April 2019 • Issue 15

AGC Georgia
Your Construction Industry Partner

Workforce Development Update

AGC Georgia Celebrates Women Who Build!

Women in Constuction

Despite men and women showing equal aptitudes for careers in construction, women make up less than 10% of the construction industry nationally. This gap exposes the failure of schools and the industry, as a whole, to engage and inspire women and girls with this lucrative career path.

It's common in our society to believe that construction is a solely masculine field; however, women are fully capable and qualified in today's diverse construction industry. As you'll see in the infographic to the right, YouScience's testing results clearly demonstrate that Georgia's talent pool is full of young women ready to help 'build' the construction industry pipeline.

As the construction industry grows during the next few years, qualified and talented individuals will be needed to fill open positions. Regardless of gender, AGC Georgia is dedicated to supporting and encouraging these naturally-inclined future construction professionals.

STATISTICS BROUGHT TO YOU BY AGC AND YOUSCIENCE

WOMEN IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

It's time to think seriously about why so few women are interested in a career in the construction industry. Here are the most important numbers to consider.

Out of **36,645** women who were tested in Georgia,

1 in 3 showed an aptitude for careers in construction.

Only 3% express interest in the construction industry,

and women only make up **7%** of construction courses.

The construction industry is projected to grow **4.5%** through 2020,

but only **9%** of the construction industry is female.

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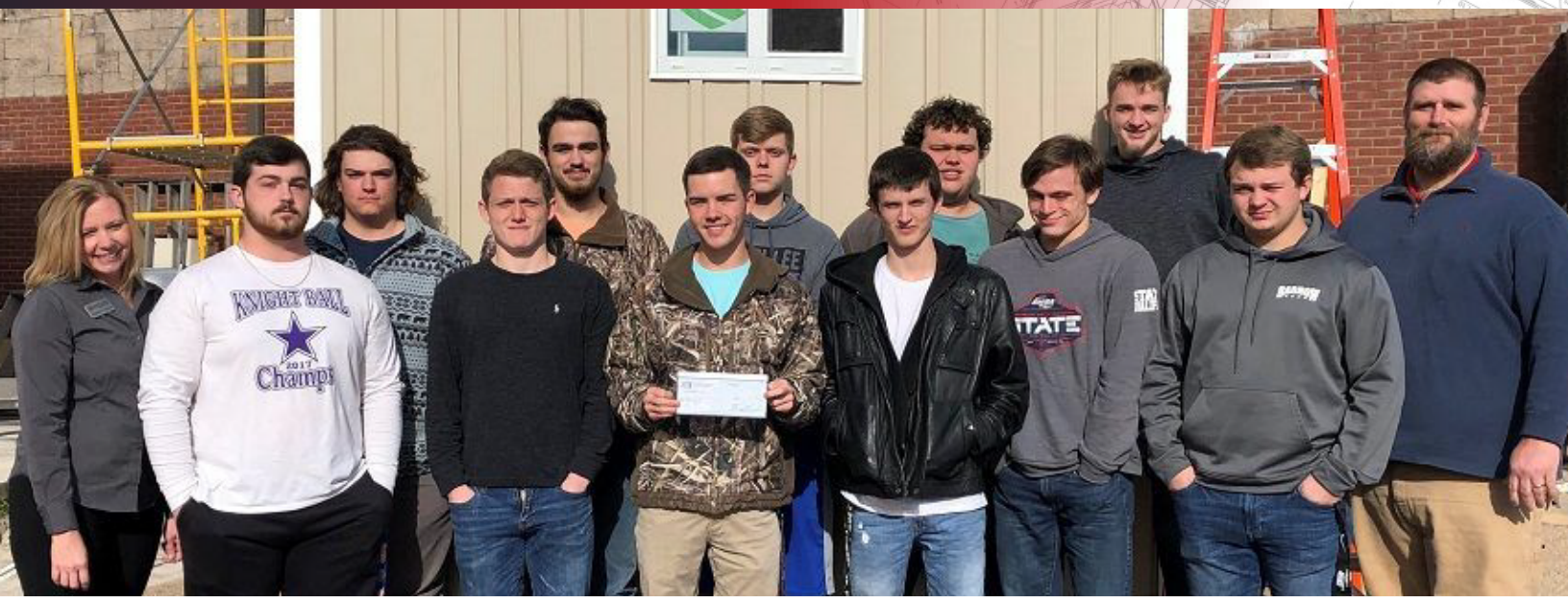
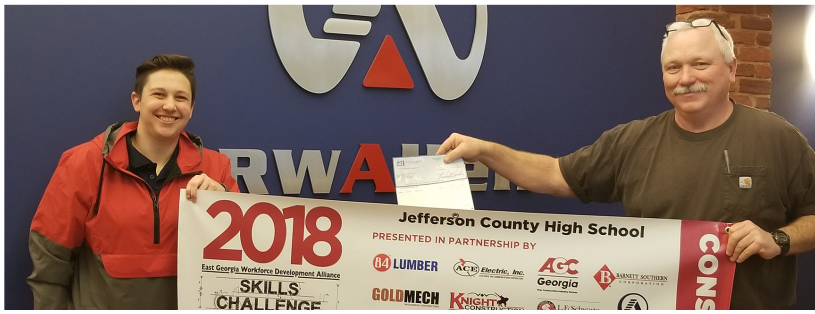




