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LEADERSHIP IS EVERYTHING
AND TRAINING IS A CLOSE SECOND

WHEN THE AMERICAN Revolution ended it was widely thought and, in many cases, accepted that George Washington would install himself as our king. Less than a decade after the end of the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant was elected president. Seven years after World War II, Dwight David “Ike” Eisenhower became the 34th president of the United States. What were the key ingredients in making these three war heroes immortal in the American experience? Leadership and training. They never wavered in the midst of a cause they thought to be just and righteous. They ensured their personnel were trained and equipped to meet and defeat the enemy. For those qualities they were exulted and then elevated to our nations’ highest elected position.

We, TAUC contractors, are in a struggle that is both just and right. We represent the best in union construction; but in assessing our position we must, as all good leaders do, self evaluate constantly. TAUC is comprised of about 2,500 union contractors. Let’s be honest, the distribution of these contractors falls into a normal bell curve of 10 percent that are exceptional, 80 percent that are average, and 10 percent that are below average. This is no different than a sampling from any other large association.

Jack Welch, the former CEO of General Electric, has been much ballyhooed in popular media for his leadership in making GE a business juggernaut. Now, I do not agree with all of Welch’s tactics, however, there is one practice that I do believe was an unquestionable key to GE’s success in his tenure as CEO. That was constantly putting pressure on the bottom 10 percent to improve or get out.

I think TAUC contractors are perfectly positioned to assert their leadership, accept and embrace training for themselves, and win back a bigger share of the construction industry pie.

This is my proposal for how it can be accomplished. We, as TAUC, build on the momentum created by the International Union leadership when they started the “Code of Excellence” era in union construction. We are perfectly placed in history to separate ourselves from our competition.

We need, at this juncture, to develop a program for contractors to embrace best practices offered by TAUC. The best practices would initially begin by looking at what management skills are needed at the jobsite to ensure peak productivity that will astound our customers. This could then evolve into other aspects of how union contractors could best run their businesses with regard to hiring and training management supervision, acquiring bonding, interaction with our union partners, remitting funds to trusts and the like. This list would continue to grow. Armed with these skills and continued training, we would be able to further distinguish ourselves in the marketplace. The credibility these practices would give TAUC members would in turn allow them to further assert the leadership role that we have allowed to atrophy over many years and help create a generation of contractors that are viewed as the elite and most sought after.

For those of you who view such a proposal with eye rolling, I provide a very poignant example. TAUC contractors are the safest in the world. Do any of you good TAUC members remember when we all, and believe me, it was all of us, looked the other way at safety issues?! The emphasis that we, as TAUC members, put on safety is so far advanced from where it was 20 years ago it is not even comparable to today. So what happened? We realized that our customers demanded safe jobsites and that by doing the right thing, we could actually save money. Well, my friends, increasing our management skills, like we did our safety skills, needs the same fervor and effort to be successful.

Tell me, via e-mail at info@tauc.org, your thoughts on this proposal. We will need a lot of believers to make this a reality, but when you really think about it, what’s our choice?
A NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL MEAN A NEW OSHA
BY STEVEN JOHN FELLMAN

UNDER THE BUSH Administration, OSHA has emphasized voluntary cooperation and industry stewardship programs and significantly curtailed enforcement initiatives. In fact, rumor has it that before the end of the year, OSHA will propose new measures to lighten up regulations defining when certain substances pose workplace hazards.

At a time when the EU is developing a regulatory framework that requires chemical manufacturers to prove that a substance is safe before marketing the substance, OSHA has remained silent on many workplace safety issues. The crane standards have languished for years. OSHA emasculated the steel erection fall protection standards by issuing a directive essentially permitting contractors to elect to substitute a tie off system for decking requirements. The OSHA rule making process has been characterized by such long delays (try 10 years) that by the time a rule has been finalized, the evidence OSHA used to support the proposed rule may no longer be relevant.

At the same time that OSHA has been curtailing its enforcement efforts, union contractors have been stepping up their safety programs. More and more companies are adopting zero tolerance programs. Under the leadership of associations such as TAUC, union contractors working closely with the construction trade unions and owners have taken great strides to improve on the job safety. Safety is a win/win/win proposition. Workers benefit, contractors benefit and owners benefit. Safety programs eliminate injuries, improve productivity and lower costs.

As the November election moves closer, regardless of who wins, you can expect a new OSHA. The emphasis will be on worker safety and enforcement. Inspectors will be out in the field and construction sites will be a priority.

On July 25, 2008, an article appeared on the first page of the Wall Street Journal reporting a crane collapse in Oklahoma City resulting in the sixth crane-related death that week. On July 22, 2008, nine members of the Senate wrote to Labor Secretary Chao stating that it was “unfathomable” that OSHA has not adopted a final standard for cranes when such a standard was proposed by both industry (including NEA/TAUC) and labor in 2004. The Center for Construction Research and Training, a union supported organization, reported that between 1992 and 2006, there was an average of 22 construction worker deaths per year directly involving cranes.

In the same issue of the Wall Street Journal, there was another article under the headline “On-the-Job Deaths Vex Steel Industry.” That article described a joint effort by Arcelor Mittal and its unions to establish joint health and safety committees in each of the company’s plants and tie executive compensation into plant safety performance.

For TAUC members, the message is clear. There is a need to continue to improve safety programs and eliminate workplace injuries. If contractors don’t do this themselves, you can be sure that the next Administration will do it for you.

As the November election moves closer, regardless of who wins, you can expect a new OSHA.

Steve Fellman is the president of Galland, Kharasch, Greenberg, Fellman & Swirsky and TAUC’s general counsel.
BEFORE A PACKED hall of union contractors, labor leaders and representatives from the owner community, TAUC’s First Vice President Bob Santillo, of MCarf’s Inc., opened TAUC’s annual summer safety—labor forum with a call for an added sense of responsibility in the construction industry. Touching on the challenge of manpower shortage and the ever present issue of union construction’s share in the marketplace, Santillo encouraged those in attendance to further their involvement with TAUC so that the unsettling trends that our industry has been witness to may be reversed.

Following a “TAUC Safety Minute” with the Association’s Safety and Health Committee Chairman Bill Hering, of S.M. Electric Co., those in attendance were apprised of the current state of union construction in Michigan. Shorty Gleason, president of the Michigan State Building Trades’ Council (MSBTC), gave an undeviating presentation on the work that is coming down the pipeline and the challenges that his affiliate unions are facing in their region of the country. MSBTC CEO Pat Devlin followed Gleason’s remarks with an energized look at the need for continued labor management cooperation to overcome the hurdles the construction industry is facing. Devlin’s viewpoint on what needs to be done in his region could easily translate to any region in the country.

