

The Future of the Skilled Craftsman

By James Simpson, Pacific Southwest Structures, ASA Director

As the economy and business opportunities continue to grow in the San Diego area, many ASA members are left asking themselves, “Where will the next generation of skilled craft workers come from?”

In an effort to address this concern, the ASA Board of Directors has established the new ASA Trade Craft Committee (as a subcommittee under Education). The purpose of this new committee is to encourage, promote, and develop the next generation of skilled craft workers.

The committee’s first step has been to team up with two local community leaders, The Monarch School and Goodwill of San Diego County.

The Monarch School is a K-12 comprehensive school devoted to educating local homeless youth. The school strives to provide these children with the structure and tools they need to build a brighter future. The ASA Trade Craft Committee, collaborating with the Monarch Career Counselor, has begun working to provide a road map to careers in the construction industry.

Many of the Monarch students are unaware of the great career opportunities that the subcontracting industry can provide. The ASA is taking an active role in promoting these opportunities by meeting with the student body and giving a short presentation that highlights the many different trades in the subcontracting community. The ASA is also providing a small grant to those students who are interested in pursuing a craft. This grant will allow for each student to purchase the required equipment to start work on the first day.

ASA has also joined forces with Goodwill of San Diego County. Goodwill’s mission is to provide employment and training opportunities to people with barriers to employment. Goodwill was founded on the belief that “.... work is an essential foundation for a meaningful life.” Goodwill is involved in a number of different programs, including Helmets to Hardhats, which is a program that helps recruit both active and retired military service members to careers in the construction industry.

If you or your company is interested in providing an opportunity to either of these great organizations please reach out to me, James Simpson, at jsimpson@pswsi.com. I will be pleased to provide you with more information. And, if you would like to join the new committee, I will be more than happy to sign you up!

I encourage you to help build the next generation of skilled craft workers. ASA is seeking companies to provide student internships, and we’re gratefully accepting donations of vests, safety glasses, hardhats, and other supplies that will outfit Monarch School students. We also would appreciate your donation of money to go toward student grants. Also, if you are

interested in putting someone to work through the Goodwill's Helmets to Hardhats program, please let me or ASA Executive Director Nancy Grimes know.