Funding for the Industry's Future Workforce

More than 160 firms provided sponsorships and donations benefiting the Fall 2018 Skills Challenge series.

Pictured above
Top Image (l-r):
Christy Cranford, Director of Marketing and Business Development for Sheridan Construction, enjoys visiting with Upson-Lee High School construction students and Ben Lowe, the school's construction teacher. She presented them with a contribution from the AGC Georgia Foundation to benefit their program.

Lower Left Image (l-r):
Representatives from Bowen & Watson, Inc. and Carroll Daniel Construction Company were excited to present high school construction teachers representing the Northeast Georgia Workforce Alliance with checks from the AGC Georgia Foundation during a recent meeting. Pictured (l-r): Brad Randall, Stevens Co. HS; Jim Duren, Bowen & Watson; Scott Reed, Flowery Branch HS; Rodney Presley, Lanier College and Career Academy; Eddie Leblanc, Carroll Daniel Construction Co.; Patrick Mahaffey, Berkmar HS; Landon Boyd, Carroll Daniel Construction Co.; Jake Slusher, Madison Co. HS; Greg Justice, Cherokee Bluff HS; Brandon Miller, Chestatee HS; Reid Houston and Byron Stafford, Johnson HS.

Lower Right Image (l-r):
Molly Johnson with R. W. Allen Construction, presents Jim Borum, construction teacher with Jefferson County High School, a check from the AGC Georgia Foundation during a recent East Georgia Workforce Development Alliance meeting. Mr. Borum's students won the Construction Cup at the recent Skills Challenge.

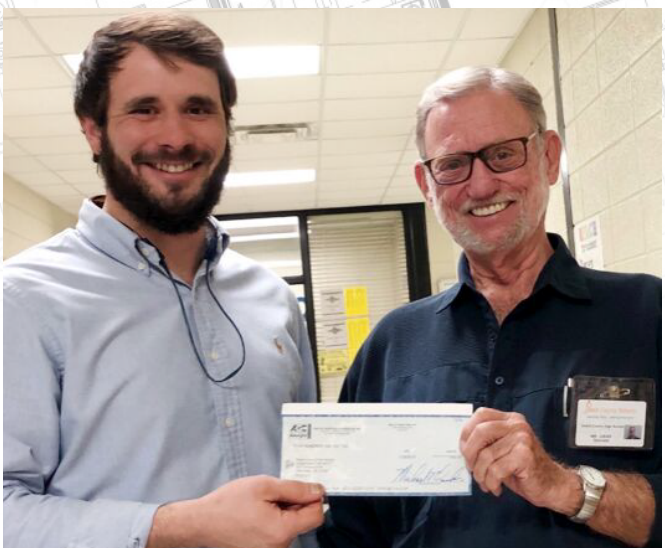
AGC Georgia is excited to award checks to schools that participated in the 2018 Skills Challenge series. Funds that remain after paying expenses for each of the regional 2018 Challenges are divided between competing schools.

Representatives of the partner host contractors from each of the Skills Challenges personally visit with school representatives and often times students to present the checks. The funds help the schools purchase necessary materials and tools to elevate their construction curriculum.

In the Fall of 2018, there were more than 160 firms that contributed sponsorships and donations to the four Skills Challenges. The AGC Georgia team is grateful for all the support received from the industry. We are proud to contribute to local construction programs, which directly benefits construction students, Georgia's future construction workforce.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the 2019 Skills Challenge series!