A staple of TAUC safety labor forums, an update on the unre lenting work of TAUC’s Labor Committee, was offered by its new chairman, Bud Burns of J.J. White Inc. Burns relayed that at the most recent Labor Committee meeting, during TAUC’s 2008 Leadership Conference, the committee’s past chairman, Gary Kebert, made it a point to refocus the committee. It was noted that the committee looked at past accomplishments so that they might map out the path they will take moving forward to continue their productivity.

Switching gears, the forum then delved into the issue of Transportation Workers Identification Credentials or “TWIC.” Chris Granberg of Siff & Lake LLC was on hand to offer his expertise on TWIC, which was developed to improve identity management and credentialing shortcomings that exist in segments of the transportation sector. TWIC affects more than one

TAUC Members Encouraged To Participate In Drug-Free Work Week

OCTOBER 20-26, 2008 is National Drug-Free Work Week, and all members of TAUC are encouraged to participate. The purpose of Drug-Free Work Week is to highlight that being drug free is key to workplace safety and health and to encourage workers with alcohol and drug problems to seek help.

Drug-Free Work Week is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor in coordination with members of its Drug-Free Workplace Alliance, of which TAUC is a charter member. This cooperative program, which represents both employer/contractor associations and labor unions, aims to improve safety and health through drug-free workplace programs. It focuses on the construction industry because research indicates that it has higher than average rates of worker alcohol and drug abuse—a serious concern given that it also tops the list of industries with the highest rates of workplace accidents and injuries. But because drug-free workplace programs benefit all workplaces, employers and employees in all industries, not just construction, are encouraged to take part in Drug-Free Work Week.

For specific ideas about how TAUC members can support Drug-Free Work Week, visit the Working Partners for an Alcohol- and Drug-Free Workplace Web site at www.dol.gov/workingpartners and click on “Drug-Free Work Week.” Suggestions range from simple to comprehensive, but all help promote safer, healthier workplaces and are wise business practices that can be implemented at any time of the year.
million individuals at present, all USCG credentialed mariners, port facility employees, longshoremen, truck drivers, and others (including construction and maintenance employees) requiring unescorted access must have a TWIC.

Rounding off the morning MDUC session was J.P. McBride of Chrysler, Ron Kosheowitz of Ford and Carl Gabbard of GM, who were on hand to participate in an open dialogue with TAUC moderator Mike Schumacher of Aristeo Rigging & Erecting, on the current automotive market and its impact on labor forecasting and what can be done to better the industry as a whole.

Kicking MDUC off in the afternoon was an update on the National Maintenance Agreements Policy Committee, Inc. (NMAPC) from Vice President of Industrial Relations Kevin Hilton. It was reported that in 2007, work hours reported under the NMAPC program totaled over 59 million and work hours reported to date in the first quarter of 2008 have already outpaced 2007. Hilton also reminded those in attendance that the 8th annual Zero Injury Safety Awards (ZISA) will be taking place October 29 in Washington, D.C. The ZISA awards have accounted for 56,481,839 injury-free work hours performed under the NMAPC program.

In light of the crane accidents this year, Bill Parsons of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration was on hand to update the audience on a number of standards, namely the cranes and derricks which, at press time, is being reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Although this has been a long and drawn out process, a drug testing requirement and physical qualification standard will not be part of the new standard. Parsons noted that he would have personally welcomed these requirements had they survived the negotiated rulemaking process.

MDUC was concluded with a look at manpower shortage, as Ed Coffey of the Michigan Building Trades Council and Chris Hernandez of the Northwest Indiana Building Trades Council took questions from TAUC moderator Steve Johnson of GEM Inc. The challenge of recruiting younger people into the trades was brought up and both Coffey and Hernandez remarked that they had gone to long lengths with recruiting high school and college aged people without seeing marked results. A solution to this was posed by TAUC CEO Steve Lindauer, in that the industry will only see improvements in recruitment when attitudes are changed regarding the construction industry. Too many high school and college aged Americans see construction as a last resort when thinking about careers. They cannot look past the dirty clothes and the hard working conditions to see that many of today’s business owners, safety professionals and contractor executives were once field craftspeople. TAUC and its membership are working alongside the International Unions to change these attitudes.

TAUC’s next safety labor forum will be its annual State of the Union…Construction Industry meeting.

Mike Dorsey is TAUC’s manager of membership. He can be reached via e-mail at mdorsey@tauc.org, or via phone at (703) 524-3336 ext. 122.

Mark Your Calendars — Winter Safety-Labor Forum Approaching

“THE STATE OF the Union…Construction Industry” meeting is back! Join TAUC for its second annual winter safety-labor forum, taking place Wednesday, December 3, at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington, D.C.

“The State of the Union…Construction Industry” meeting in 2007 offered an outlook on the political climate for union contractors, an address from the Building and Construction Trade’s President Mark Ayers, an insider’s guide to OSHA’s Challenge Program, a panel on welding certification and training by three different trades and reports from TAUC’s Customer Caucus, Labor Committee and Safety and Health Committee. This year’s meeting will build on the momentum that was created from last year’s forum and will continue to explore ways in which we can continue to collectively reinvigorate the industry.

To register for the 2008 “State of the Union…Construction Industry” meeting, visit www.TAUC.org.

We Want To Get You More WORK!

TAUC IS CURRENTLY developing a database called the Work Opportunity Reference Key (WORK) form. Our goal is to allow National Maintenance Agreements signatory contractors to get more work opportunities, and for owners to quickly search for contractors that meet the criteria of their new projects.

Access to the WORK Form is FREE for TAUC members, which includes all contractors signatory to the National Maintenance Agreements.

The most important part of the WORK Form is collecting the contractor’s detailed demographics that will be searchable by the owners. TAUC has begun an outreach program to obtain this information via phone, e-mail, and regular mail. The brief investment of time it takes to complete the WORK Form will pay off with future access to new job opportunities!

For more details and for information about how to fill out the WORK Form, visit www.tauc.org and click on the “Help Us Help You Get More Work!” link under Industry News or visit the NMA Web site at www.nmapc.org and locate the paper version of the WORK Form under the “Agreements and References” link. Or you can contact Ben Cahoon, TAUC Membership Services Administrator, via e-mail at bcahoon@tauc.org or via phone at (703) 524-3336 ext. 118.
ARAMARK UNIFORM SERVICES has teamed up with The Association of Union Constructors (TAUC) to offer a special promotion to TAUC contractor members. For a limited time, when you start a uniform program with ARAMARK, each of your uniform-wearers will receive a free pair of steel toe boots.

ARAMARK Uniform Services is a division of ARAMARK, a global leader in professional services. Since 1998, ARAMARK has consistently ranked as one of “America’s Most Admired Companies” by Fortune. ARAMARK currently provides uniform rental and uniform leasing services to more than 400,000 customer accounts nationwide from over 228 service locations and distribution centers across the United States. ARAMARK’s full-service employee uniform solution includes design, sourcing and manufacturing, customization, cleaning, maintenance, and delivery.

