



**Construction
Institute**

*Advancing Relationships
Developing Leaders
Building Opportunities*

Save These Dates . . .

January 26, 2007

I-91 Corridor Regional
Construction Forecast
*Connecticut River Valley
from Middletown, CT to
Northampton, MA*

February 7 & 8, 2007

CONEX CT, *Construction
Trade Show with
Educational Content*

February 16, 2007

Young Professional in
Construction Forum
*Workforce Issues Facing
Young Professionals and
Their Employers*

March 14, 2007

Sustainability in
Construction Forum
*Harvesting the
benefits through
intelligent design,
innovative products and
conservation incentives*

June 21, 2007

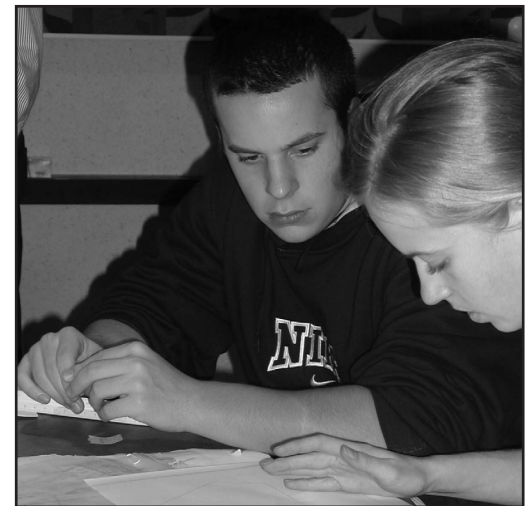
32nd Annual
Membership Meeting
& Awards Dinner

Recruitment—The Pool of Talent Has a Hole

Connecticut's pool of talent has a huge hole in it. Architects, engineers, project managers and construction managers are clearly hard to find and recruit. It is reminiscent of the 80s when firms in Connecticut were reaching out to other parts of the country for top talent. The 80s was a decade when firms could afford to transplant employees from depressed areas with the promise of top pay, interesting projects and challenging work. But, we are in a new millennium, where firms do not have the money to lure prospective employees with premium pay and reimbursed moving expenses. Speaking with various firms facing this challenge, I tried to uncover best practices that have been instituted to build and retain staff.

Diane Bruno, director of human resources for JCJ Architecture, stated that the employee referral program recently underwent a transformation. Originally, when an employee referred a candidate to the company, the employee would receive \$1,000 if the candidate was hired, no matter what position they filled, with one-half being distributed when the candidate actually started work and the other half paid after the candidate was employed for 90 days. Now the employee referral bonus program offers amounts relative to the position being filled, and it is paid in one lump sum upon the candidate's start date. For a project manager position, for instance, the referring employee can expect to receive \$7,000 - \$10,000. The change has had a great impact, not only on the referring employee, but also on new hires, who see the opportunity to earn substantial money by referring even more top talent.

Kathy Farnham, human resource representative with Manafort Brothers, a well-known construction company based in Plainville, has a different approach. Management believes that treating human capital well has a high rate of return. They



feel that the firm's reputation as a great place to work helps to attract potential candidates. If you, too, want to become an employer of choice—where your employees tell a great story—follow these tips. Treat employees fairly and equitably, and maintain consistency in applying policies and procedures. Be proactive versus reactive in your decisions. Anticipate employee needs beforehand. In a way, you are rehiring your employees everyday. Simply ask staff what they need, and then follow through.

(please see Recruitment on page 3)

Carol Kardas, is a principal with KardasLarson, LLC, human resource consultants based in Avon, CT. She can be reached at carolkardas@snet.net.

Future of the Workforce

Nearly half of what will be the built environment in 2030 doesn't yet exist, according to a Brookings Institution study. But who will design and build these new structures?

Nationwide, one of the most critical issues facing design and construction firms is the availability of our future workforce. There are many factors that contribute to this issue, including the aging workforce, diminishing numbers of science and engineering graduates, and the gender and racial diversity changes facing the industry.

Construction is the second largest industry in the United States, employing about 7 million workers. Overall, the U.S. Department of Labor estimates that one million new jobs will be added to the construction industry by 2012. It is estimated that one-third of the A/E/C workforce is 50 years of age or older; and according to recent statistics, there are five people leaving the construction industry for every one person entering the industry. The number of Caucasian males entering our industry is decreasing rapidly; and future workers will be increasingly minorities and females, which represents a major shift in workplace demographics. From 1990 to 2000, there was a 3.6% growth in science and engineering occupations, but only a 1.7% growth in science and engineering

degrees. Worldwide, the United States lags behind the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Japan and Canada in the percentage of university degrees awarded to science, engineering and construction students. To exacerbate the situation, many architecture and engineering graduates, instead of



following traditional career paths, are seeking professions in new, high-tech fields such as design animation, product design, biomedical engineering, and computer engineering.

