

# Career Connections Playbook

FALL 2024



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## Introduction

NAHB and its philanthropic arm, the National Housing Endowment (NHE), are working to address the shortage of skilled workers in the building trades. Through its Career Connections grant program, NHE's Skilled Labor Fund has funded a wide variety of career outreach activities aimed at school children of all ages for the past 5 years.

To create this Playbook, the 2024 Career Connections grant applications and after-action reports from over 100 HBA/BIA's across the country were studied to capture some of the best practices and innovative approaches already underway, and to identify potential areas of improvement to connect young people—and working people of all ages—with opportunities to work in the home building industry. Some interesting case studies are presented for illustration, but there are so many innovative and creative ideas being implemented across the country it is not possible to mention them all. Keep up with these Workforce Development Champions at [NAHB.org](https://www.nahb.org).

This Playbook is meant for any group, large or small, that wants to start an outreach effort or assess the effectiveness of its current efforts. There are needs and opportunities to reach children of all ages, their parents and caregivers, educators, community leaders, school superintendents, legislators and more. There is no single best approach: all contributions towards the goal of making the building trades a respected and preferred career choice are needed, valued and applauded.

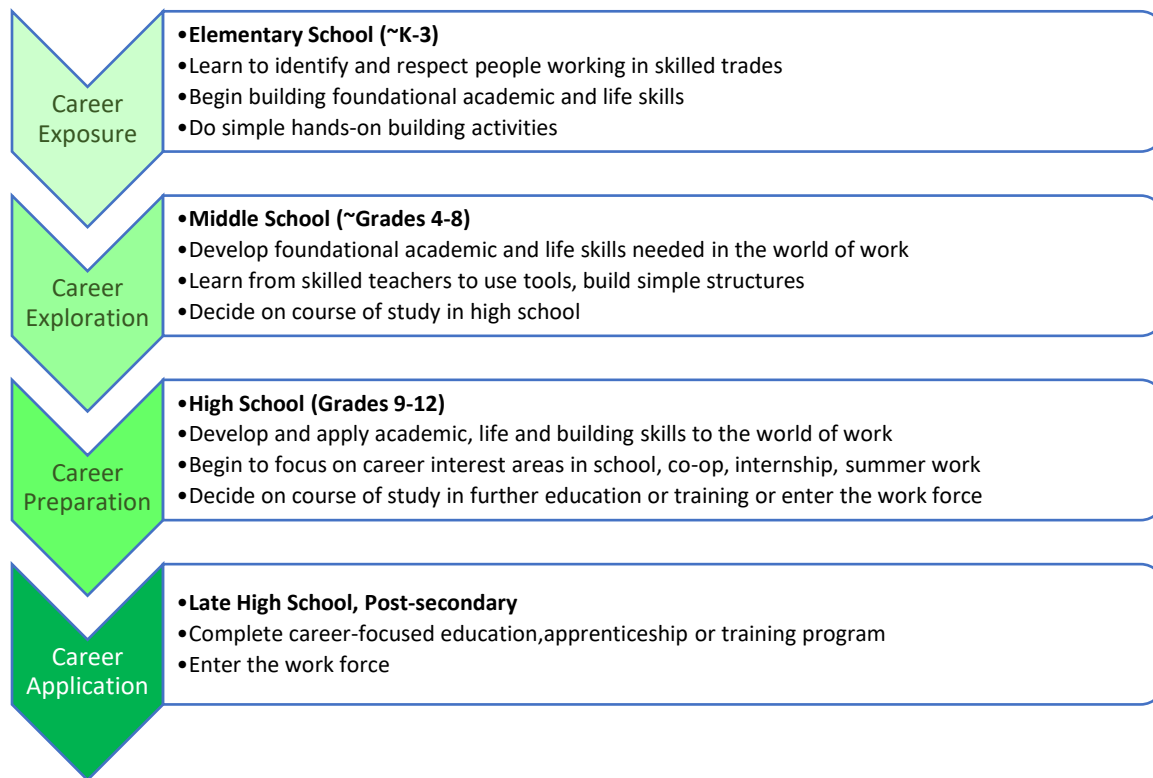
The [NHE Skilled Labor Fund](#) is made up of representatives from NAHB, NHE, NKBA, NARI and SGC Horizon Building Group. Notifications regarding the NHE Career Connections grant program are communicated to HBA Executive Officers in November and selections are made in March. For more information on Career Connections grants, visit [NHE Career Connections](#).