ARAMARK’s route sales representatives have the highest level of experience in the industry and take a vested interest in providing excellent service and follow-up. ARAMARK offers businesses a total uniform solution that helps them to solidify their image, promote teamwork and motivate employees. Its fully-managed cleaning, maintenance and delivery services offer convenience for you and your employees; cost-saving uniform solution – and ultimately, your peace of mind.

Uniform services are good for business. A well-coordinated uniform program goes beyond dollars and cents. It provides a professional image that builds employee morale and helps raise the perceived value of your products/services. Most importantly, appropriate uniforms also provide safety and security for your employees as well as customers.

Enhance your image. Almost 60 percent of consumers and businesses prefer to buy from companies whose employees wear uniforms, says a survey* conducted by Uniform & Textile Services Association (UTSA). The survey also reported that respondents had more confidence in uniformed employees and found them to be more credible.

Empower your employees. Uniforms do not only affect how your staff looks, it also has a positive impact on their attitude and demeanor. While your staff feel more confident, professional and at ease, your customers respond accordingly. Your front-line staff presents a tremendous opportunity of selling for you. A uniform program promoting your corporate image is one of the most cost-effective marketing investments you can make.

Promote Safety: Appropriate Uniforms made with the right material and designed in the right forms would help protect workers from contaminants and hazards in critical environments. Uniforms help safeguard you and your employees in various levels:

• Protecting your own clothing and equipment;
• Protecting you and your workers from contaminants;
• Protecting your products and customers from contaminants and diseases;
• Shielding your workers from flame, fire, arc flash, and electric shock;
• Preventing the accidental catching of garments in equipment and machinery;
• Shielding you from possible liabilities relating to food safety laws; and
• Providing proper identifications, increasing the security level of your workplace and peace of mind for your customers.

To ensure you have a proper uniform program, ARAMARK Uniform Services will assign you a team to handle all planning and administrative work of the program for you – from workplace assessment, to inspection and repairs, to delivery and inventory control. Contact an ARAMARK representative for a FREE assessment of your business needs. To schedule an ARAMARK representative to meet with you, call Tania Allaire at (818) 973-3906.

* Source: Survey conducted by JD Power and Associates in May 2000, sponsored by UTSA.

New TAUC Regular Members
As of 5-1-08

Acme Interiors, LLC
Anderson Equipment
Barbicas Construction
C.G. Mechanical Inc
Cadillac Asphalt LLC
California Roofing Co, Inc
Casadei Steel
Chance Bros Marble & Tile Inc
Charles E. Jarrell Mechanical Contractors
Cleaning Solutions Plus
Complete Office Interiors
Control Line Electric
Custom Engineering, Inc.
D2 Abatement Inc
Despenas Mechanical Inc
Detroit Auto Sprinkler
Du-Mont Company
E&K
Edwards Engineering
Environmental Construction Inc.
EPS of New Hampshire, Inc.
Ford Development Corp
Gemellaro Systems Integration
General Crane Rental
Gerace Construction
Glesco Electric, Inc.
Global Piping Services, Inc.
Holley Mechanical
Insulation, Inc.
Hycon Construction Systems Corp.
Jameson Sheet Metal, Inc
JF Lomma Inc.
JM Walters & Son, Inc.
K & K Specialties Inc.
Kramers Land Clearing
Larry’s Universal Inc
Leander Construction, Inc
Madar Metal Fabricating
Mark Fondell Excavating
MCM Rigging Services
Midwest Electric Control Specialists, Inc.
Mr. Carmel Stabilization Group, Inc.
Northeast Ohio Electric
Ohio River Salvage, LLC
Ohio Valley Electric
Otone Mechanical Construction Inc
PCL Construction Services LLC
PJ Ellis Electric Co, Inc
Professional Abatement Services Inc
Project Control Services Inc.
Reliable Electrical
Mechanical Services
Rex Electric, Inc. and Technologies
Rice Lake Construction
RMC Inc.
Ryan Incorporated Central
Sealed Rite
SJ Zepeda Inc
St. Charles Glass & Glazing Inc
Unistrut International Corp.
Videotec Corp.
Woody’s Rebar Co, Inc
Wymer Steel
THE TIME HAS come for labor and management to get real. Across this country union construction has lost most of its marketshare and still some contractors yawn and some business managers just count votes. As a partial cure and strategy I would like to suggest we all take a new look at that blessed institution; the collective bargaining process and its by-product, the union agreement.

Now seeing as I have negotiated more than 100 Master Construction Agreements (that currently cover in excess of 120,000 local union craft workers) I may sound a bit jaded when I say that from a competitive standpoint, they are generally more worthless than a bucket of cow piss. That colorful description accurately portrays most all collective bargaining agreements that usually read as an amalgamation of “sins of the past.” They are filled with language and provisions that run from “gotchas” to “never-agains” to “we’ve always had it in there but never paid any attention to it.” Frankly I cannot think of any other business contractual relationships governed by documents so generally complex, outdated or irrelevant to the competitive market...always reactive versus proactive. They reflect a time when the threat was an exploitive union employer who had the market sewn up. Now, decades later, they often just look old and tired. And the market threat is more savage and consuming than ever before.

Up until now, all the thousands of us going to the bargaining table across the United States and Canada have been in denial about this reality. Frustrated and often indignant, we still go to the table with our little wish lists and play the posturing game for several dollars and work rule changes. It’s an age-old game of trading our something (as small as possible) for their something (as big as possible). And while we have been trading in each of our local “feudal kingdoms,” the empire of union construction has fallen. The walls have come down. What we had has been taken and pillaged. The hordes have prevailed. And yet we play at it like nothing has changed. And all the construction owners and end-users are simply confounded and ask, “Don’t they get it?”

The future of bargaining cannot be about trading anymore. It has to be about competitive relevance. It has to be about productivity and market share. Every negotiation has to be focused on the new Golden Rule, “How do we compete most effectively to expand our mutual economic interests?” Anything that stands in the way of this must be eliminated. Anything that must be done to improve our economic interests must be done. A union agreement should be a document of mutual opportunity and strategy. If you disagree, then give me a better alternative. The current broken system governing our contractual and operational relations has directly resulted in a loss of more than 80 percent marketshare.

Contractors cannot think that marginal work rule changes are going to get it done. There is not time enough to incrementally...
recover the market by trading for a competitive position a dollar at a time. If they wait for this they will eventually be put out of business or eventually go non-union. Union leaders also have to realistically assess how they are going to a) meet the ever increasing financial obligations and expectations of their members b) maintain the very last of the nation’s defined benefit plans and c) keep their golden geese (the union contractor) alive to lay those golden eggs. Stonewalling on the basis of tradition is how we got here. If union leaders think the status quo will do it, they are betting their personal union pension on a proven losing model (and will be at risk for the next 20 years). Simply put, how we’ve been doing it, simply won’t get it done.