Macon – October 31
Gainesville – November 7
Moultrie – November 12
Augusta – November 14



Matthew Weekly, project manager with Sheridan Construction, (l) presents Jim Davis, Peach County High School construction teacher with a check from the AGC Georgia Foundation.

Christy Cranford, Sheridan Construction, presents a contribution to Mary Persons High construction students, and D.J. Hurm, the school's construction teacher.

AGC Georgia was pleased to provide a contribution to Harris County High Schools construction program. Thank you to Joe Tuggle (2nd from right), president of Swofford Construction for visiting the school to make the presentation! Pictured with Joe are Todd Stanfill (l), principal; Jim Steel, construction instructor, (2nd from left) and Tim Cockrell (r), CTAE Director.

Griffin High School construction teacher, Walter Preston, accepts an AGC Georgia Foundation contribution from Joe Tuggle with Swofford Construction.

Construction Teachers and Student Benefiting Industry Involvement

After completing the successful AGC Georgia Skills Challenges last fall, we reached out seperately to two instructors who led their high school teams in competition. We spoke with Matthew White, a construction teacher at Statesboro High School, and DJ Hurm, a building construction teacher at Mary Persons High School, about the Skills Challenge and the impact these competitions have on students involved in their respective construction programs.

Matthew White

DJ Hurm

How important is it for the construction industry to support high school programs?

Matthew White (MW): It's extremely important for the industry to support school programs. Oftentimes, when somebody other than yourself comes along and says the same thing to your students, it suddenly becomes the gospel truth. The ability for students to have real world experiences with industry veterans demonstrates the relevancy of what they're learning from their teacher. Additionally, we are grateful for the generous donations of work materials, as well as providing work-based learning opportunities for the students.

DJ Hurm (DJ): It's critical for the construction industry to support our high school's construction program. If the students at Mary Persons High School didn't know what the industry needed, we could be teaching them to solve problems that don't exist. The industry's involvement makes us aware of their needs and it gives us the chance to tell them how we can benefit from their involvement. I think this reciprocal relationship is critical.

What are the benefits of exposing high school students to the construction industry through AGC Georgia's Skills Challenge series?

MW: While classrooms are important, it's imperative that students are given an opportunity to put their skills to the test, whether they win or lose at the Skills Challenge. Obviously, we enjoy winning, but losing shows you there's room to improve. I enjoy letting the students compete. There's a saying that iron sharpens iron. The Skills Challenge is the best way for students to showcase their skills and get better.

DJ: Regardless of how the students do in the competition, it's important for them to be around people like Joe Tuggle from Swofford Construction, and other industry professionals who are involved in our program. These representatives tell students that their firms have a critical need for people who know how to behave on a jobsite, who understand the importance of professionalism, respect the need to work safely, and are receptive to being taught how to do a job properly. My students better understand by hearing from industry that they must do more than just show up. It takes effort to do build a career. My guys and girls are really putting their all into it when they are in my class and competing in the Skills Challenges. I have as many young ladies taking part as I do young men. AGC Georgia has created a really, really workable venue for the students to compete. In the fall of 2018, we took 50 students to just observe the competition and they all came back to school saying they want to compete next year. It's a good problem to have, but we only can enter 12 students each year. This makes them all work even harder.

What benefits do you get out of the AGC Georgia's Skills Challenge?

MW: As a teacher, I'm able to showcase what's going on in a positive manner. Similar to athletics, it's an opportunity to have bragging rights by demonstrating how good your program is. By encouraging students to become more involved, we hope to solve a long-term problem of how do we fill the skilled labor gap. So, this is just our way to show that we do things differently than the regular academic class but we're still grounded in knowledge. Our slogan is "Knowledge and Skills." Anybody can get hired if you can lift something, but what you need is the skill and the knowledge to apply that skill to go far in a career.

DJ: For me, as an educator taking part in the Skills Challenge -- it's proof the building construction industry is interested in what is best for the students. It also demonstrates they care about helping the construction educators who are working hard to teach the next generation of skilled people. From the students' perspective, I think they see just how much the industry really needs qualified people and that working hard in high school can help you earn a bright, rewarding future and career.

What benefits do you get out of the AGC Georgia's Skills Challenge?