## Get Started

### Identify a Need

The general steps in rational problem solving are 1) identify a problem or need; 2) gather and analyze relevant information and generate alternatives; 3) decide on a course of action; 4) implement the action; and 5) monitor the results. This Playbook will examine each of these steps.

In the home building industry, the shortage of skilled labor has been identified as a nationwide problem. The need, or aspirational goal, is to relieve that shortage by bringing more young people into the skilled trades. To do this, a career in the skilled trades must be the end-result of a continuum of attitudes formed and decisions made from an early age about desirable and achievable future life goals. The decision-making steps and ways in which to positively influence those steps toward the skilled trades might be modeled as follows:



Note that like all models, this is a simplification. There may be many high school students (and adults) who have never considered or are unaware of the variety of careers in the skilled trades and how to get the needed training and employment. For them, career exposure might take place in a large-event setting like a career fair, a hands-on event such as a Habitat for Humanity volunteer experience or a one-on-one encounter with a family friend who works for a plumbing contractor. This career exposure may lead directly into career application through an apprenticeship, training program or employment.

**Career connection** is the term used throughout this Playbook to describe the work of an HBA imagining ways to effectively intervene at any of these steps in career selection. To carry out a career connection effort, it is typical to form a team of people to create, carry out and continue the effort.

### Build a Team

For most efforts, it is good to have a team of people, even a small one, that can brainstorm ideas, bring different life experiences, business contacts and know-how to the table and share the work. In a small HBA, the “team” may consist of one person: larger associations may have a standing Workforce Development Committee or other group with a passion to take on this work. The size of the team does not necessarily limit the size of the career connection. Small teams that work well together and leverage outside partnerships can manage career connection events of all sizes. For larger teams, resources for organizing your career connection committee are available at [Workforce Development Champions | NAHB](#).

### Leader(s)

The leader is the organizing force of the effort, a person who is logical and able to keep the efforts on track, able to get things done, select, inspire and cajole others to do their part, and willing to invest the necessary effort to get the job done. The leader may be a partnership of two people; for example, one who is the detail-oriented person and another who is the “people-person.” The leader(s) will next look to the membership to identify others who can contribute to the team.

### Members

Assemble a diverse team of individuals drawn from the home building industry--members and associate members, field and office personnel, young and more experienced. Try to find and include people who

- are interested in workforce development
- are creative and open to new ideas
- work in the skilled trades
- have personal knowledge of or willingness to connect with local schools
- can communicate well in writing or public speaking
- can raise funds
- have a proven ability to honor commitments and make deadlines
- work well with others.

Include leaders or recent alumni of student chapters, whose input on how to reach and engage young people may be invaluable. A person skilled in website design or social media is a plus for larger events.

### Mentors

Many others have already struggled through launching an outreach event and are willing to share their knowledge. Build My Future, originated in Springfield, Missouri in 2017, maintains a [list of seasoned personnel](#) available to consult and sample materials. Contact [Greg Zick](#) at NAHB for connection to other workforce development champions who can help.

### Gather and Analyze Information

One important aspect of generating alternative ways to address a need is to identify resources (e.g., ideas, schools, finances, budget, time, people) and constraints (lack of resources).

## Ideas

The team may begin by brainstorming a wide range of ideas without consideration of limitations to break the ice and get the process off the ground. As more data is gathered, the team can order and categorize the ideas and focus on viable alternative career connection efforts. The leader(s) keep the group focused and operating within resource constraints.

From the 2024 Career Connections grant applications, the range of efforts is summarized in Table 1.

*Table 1. Number of Grant Applications by Type of Effort*

Type of Career Connection Effort	Number of 2024 Grant Applicants
Construction expo (demonstrations, hands-on activities)	22
Career fair (employer booths, information)	18
Event at Home Show	12
Build My Future-branded construction expo	11
Small-scale construction project	9
Summer camp	6
Financial support (scholarships, materials, etc.)	6
Competition	5
Job site tours	5
Trades education support	4
Boys and Girls Clubs of America	3
Luncheon/Roundtable/Networking	2
Support SkillsUSA team	1
Junior Achievement expo	1
Classroom event	1
Job shadow day	1
Economic development marketing and support	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>

The temptation is often to try to attack the entire problem of workforce development. Consider the continuum of decision-making (Career Exposure, Exploration, Preparation, Application), the existing career development efforts within the community and match the resources at hand to addressing one piece of the problem. Select a “target audience” for initial career connection efforts.