There are many labor and management people as tired as you and I of this transparent game that consumes much and delivers little. The new strategies that I am seeing at a best practices level include:

- interest based bargaining
- facilitated bargaining
- union strategic planning
- joint labor-management strategic planning
- adoption of business principles rather than politics to manage union enterprises
- joint organizing/market development for union employer density
- market focused rather than contract focused bargaining
- direct rank & file involvement or heavy communication concurrent with necessary contract change
- contractors not bringing micro items or single contractor issues to the table
- elimination of the wish list/“strike-off one at a time” process
- creation of national model bargaining agreement templates
- creation of mandatory nationwide value-added policies (i.e. Codes of Conduct/Excellence)
- incentive/productivity bonus programs replacing targeting funds (to incentivize versus subsidize)

And these are just a few. In low union density areas the ideas are nothing less than shocking in their embracing of innovation and risk (mainly because there are few union political obstacles). I am now, at 47, starting to hear from many business managers and contractors younger than I. And they are much more practical and aggressive. They are a lot less concerned about what was done way back when. They are aggressively courting new ideas because they are being handed the reality of a broken business model, a decimated marketshare and 20 more years of the business staring them in the face. Most of them have mentors who have guided them to this progressive vision. Many of these mentors are you readers. If the market rewards of embracing change are to be fully realized, it is time for all of us responsible for tens of thousands of union businesses and millions of lives and families to take a deep breath and decide: do we do what is necessary and strategic or do we just fill that bucket one more time?

Mark Breslin is a strategist and author specializing in labor-management challenges. He is the author of Survival of the Fittest, Organize or Die, Million Dollar Blue Collar and, most-recently, Alpha Dog. He addresses more than 50,000 labor and business leaders each year in North America. For details, visit www.breslin.biz.
As a safety professional in the construction industry, you have to remain vigilant when it comes to safe work practices, proper personal protective equipment and training. But even if the basics are being covered in terms of safety, there is still the 300-pound gorilla in the room... the basic health of all employees.

I would like to spend a little time talking about the need to keep our workforce healthy and happy. Later in this magazine you will find an article that delves into this very issue. I’ve taken the opportunity as the Safety and Health Committee Chairman of TAUC to reach out to experts in the health care field. Elizabeth Melchert, OD is a close personal friend of mine who I believe has a great message that we should get out to our brothers and sisters in the building trades. As everyone in our industry knows, health care costs have risen through the ceiling creating additional burdens in our ability as union constructors to be competitive in construction and maintenance.

With that thought in mind, it’s extremely important to look at the leading causes of insurance deficit and payout, both indemnity and medical, when workers’ hidden diseases aren’t detected. Dr. Melchert’s article shows how preventable most eye injuries are while outlining some of the basics for eye care practices.

When was the last time your workers were checked for eye injuries, including when older workers eyes may be deteriorating, including their depth perception? We test for drugs and alcohol, but when was the last time your operating engineers’ eyes were checked out?

A healthy worker is so much more productive, for the union, the contractor and ultimately the owner. Maintaining a competitive workforce is critical to increasing our market share, and keeping those who come into the trade healthy and happy!

If you or someone you work with is interested in participating on TAUC’s Safety and Health Committee please e-mail me at safety@tauc.org.

Bill Hering is the corporate safety and health director for S.M. Electric out of Rahway, New Jersey, and the National Safety and Health Committee Chairman of TAUC.
GLOBAL DEMAND DRIVES CRANE SHORTAGES
BY SARAH B. HOOD

AMERICA’S SKYLINES ARE changing – but not as fast as some would like these days, as a worldwide shortage of cranes is raising rental prices and forcing slowdowns on construction projects across the United States. As far back as November 28, 2005, Alby Gallun reported in Crain’s Chicago Business that a shortage of tower cranes in Chicago had caused rental prices to rise from $12,500 to about $22,000 per month. The demand was largely due to a highrise condominium boom in that city, but also partly driven by nationwide events, like massive rebuilding in Louisiana and Mississippi following the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina.

In February 2006, Libby Tucker, writing in Portland, Oregon’s Daily Journal of Commerce, warned that a tower-crane shortage would cause springtime project delays for Portland contractors due to the U.S. building boom. More recently, Emilie Bahr of New Orleans City Business described a tower-crane shortfall for construction projects in the Big Easy (August 31, 2007). Bryce Baschuk of The Washington Times wrote about similar shortages in the District of Columbia (May 31, 2007), noting that demand from such countries as China was adding to the crunch.

However, the place taking the most blame for crane consumption is Dubai, U.A.E., which is experiencing astonishing construction growth. Most famously, it has recently become the site of the world’s tallest building, the Burj Dubai, which has already reached 150 stories and is expected to rise a further 10 stories by the time of completion in 2009. But Dubai’s building boom goes far beyond a single big tower. Some commentators, like Simrin Sandhu of CPI Financial, estimate that the city is now “home to a quarter of the world’s construction cranes” (July 28, 2008). With deep pockets, Dubai’s construction industry is able to pay top dollar and outbid U.S. firms.

However, Dubai’s rapid expansion is not the only reason U.S. companies are having a hard time securing an adequate supply of cranes.

“There absolutely is a crane shortage. There’s no doubt about it,” states Randy Harris, Crawler Crane Manager for All Erection and Crane Rental Corporation, which has its head office in Cleveland and 28 locations across the country. “Dubai is consuming a lot of the product around the world, but most of the products in Dubai are electric tower cranes.”

Although Dubai construction is not projected to slow anytime soon, demand for tower cranes has dropped slightly in North America. Whereas a few years ago, tower cranes were difficult to obtain, the slowing housing situation and the cancellation or postponement of some major condominium developments have made more tower cranes available across the United States. On the other hand, U.S. Census Bureau figures indicate that the nonresidential sector continues to show
steady growth in 2008, especially in the construction of hotels, offices and power facilities.

“The biggest shortage in the U.S. market right now is crawler cranes,” says Harris. This demand is driven by increasing concern for the environment, and specifically America’s Clean Energy Act. It calls for a complete modernization and increase in the efficiency of the entire U.S. electricity grid and is bringing about changes to virtually every power generation utility across the country in order to remove greenhouse-gas contaminants from the air at their source.

“And let’s not forget about all the wind farms we’re putting up in North America,” Harris says. The increase in these types of projects has upped demand for 440-ton crawler cranes. “At $4 million apiece, if we had 30 more of them, they’d all be rented today; that is what the demand is,” he says. “And for the wind farms they’re putting up 80-metre towers that weigh 116 to 154 pounds. For these we’re putting nascelles up there: 154,000-pound cranes.”

