

## Construction Sector

### Summary of key themes, needs, and opportunities: June 2024

Prepared by the AGC Education Foundation

**(1) What are the top 3-5 themes you hear from employers in your sector related to workforce development?**

- “Graying workforce” – the need to attract new talent as many approach retirement
- Need for soft skills
- Efforts to build diversity and a more inclusive workforce
- Demand for construction professionals with degrees
- Consistent demand for skilled construction laborers, craft workers
- Demand for increasing quality of training in construction education programs

**(2a) What are the 3-6 occupations that employers in your sector indicate should be high-priority for workforce development to help meet their hiring needs?**

- Project Engineer
- Project Manager
- Construction Manager
- Construction Laborer
- Construction Career and Technical Education (CTE) Educator

**(2b) Which career connected learning programs are effectively meeting the hiring needs of employers in your sector?**

- Community and Technical college programs
- Construction Management degree programs – UW, CWU, WSU
- Core Plus Construction (Statewide)
- Skills Centers (Statewide), New Tech Skills Center (Career Launch Endorsed program, East Region)
- Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship level programming such as ANEW, Inland AGC Apprenticeship (Northwest and Northeast Regions region), Palmer Scholars (King Pierce)
- OIC of Washington (Yakima)

**(2c) Which career connected learning programs could be adjusted, expanded, or scaled to other regions to meet the hiring needs of employers in your sector?**

- Skills Centers
- Core Plus Construction
- Sawhorse Revolution
- WABS Job Shadow
- Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship level programming

**(2d) Which career connected learning programs should be developed to meet the hiring needs of employers in your sector?**

- Successful CCL programs will build out their offerings of **soft skill training and wrap-around support** (in addition to construction programming) to make more effective and inclusive programs. Additionally, supporting explore/awareness programs, especially those led by people of color and that can authentically increase career-connected learning efforts to communities of color, can help develop interest in a construction career pathway and should be prioritized. Successful programs seek

employer partnerships that reflect the program's values and efforts.

- Programs that support pathway development should make investments in providing **industry-recognized certifications, credentials, or college credits**. Programs should introduce students to credentials that will illuminate high-wage construction opportunities.
- Programs should invest in creating relevant **construction educator training** and continuing professional development options to strengthen all programs. Initiatives should be created to actively seek professionals who have (or can build) experience in industry and educational settings.

### **(3) What are the top 3-5 approaches you recommend to increase participation of underrepresented students in your sector's high priority occupations?**

The Construction Sector's Strategy core recommendations are made with increasing the participation of underrepresented students in mind:

- **Recommendation 1:** CCL programs should build out their offerings for soft skill training and wrap-around support (in addition to construction programming) to make more effective and inclusive programs. Additionally, supporting explore/awareness programs, especially those led by people of color and that can authentically increase career-connected learning efforts to communities of color, can help develop an interest in a construction career pathway and should be prioritized.
- **Recommendation 2:** Programs that support pathway development should make investments in providing industry-recognized certifications, credentials, or college credits.
- **Recommendation 3:** Programs should invest in creating relevant construction educator training and continuing professional development options to strengthen all programs.

These core recommendations address the problems of 1. An employer's ability to attract and retain talent - in part people-related, the talent pool is more diverse than the hiring people and processes. 2. Awareness of construction career paths in general, and especially career paths that begin with a degree. 3. A lack of qualified construction teaching professionals (for BIPOC students, this may be an even larger barrier if a teacher is out of touch with the students and community in which they are teaching). We believe tackling these core recommendations is work that needs to be done to advance BIPOC participation.