The official newsletter of the National Professional Construction Estimators Association of America

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“BUYING PCEA”. Sounds like a catchy tagline that soon will be right up there with “just do it”, “I’m loving it”, or “what’s in your wallet”, right? Okay, maybe not, but it is an idea that we are rolling out this month for PCEA and one that we hope will find its way into you daily functions of bidding and buying for the great structures we are all building. In the past few weeks you received an email from PCEA National announcing the enhancement of our online membership directory from a very limited roster listing into a powerful buyer’s guide which can be accessed by Association members from all our chapters. Many of our employer’s companies work outside their immediate local areas and across state lines, and have needs to find local subcontractors and suppliers in the project locations. Yes, a Google search or a Sweets Catalogue (does anybody still use that?) search can help to fill in those blanks, but Google may or may not let you know anything about those companies who sponsor memberships in your PCEA. Our upgraded membership directory puts that information at your fingertips.

If you have not yet done so, login to your member access via the PCEA National website and follow the instructions from the email to see what we have available. You can now enter into your membership profile a plethora of information regarding the company that pays your membership fees (in many cases) and what they have to offer to the greater construction industry. You can enter CSI trade listings and specific keywords that tells potential buyers what you have to offer. All these entries will be searchable, so if there is a particular product or sub-trade you need for your project, you can simply enter that information into the search screen and a listing of members associated with that key information will be available for you to contact. So, need a HVAC sub for a project near Hickory? Search for them through PCEA. Looking for a 03000 supplier in Raleigh? They will be there for you. Need a casework subcontractor for a school project in South Carolina or a rebar fabricator for Florida? Try the PCEA Buyer’s Guide and see what you come up with. Buy PCEA.

With good participation, this function of the PCEA website will hopefully serve to increase visibility to the entire Association of the General Contractors, Subcontractors, and Suppliers that make up our membership rolls. Increased visibility leads to new bid opportunities, and increased bids should lead to economic activity flowing back to our employers, raising the value of the PCEA membership experience. Like most member participation-driven functions, the true value of it will be dependent upon the information that is placed into the directory by the members, and the willingness of the member companies to integrate this information into their sub & supplier databases. If you’ve already updated your listing, thank you and we hope you are getting …

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ABI September 2019: Firm billings remain sluggish

Business conditions remained generally flat at architecture firms in September. But while the Architecture Billings Index (ABI) score remained below the 50 threshold at 49.7 (a score over 50 indicates billings growth, a score below 50 indicates a decline), that score is 2.5 points higher than the August score, indicating that fewer firms saw declining billings in September. In addition, the design contracts index rebounded strongly to 54.4 this month (from 47.9 in August), as firms saw an increasing number of clients signing contracts for new projects. Firm backlogs also remained above six months in September (6.2 months on average), although they shrank modestly from a high of 6.5 months in June. More than half of firms (55%) indicated that backlogs have not changed from the second quarter, while 25% indicated that they’ve decreased by 5% or more, and 20% indicated that they’ve increased by 5% or more.

For more information, visit: AIA.org

• “Despite intense demand for housing, getting projects financed and started is increasingly difficult.” 155 - person firm in the West, commercial/industrial specialization

• “Conditions remain strong overall, but we are seeing slightly less optimism than we did at this time last year. We are being particularly careful about hiring additional people at this time.” 48 - person firm in the South, institutional specialization

• “It is taking unreasonably long to get materials ordered and fabricated. Contractors are generally available, but these delays in acquisition and fabrication are slowing the process.” 1 - person firm in the Northeast, residential specialization

• “Still many opportunities, just smaller in size. Not because they have been scaled back, but because they are just not coming out as large as they were previously.” 300 - person firm in the Midwest, institutional specialization
Charlotte Chapter

This summer flew by. I can't recall a busier summer in the ten years I've been in the industry and have never had such a difficult time getting subcontractors to bid work. Every sub I talk to seems to be booked thru the end of the year. It feels like when someone asks you if you'd like desert after your third plate at a buffet. I hope everyone is in the same boat we are in here in Charlotte, getting fat before winter. And winter is coming...or at least that's what I hear all the experts saying.

