



Arizona Energy Consortium Go Build Arizona Initiative Executive Summary

Facing a Crisis in Workforce Development

Meeting the demand for a highly skilled workforce in the skilled trades is a national crisis that becomes more severe each day. America's construction workforce is aging and there simply are not enough young people entering this sector of the workforce. Today, nearly one-third of all construction craftsmen are over the age of 50—and the average age is increasing every year. Unless something is done to attract younger people to construction and manufacturing trades, the nation will face severe problems in any effort to build and maintain its infrastructure.

Collaborating to Solve the Problem

Recognizing the impending labor shortage problem in Arizona, the Arizona Energy Consortium (AEC) has sought the help of the Alabama Construction Recruitment Institute (ACRI) and marketing company BIG Communications to address this issue by educating the public regarding the construction trades in a labor-neutral manner. Under the control of ACRI, Go Build Alabama was created to help solve the problem in Alabama, where expanding auto, steel production and energy industries make the demand for a highly skilled workforce in the construction trades particularly acute. The AEC is working to bring the success of this program to Arizona where it will be tailored specifically to Arizona's needs under a Go Build Arizona program.

Taking the Message to a New Generation

Research indicates that young people simply are not considering the construction trades or the manufacturing sector as viable career choices. As a result of image and knowledge gaps, young people from junior high school through junior college, who are prime candidates for careers in the trades, seldom even investigate the possibilities.

GO BUILD™ is a marketing and promotional campaign focused on enhancing the image of the trades and informing young people, parents, educators, and others who influence career decisions, about viable futures in the construction and manufacturing industries.

The campaign is much like the highly successful campaigns created for recruiting to the armed forces. Campaigns like “Go Army” and “Army of One” have revolutionized military recruiting. Such a campaign, when combined with accurate information and effective communication, has successfully accomplished the same for the construction trades in states that have already implemented GO BUILD™.

Through the GO BUILD™ program, young people are directed to a webpage where interactive video shows them construction trades professionals at work, in training, and at home. In addition to the “virtual experience” offered by the website, there is a user interface where information seekers may request information and enter their personal data. This personal data becomes part of a database of those interested in the construction trades. This database is available to accredited training facilities and organizations recruiting for the construction trades.

Precedent and Success

GO BUILD™ was launched in Alabama on Labor Day, 2011 and in Georgia on January 17th, 2012. To date, GoBuildAlabama.com has seen 105,000 unique website visitors with over 6,000 training program registrations. GoBuildGeorgia.com has over 60,000 unique visitors with over 3,000 training program registrations. When polled, 99% of visitors to the sites have indicated that the sites are “useful or very useful.” After the one-year anniversary of GO BUILD™ in Alabama the community colleges in Georgia issued a poll of their students that found 70% of those entering skilled labor training programs cited GO BUILD™ as the impetus for their decision.

Future Collaborations

Go Build Arizona seeks to complement – not compete – with existing organizations engaged in enhancing the access and excellence of construction education, training, placement, employment and professional development programs and activities. The AEC will collaborate with those who wish to better align the supply of skilled construction workers with the demand in a labor-neutral manner by using the GO BUILD™ program. This will provide better opportunities for workers, more skilled employees for construction businesses and enhanced economic development for Arizona, the Southwest, and the nation.

Outreach

Representing the Go Build Arizona initiative are Jason Sutton, AEC Workforce Committee chair, and AEC Co-Chairs Michelle De Blasi and Christopher Davey. Meetings have been held with the companies and organizations listed below in an effort to gain support for GO BUILD™ and tailor the program to meet the specific skilled labor needs of Arizona.

INDUSTRY GROUPS

Alliance for Construction Excellence
Associated General Contractors, Arizona Chapter
Arizona Tech Council
The International Right of Way Association
Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals

INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS

Beazer Homes
Sundt Construction
Younger Brothers
Hensel Phelps Construction Company
The Weitz Company
Centennial Contractors Enterprises
McCarthy Building Companies
DPR Construction
United Metal Products
DL Withers Construction
Rosendin Electric
Faithful + Gould
Black & Veatch
Kiewit
Smith Group

GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

Arizona Commerce Authority
Greater Phoenix Economic Council
Department of Economic Services
Governor's Office of Energy Policy
Governor's Office of Education Innovation
City of Phoenix
AZ Department of Education

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Maricopa County Community Colleges
Arizona State University
University of Arizona
West-MEC
East Valley Institute of Technology
Estrella Mountain Community College

PROJECT OWNERS

Intel
Valley Metro
University Mechanical
Luke Air force Base
Dignity Health
DMB
Arizona State University
University of Arizona
Banner Health
EnviroMission



GO BUILD ARIZONA

BY ROBERT SCHMELZER AND JASON SUTTON, CO-CHAIRS OF THE ARIZONA ENERGY CONSORTIUM WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

Arizona could soon be reaping the benefits of a program named “Go Build” aimed at addressing the skilled trades labor shortage by revitalizing the industry through a remarketing campaign. Celebrity Mike Rowe from the Discovery Channel’s “Dirty Jobs” joined Go Build as the official spokesman for the campaign. Mike is passionate about creating a renaissance in the trades. During his recent testimony before the US Senate he said “In high schools the vocational arts have all but vanished. We’ve elevated the importance of ‘higher education’ to such a lofty perch that all other forms of knowledge are now labeled ‘alternative.’ Millions of parents and kids see apprenticeships and on-the-job-training opportunities as ‘vocational consolation prizes,’ best suited for those not cut out for a four-year degree. And still, we talk about millions of ‘shovel ready’ jobs for a society that doesn’t encourage people to pick up a shovel.” His endorsement has encouraged many people to find out more about the program which has led to incredible results.