“All the manufacturers are adding to their facilities, so they’re ramping up on their production,” says Harris. But “all the people we’re dealing with are backed up 18 months to two years. We won’t see some of the new cranes until 2010 or 2011.”

The good news? Although crane safety has become an issue in the minds of the media and the general public lately, there is no evidence that recent, highly publicized crane mishaps were caused because old or substandard cranes had been forced into service. “Nobody in their right mind would risk anything like that,” Harris says. “If we have an older crane in service, we’ll totally rebuild it, and when we’re done with them they’re like brand new, or we don’t keep them in the fleet.”

But some builders don’t have the option of revamping an older crane. For them, it may be necessary to resort to tactics like renting equipment for longer than necessary just to ensure they’ll have the right crane for the job when the need arises.
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WHAT’S UP WITH CRANES?
RESEARCHERS EXAMINE CRANE DEATHS, REPORT FINDINGS
BY MARY WATTERS

THE SPATE OF crane collapses have contractors and rank-and-file workers (not to mention worried pedestrians) wondering if cranes are less safe than usual.

Safety researcher Michael McCann has been wondering the same thing. McCann, the director of safety research for CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training, and two colleagues at CPWR* produced a report June 17 on construction crane fatalities, using the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics data available. He was about to begin updating his previous report on construction crane fatalities when the Manhattan crane collapsed on March 15.

The report’s findings may surprise you. Although crane collapses grab headlines (especially the ones that kill bystanders), power lines kill more workers. From 1992 to 2006, 323 construction workers died in 307 crane incidents: one-third of those deaths (102) were from overhead power line electrocution. Almost 40 percent of the electrocution deaths were workers on foot, guiding the load. Crane collapses were responsible for one-fifth of all deaths (68), followed closely by 59 deaths of workers struck by a falling boom/jib. Of those, 52 workers were killed by a falling boom/jib.

The report offers other insights. One-third of those who died worked for small contractors – less than 10 employees. Mobile, not tower, cranes were involved in 71 percent of fatalities. More than half the deaths were among construction laborers and heavy equipment operators. Supervisors/managers accounted for 12 percent of deaths, which represent 40 people. Other workers killed were ironworkers, mechanics, electricians, truck drivers, welders and carpenters.

The researchers listed possible explanations for these deaths: lack of worker and supervisor training, lack of jobsite safety plans, lack of adequate crane inspections, and lack of proper investigation and reporting of crane accidents and fatalities. That led the researchers to create a list of eight recommendations to prevent construction crane deaths. (Full report and recommendations are available via CPWR’s home page, www.cpwr.com.)

“Make sure your crane operators are certified by a reputable group, like the NCCCO [National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators]. Crane inspectors should also be certified,” he told The Construction User. “And the workers who assemble and disassemble cranes should be well-trained, not just those available.”

McCann, like many contractors and workers, wishes OSHA would quickly adopt the crane standard developed by a consensus group of industry and labor in 2004.

“Our current crane standards are 40 years old,” said McCann. “Crane technology has changed drastically. The ones used now weren’t around when those old standards were written.”

McCann was curious about this seeming “epidemic” of crane fatalities, so he tallied news sources. By July 31, McCann found 25 construction crane-related fatalities and 39 injuries of workers, plus three bystander deaths and three bystander injuries in 2008. His report found an average of 22 construction crane deaths annually.

McCann plans an update, using new BLS data, as soon as the data are released. Check www.cpwr.com for details.

*Report co-authors are Mary Watters and Janie Gittleman, PhD, associate director of research for CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training.

Mary Watters is director of communications for CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training, a nonprofit created by the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, to aid labor and management in construction safety and health issues. She can be reached via e-mail at mwatters@cpwr.org or via phone at (301) 495-8523. Research and production of the crane report was made possible by a cooperative agreement between CPWR and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), grant OH008307.
OUR AGENDA IS LONG AND OUR STANCE IS FIRM

BY BUD BURNS

THIS IS THE first opportunity I have had to pen an article for The Construction User and I wanted to use this space to discuss the progress and forthcoming agenda for the TAUC National Labor Committee.

The Labor Committee, which formally meets four times a year, has been fortunate to have a talented group of TAUC contractors to tap into. The box to the right shows a roster of the leaders in our industry that take time out to assist TAUC in putting forth the agenda of the union segment of the construction industry. In our existence the committee has raised a number of issues to the forefront, with some having more traction on a national basis than others.

The three items that have been front and center on our agenda have been a national program for craft reciprocity, owner expectations and recruitment into the trades.

You've seen discussion on craft reciprocity in this space before. This program would allow craft personnel to travel around the country, perform productive and necessary work, and ensure that they receive all the benefits that they contribute to. We feel it's an idea whose time has come and a concept that, when activated, will assist to smooth out the boom and bust cycles in our construction manpower needs. To that end, discussions have ensued at the national level with leadership from our partner labor organizations. At this point the feedback is positive, but continued effort is necessary.

Our TAUC Customer Caucus (TCC), which was formed roughly at the same time as the National Labor Committee, asked for feedback from its TAUC member contractors on what they should expect from their customers. The committee is set to provide our customers with some pointers on steps they could take to make their jobs flow better, safer and more productive. This policy was reviewed and adopted by the TCC and can be made available for any TAUC member.

Another initiative the committee has worked diligently on is attempting to recruit the talented youth of our nation to a career in union construction. Your association is in the midst of discussions with another national association that deals closely with secondary educators to dispel the notion in their mind that construction is for underachievers. It is one of TAUC's responsibilities to dispel that erroneous message, as we recognize that union construction offers incredible opportunities in terms of career paths and advancement. I would go so far as to say that I am living proof of someone who started out in the trades and progressed into my current role.

This is not, by any means, an all encompassing list of the National Labor Committee's agenda, but these are the leaders. We continue to need greater support from our membership and your thoughts are important, so let me know your thoughts via e-mail at info@tauc.org.

Bud Burns is the executive vice president for J. J. White Inc., and TAUC's Labor Committee chairman and board member.
EMMITT NELSON’S BOOK, *The Employer Safety Guidebook to Zero Employee Injury*, was in part the impetus for the National Maintenance Agreements Policy Committee, Inc. (NMAPC) to create their Zero Injury Safety Awards. But the real reason was to create an awards program that would be respected across the entire construction industry for recognizing that not only are zero injuries conceivable…but attainable.

One TAUC Governing Member contractor, Aker Construction, Inc., is so committed to safety that they are willing to try something different to attain zero injuries on their largest United States jobsite, the Longview Power Generation facility in Maidsville, West Virginia. For the first time in the construction industry, the Zero Incident Process (ZIP), is being rolled out to every worker that Aker and their subcontractors bring on to the Longview site.