From the 2024 Career Connections grant applications, the number of events aimed at different target age groups can be summarized as shown in Figure 1. [Note: In cases where applicant cited multiple ongoing efforts, the primary effort was used in this summary]. All types of activities taking place in conjunction with the annual home show were categorized as Home Show; some examples of home show activities are illustrated in the next section.

From this analysis, there is a skew toward large “stadium-type” events aimed at middle school and high school students. Small-scale building projects (sheds, tiny homes, playhouses, etc.) and events combined with the Home Show are popular “all ages” community events. Summer camps for under 50 people were used for both middle and high school students.

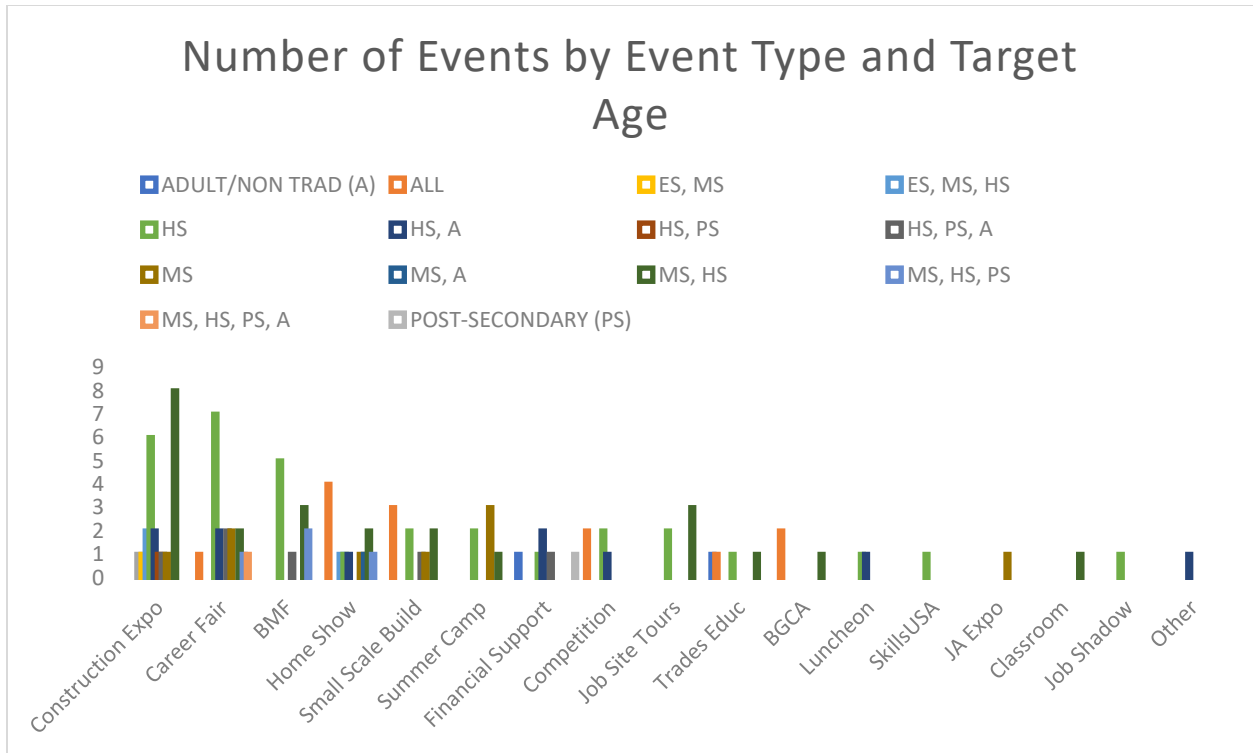


Figure 1 Number of Events by Event Type and Target Age

Recognize that not every career connection activity is an “event.” In addition to financial support (scholarships, travel to competitions) and educational support (e.g., instructional or building materials) included in Figure 1, “non-event” career connections might include:

- cultivating a positive attitude about the skilled trades among parent and community groups through billboard campaigns, radio, video or social media messaging
- public speaking to civic leaders’ groups on the dignity of work, career paths and opportunities in the skilled trades
- educating your membership on the skilled trade careers available for their families.

