



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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BCANJ BRINGS CONSTRUCTION OPPORTUNITIES TO PERTH AMBOY STUDENTS

EDISON, NJ - In a break from school-as-usual, more than 1,500 students in Grades Five through Eight at Samuel E. Shull School in Perth Amboy explored opportunities in the construction industry during a recent morning "Careers to Consider" event, coordinated by Jill Schiff, Membership Services Director of the Building Contractors Association of New Jersey (BCANJ) .

Representatives from the construction industry moved from homeroom to homeroom, 60 in total, spending 20 minutes with each class introducing the students to some of the 75 different opportunities in construction. In addition to Schiff, the representatives included Jake Coletti of the New Jersey Building Laborers, Frank Speziali of the New Jersey Carpenter Contractor Trust, Bill Costello and Tony Talluto of Epic Management, a construction management firm in Piscataway, Ron Repmann and Bill Nagy of the Northern New Jersey District Council of Ironworkers, and Len Hull of the Operating Engineers.

"Our goal in this event is to engage the students in a conversation about construction and, when they reach high school, have them remember what they learned and consider a career in construction, whether it's in management or in the trades," explained Schiff, who is responsible for BCANJ's workforce development programs such as in-school events.

Guidance Counselor Catherine McHugh, who facilitated the event at the school, found from past experience that an "up-close-and-personal" experience makes the event far more successful than a large, convention-style approach. McHugh made sure that every homeroom was prepared with student handouts that gave a thumbnail description of various construction jobs. She also assigned student escorts, who kept the speakers "on task" with cue cards indicating the amount of time left in each presentation.

"The children loved the program," Ms. McHugh reported. "Because of the personal approach, they could comfortably ask questions and gain a clearer understanding of what a construction career entails, how it comes with training and opportunity, and how it can become a lifelong profession."

About BCANJ

Established in 1937, the Edison-based Building Contractors Association of New Jersey (BCANJ) is made up of some 225 active and associate members who are engaged in commercial, institutional and industrial construction. BCANJ works to unify the construction industry in terms of labor relations, improved business methods and standards, high safety standards, and overall project efficiency and productivity. Through an exchange of services and information, BCANJ members are made aware of issues that directly impact the construction industry in New Jersey.

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