

Future Educational Partner,

My name is Ebony Robinson and I have the distinct privilege of working as the Director of Community Relations of ConstructReach.

Below is a quick overview:

ConstructReach is a workforce development initiative and consultancy that Builds Reachable Opportunities Through Construction.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

We partner with expanding brands, general contractors, educators, and students to create solutions, change the face of construction, fill the pipeline of qualified construction candidates for general contractors across the nation, help ensure economic growth continues, and build a better future for youth across the country.

Currently, the construction industry is experiencing massive growth, but also facing a shortage of skilled workers to fill an increasing number of high-paying jobs.

Reaching out to young people from diverse backgrounds (women, underrepresented minorities) is critical as baby boomers retire and the nation's demographics shift.

OUR INITIAL RESEARCH CONCLUDED THAT:

53% of skilled trade workers are over **46** and will be retiring.

30% of construction workers left the industry after the economic downturn in 2008, and they **have not returned to the field**.

Only 9.1% of construction employees are **women**.

Only 5.8% of construction employees are **African American**.

Only 1.9% of construction employees are **Asian**.

With an aging workforce and a longstanding diversity problem, the construction industry is ready – now more than ever – to fill their pipeline with young talent. The problem? Young people need access to the best information, resources, and opportunities possible.

In addition:

- Inaccurate perceptions of construction work as categorically unskilled labor and lack of awareness about skilled craft disciplines and degreed professions such as Construction Management and Construction Engineering are major barriers to recruiting.
- The industry has not been proactive enough in connecting with schools, reaching out to underrepresented communities and investing in young talent, and as a result was unprepared for the demographic shifts the nation is currently experiencing.



ConstructReach, in partnership with expanding brands and general contractors from around the country is changing all of this. How? We are:

- Forming partnerships and connections that will create a path for young people from diverse backgrounds to discover and succeed in the construction industry. Our brand and GC partners are creating viable internships and jobs for your students.
- Establishing standards and promoting best practices that will ensure young people from all backgrounds have positive internship and apprenticeship experiences that lead to long lasting, successful careers in the construct industry.
- Strengthening school and community programs to ensure that young people have the necessary skills and knowledge for both skilled trade positions (electrical, HVAC, plumbing, etc.) and degreed engineering/management positions.
- Creating events on construction sites where students aged 16-18 years from neighboring school districts gather to learn about the construction industry and participate in elements of the build or remodel. GCs and reps from ConstructReach are on-hand to provide an overview of the industry and discuss career opportunities.
- Speaking with work force coordinators and guidance counselors throughout the country to provide resources and opportunities, and speaking to students about the various opportunities in construction.

ConstructReach unites all industry stakeholders to

- ✓ Transform the future of construction
- ✓ Transform the future for diverse youths
- ✓ Transform access to internships, careers, opportunities



The practical steps we are currently taking include:

- Identifying construction companies nationwide who are ahead of the curve on construction workforce diversity, and learning about their policies and programs
- Leveraging the best practices of forward-thinking contractors to create a set of standards for other companies to follow in their recruiting efforts and internship/apprenticeship programs
- Reaching out to K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions (particularly Historically Black Colleges & Universities) and community programs to help connect their students with internship and apprenticeship opportunities with participating "ConstructReach Approved" contractors
- Working with contractors on a more coordinated approach to outreach, including creating resources for K-12 school counselors, faculty, students and families on the range of career opportunities within construction

Are You Ready?

- Increase the presence of construction professionals at your school and within your district?
- Create hands-on experiences for your students to see if the construction industry is a fit for them?
- Assess current information about construction internships and careers to provide you with more compelling resources to share with students?

Next Steps

Please review this opportunity with other stakeholders within your organization and let me know how you would like to proceed. I would be happy to deliver a brief online presentation and Q&A for your leadership if that would help to answer questions.

Sincerely,
Ebony Robinson

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