THE GO BUILD PROGRAM

The Go Build program was initiated after the Alabama Workforce Development Initiative (AWDI) completed research about the talent shortage facing the construction industry. It concluded that opportunities for careers in the construction field were not being clearly defined to young people. Students, parents, teachers, and guidance counselors were unaware of the construction industry’s wages, opportunities, and how to obtain information about various skilled trades. This information gap led to the creation of the Alabama Construction Recruitment Institute that initiated the creation of Go Build Alabama. “If we sit back and allow our skilled craftsmen to retire without training the next generation of workers we are not going to be able to build and maintain the infrastructure we need for sustainable growth across the country,” said Bob Woods of Executive Director of AWDI. Since its Launch on Labor Day, 2010 over 4,000 people have become registered users of GoBuildAlabama.com.

Based on the success of Go Build Alabama, Go Build has been launched in Georgia and is currently in development in 14 other states. “Since the launch of Go Build Alabama the Alabama Community College System has seen a 70% increase in enrollment in technical skills program, with over 90% of students citing Go Build as the reason for their enrollment,” said Woods.

BRINGING GO BUILD TO ARIZONA

Under the leadership of the Arizona Energy Consortium (AEC), the Workforce Committee, co-chaired by Jason Sutton and Bob Schmelzer, is working with the founders of Go Build on an initiative to bring the program to Arizona. The AEC is a credible, member-driven voice for Arizona’s energy industry, providing meaningful input into the long-term strategic planning for industry growth statewide. Committee members include prominent commercial and residential builders who have already begun to feel the restraints of increasing competition for skilled labor in all areas, not just the energy field. The trades most highly affected include electricians, plumbers, welders, carpenters, concrete workers and truck drivers. “In order to achieve a lasting solution, the labor shortage problem needs to be addressed early and often with the students who will become future trades professionals,” commented Sutton.

Due to the fact that Arizona has benefited from a long tradition of steady growth in the construction industries many training opportunities exist in our state including 104 active registered apprenticeship programs, and a multitude of vocational programs offered by community colleges and private educational facilities. “These programs do an excellent job of training workers for a lasting career, earning a very respectable middle-class wage. Sadly they lack the appeal they deserve that will only come through a concerted, on-going marketing effort like Go Build Arizona,” stated Schmelzer. The Arizona effort is envisioned to be broad based including skilled jobs in high-tech, aerospace and machining in addition to commercial and residential construction trades.

The AEC Workforce Committee is implementing a state-wide campaign that will include presentations to thousands of high school guidance counselors, printed marketing material and paid advertising in the form of radio, television and electronic billboards. Industry partners have already begun to emerge and presentations to public and private economic development organizations have been met with a high level of interest. When implemented, this program will benefit the lives of the current and emerging workforce for generations to come in Arizona. For more information on the AEC or Go Build visit aztechcouncil.org/committees/aec and gobuildalabama.com.



70% of community college instructors surveyed feel students entered their program because of the Go Build marketing campaign.

The Alabama Construction Recruitment Institute (ACRI) and its Go Build Alabama campaign are working to ensure we are recruiting Alabamians to work on our job sites. We now need you to vote to renew this legislation. Our industry conservatively represents close to 10 billion dollars worth of economic impact in Alabama and this legislation ensures we continue to have the manpower needed to meet demand. ACRI was requested by the construction industry and approved by the Legislature and has been in full operation for over a year. Its mission is to recruit a new generation of skilled craftsmen for the commercial and industrial construction industry. Our association and this industry strongly encourage you to pass this so we can make sure Alabamians work, and Alabama wins.

JAY REED, President
 Associated Builders & Contractors
 Alabama Chapter

In an industry that can actually create jobs in a timely manner and inject Alabama dollars back into the economy, this has been a great asset to helping keep our companies equipped with qualified labor. And it is extremely rare when you'll find an industry willing to pay for such an effort all by itself. We at ARBA are very proud to be a part of this extraordinary team of construction leaders.

BILLY NORRELL, Executive Director
 Alabama Road Builders Association

The Alabama Construction Recruitment Institute has operated the most successful campaign of its type in the country. I hear about it constantly at national meetings. What we have achieved here with the ACRI's Go Build Alabama campaign is a great benefit to the non-residential construction industry, to business as a whole and to Alabama's economic development at no cost to the taxpayers. The Alabama AGC Board of Directors has been behind the initiative from the beginning, because it knows that Alabama needs a strong construction industry to recruit new business and to build its economy. The entire program is paid for by a fee the construction industry imposes on itself.

HENRY T. HAGOOD JR., CEO
 Alabama Associated General Contractors

This nationally award-winning marketing campaign featuring Mike Rowe has garnered over 65,000 website visitors, 187,000 page views and around 4,000 registrations in a year and a half.

GOBUILDALABAMA.COM