

Code Officials Provide Leadership, Guidance and Support to the ICC's High School Technical Training Program

This past year has been filled with enthusiasm and anticipation of what the next day will bring as code officials from around the country have taken the International Code Council [High School Technical Training Program](#) (HSTTP) to a new level.

Many code officials have reached out to their local technical high schools and colleges, receiving a welcome response. Subsequently, many code officials have met with the technical schools students, instructors and administrators. They discuss the value ICC certificates and certifications offer to the technical school student as they start their careers in various construction fields.

As many of you know, I was unable to attend the ICC's Annual Conference this year due to my work schedule as Senior Plans Examiner for Harford County Government in Bel Air, Md. During this year's Code Council banquet, outgoing ICC Board of Director's President Alex "Cash" Olszowy presented me with the coveted President's Award.

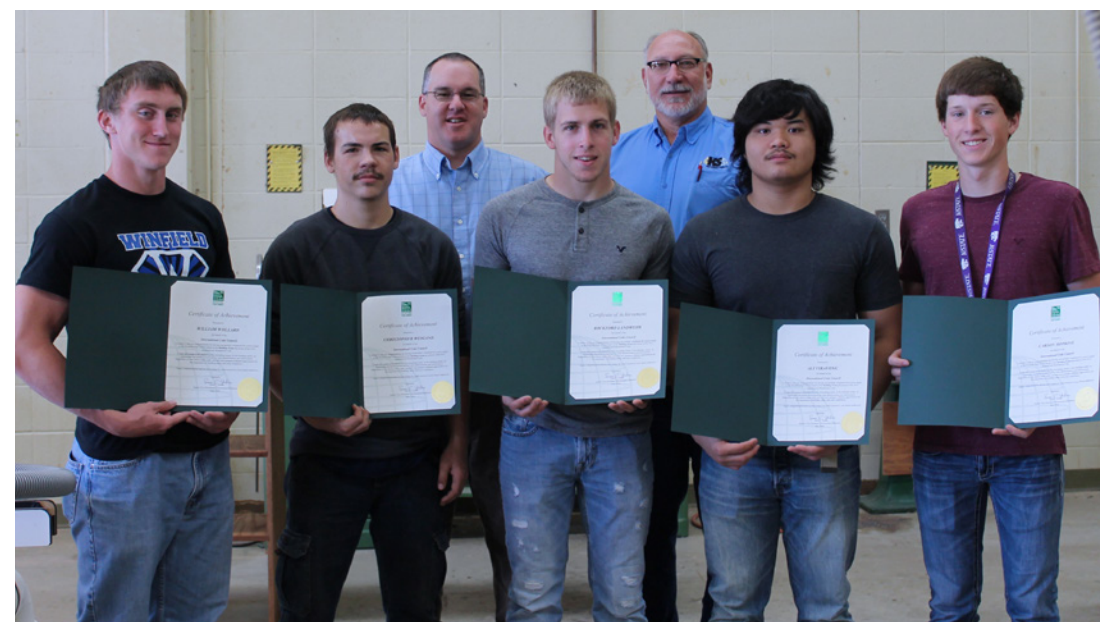
I found this out first through a text from Rod Haney, Past President of the Heart of America ICC Chapter, sending his congratulations. I was at my home office, writing a letter to the Waco, Texas, School District, following up on information provided by Cyndi Lewis, ICC Government Relations rep for Texas, and Bobby Horner, Associate AIA, Inspection Supervisor for the City of Waco. Then all heck broke loose: Texts, emails and phone calls started pouring in from code officials with whom I had worked with over the past several years, all sending congratulations.

I am greatly honored and humbled to receive such an award, but I cannot take all the credit for the success of the HSTTP. This program succeeds because it simply makes sense in so many ways. The HSTTP provides all construction-related careers with a code-

knowledgeable workforce, opening doors for students to have careers in various fields of construction, some that even school counselors and instructors had not considered as avenues to success.

The best part is students actually develop a good working understanding of the codes, because they can read a section of the code book and apply it to their daily project. Visual learning is a great tool.

The success of this program comes from the code officials across the country. I cannot possibly name all of the code officials who have reached out to us about starting a



Rod Haney, Past President of Kansas Heart of America Chapter, with students from Winfield, Kansas, displaying their ICC Certificates of Achievement.

By Jim Ellwood, Liaison, ICC High School Technical Training Program

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program in their local school. I can tell you this: The family of code officials who belong to the Code Council have a great deal in common with the technical schools. They are a close-knit group that stands up for each other, will argue with each other, defend each other and, yes, just plain, old torment each other at every opportunity. Now that is family.

I would like to share several stories about this family: The Southern Nevada ICC Chapter (SNICC) started the ball rolling with a sponsorship that continues to this day; it sponsors East Career & Technical Academy, boasting a minimum of 32 students over the past three years earning two Certificates of Achievement (COA) in a single year.

Right: Students from East Career and Technical Academy, sponsored by SNICC, proudly displaying their COA's.



Below: RIBOA officials, sponsors, instructors and students proudly displaying their "Tools of the Trade" awards.



Rhode Island Building Official's Association (RIBOA) has assembled a terrific awards program called "Tools of the Trade," where the students receive their COAs and tools and gift certificates valued at \$300 per student. This generous donation comes from organizations working together. The sponsors include DeWalt Stanley, local tool supplier; NETCHO, a family-owned business, and RIBOA members.

The Maryland Building Officials Association (MBOA), where this program was first accepted and the books for the pilot program were acquired, offers a \$500 scholarship to a technical high school student who is a Member of the ICC and has received a COA through HSTTP.

Virginia Building Code Officials Association (VBCOA) has gone wild. This group alone has had me log 3,000 miles and consider a Virginia residency. Over the past year, we have met with numerous schools and colleges in the Commonwealth, giving presentations to code officials, students, instructors and administrators.

VBCOA has developed a vast network of their members tasked with reaching out to the

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VBCOA members with masonry students from Spotsylvania Technical at local SkillsUSA competition.

technical schools in their areas. VBCOA's dedication to making the HSTTP a success in their state is apparent not only by leading the nation in schools participating in the program, but by Virginia's Department of Education (DOE) becoming the first state to accept the ICC's HSTTP as an approved industry certification.

This is an asset to the program as we discuss state approvals with other DOEs. Currently, several of VBCOA's code officials are mentoring students, preparing them for the residential building inspector's exam. We look forward to seeing the results.

At every opportunity, we tell students about our careers and the path we traveled to become code officials. Many of us say if we had known earlier about careers as code officials, we may have done some things differently and joined the code family at a younger age.

When talking with students, I always tell them a career as a construction professional or a code official is very rewarding. It is a career that at the end of each day, you can see what you have accomplished, either as the builder or trades person constructing a home, or as the code official who reviewed the plans or inspected the building. Both careers are committed to producing a home for a family to live in safely, economically and for years to come.

I have never been anywhere in this country—a school, college, builders organization or code function—where I was not greeted openly and made to feel welcome and appreciated. The recognition this program gets is because of the family that makes up the ICC.

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