ZIP was created by Sentis, an organization founded in Australia with North American Operations based in Denver, Colorado. Sentis began using ZIP primarily for the mining industry and has since broadened their services to industries such as energy, metal fabrication, aerospace, chemical manufacturing and other industries where high hazard energies are present. The Longview site is the first time they have teamed up with a general contractor to roll it out in the construction industry, and so far it seems to be a perfect fit.

WHAT IS ZERO INCIDENT PROCESS (ZIP)?

According to the Sentis Web site, “ZIP is a cognitive-behavioral psychologically based safety process that moves your people from extrinsically driven safety to intrinsically motivated safety. It does this by focusing on the Person component of the Safety Culture Model.”

I recently traveled to Maidsville, West Virginia, with two coworkers to experience firsthand what this new form of safety training was really all about. The session was taught by a cognitive behavioral therapist and safety training facilitator, David Musgrave, who is both a full-time employee of Sentis and also located onsite at Longview.

The one-day session opened with onsite Manager of Labor Relations Sam Steinmiller giving participants his view of why this training is so important, and why Aker has seen fit to spend an enormous amount of time, energy and resources to provide it to everyone on site. It boils down to this: Regardless of what rules and processes a company has in place to ensure a safe jobsite, and regardless of the number of onsite safety professionals who are enforcing these rules, ultimately the individual has to buy-into why these rules are in place and realize they are ultimately responsible for their own safety. This is a pretty simple concept, but one that is significantly reinforced by ZIP.

During the first break we asked a fellow participant, Rodney Teter, a laborer who had been on the job for three weeks, what he thought of ZIP training. He said, “I am thinking that this will be just another safety training session that I have attended a number of times before. However, I am noticing that this session might be a little different, which would be a nice change of pace.”

ZIP was designed to empower people to take control of their personal safety by becoming more effective within the systems they are working in. Creating a personal connection to safety is one way ZIP achieves this. Each participant is asked to come up with their own “Personal Big Five.” Basically what are the five things you, as an individual, cherish most about your life. The responses vary, but to each individual this is why they come into work each day. This is also why it is so important for them to leave work each day in the same shape they came in…safe and healthy.

Musgrave highlights the underlying psychological causes of behavior – thinking and feeling, or the ‘hearts and minds’ of safety. Throughout the day he reinforces the idea that what keeps people safe most of the time is their skills, knowledge and attitudes toward safety. The link between safety attitudes and safety performance is well documented and is the focus of ZIP.

ZIP is not a program in “what” is safe, nor is it instructions on “how” to follow procedures. Instead, ZIP focuses on providing people with information about the “why” of safety and the skills to make safe choices in the workplace and at home. It achieves this goal by presenting the brain as a machine and ZIP is an apprenticeship in how to work this machine skillfully and how to maintain it.

Both Aker Construction and Sentis realize this is not a
program that can change a safety culture overnight, but done properly it can help get your organization and workforce to zero injuries with time and commitment.

The use of concepts discussed in training are embedded within start of shift and leadership meeting processes on site in order for ZIP to be incorporated into and influence the safety culture of the site. I witnessed one of these start of shift meetings firsthand the next morning where Rick Liller, an apprentice carpenter and foreman, gave a safe day meeting to his crew using ZIP concepts to identify potential “gorillas” or unforeseen obstacles in that day’s work scope. ACI Superintendent Bob Moratti was quick to point out afterward how the issues raised in Liller’s safe day board meeting impact their safety awareness. “I have seen the results of ZIP training firsthand, and my guys are better for it” Moratti said.

After the one-day ZIP class had wrapped up, I asked Rodney Teter again what he thought of this experience, and he said “This was entirely different than what I was expecting. Knowing how our brains function has given me a base of knowledge to help change my outlook on the challenges that I am presented with everyday.”

Greg McDonald, another laborer, noted, “It was great. It shows how your every day thoughts impact the way you do your job, and contribute to your stress, productivity and safety in the workplace.”

To learn more about ZIP, go to www.sentis.net.

Aker Construction, Inc. is the union construction arm of Aker Solutions, which provides a full range of construction, maintenance and renovation services to the North American industrial sector. Direct hire union construction, maintenance and renovation services are provided to the power, steel, chemical, petro-chemical, and other industrial sectors in North America.

Todd Mustard is the executive director of association services for TAUC. He can be reached via e-mail at tmustard@tauc.org or via phone at (703) 524-3336 ext. 112.
UNION LABOR —
THE PROBLEM OR THE SOLUTION:
AN INTERVIEW WITH STEVE LINDAUER

BY TED GARRISON

THE ASSOCIATION OF Union Constructors’ CEO, Steve Lindauer, challenges anyone to put up the data that shows union labor is not more productive. In fact, he added that on average across the United States, union projects are 17 percent more productive than merit shop projects.

When asked to explain why he thought union labor was the solution to many of the problems facing the construction industry, Lindauer offered a very positive response. He stated that despite what a lot of people think or may have read, in the past few years he has seen many organizations that were not necessarily union advocates open a dialogue with the unions to examine the challenges facing the industry. These challenges include a critical shortage of skilled workers, a need to increase productivity and ongoing safety issues.

When asked about the services that TAUC offers, Lindauer responded that the areas they focus on are labor relations, safety and health services. These services benefit not only the contractor members, but also the members’ craft employees and the building owners or customers.

He further emphasized that this approach is consistent with their overall commitment to a tripartite approach to business. In other words, they are committed to helping the contractors, the workers and the owners. This positive approach is critical because unless solutions benefit all three major industry stakeholders, the solution is unstable and unsustainable. The reality is that many of today’s problems within the industry are a result of self-centered practices of the various stakeholders.

Lindauer added that TAUC was proud of its groundbreaking effort at its May 2008 leadership conference. What they did was create the first of its kind: a town hall–style format where they had five general presidents of international unions come and discuss industry issues. There was no set agenda. Instead Mark Breslin of Breslin Strategies facilitated a non-confrontational discussion consisting of questions from the audience and each other. While this 90-minute exercise certainly couldn’t resolve all the industry issues, it was a great beginning to a more collaborative environment.

With healthcare being one of the biggest fears of the average worker and because the industry has many small companies, the industry has had difficulty obtaining really good and affordable health plans. When Lindauer was asked about this problem, he responded that TAUC has been able to negotiate health plans that help minimize this problem for union workers. He admitted while the system isn’t perfect, it’s definitely an improvement.

To hear Steve Lindauer’s complete message, you can listen to his full Internet radio interview as he dispels myths about union workers and explains the benefits of this trained workforce. To listen, go to: http://www.newconstructionstrategies.com/TAUC/SteveLindauer.html.

Ted Garrison is a construction expert who writes, speaks and consults on the future of the construction industry. He is also the host of the Internet radio program New Construction Strategies. He can be reached at Ted@NewConstructionStrategies.com or via phone at (800) 861-0874.
EACH YEAR ABOUT 300,000 highly skilled and disciplined men and women leave the military to pursue career opportunities in the civilian world. That is 25,000 potential employees per month who are eager to find good jobs in the open market.