MW: We teach our students the foundational skills about employability, problem solving and work ethic. I have students that graduated last May who are working for a lumber company and they quickly realized those skills are actually more important. The students are only 18 or 19 years old and they're going be making $60-70,000 this year. So having more opportunities like the Skills Challenge for students to showcase their work ethic and problem solving skills they're gaining in our construction program is critical.

DJ: It works when I don't have to wonder if our curriculum is preparing a student to work in the building industry. I know that we are doing the right thing because of the relationships and communication I have with industry. They always know what we need from them to make our program better and we know the type of employee they need to be a successful business. Any relationship is built on communication and through AGC Georgia we have a very good working relationship with the industry.

Why is AGC Georgia's Skills Challenge important to the community?

MW: Oftentimes, there are only two ways for schools to boast or promote what they're doing well: academics or athletics. The Skills Challenge provides another avenue where schools can showcase how they're getting their students college and career ready.

DJ: I spent 30 years in the building industry and the past 10 years in teaching. Today, there is a critical lack of skilled, unskilled, and semi-skilled labor. If you're a builder, you should have a great interest in closing the skills gap, because viability of your business is on the line. Organizations like AGC Georgia are making workforce development a priority because there's a risk the industry workforce will dry up soon due to a lack of skilled people. I hope more construction firms will see how partnering with AGC Georgia on the Skills Challenge series makes so much sense. It doesn't matter if my students are going on to a university or technical college, into the military or straight into the workforce, they all need to be exposed to the career opportunities that are available in the building construction industry. This is one that you can build a life in and should never be viewed as a fallback career.

Partnering with CEFGA to Build a Talent Pipeline

2019 CEFGA

CareerExpo and SkillsUSA State Championships at a Glance:

8,615
TOTAL ATTENDEES

5,914
STUDENTS

1,187
INFLUENCERS
(Teachers, Parents, Counselors and School Administrators)

1,514
INDUSTRY VOLUNTEERS, EXHIBITORS AND OTHER GUESTS

2020 Expo
March 12-13

Pictured above (l-r): AGC Georgia Board President Kevin Kuntz, president southeast division of McCarthy Building Companies, Inc. (center) participated in the opening ceremony, a 2 x 4 cutting, for the 2019 CEFGA Career Expo.

AGC Georgia is proud to continue our decades-long support of Construction Education Foundation of Georgia (CEFGA). In addition to being a principle partner of the organization, we also provide resources and support for the annual CEFGA CareerExpo. This year's event was at the Georgia International Convention Center on March 21-22.

The annual event links students directly to professionals in the areas of construction, utility contracting, highway contracting, electrical contracting, mechanical contracting, energy, mining and more. It also features hands-on displays that allow students to engage with industry leaders, equipment and materials and tap into their unique skills and interests.

The SkillsUSA State Championships, a competition in which students showcase their skills in several construction-related disciplines, are held onsite as well. This combined event continues to grow each year and drew a record 8,615 attendees in 2019.

AGC Georgia appreciates the generous support of so many members. It's important to grow this event's participation even more in years to come. It's going to take an entire industry working together to close the gap in the number of skilled workers the industry will need in the future.

If you'd like to learn more about getting involved in the CEFGA CareerExpo, please visit www.cefga.org or reach out to Zach Fields, vice president of K12 Pipeline, at zach.fields@cefga.org.

CEFGA CareerExpo Photos

PCHS SkillsUSA Complete Special Project on Campus

The members of the Peach County High School SkillsUSA team were asked to build a handicap ramp for students struggling to maneuver their wheelchairs and walkers in and out of school for fire drills. Instructor Jim Davis chose 10 students to collaborate and build the ramp. The students prepared land next to a centralized door at the school and began their project. The project became a focal point of interest by many other students who watched with amazement through their classroom windows. When some of the project team members saw the excitement from those who needed the ramp, they became emotional. This was a great project to showcase student's talents, but also showed everyone how compassion builds a community.

Batson-Cook Hosts Cass High School Jobsite Visit

A Batson-Cook Construction project team recently hosted a jobsite visit for 140 students involved in Cass High School's Career and Technical Department. Prior to the site visit, company superintendent Spencer Houston hosted a classroom safety orientation where students watched the Batson-Cook safety orientation video, took and passed the site safety test, and reviewed key safety protocols. During their site visit, training stations were set up throughout the jobsite for students to gain hands-on experience, as well as speak with project team and key trade partners about careers in construction. Training stations included HVAC, plumbing, pipe fitting and welding, electrical, masonry, carpentry, and 360-construction photography. AGC Georgia members and trade partners on the specific project, McKenney's, Inc. and Eckardt Group, were instrumental in making this event a success.