Match career connection activities or events to age and attention span of the audience, and the need for individualized attention and assistance. Younger children do better in short-duration small-group settings with plenty of adult support. Older students also like to stay with a small group of peers and may have difficulty approaching adults at career fair booths or exhibits. At large events, plan to rotate groups through a variety of activities in an organized way and consider “scripts” of questions or a “bingo card” of demonstrations to visit to support engagement with exhibitors.

There are many resources to provide ideas for event-type [career connection activities](#) of all sizes and budgets, from classroom visits to stadium-sized career expos. NHE produced an excellent [webinar](#) with three case studies of Career Connections grant winners who used different approaches. Examples of other activities are highlighted in this Playbook. The idea list can be used as a springboard for the team to brainstorm, modify to fit your environment, and begin to budget.



## Finances

Identify budgeted funds, potential sources of grants, donations and sponsorships. Consider additional HBA fundraising activities to grow or expand career connection efforts. Establish a realistic “ceiling” for initial expenditure on career connection efforts. Examples of Career Connections grant application budgets with revenue sources are shared later in this Playbook.

## Schools

A critical aspect of making career connections with school age children is getting access to the schools; getting acquainted and having a good relationship with key personnel and working within the constraints of school calendars, curricula and state-imposed learning objectives. Schools have limited time for outside groups to be in the classroom but may welcome opportunities to help with extra-curricular activities. Some school districts have a well-established career development program with staff ready to assist employers while others have no building trades focus. Find out what students are already doing in school (e.g., [SkillsUSA](#); using [NCCER](#) or [PACT](#) curriculum; regional and state carpentry, woodworking, metalcraft or other competitions, etc.) and support or complement those efforts.

Contact the school through the upper administration and allow your request to be directed to the appropriate staff. If there is a building trades program, meet and develop a relationship with the faculty. Career academies have dedicated career development staff who will work with you. In elementary and middle schools, find faculty or club sponsors that might be interested in project-based learning related to home building. Student members of groups such as 4-H and Future Farmers of America may be amenable to careers in the skilled trades.

Begin to develop these contacts early and search for alternative ways to establish mutually beneficial relationships with the schools. Ideas to build that relationship with various age groups include:

- Donate age-appropriate building related books, construction videos, models or building kits, tools and equipment, building materials, etc. (all ages)
- Visit classrooms to discuss careers or projects in the community (all ages)
- Speak at parent group meeting (all ages)
- Host field trips at a job site (middle and high school)
- Exhibit at guidance counselor meeting (middle and high school)
- Participate in school career demonstration fairs (middle and high school)
- Host students for a job shadowing day (middle and high school)
- Help a class or club build a practical project for the school--picnic table, bench, pergola, raised bed garden box, concrete pad, etc. (older middle and high school)
- Support or offer a building-oriented competition (older middle, high school, post-secondary)
- Sponsor an NAHB Student Chapter (high school and post-secondary)
- Support job fairs, internships, co-ops and apprenticeships (high school and post-secondary)

Working with schools requires knowledge of the school calendar and planning with its limitations in mind. Consider the many school holidays and early dismissals throughout the year. Many schools now begin in August and end their fall semesters before Christmas, with fall breaks at mid-semester (October) as well as a break at Thanksgiving. Some rural schools consider the opening of fall deer season in their schedules. There are statewide testing weeks and Skills USA competitions in late winter, and seniors may

get out earlier than others near graduation. Some schools have a spring break at mid-semester (early- to mid-March) in addition to or instead of an Easter holiday (date varies by year).

Summer school may run from mid-June through late July; sports camps, marching band and other extra-curricular activities may run over the summer months. While teachers are not typically on campus during the summer months, most administrators are.

Consider the length of the school day, dismissal time for students of different ages, bus schedules, and cost of bus transportation to your event, if required. Some high school building trades programs are half-days at a central location, with bus transportation to and from the home school.

Depending on the community, consider both public and private elementary, middle, junior high and high schools, career academies, community colleges and trade schools that may support the building trades.

In summary, getting to know the intricacies of working with the local schools is no small task. The team should include at least one member who will be the school liaison and allow sufficient time to plan career connection efforts.

### Partners

Identify and contact people in other associations who have an interest in building a skilled workforce in the community—[AGC](#), [ABC](#), [ACE Mentor](#), trade unions, apprenticeship training programs, [YouthBuild](#) programs, [HBI Job Corps](#) and other training programs.

