp.
- 79 NJ Steel Association
- 27 Nordic Contracting Co., Inc.
- 77 Northeast Remsco Construction, Inc.
- 87 Northwestern Mutual
- 64 Operating Engineers Local Union No. 825
- 26 Peckar & Abramson, PC
- 84 Petillo, Inc.
- 33 J.R. Prisco, Inc.
- 10 Prismatic Development Corporation
- 90 Railroad Construction Co., Inc.
- 67 Rizco
- 63 Sax LLP
- Inside Front Cover** Schiavone Construction Co. LLC
- 78 Schifano Construction Corp.
- 52 Schnell Contracting Limited
- 81 Signature Safety LLC
- 12 V.A. Spatz & Sons Construction, Inc.
- 23 Taylor Oil Co.
- 22 Torcon, Inc.
- Inside Back Cover** Traffic Safety Service LLC
- 51 Unique Scaffolding Systems, LLC
- 33 Vericon Construction
- 86 Vollers
- 73 Wade Ray & Associates Construction
- 74 Wetlands, Inc.
- 13 Withum



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- DPW & Municipalities
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