Local industry and AGC Georgia recently partnered with CEFGA to kick off the advisory board meeting to restart Etowah High School's Construction Program for the 2019-2020 school year.

CEFGA and AGC Georgia Continue to Partner in a New Initiative Called Trade Talks: The Construction Way

The organizations hosted another event where industry provides an interactive experience and open dialogue with public school counselors to help them learn about construction career pathways. The April 2019 event was hosted at The Mechanical Trades Institute and was live streamed by JCI Contractors in Moultrie for their local school counselors. (see two pics attached) It's exciting to have such a strong response from our partners at DOE who are helping us coordinate communication with the counselors. They are a direct link for the construction industry to share the message that we have a place for individuals with a wide variety of aptitudes and levels of education.

CEFGA Youth Employment Overview

CEFGA construction sector initiatives are working to increase employer participation in the hiring of 16 and 17 year olds. These students can be legally hired using existing Work Based Learning (WBL) and Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP) agreements with exemptions noted in the Fair Labor Standards Act. Employers should use DOL Code 9777 for WBL and YAP students.

Guidelines Include:

Federal Child Labor Laws allow many jobs that are hazardous for student-learners in career education programs under certain conditions. Student-learners in Work-Based Learning programs meet the student-learner exemption if the student is employed under written agreements (the WBL training agreement and training plan) which provides that:

- All hazardous work will be performed under the direct and close supervision of a qualified and experienced person.
- Safety instructions will be given by the school and reinforced by the employer with on-the-job training.
- The job training follows a schedule that reflects organized and progressive skills development.
- The work in the hazardous occupation is intermittent and for short periods of time, is under the direct and close supervision of a qualified and experienced person, and is a necessary part of training.

To learn more, please visit https://bit.ly/2GD0jgU

Hiring Students for Summer Work – Made Easy!

In recent years, AGC Georgia and CEFGA have educated legislators on the benefits allowing 16 and 17-year-old students to be hired on active jobsites by using existing Work-Based Learning (WBL) programs. A law has been passed to allow for this opportunity. So, let's take advantage of this change.

AGC Georgia contractor members are encouraged to share your jobsite addresses with our workforce development partner, CEFGA. This is an important tool in facilitating workforce development for our industry. It's also an opportunity for your firm to hire high school students for summer jobs.

Students from across the state have enrolled in a work-based learning program because they are interested in working on jobsites. Our goal is to match them with sites close to where they live. Employers will have the opportunity to interview and hire on-site.

CEFGA can train your HR personnel on how to hire 16-17 year-old students legally through the Work-Based Learning program run by the GA Dept. of Education.

To learn more about how CEFGA matches students to jobsites in their area or to register your jobsites, please visit www.cefga.org and click on K12 Pipeline. You may also contact with Zach Fields, CEFGA's vice president of K12 Pipeline by email at zach.fields@cefga.org, or Diane Robinson, CEFGA's K12 Pipeline administrator by email at diane.robinson@cefga.org.

Elementary Club Builds Interest in Construction

More than 100 students from the six elementary schools in Roswell are participating in the Toolbox Club. The goal of the program is to "inspire kids to dream and aspire to be in the construction industry," all while teaching them teamwork and soft skills such as shaking hands and making eye contact. For all these great reasons, AGC Georgia and its member firms are proud to help support this organization through monetary and material donations.

Toolbox Club is a great introduction to construction for the students participating in these after school programs that feed into Roswell High School.

The students are learning how to construct walls, trusses and electrical, among many other tasks. Most importantly, they are enjoying every minute of it. Our special thanks are extended to the Toolbox Club team that includes Jeffrey Prothero, John Gordon, Ken Briggs, Bartee Lamar and John Ross. All involved see how these programs are a model for others to replicate around Georgia.

Of interest, the Toolbox crew says that the "star" student at each of the schools is a young girl. Now, that's something to build on! To learn more about Toolbox and how you can help, please visit: https://toolbox.life.

To view the students' work, please visit: https://vimeo.com/325422995

Middle School Students Visit Jobsite

David Wolfe, the Early County Young Farmer Advisor for Early County High School, wanted his middle school students to take a field trip to a construction site to get them interested in careers in construction.