With kids back in school in the next two weeks and Fall mercifully just around the bend it feels like a good time to check in to see how our membership drives have done. We are up in membership this year and have had a good amount of interest in the chapter. Ben and I have both put money out of our pocket as a challenge any member, if they can sign up more people than us by the end of the year than either of us can. I'm hoping to keep my money in my own pocket but if someone can out recruit me then I'd be happy to see it go towards a good cause.

We had a good meeting from one of our National Sponsors, Building Connected, last month and have presentation from OSHA coming up this month on Silica. I'm really looking forward to our job site tour this month, the PURL Apartments. It is a 360 unit, 9 story, wood frame building with 4 full story building steps wrapped around a precast deck. Next month is all about firestopping. We'll be talking about changes in code, what to look out for and who to turn to for help.

We are still at our new venue and so far everyone is loving it. We are at the Dilworth Grille at 911 E. Morehead St here in Charlotte, about a block away from National Sponsor, Building Point Southeast's Charlotte office.

Last big news of the Quarter from us is our upcoming golf tournament. We are having it at a new location this year over at Highland Creek on Monday September 16th. We are already sitting at 10 registered teams which is more then we usually do this early. So hoping for a great turn out!

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee Edwards,
National Director, Charlotte Chapter #1

Upstate Chapter

We successfully had our June meeting at Barley’s which has promise to be a regular meeting place for the Upstate chapter. Ryan Burnette put together another great presentation from Jess Dantice, discussing an application designed to aid in construction insurance claims for workers comp. Barley’s has a great room upstairs that will grow with our group including a full wall of assorted beer taps, appetizers, pizza, pool tables and darts. With the location right in the heart of Greenville’s downtown district, there is plenty to do before and after the meeting, i.e. discussing business, site seeing or just walking off dinner. We were also blessed with a very special guest representing the Columbia Chapter and National, Jim Cormany from Bamastone.

July’s meeting was hosted by our very own J Davis construction. Ben Weeks had the opportunity to show off their new facility with a Low Country Boil and Brandon Humphries presented Ben; 2018-2019’s chapter president; with the Past Presidents Award. Rose from Habitat for Humanity of Pickens County was this month’s presenter and spoke about the history of the organization. PCEA Upstate plans to participate in the Clemson Habitat for Humanity Home Build this Fall.

August’s meeting will be held a Barley’s again, where we will be presenting two students with scholarship checks and hearing from Activelogix / Distech about BMS (Building Management Systems).

Our 2nd annual golf tournament is on scheduled for September 20th to be held at Willow Creek Golf Club in Greer, SC. If you’d like to get involved, or know someone who would, please check out our web page or follow us on Facebook.

If you are in the Upstate area on the third Thursday of the month, feel free to stop in and have a beer with dinner! We meet at 6:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Heath
National Director, Upstate Chapter #23

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Randall Williams
National Director
Catawba Valley Chapter

My journey with PCEA began almost 20 years ago when I took a position with Neill Grading & Construction Co., Inc. The President of the company, Ed Neill, was a long-time member of the Catawba Valley Chapter and insisted that as an estimator I attend monthly meetings and other PCEA functions. I immediately saw the great benefits of PCEA, and it wasn't long until I became a member. After joining PCEA, I instantly began participating on committees and serving on the Chapter Board of Directors. I have held every position within our Chapter Board, most positions multiple terms, and served as Chapter President three times. In 2007 I was nominated and elected to serve the position of National Director for the Catawba Valley Chapter. Since that time, I have continuously served at the National PCEA level. My service has included: Executive Committee Member, Convention Golf Committee Chair, Convention Committee Chair, President Elect, Budget Committee Chair, Ted G. Wilson Scholarship Committee Chair, Executive Committee Chair, Past National President, Nominations & Elections Committee Chair, Long Range Planning Committee Chair, Order of Isosceles Fellow and National President. In 2017 I became your first and only member in the History of PCEA to hold the esteemed position of National President for two terms. What I am most proud of though, is that in 2015 I was presented the Rudolph John Barnes Award.

Over the years I have made several career changes. Throughout all these changes PCEA remained the one constant. In 2018 I became a partner at Clayton Engineering & Design, PLLC. Clayton Engineering & Design is a full-service Civil Engineering Consulting Firm. We offer full-service design and project management for projects of all sizes as well as specific services, as needed. In addition to these services, CE&D offers an array of construction services including bidding & contract award services; construction administration & observation; construction engineering; and warrantee services.

