

# CONSTRUCTION CAREER PATHWAYS EDUCATOR TOOLKIT

Use this toolkit to prepare for a successful event.

## BEFORE YOUR IN-SCHOOL PRESENTATION

- Consider how this presentation connects to your curriculum.
  - Connect with the employer presenter to build a relationship and plan together for the upcoming presentation.
  - Discuss classroom setup, A/V needs, and presentation duration.
  - Share grade level, number of students, and any specific construction topics your students are interested in.
- Plan to:
    - Support presenters with classroom management as needed.
    - Facilitate Q&A sessions and encourage student participation.
    - Take photos for school and Construction Careers Council publications.

## BEFORE YOUR ON-SITE VISIT

- Follow your school's timeline and required protocols for arranging field trips.
  - Have your district's transportation phone number in case of transportation issues.
  - Plan for an appropriate number of chaperones (1:10 ratio recommended).
  - Review expectations for student behavior and provide an overview of the event.
  - Encourage students to brainstorm meaningful questions in advance.
  - Discuss with your host site point of contact:
    - Specific concepts, curriculum, or topics that you would like highlighted during the visit
    - Arrival/departure times, and transportation logistics such as instructions for bus parking
    - Any special student accommodations or allergies
    - Safety requirements, identification needs, and photo/video policies
    - Cell phone use, which is typically not permitted without explicit permission from your host.
- Plan to:
    - Ensure all safety protocols are followed.
    - Share your approved photos and videos on LinkedIn and tag @Construction Careers Council, and send them to [hwoessner@westmiworks.org](mailto:hwoessner@westmiworks.org)
    - Encourage students to engage with the professionals by asking questions.
    - Share the dress code with students:
      - Students must wear closed-toed shoes.
      - Students must wear jeans, cargo pants, carpenter pants, or work pants made from heavy-duty fabrics like cotton, canvas, or blends with synthetic fibers.
      - Long hair must be tied back.
      - Lanyards, long necklaces or large earrings may not be worn.
      - PPE will be provided at training centers and job sites.

# PREPARE YOUR STUDENTS

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

### **Why are we participating in this Construction Career Pathway Program?**

Discuss why exploration activities like this program are important to their career development process. Emphasize that career development is an ongoing journey throughout their lives, not a one-time event.

### **I know I don't want to work in construction, so why should I care?**

Speak to your students about how the local community and economy benefit from the construction industry. In West Michigan, construction represents a significant portion of the workforce and is a key contributor to the region's economy. With thousands of job openings projected annually, there is high demand for skilled talent across many different specialties.

### **What can I talk about with construction professionals?**

Whether or not students are currently interested in a construction career, urge them to keep an open mind and use the time to talk to professionals about how/why they chose their career paths. Have students brainstorm questions they could ask during the event.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why did you decide to pursue a career in this field?</li><li>• What other jobs did you consider before deciding on construction?</li><li>• What skills and education are required for your current position?</li><li>• What do you like most and least about your job?</li><li>• What is a typical day like in your role?</li><li>• What are your hours/days of work?</li><li>• Do you work alone or on a team most often?</li><li>• What is your perception of the job outlook for construction careers?</li><li>• What are some of the surprises you have had in this job?</li><li>• Were you employed in another profession before coming into construction? If so, why did you change?</li><li>• What kind of training do companies provide to new employees? What skills are you expected to have learned beforehand?</li><li>• What advice would you give to those considering a similar career path?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What companies will be featured?<br/>Provide students with information on the employer(s) involved in your event. Have students generate questions they would want to know about the company and/or provide examples. Tell students to investigate the company website in advance of the event. Assign groups to focus on different company characteristics:</li><li>• What is the focus of the business?<br/>(Commercial construction, residential, infrastructure, specialty trade, etc.)</li><li>• What types of projects do they typically work on?</li><li>• Is the company local or do they work across a broader region?</li><li>• Is the company family-owned or part of a larger corporation?</li><li>• What types of positions are they currently hiring for?</li><li>• What type of benefits does the company advertise?</li><li>• What entry-level positions exist within the company?</li></ul> |
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## AFTER THE EXPERIENCE

- Construction industry partners have spent many hours preparing for your students' experiences! Please be sure to thank them for their commitment so we can continue these partnerships for future students.
- Send a thank you note to participating companies and organizations.
- Provide time for students to complete the event survey. This helps improve future experiences and provides valuable feedback to our partners.
- Encourage your senior students to apply for available construction industry scholarships.
- Provide students time to complete the self-reflection worksheet.
  - Self Reflection Worksheet
    - After each phase of the program, have students reflect on what they learned using the questions below. Conduct a discussion about the careers highlighted during the experience. Were there any surprising discoveries? Which fields seem most interesting? Which careers were new to them? Encourage students to update or add information to their Educational Development Plan as appropriate.
      - Describe three things you learned about construction careers that you didn't know before.
      - What type of careers in construction sound most interesting to you? Why?
      - What type of education or training do you need to get started in your chosen construction field?
      - Based on what you learned, what kinds of skills are needed to succeed in this industry? (e.g., math skills, problem-solving, teamwork, physical abilities, etc.)
      - What are your next steps in career planning? (See the LEAP into Career Success handout for ideas)

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CAREER EXPLORATION

BUILD YOUR FUTURE

CRAFT PROFESSIONAL QUIZ

CONSTRUCTION CAREERS COUNCIL VIDEOS

