

**BEKare Child Development Center**

The NOVA Award was presented to the BEKare Child Development Center for innovation in providing benefits to construction workers and recruiting women into the construction workforce.



To encourage more women to pursue construction careers, BE&K Construction Company developed a program to make it easier for women to receive training and accept assignments as skilled carpenters, electricians, welders, and pipefitters.



Early start times, three-shift assignments, and the need to attend after-shift apprentice classes have been an impediment to women to enter the ranks of craft workers. Conventional child care centers do not open early enough or stay open late enough to accommodate construction project schedules.

BE&K President Michael T. Goodrich decided to sponsor a facility designed specifically to meet the child care problems of his company and its subcontractors. The child care center would move from site to site, with hours adjusted to meet the requirements of each project. BE&K hired a professional child care staff to move with the center, which they named BEKare. Director Mary Jo Cline and her staff are salaried employees of BE&K. BEKare's facility and its staff meet the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The BEKare Child Development Center opened in January, 1990 at a project site in Georgia, where BE&K was working on a major pulp mill expansion project. Five mobile units were linked together to make a building 54' x 70'. The Center stayed open up to 24 hours a day when necessary to support three shifts and apprentice training.

This first BEKare-supported project had a craft force that was more than 10% female workers -well above the national average for construction companies. The innovative approach to child care has attracted even greater numbers of women employees to BE&K. The BEKare Child Development Center provides child care for prime contractor and subcontractor workers, tailored to the special schedules of construction workers. The Center moves from worksite to worksite, and its hours can be easily adjusted from day to day to meet construction and training demands.

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