On April 11, Trey Anderson, owner of Anderson Construction Company of Fort Gaines, facilitated the students visiting a Saliba Construction Company jobsite at Wiregrass Public Safety Center in Dothan.

There were 37 students (33 Early County Middle School students and four Early County High School students) that participated in the tour.

According to Wolfe, the plan is to generate more interest in the industry, so they can grow the number of students in the construction program at the high school. His goal is to open a connections class at the middle school. If middle school students are interested, they will sign-up for the Occupational Safety class which is a prerequisite for the construction, automotive, and welding classes that the high school currently offers.

Anderson Construction helped sponsor the lunch and other field trip expenses.

High Schools Receive Masonry Supplies

Swofford Construction, Inc. President Joe Tuggle and Nix-Fowler Vice President of Operations Kelly Nix donated a pallet of mortar for students in several Georgia high schools to use in their construction classes. The mortar was delivered to East Laurens High School construction teacher Dean Cutler and West Laurens High School construction teacher Jeff Johnson. Extra mortar bags were delivered to six additional construction education programs around the state, including construction teacher Paul Grantham at Hardaway High School in Columbus and construction teacher Jim Davis at Ft. Valley High School.

As students are being introduced to the world of masonry, this type of mortar is extremely valuable to high school construction programs. Instructors also use this mortar to prepare students for the AGC Skills Challenge events, along with regional and state SkillsUSA competitions.

AGC Georgia appreciates our members helping locate this reusable, specialized mortar and distributing to the various high schools. This is a great example of the small ways all contractors can help local construction programs. Please consider reaching out to your local teachers and see what materials they need to supplement their lab projects.

Georgia VECTR Center Built to Support Veterans & Impact Workforce

AGC Georgia is proud to announce that the Georgia VECTR (Veterans Education Career Transition Resource Center) is now open in Warner Robins, due to the hard work of the Parrish Construction Group. The Center serves as a hub for all military installations in the state and helps transition active military back into civilian life, as well as retired veterans. In addition, numerous programs and assistance will be offered at the facility.

The state-of-the-art facility is the only one of its kind for the military in the country. Travis Miller of Parrish Construction, who served as the site's project manager, was proud when the project was recognized with a Build Georgia Award from AGC Georgia. In fact, the award is currently displayed in the facility's lobby.

Recently Miller, along with Rhonda Sawyer of All-State Electric, Bill Chambless of AGC Georgia, and Mike Engle Dean with CGTC, met with Lt. Colonel Joe Richardson, PhD, who serves as VECTR's executive director. During the meeting, Lt. Col Richardson explained the involvement of the Governor and the alignment with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). When Governor Brian Kemp was on the campaign trail, he committed to having an office at every TCSG system to promote the Center and help align accelerated training in these systems.

Currently, the Center has two labs that feature welding and HVAC. In the near future, Parrish Construction Group will break ground on an addition that will include two new labs and a large truck driving school. In determining the best use of the labs, AGC Georgia sent out a survey that resulted in selecting electrical for one of the labs.

The accelerated program's current model is to offer a 15-week class for these veterans to learn the skill. Industry leaders are prepared to hire them. With the right support from the construction industry, this model can make a huge impact on workforce development.

AGC Georgia members are invited to take ownership in the curriculum and possible alignment with their own apprenticeship programs. The goal of the program is to meet the needs of an industry and provide additional credits to the ones already offered by CGTC.

To learn more about the VECTR program, please visit: www.gavectr.org/programs

Kennesaw State University AGC Georgia Student Chapter Visits Construction Site

Construction Management students from AGC Georgia's Student Chapter at Kennesaw State University visited the WellStar Hospital construction site on February 23. Bill Warner and Randy Murphy of Brasfield & Gorrie hosted the students and guided the group through the job site.

"This was a great experience for all of us and all of the members enjoyed the tour," said Hank Strickland, president of KSU's AGC student chapter.

AGC Georgia is grateful for construction firms such as Brasfield & Gorrie, who take the time to guide student groups around job sites. This provides the students an opportunity to see first-hand what is happening in real time and is another way to educate the future workforce on the construction industry.

For more information about AGC Georgia's workforce development efforts or to submit a story about your firm's involvement with a school or organization, please reach out to: **Bill Chambless** • Member Development Specialist • chambless@agcga.org • 478.972.5865