

New Mexico Building Education Congress (NMBEC)

The Education Foundation of AGC-NM Building Branch

AGC-New Mexico Building Branch established NMBEC in 2009 to address one of the industry's greatest challenges – develop a skilled workforce to meet present and future needs in construction.

MISSION

After exploring ways to expand and redirect construction education efforts, **AGC and the Construction Advancement Program (CAP)** - the chapter's original education foundation - **formed the New Mexico Building Education Congress (NMBEC).**

A private non-profit education foundation for workforce development to benefit the commercial construction industry, **NMBEC's mission is to “partner with educators to increase the quality and diversity of entrants into the building professions.”**

NMBEC follows visionary thinking to align education curricula with real world needs. **NMBEC's efforts prepare students to meet the evolving demands of our industry** and succeed in a competitive global marketplace.

HISTORY

CAP began in 1966 as a trust fund administered by AGC and sustained by a cents-per-hour contribution provided for in AGC collective bargaining agreements. Funds were used for training, education, safety, public relations and research programs. In 1983, CAP contributions stopped in collective bargaining agreements and the existing assets were held in the Trust, with income resulting from interest earned on investments.

In 1988, CAP was established as a 501(c)(3), allowing for non-profit, tax-exempt status. The CAP charter was signed in 1989 with five specific purposes as stated in its articles of incorporation.

- 1) To conduct and promote education and training programs for the construction industry
- 2) To foster secondary and post-secondary education in construction related fields of study, including the awarding of scholarships and fellowships etc.
- 3) To promote safety and accident prevention practices in the construction industry and to conduct educational programs in connection therewith
- 4) To promote the construction industry and its image
- 5) To solicit funds from within and without the construction industry to be used to accomplish these purposes

Programs Facilitated by CAP (1992-2004)

- **First School-to-Work program in NM**, setting example for others to follow, with results including:
 - \$468,426 awarded in grant dollars; \$290,000 in-kind contributions from 1989-1999
 - Over 220 students placed in the industry, with 13,300 students, teachers & parents exposed to construction opportunities through presentations
 - 35% retention rate evidenced by continued employment and pursuit of higher education
 - 33% of placements in administrative positions, 66% in the field
- Part of the Youth Opportunities System, under the Workforce Investment Act
- Ensured statewide utilization of standardized commercial building curriculum by high school and post-secondary programs, enabling articulation with apprenticeship and degree programs (utilizing NCCER Tools for Success and Exploring Careers in Construction).
- Grant provided ability for Youth Opportunity Coordinators to be certified to train instructors on NCCER Construction Curriculum, with this industry certification required by NM PED state reform
- Development of the **Construction Advancement Institute**, a partnership between UNM, TVI, AGC and other trade associations representing all types of contractors. The Institute caters to the learning needs of individuals working as, or aspiring to be job site supervisors. Through CAP, **AGC contributed \$255,000 toward the funding of an Endowed Chair position at UNM.**

The CAP program received the local “Associations Advance America Award” in 1994 by NM Society of Association Executives and was featured in many local and national publications.

TRANSITION FROM CAP TO NMBEC

After more than 15 years of AGC and CAP implementing successful construction training programs, a **Workforce Development Summit was convened by AGC in 2007 to identify continued challenges faced by both the construction and education professions.**

After months of continued discussion among CAP board members and several pioneering educators, a 3-person NM delegation visited the Oregon Building Congress. The NM visitors learned how the Oregon group gained success through four distinct initiatives within the construction academic environment:

- **A charter school** (known as ACE Academy) working with high schools to offer juniors and seniors “hands on” experience in architecture, construction trades and engineering.
- **A magazine (*Building Futures*)** to help teachers and students understand construction careers.
- **Teacher education development** aligned with National Staff Development Council’s Standards to provide resources targeted to teacher need, industry/real-world information, and desired student outcomes.
- **Opportunities for students to gain insight and “bright ideas” they can put to use in a construction career.** Programs include summer construction academies which combine paid building experience with meaningful career exploration and Engineering Camps where students study a variety of civil engineering fields.

LAUNCH

Based on outcomes from the AGC Summit and the visit to the Oregon Building Congress, the AGC Summit Group designed a clear action plan to develop and launch the NMBEC.

PRIORITIES

1. Establish the NMBEC vision
2. Hire an executive director
3. Create and deliver a pilot teacher initiative
4. Determine the direction and timeline for a construction academy/professional development center

EXISTING ASSETS

- With CAP, a 501(c) (3) organization is already in place
- AGC has contacts with individuals with charter school experience
- Each CAP director is involved in several different industry and education networks
- Seed money for 1-2 years - and the possibility of future funding through NM Workforce Development
- Good relationships with Tribes and Tribal communities; interest from UNM, CNM and rural schools
- Greater awareness and acceptance of the charter school concept in NM communities
- NMBEC provides an opportunity for stakeholder groups - schools, associations, registered apprenticeship and training programs - to collaborate on meeting a workforce need which they all face
- The Oregon Building Congress provides a good road map

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2011-2012

- Sustainability of NMBEC in terms of finances, organization, personnel and program
- An improved image of construction - “Construction” will be seen as a “profession”
- Students stop putting construction at the bottom of the list on career preference surveys
- A charter school in place with a 9th grade class in attendance
- The school is also a professional development center for teachers around the state
- Regular teacher/counselor workshops are held; NMBEC is seen as a “solution for teachers”
- Counselors and teachers are advocating for the construction profession
- Students have usable education “currency” upon graduation
- NMBEC has strong collaboration with other construction organizations and professional partners that contribute and advance its mission
- The NM Public Education Department knows about and calls upon the NMBEC
- NMBEC is recognized as a resource to the construction industry and profession

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