Outside of my large PCEA family, I am blessed with two children. My 28-year-old son Matthew and my 17-year-old daughter Tristin. Lastly, my accomplishments within PCEA and the success of my career wouldn't have been possible without the love and support of my beautiful wife April.

... President’s Address continued from page 2

... some hits and bid invites as a result. If you have not done so, please be sure to take some time and enter your information so you can get the best bang for the buck. We will do some follow up emails as needed to encourage maximum participation, and also email new members so they can get their calling card out into the PCEA view quickly. If you see some additional items that could further enhance the Buyer’s Guide, be sure to email Kate or myself and let us know. We want this to be a tool that works for you.

In other news, I hope all of you are enjoying the coming (finally) of the Fall season with some cooling temperatures, changing leaves (or as applicable for our Orlando friends), and the usual lineup of college teams in the running to put a shiny new football national championship trophy in the case in January. Wishing you all well going forward and we’ll see you National Board folks in November and here in our great newsletter after the ball drops on 2020.

Jim Cormany
PCEA National President 2019-2020
Swinging the pendulum on construction careers

The unemployment rate in the United States has remained at or below 4% for the last 18 months, hitting the 3.7% mark in August. Yet, more than 5.8 million jobs have been added since January 2017, including the nearly 700,000 in construction alone.

With the average age of craft professionals at 43 and 21.7% over the age of 54, the industry is expecting to see 40% of seasoned workers retire by 2030. Even more alarming is that, in 2018, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that only 1.7% of construction workers were 16-to 19-years-old and less than 10% were under 25-years-old.

Where is our future workforce going to come from? The industry is facing a severe skilled worker shortage that is not going to change overnight.

What can we do? Challenge ourselves to both find new solutions and ensure we are implementing tried and true programs. Educate ourselves about barriers to entry into the industry and how to combat misconceptions. Share the truths we know to be authentic about the independence, skills and opportunities that accompany a career in construction.

Creative Solutions for a Challenging Time

With less young people choosing to enter construction, the industry has the opportunity to evaluate previous practices and see where there is a chance for improvement or innovation. Career and technical education (CTE), while reimagined, is not new — previously known as shop classes and other vocational areas of study, these began decreasing in secondary schools with the increasing focus on college tracks. The reinvention of CTE has brought back a resurgence of popularity in career paths, especially with facts showing CTE students have a higher graduation rate from high school, better grade point averages and hands-on experience when entering their chosen field.

A well-developed program, the Construction Trades program at Garrett High School has been in existence for over 40 years. Understanding that maintaining the status quo was not enough, it was expanded to be the Construction Career Development program which begins in fifth grade. In addition to expanding to include elementary and middle school, the program is committed to academic integration, hands-on work experiences and career exploration.

Power UP Inc. is an innovative program beginning in kindergarten that includes two full school days a month — during school hours indicating the program carries the same importance as English or math classes. The program begins in kindergarten and follows the same class of students up through high school.

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Price Reduction!

Take advantage of this great opportunity to own your own piece of paradise!

This plot of land was donated to the Ted G Wilson Scholarship Foundation by Gail and Chris Chapman of the PCEA Columbia Chapter.

Located in Governor's Point, this land inhabits Daufuskie Island, between Hilton Head and Savannah.

Take advantage of this opportunity! This property is listed at $25,000, well below market value!

For more information, please visit our MLS Listing.
Central Savannah River Area Chapter

Greetings from the Augusta area!

Since our last National Board meeting, we have had two membership meetings. In July, National President Jim Cormany spoke to us about his plans for the year and what each of us can do to make the year successful for our chapter and National. This month, our speaker was Bobby Wylds with Augusta Collections Agency. He outlined ways his company can help businesses collect unpaid bills.

In July, we also welcomed new member Steve Munn with MAI Risk Management.

Upcoming events include our family outing/low-country boil on August 24 at Mark Plunkett’s barn. Our annual golf tournament and 50/50 raffle is scheduled for Monday, October 14 at Bartram Trail Golf Course. If you are interested in playing golf, please contact David Eller (david@gadwinc.com) for details.

