

HSTTP Continues to Expand its Reach



Jim Ellwood with masonry students, code officials and instructors.

The International Code Council High School Technical Training Program (HSTTP) is entering its fourth year of operation. Word is spreading throughout the code and construction industry that ICC is educating a workforce to replenish the current code officials and leaders of the industry. This workforce can be found nationwide and consists of young men and women interested

in learning how to build and are being introduced to the codes associated with their chosen trade.

Students at technical high schools are eager to learn, and we have found they are very interested in how codes govern the building industry. Many of these students can speak intelligently about the codes and ask outstanding questions about interpretation, which usually leads to

By Jim Ellwood

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additional code inquiries. The students have risen to the challenges presented by their instructors and mentors from various jurisdictions.

The HSTTP instructors have opened the trades, drafting and engineering students' eyes to a whole new world. Construction is the original STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) program. Students realize that they will need all four STEM disciplines, plus geography, to be able to navigate, comprehend and apply the building codes competently. We have had instructors from York County School of Technology in York, Pa., to East Career and Technology Academy in Las Vegas share how their students have discovered geometry, English and geography play a large role in construction. During visits to various schools we found students who have taped a map of the United States to their code book so they can find the corresponding state when referencing Chapter 3 in the IRC for building design. The ICC HSTTP program is helping to create a well-rounded construction student.

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) has listed the HSTTP on their website as an approved educational program. After last year's ICC's Annual Conference in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., we were invited to meet with the Pennsylvania Builders Association (PBA) to discuss adding the HSTTP to their approved educational curriculum list. Thanks to HSTTP supporter Amy Martin, architect and owner of Building Site Synergy, and after several conversations with Tom Turnbaugh, PBA's Education Director, HSTTP was added to the PBA approved curriculum.

This year we attended NAHB's Shelbyville, Ky., "Construction Days" event. We contacted Lora Knight at the Home Builders Association of Kentucky (HBAK), the pro-



Students at York County School of Technology taking their exam.

gram organizer, and she graciously welcomed us to set up a booth. Since this event, ICC Board Vice President Alex "Cash" Olszowy; Dennis Crist, Building Official, City of Somerset, Ky.; and newly elected ICC Board Member Jeff Bechtold have been ensuring that code officials and contractors in Kentucky are aware of the advantages of teaching technical high school students the building codes. Bechtold recently requested additional brochures to share with the schools in his jurisdiction. With the efforts of all three, we are looking forward to schools in Kentucky joining our program in the near future.

As many of you may be aware, the public schools system is complex and complicated, and it takes a bit to learn and maneuver through it. Over the past year the Virginia Building Code Officials Association (VBCOA) has been working to do just that with the Virginia Depart-

ment of Education. In September 2014, we were invited to give a presentation at their Richmond conference. Pete Mensinger, CBO, Special Projects Manager, Department of Code Administration in Alexandria; and Latoya Burden, Plans Examiner II, City of Hampton, represented VBCOA. We worked together and gave a presentation outlining the HSTTP and the benefits ICC certificates and certifications provide students when seeking employment.

Our year-long wait was over. After making the presentation to Anne Rowe, Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction, and Joseph Wharff, School Counseling Career Connection Specialist, and sending additional requested information, Mr. Wharff told us our program met the DOE requirements as a certificate/certification program. ICC's HSTTP will be approved in July 2015 and added to the Virginia DOE list of approved curriculum for the Career and Technical schools.

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After meeting Ms. Rowe in the beginning of this process, we offered to help in any way we could as code professionals. She asked if we could have a couple of code officials review their current masonry programs curriculum and make suggestions to the masonry review advisory board. Randy Pearce, Building and Fire Inspector in Emporia, Va., and Sean Farrell, President of VBCOA, and I volunteered to review the curriculum. We all voiced the importance of teaching tech students the building codes and suggested adding them to the curriculum, among other suggestions. When the review process was completed we received a nice thank you from Ms. Rowe and the extended appreciation of the Virginia DOE. We believe our willingness to assist when asked went a long way to proving our commitment to the technical school system.