Generational issues are also having an impact on the industry. Many of the young professionals entering the industry – those from Generation X and the dot-com generation – have different views and values about work. With most young families depending on two incomes, male and female workers are demanding greater flexibility and better technology to work away from the office. Many young professionals are likely to switch jobs frequently – taking their knowledge and relationships with them, which puts additional pressure on organizations to develop strong employee retention programs. And young professionals are less interested in developing long-standing client relationships and moving into leadership positions within their firms, creating challenges in ownership transition in the future.

Whereas shortages of teachers and nurses over the past decade in the United States have been highly publicized in the media, the general public is not aware of the shortage of workers in the construction industry. Since the industry is dominated by small business entities rather than large Fortune 500 companies, concerted efforts to project a more positive image of the industry and what it has to offer in terms of career opportunities have not been successful.

The good news is that the construction industry is taking steps in the right direction. The need for workers is so great that the construction industry, through programs like the ACE Mentor Program, is reaching out to high school and college students, making them aware of the opportunities in the design and construction industry, and providing them with mentoring, internships and scholarships. Many higher education institutions are experiencing 100 percent job placement rates, and some companies are hiring students while they are still attending college, paying the student's remaining tuition and providing paid internship opportunities.

But more needs to be done. First, the design and construction industry needs to unify their efforts and develop a campaign to educate the public on what the industry has to offer, i.e. well-paying, fulfilling careers with an abundance of opportunities for career growth. Women and minorities need to be encouraged to enter the industry, and companies need to be forward-thinking, addressing generational, cultural and racial diversity issues to satisfy the changing workforce. ▲

Maria A. Loitz, CPSM, director of marketing at BVH Integrated Services, Inc., can be reached at marial@bvhis.com. She also is president of the ACE Mentor Program of Connecticut.

Welcome New Members

Ingersoll-Rand Security Technologies

Kronenberger & Sons Restoration, Inc.

Lutron Electronics

The Norwich Free Academy

Recruitment — Pool

(continued from page 1)

A program that has proved valuable in attracting talent to Konover Construction Company is college and trade school recruiting. Katherine Meyer, Konover's human resources director, has aligned the firm with various educational institutions, such as Central Connecticut State University and Wentworth Institute. Both offer majors in the engineering and construction management fields. Konover Construction hires students for summer employment or for an internship. The students receive a rewarding experience and are exposed to various parts of the business. This helps them in determining which part of the business most appeals to them. Konover often makes an offer of employment to these students, either to return for the next summer or to fill a full-time position if they are due to graduate.

For smaller firms that do not have a human resource department, consider outsourcing this task. There is no magic process for attracting and retaining top talent. It takes time, thought and creativity to attract the best and retain the rest. Find out what works best for you, and get started. ▲

F O C U S



CI Construction Issues Series Young Professional's Forum

Old School vs. New Rules

Understanding and dealing with new attitudes, demands and needs of an emerging workforce within an established workforce culture

Join us for an exciting forum to find out what is on the mind of today's young professionals and what the established professional has to do to entice them and keep them in their firm

Friday, February 16th, 2007

**at the New Haven Lawn Club
8:30 - 11:00 a.m -- Registration 7:45 a.m.**



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E This Program rated **E** for Everyone
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4 ▲ Construction Institute Update

CI Creates Opportunity for Young Professionals

The two fundamental challenges facing young professionals in today's construction industry are 1) networking to develop increased visibility and potential clients, and 2) increasing one's knowledge base to advance in the field. In order to meet those challenges, the Construction Institute has embarked on an initiative to create networking and marketing opportunities for young professionals in a social setting, facilitate educational programs specifically tailored to young professionals, and increase the young professional membership within the Institute.

The Construction Institute's Young Professionals Initiative plans to offer

educational programs and business-building opportunities tailored to individuals with less than 10 years experience in the A/E/C industry.

The first event planned for this Initiative will be the Young Professionals in Construction Forum, which will be held on Friday, February 16th at the New Haven Lawn Club. We're encouraging our more experienced professionals to attend to serve as mentors and to learn more about how we can help our younger professionals grow in the industry. Watch for more information on the Young Professionals Initiative or contact the Construction Institute to find out more. ▲

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