Labor unions and their signatory contractors would benefit greatly by giving this unique talent pool due consideration when indenturing new apprentices or hiring new employees.

Transitioning military veterans are drug-free, physically fit, safety conscious, accustomed to following orders and willing to work hard until the job is done. Additionally, many ex-military have construction-related training and experience imparted by the most demanding employer in the world – the United States Armed Forces.

When people think of the military, they tend to think of the infantry or artillery. The fact is, these combat-related jobs account for less than 30 percent of the work assignments. The vast majority of service members specialize in areas such as logistics, administration, intelligence, engineering or construction. Of the nearly 200 different occupational specialties in the military, the vast majority are technical, non-combat related.

“Thousands of service members have building and construction jobs in the military,” said Darrell Roberts, executive director of the Helmets to Hardhats program. “The military has carpenters, masons, pipefitters, electricians, surveyors, estimators, project managers and many other construction-related positions. These veterans are natural fits for the civilian building trades and they tend to excel on the jobsite.”

Helmets to Hardhats is a national, non-profit program dedicated to helping transition active duty Military, Reservists and National Guardsmen find quality careers in construction.

“Through Helmets to Hardhats, thousands of veterans have started meaningful careers and thousands of employers have found great workers. This truly is a situation where everyone wins — the veterans, the employers and the unions,” said Roberts.

The Helmets to Hardhats Web site, www.helmetstohardhats.org, allows jobseekers to browse hundreds of career opportunities and apply for these positions electronically. It also allows employers to post job openings and search for qualified candidates. Pre-written questionnaires for each job category, pull down menus, and options for pre-determined job qualifications make job posting effortless.

Additionally, military job candidates are required to fill out detailed information before accessing the site, making it easy to eliminate inappropriate candidates based on job specifications.

Employers can search all candidates in the database and use the letter creation tool to easily communicate with qualified applicants. The site also offers an opt-in e-mail feature that will send resumes that meet your job criteria directly to your inbox.

After posting a job, employers can also adjust the criteria to increase or decrease the number of job applications they are receiving. Employers can choose to just receive resumes, job seekers’ screening answers, or a screening score in the subject of the e-mail.

Another way to utilize the program is by contacting your local Helmets to Hardhats regional director. Regional directors are the program’s field operatives who are in touch with qualified candidates in your area on a daily basis. They can keep an eye out for the most aptly qualified individuals and help facilitate the hiring process.

A regional director’s mission is to help you find the right person for the job from among the best candidates in the world — U.S. military servicemen and women.

Visit www.helmetstohardhats.org today to enhance your workforce with military skills, values and discipline.

Tad Kicielinski is the communications manager for Helmets to Hardhats. Be can be reached via e-mail at tkicielinski@bctd.org, or via phone at (202) 756-4642.
SAFETY IS AT the top of every construction workers’ point of view. However there are many things that can be done to improve safety in the workplace.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has set forth guidelines for all employers to follow to ensure the safety of their employees in their work environment.

Personal protective devices (PPD) are required with specific standards for the construction industry. Specifically, safety eye-wear is essential in the protection of the eyes. Periodically, OSHA updates the specific requirements through testing new products to continue to supply the workers with the most effective products to make the work environment safe for the worker.

Every day, about 2,000 workers in the United States have a job-related eye injury that requires medical treatment. Every year, thousands are blinded from work-related injuries that could have been prevented by wearing protective safety glasses, goggles or face shields. More than one-third of these injuries are treated in hospital emergency rooms and more than 100 of these injuries result in one or more days of lost work. Eye injuries alone cost more than $300 million per year in lost production time, medical expenses and workman’s compensation. A majority of these injuries result when small particles or objects strike or abrade the eye. Chemical and heat burns are particularly devastating and painful injuries.

An employer may wish to go through hazard assessments to determine the risk of exposure, including those that may be encountered during an emergency. You should be aware of the possibility of multiple and simultaneous hazard exposures to be able to protect employees as much as possible. These things include impact, heat, chemical, dust and optical radiation.

Eye protection should be fit to the individual, be adjustable for appropriate coverage and comfortable enough to wear for the day and allow sufficient peripheral vision. Safety eyewear has specially made lenses either of polycarbonate, a virtually shatter resistant material, or is made by the industry standard of 3.0 mm center thickness in glass or plastic (CR-39). It is recommended that safety eyewear lenses should never be made of glass. Even industrial glass lenses made with the 3.0 mm center thickness can shatter and cause serious eye injuries. Plastic or polycarbonate lenses offer the most eye safety.

Contact lenses can be worn in the workplace, but only when covered with safety glasses or safety goggles, which can be purchased with nonprescription lenses. Contact lenses alone offer no controlled protection.

In the workplace, risk is inherent in everything we do; however if both the employer and employee adhere to the guidelines set by OSHA, you can prevent the vast majority of eye injuries, the lost income resulting in the medical care, lost employee work time, wages and the long term pain and suffering from the injury. It is important to recognize that despite all safety precautions, accidents can still happen; however, 90 percent of the eye injuries that we see can be avoided with appropriate care. It is always difficult for the doctor to treat these injuries, especially in the case of the most preventable ones and, at times, these corneal/retinal injuries can require a lifetime of medication and treatment or the loss of vision. So, think about it when you make that decision not to offer or wear safety glasses — you may be affecting the rest of your career and lifestyle.

Elizabeth M. Melchert is a doctor of optometry at Valley Eye Associates located in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. She can be reached via phone at (920) 235-0066.
STATISTICALLY SPEAKING, HAS crab fishing, ice trucking or logging become more popular career paths because of the exposure these professions have received from television programming like Discovery Channel’s “The Deadliest Catch,” or the History Channel’s “Ice Road Truckers” and “Axe Men”? Maybe, maybe not, but the popularity of these professions are now part of popular culture’s dialogue in high schools, colleges and even around water coolers across corporate America.

I am not a fisherman, trucker or logger; I am a run-of-the-mill college student majoring in accounting. I know I will personally never do any of these professions. However my friends and I have all become drawn to this new genre of reality television. I find it appealing to watch how much a deckhand makes during crab season, and try to put myself in the position of a new crewmate to see if I could handle the difficult manual labor. If these industries can glorify their respected occupations, then why can’t construction do the exact same thing?

The production company that brought us “Deadliest Catch” and “Ice Road Truckers” is now doing a six part miniseries on National Geographic Channel called “LA Hard Hats” that showcases the construction of a large commercial property from the perspective of the workers. Each episode is based on a specific craft and their role in the construction of a high-rise condominium in Los Angeles, California.

From my limited interaction with the world of construction and my two summers spent as an intern at TAUC/NMAPC, I can tell that there is not a shortage of drama on the jobsite. Television viewers thrive off this exact type of conflict between people. The dramatic aspect of these types of programs is what reels viewers in.