We were saddened by the death of David Eller’s dad, Gary, on July 25. Deepest sympathies to the family.

As always, you are welcome to join us at our membership meeting on the second Thursday of the month. We meet at Logan’s Roadhouse at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Gaskin
National Director, CSRA Chapter

Columbia Chapter

Greetings from “Famously Hot” Columbia!

With only a short time since our last report, I’m proud to say we have added two new members. A quick shout-out to Larry Kingery with McCrory Construction and David Easler with Binswanger Glass. That brings our total up to 20 members; five for the new year. Did I mention we had 100% retainage???

Our July regular meeting was Juliet Nelly with the City of Columbia where she is the Contractor Supplier & Subcontractor Specialist and presented a program on contract opportunities with the city.

This past week’s August gathering was held at the Columbia Fireflies baseball park. Thanks to our sponsor, Knights Concrete, we were able to upgrade our regular tickets to a private suite with food and cold beverages. Temperature at game time was 98 degrees; hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. The Fireflies managed to hold off the Greenville Drive with a final score of 11 – 7. A pleasure to see the Bull Street Development thriving with new construction projects.

Our September regular meeting promises to be enlightening as we return to our normal venue at the Longhorn Steakhouse for a program.

Stay tuned for information about our October “Stew in the Woods” and Annual Golf Tournament.

As always, if you’re in the Columbia area on the second Thursday of the month come join us.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Barton
National Director, Columbia Chapter
Each year focuses on a different construction theme; the 2019/2020 school year is electrical.
This program is unique in that it focuses entirely on young women, providing them with the opportunity to learn about career options they may not have considered, and incorporates their parents. Buy-in and participation from parents is key to the success the program has seen with students continuing each year.

Understanding Barriers to Entry

There is no question that there are fewer young people choosing construction as a career path. In fact, the Construction Labor Market Analyzer (CLMA) reports a decrease from 12.5% to 9.0% in those under the age of 25 from 2007 to 2018.
One likely reason for this decline is the influence of parents and the belief that going to college is the only route to success. In a survey deployed by Frankel Media Group, on behalf of NCCER, 514 parents shared what they considered important for their children to be successful. The results provided a few significant insights:

- 83% either strongly or somewhat agree that a college degree is vital to a good career
- 99% either considered job security and availability very or somewhat important
- 71% either would be strongly or somewhat supportive if their child pursued a career in construction
- 70% either would be unlikely to advise their child to choose a career in construction
- 100% either rated job satisfaction as very or somewhat important

A surprising 6% of parents would be strongly opposed to their child taking CTE courses as well as being strongly unsupportive of their child pursuing a career in construction.

The results show that, while many parents would support their child’s choice to enter the industry, they would not recommend it. To begin swinging the pendulum in our favor, we must work to changing the perceptions of parents from negative to at least neutral.

Challenging Misperceptions

A key opportunity to begin changing perceptions is to connect parents’ prioritization of job security and availability with the increasing job demand in construction — an estimated 1.5 million jobs will need filled through 2023.
One hundred percent of parents surveyed indicated that job satisfaction was important to them for their child’s future. The 2015 TinyPulse Best Industry Ranking Report finding construction professionals to be overall the happiest workers. The survey found major drivers behind this rating was satisfaction with colleagues and the nature of the job. So how does industry highlight this to parents?

Careers in Construction Month (CICM), a yearly tradition, offers the perfect chance to showcase what the industry has to offer: job satisfaction, lucrative careers, upward mobility, high skills and so much more. Spearheaded by NCCER and Build Your Future, CICM occurs every October to increase public awareness and inspire the next generation of craft professionals. Every state is asked to request their governor to proclaim October as CICM and provide activities supporting the month.

As of October 1, 40 states, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Washington D.C. have submitted proclamations and are planning activities to recognize the highly skilled men and women who build America and change perceptions of a career as a craft professional.

Bringing It All Together

One thing that we must not do is remain a segmented industry. Understanding that changing the perceptions of careers in construction benefits us all, as well as the rest of society, we must be willing to share successes, work together and continue upskilling those who have chosen to enter the industry.
Connecting with education and changing parents’ perceptions gives us hope for a different future — one where construction is a career of choice. After all, from our schools to our stadiums, craft professionals build the world.