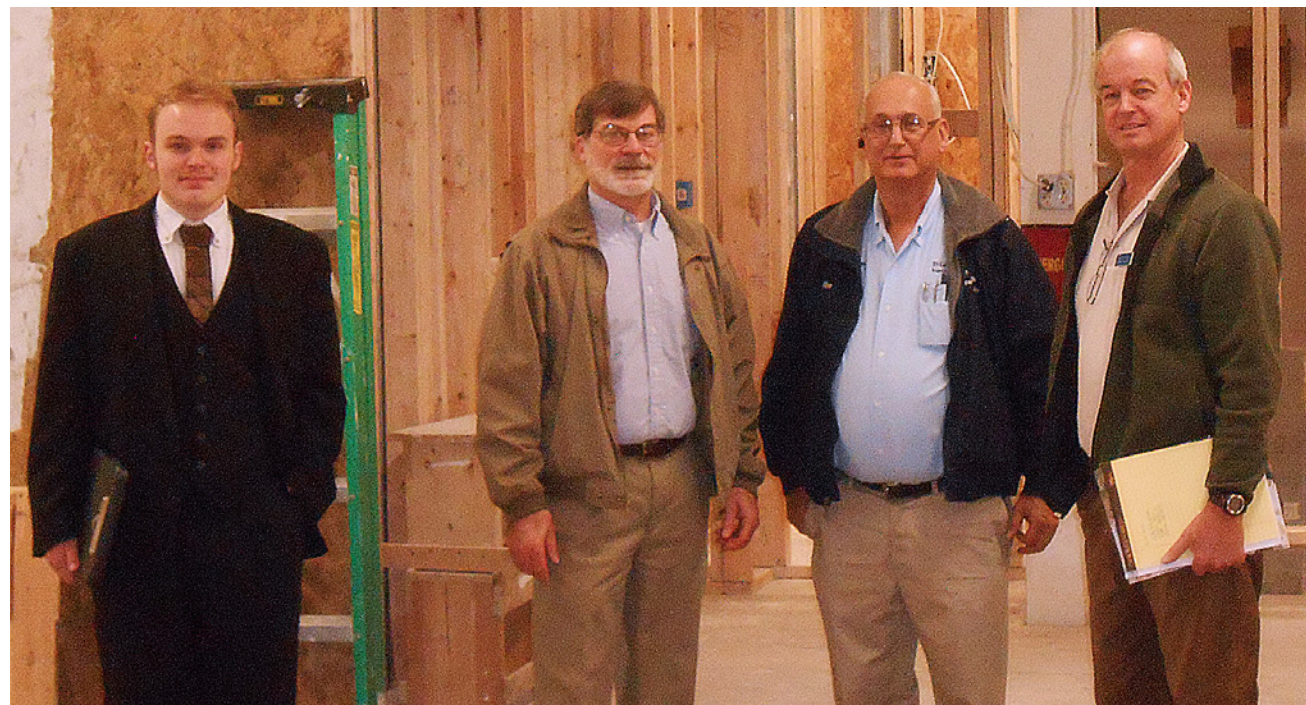
Now the VBCOA is working diligently to organize code officials to extend a greeting to their local technical high schools and provide information about the HSTTP. We have been assisting with presentations and providing any additional information requested. After one such VBCOA meeting where we met Paula Johnson, Senior Property Code Enforcement Inspector in Prince William County, things started happening. Paula has experience with how things work in the technical school system. Her daughter attended a tech school and Paula was instrumental in getting a cosmetology class organized for her daughter and friends so they would not have to ride the bus an hour to another school for their class. Less than an hour after I left the meeting, I received a call from Paula. She had stopped at her local tech school, explained the HSTTP and had already arranged a meeting. She invited us to a SkillsUSA run-off competition at Stafford

Tech and arranged for us to have a booth at the regional SkillsUSA competition—a two day event. Paula kept the momentum going by having Spotsylvania Career and Technical Center join the HSTTP. The electrical instructor at Spotsylvania, Kermit Davis, is taking the lead for the schools in his region, and setting up the pilot program. VBCOA is working with Stafford and Northern Neck to get additional programs up and running in September.

In late December we were contacted by Harry Hintz, who teaches Codes in Construction at the Pennsylvania College of Technology (PCT), concerning the ICC's HSTTP. A meeting was arranged on December 15 and attended by me, John Eby, President of PENNBOC, Steve Bielskie, PENNBOC's State Education Committee Chairman, and Gabriel Bocchino, a high school student from Harford Technical High School in Bel Air, Md. (where the HSTTP originated) who currently has 3 Certificates of Achievement (COAs) and the ICC's Residential Inspectors certification.

We met with Hintz, instructor Barney Kahn, V.P. for Workforce Development Tracy Brundage, and the school's Dean Marc Bridgens. We had a wonderful tour of their facility and saw various projects the students at PCT had completed. PCT educates their students to be prepared to enter the workforce as construction foremen, superintendents and project managers. They offer an A.A. and B.A. degree in construction management and their students are recruited by the top builders across the country. We are pleased to announce PCT offered our curriculum to their students when they returned from their 2014 winter holiday break. Harry Hintz is currently re-writing the curriculum to make the HSTTP a required course and offering their students the next level of opportunity from the ICC to obtain inspector and plans examiner certification while at PCT.

The other news from this meeting is that PCT is interested in having Gabriel Bocchino, our first student to pass



From left to right: Gabriel Bocchino, Harford Technical High School student; John Eby, President of PENNBOC; Steve Bielskie, PENNBOC State Education Committee Chairman; and Harry Hintz Pennsylvania College of Technology's code instructor.

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the residential inspectors exam, attend their college. We are currently working with Gabe to get his request for financial aid submitted and apply for scholarships. Harry has spoken to the college and had Gabe's administration fees waived and is working to place Gabe in a good job while at PCT. We are very pleased with the outcome of our meeting, and the value PCT has set on our program and the students that achieve COAs.

As you can see, much has happened in the past months, all due to the hard work of our code officials across the country. In the coming months we will provide an update from Kansas, Arizona, New York and Utah. If you want to insure your legacy continues, go to your local tech school, introduce yourself, help educate the future workforce and encourage these students to follow a career in code enforcement.

For more information about the HSTTP contact [your ICC Government Relations representative](#), Sara Yerkes at syerkes@iccsafe.org, or Jim Ellwood, ICC Liaison to HSTTP at jellwood@iccsafe.org. **BSJO**

Jim Ellwood is a liaison for the Code Council's High School Technical Training Program.



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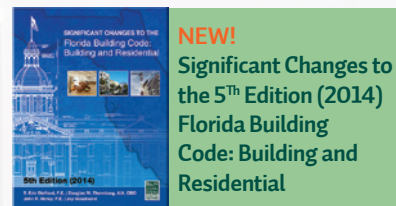
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