

Junior Achievement's Construction Process Training Program

Junior Achievement of Arizona (JA) has worked in conjunction with an unbiased local contractor, trade and architect consortium to establish a focused section of JA BizTown for construction, design and related services to enhance students', teachers' and parents' awareness of the numerous potentials for a career in the construction industry. Children in grades 4, 5 and 6 are receiving an introduction to the construction process training that will excite them about a career in this field and enable them to make an educated choice on future career paths within the construction industry. This program will also increase awareness to the immediate support groups of parents, teachers and counselors that will act as stewards to students that wish to seek construction industry alternatives.

Elementary students are initially exposed to the construction process beginning in JA's third grade classroom curriculum where they examine the role of a builder and the importance of the construction business to a city's economy. They identify the skills a builder needs and how the builder's job is interconnected with other jobs in a city. They explore the skills needed in various construction processes and how to acquire those skills, such as continuing their education or learning from another builder through on-the-job training. This learning experience prepares them for the hands-on learning lab of Building Arizona Co. in JA's BizTown™.

JA BizTown is a 6,000 square foot replica of a bustling American town where students learn the skills, knowledge and attitudes for success in tomorrow's workplace. The role producers play in the economy—the reason grownups get paid for working—is one of the most important concepts JA BizTown's hands-on approach teaches the children. Building Arizona Co. - a construction process training program - has been incorporated into JA BizTown in Phoenix, AZ and is a classroom and hands-on training program (representing 24 instructional hours) that can be emulated throughout the JA infrastructure in numerous U.S. locations (Baltimore, Charlotte, Columbus, Des Moines, Ft. Wayne, Houston, Heartland, Knoxville, Los Angeles, Louisville, Nashville, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Portland, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Diego, Scranton, Seattle, Tampa, Tulsa, Minneapolis, DC, West Palm Beach, Wilmington and York).

Within Arizona alone, the program has the capacity to reach more than 12,000 students annually with over 45% minorities and 49% disadvantaged youth with a high potential of dropping out of school, as well as 2,800 parents and 700 teachers. JA will be able to build on the success of this pilot by providing the blueprint of this program to the JA infrastructure throughout the US. There are a very limited number of education programs that combine awareness of the career path opportunities in the field of construction with teaching actual business skills to young people at these grade levels. The primary goals of the construction process training program are to 1) increase the community's knowledge on the complexities and process of construction methods, 2) enhance awareness of the wide scope of career options, 3) increase the flow of new talent into the greater labor pool in the local community, and 4) target the underserved minority population.

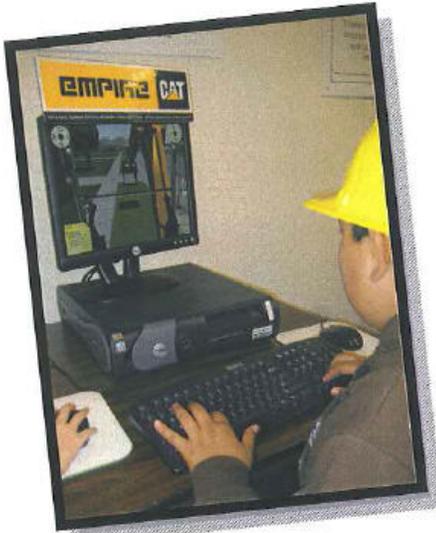
The consortium provided guidance in establishing these components of the program, 1) expanded construction process training curriculum, 2) business model for revenue generation by the students, 3) safety training process standards, 4) tools to perform the structured work, and 5) equipment for the new curriculum including CAD systems with simplified software and Personal Protection Equipment.

The consortium provides on-going 1) coaching on proper safety methods, 2) expanded technical Q&A materials to further educate teachers and parents, 3) evaluations to incorporate feedback from students, teachers and parents into the curriculum, 4) documentation of methods to expand awareness to the construction industry, 5) support for program expansion/replication, and 6) refined/expanded hands-on tasks/activities representative of the construction process.

The development of this program will be used as a springboard to capitalize on the momentum gained by: 1) engaging other key organizations in the construction process such as the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), American Council for Construction Education ACCE), The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), etc. and 2) promoting and making the curriculum available to all Junior Achievement capstone offices across the country.

JA is the world's largest and fastest growing economic education organization using hands-on experiences to help young people understand the economics of life. JA inspires and prepares 9.3 million worldwide (4.2 in the U.S.) to succeed in a global economy through workforce readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy programs.

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Civil: A pothole in the streets of JA BizTown™ is secured off with caution cones and Building Arizona Co. employees ensure the pothole is repaired correctly.

Operations: Students operate a backhoe using a software simulation package.



Remodeling: From solar panels to water features, Building Arizona Co. employees market the various remodeling options via their Palm Pilots. Work orders are submitted and the work is completed according to plans.



Plumbing: The Travel Agency in JA BizTown™ has a water leak. The CEO of this shop contacts Building Arizona Co., obtains a quote for the job, and a work order is submitted. A repairman repairs the leak.

Electrical: Building Arizona Co. employees visit businesses that have lighting and electrical repair needs, pull up the electrical designs on their Palm Pilot, and give the business a quote for repair. A work order is then submitted, and electricians complete the work.



JA BizTown is a fully interactive simulated town where the ch-ching of commerce is as audible as in any major city and the captains of industry are just a little over 4 feet tall. 12,000 fourth, fifth and sixth grade students participate annually.