An important issue for the industry is to try to use the spotlight in order to tap into a work force demographic that is dwindling in numbers. Now is the time to show skeptical people what construction can do for them. We can only hope that someone who is unemployed or unsatisfied with their current job sitting on the couch watching television will have a light bulb turned on and realize a viable career option, or at a bare minimum get people talking about careers in construction.

Even without these eureka moments, the perception of the average construction worker is bound to change. Construction being televised is the first step of changing an entire generation’s view on a career that may have been looked down upon in the past. I wish people in my generation understood the positives to working with their hands, but it can be very difficult to overcome preconceived notions and stereotypes.

The prejudged thoughts about doing this kind of manual labor can be eliminated with the proper vehicles. People in my generation watch a lot of television, and the more they see real construction the more they are bound to think about it. Will television shows like “LA Hard Hats” save the industry? Not likely, but they can help change the perception of a construction worker whistling at an attractive woman as she walks by a jobsite.

Stephen Pomager is an in-coming senior at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Virginia, and a second year summer intern at TAUC and the NMAPC.
THE 24TH ANNUAL Ironworker Instructor Training Program was held on the campus of the University of San Diego, July 13-18. Each year the Ironworker Management Progressive Action Cooperative Trust (IMPACT) works with the National Ironworkers and Employers Apprenticeship Training and Journeymen Upgrading Fund to conduct what has become one of the premier instructor training programs in the building trades.

This year, more than 700 instructors, observers, employers, contractors, owners, guests, and special presenters participated in the program that included over 40 different courses.

During the opening session on July 13, General President and IMPACT Labor Co-Chair Joseph Hunt welcomed the participants. “Our annual program ensures that we have skilled instructors and coordinators able to develop skilled Ironworkers to meet the needs of our signatory employers and contractors.”

Bill Brown, president and CEO of Ben Hur Construction Company and the IMPACT Management Co-Chair challenged the participants to apply their new knowledge and skills in order to strengthen their apprenticeship programs.

Eric Waterman, IMPACT CEO and Vic Cornellier, IMPACT trustee and president of TSI/Exterior Wall Systems, also addressed the participants during the opening session.

Nine local unions received certificates indicating their successful completion of the Ironworker Apprenticeship Certification Program (IACP). In addition, 32 individuals received their Qualified Ironworker Instructor Certificate indicating completion of required courses as part of the annual training program.

Over 40 courses were offered during the annual program including several new courses. These courses included:

- How to Teach Blueprint Reading
- Teaching Vocational English
- Reading Reinforcing Drawings

Apprenticeship coordinators and directors from the United States and Canada held their fourth annual meeting in conjunction with the training program. Participants attended a number of interactive sessions focusing on topics and issues of interest to those managing apprenticeship programs. General Secretary Walter Wise also attended this meeting and presented the new online Apprentice Tracking System being developed by the International.

IMPACT held a meeting of their labor and management Trustees on July 14. In addition, IMPACT supported a number of courses including Foreman Training for Ironworkers and Survival of the Fittest.

IMPACT held a Safety and Health Roundtable meeting on July 15. Kevin Hilton and Todd Mustard from TAUC are members of the Safety and Health Roundtable and attended the meeting.

One of the reasons the annual program continues to be a success is the participation of our supporting vendors. These vendors conduct courses, give demonstrations with state-of-the-art equipment, offer training materials, run contests, and have become an integral part of the program. This year vendors included Bar Splice Products, Crosby Group Inc., ESAB Welding and Cutting, Harris Calorific, Smith Equipment, Hilti, Klein Tools, Lincoln Electric, Miller Electric, Airgas/Red-D-Arc, GTI, Conextec, Applied Bolting, CI Solutions, Hydratight, Max Rebar, Wilson Industries, Union Sportsmen Alliance, DSI (Dywidag Systems International), Gotham Supply, Tiger Industries, Jeff Clip, and Max Rebar Tier.

General Treasurer Ed McHugh addressed the participants during the closing session held on July 18. In addition, there were presentations of prizes by vendors to participants based on hands-on events held during the Wednesday evening vendor demonstrations. The final event during the closing session was a “week in review” slide show with music that highlighted key events from the training program.

By all accounts, the 24th Annual Ironworker Instructor Training Program was a success. IMPACT and the National Training Fund staff members are now busy working on next year’s annual program. So mark your calendars and join us July 20-24, 2009 to celebrate 25 years of quality programs dedicated to strengthening our apprenticeship and training system.

Rick Sullivan is the director of education and training for IMPACT. He can be reached via e-mail at rsullivan@impact-net.org or via phone at (800) 545-4921.
"SAFETY FIRST" IS an oft used tagline by contractors to sell themselves as the right contractor for a job, but the 76 union contractors that earned Zero Injury Safety Awards this year are proof that zero injuries are possible, and union construction is safer.

This marks the eighth year in which the National Maintenance Agreements Policy Committee, Inc. (NMAPC) has given out these awards, and the number of submissions, as well as winners, has reached an all-time high.

This year the NMAPC will be recognizing 76 winners accounting for 20,493,050 injury free work hours! These numbers surpassed our expectations. As a result, the NMAPC conducted a detailed audit of a majority of the awards, checking OSHA log information, and verifying data with owners. The result, a record number of winners, and validation that the vast majority of the award submissions we received were accurate. Congratulations to all of you who have made safety a priority. You not only have increased your company’s bottom line, but you have done a great service for the men and women of the union construction industry.

We not only have a record number of overall winners, we also have a new top award winner. At our annual safety awards dinner this year we will be honoring a contractor, owner, and Building Trades Council for amassing 2,569,267 injury-free work hours! This contractor has been performing work at this facility injury free since 2000 when the NMAPC Zero Injury Safety Awards began. To find out who was able to achieve this remarkable accomplishment, please join us at the eighth annual NMAPC Zero Injury Safety Awards Dinner on October 29 at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.

For more information about the dinner or the awards program, visit www.NMAPC.org and click on the safety awards tab (on left).

Jacob Snyder is the director of industrial relations for TAUC and the NMAPC. He can be reached via e-mail at jsnyder@tauc.org, or via phone at (703) 841-9707 ext. 127.
Let’s Review:
Problems BA-A-AD.
Union GO-O-OD.

Cost overruns.
Downtime.
“Shortcuts.” (Translation: “Code violations.”)
These are bad things.
Bad for your bottom line, your reputation.
Just plain bad.
How to avoid the bad things?
Hire good people.
Well-trained people who know
how to get the job done right the first time.
Union electrical workers get more and better training
than non-union workers. And that means fewer problems
on the job site. Fewer headaches.
Fewer bad things.
And that’s good.

Go Union. For Good.

Contact your local NECA chapter or IBEW local union
for more information.
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