

One School, One Instructor, One Student, You . . .

A Workforce Development Campaign

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Just like most construction markets across America, Georgia's worker shortage has reached what many would categorize as a crisis. Our members and staff at AGC Georgia are partnering to lead efforts to address the immediate need for workers and to develop sustainable solutions to grow a pipeline for the future. To help us frame our message and explain our long term goals, we coined the phrase **One School, One Instructor, One Student, You** which has helped us link fragmented efforts by various groups, including our chapter, into a more strategic, coordinated and cohesive initiative.

The **One School, One Instructor and One Student** part of our campaign name represents our belief that at a grassroots level we can grow interest in careers in the skilled trades by starting small. We encourage contractors to connect with a high school or technical college construction program in their local region to simply say, "I'm here, and I'd like to help you." With this simple offer to be a supporter of and cheerleader for the program, we are seeing instructors' passion rising to a new level, and this is igniting a buzz about construction career paths with students.

Contractors are helping in a variety of ways. Executives will speak to classes and share how they worked their way up in the industry from their field days during summer vacation. Superintendents and foreman visit students to share their career path and help teach a skill. Firms also support classrooms by donating extra jobsite supplies or even buying additional materials in their normal orders and having a supplier deliver a portion to the school. Several contractors are great about keeping an open invitation for jobsite tours during the course of a nearby project so students can see the various stages of construction. There is no one way to help! It just simply takes a contractor "wanting" to get engaged and magic happens.

The **You** in our campaign name is designed to speak to many people. While it is meant to spur action from contractor members, **You** is also meant to resonate with education-related government agency representatives, community business leaders, academia, elected officials, partnering associations and the general public. Each of these segments has a unique perspective and powerful voice in the overall conversation.

As we work to turn what feels like the largest of ships in a new direction that embraces the notion that every student isn't meant to attend a traditional 4-year college and that rewarding careers are available in skilled trades, we keep these goals in front of us: 1) coordinate a statewide strategy of sharing our mission to recruit more talent to the construction industry; 2) increase funding for career and technical education; 3) develop quality training and consistency among graduates throughout Georgia; 4) grow opportunities for students to fill work-based learning positions at contracting firms; and 5) directly align skill training with market needs.

It's important to remember no one is in a better position to fix the workforce shortage issue for us, except us! AGC Georgia members are committed to the above goals because they believe they have the power to create more opportunities for students to learn what careers exist in skilled trades and help them be successful in a chosen field.