Consider other resources within your community where young people are exposed to the building trades, such as science centers, children’s museums, [Junior Achievement JA Trades](#), [Boys and Girls Clubs](#) and others. Learn what is already being done and how your efforts may be combined or complementary.

### Analyze Relevant Data and Generate Alternatives

After identifying the problem and gathering information, begin to shape alternative solutions. At this point, it is tempting to dive into the logistics of “holding an event.” First, however, take time to narrow the focus, formulate and articulate the measurable outcomes the team wishes to achieve, then select a career connection effort to meet that objective.

### Define Objectives

While the over-arching goal is to relieve the worker shortage by bringing more young people into the skilled trades, objectives are targeted, measurable milestones toward achieving that goal. The objectives will become more focused on employment according to student age. Young children will have the broadest objectives, but there should always be one or more measurable learning outcomes that will provide feedback to the team, sponsors, exhibitors, educators, parents and others on the value of the effort.

### Align Goal, Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Career connection efforts can be designed to impact students’ **knowledge, skills and attitudes related to skilled trades**. After determining a target audience for career connection, design an age-appropriate activity, determine what type of impact the activity can make, and find a way to measure the effectiveness of your efforts. Some examples of objectives aligned with the need, learning outcomes and ways to measure learning following an activity are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample Objectives and Learning Outcomes for Career Connection Efforts

<b>Career Selection Stage</b>	<b>Objective for HBA</b>	<b>Career Connection Effort</b>	<b>Learning Outcome for Students (Knowledge, Skills, Attitude)</b>	<b>Measurement Tool</b>
<b>Career Exposure</b>	Develop awareness of skilled trades	Read a book, show a video or bring a model to class	Recognize tools used by 10 different skilled trades (K)	Matching game at end of presentation or activity
	Develop skills of the trades	Visit a class or after-school program	Demonstrate use of tools (S)	Activity to practice use/develop mastery of simple tools
	Develop respect for skilled tradespeople	Tradesmen demonstrate and guide a hands-on activity	Demonstrate positive attitude toward one or more skilled trades (A)	Rating sheet, story or drawing of “what I liked best” about a presentation or activity
<b>Career Exploration</b>	Provide home building information/ experiences	Tour an active job site	Explain the work of 5 or more skilled trades after a job site visit or presentation (K)	Student-written story or fill-in-the-blank form
		Hold a competition, work with class instructor or after-school program	Create a model house illustrating the work of 5 or more skilled trades (S)	Judges’ rating of a model and presentation
		Hold a competition, work with class instructor or after-school program	Analyze the general activities and time needed to build a house (K and problem-solving)	Compare student work to actual schedule
		Host a career expo demonstrating various career options	Demonstrate a positive attitude toward the skilled trades (A)	Number of students selecting building-trades courses when available

Table 2, cont'd

Career Selection Stage	Objective for HBA	Career Connection Effort	Learning Outcomes	Measurement Tool
Career Preparation	Provide experiences instrumental in deciding career	Hold an estimating competition		Compare to actual estimate and schedule, provide feedback
		Building competition between student chapters, schools	Demonstrate skills in 1 or more skilled trades used in home building (S)	Judges critique student work, provide feedback
		Career expo that includes hands-on activities, commitment to next level of study	Use academic and building knowledge to select a course of future study in the building trades (A)	Number taking literature, speaking to career counselors, enrolling in next level education, training or employment
	Engage students who have decided career path	Hire qualified candidates	Apply basic skills to frame [wire, plumb, insulate, roof, side, drywall, paint, floor]	Demonstrate skills under supervision

Key terms used in crafting measurable outcomes include:

- **Recognize** (early age level)
- **Create** (can be adapted to any age level)
- **Demonstrate** a knowledge of [people, tools, building materials, safety procedures, etc.] (can be adapted to any age level)
- **Use** [a tool, skill, previous knowledge, etc.] (middle to high school)
- **Analyze** [data, problems, situations, etc.] (middle to high school)
- **Apply** [academic skills, tool skills, people skills, life skills, etc.] (late-middle, high school, post-secondary)

The work of crafting measurable goals may seem like the team is getting bogged down in process rather than moving forward, but the pay-off will be having measurable results for the investment of time, talent and finances. The ability to measure whether students who take part in career connection activities are in fact entering the skilled trades workforce is the ultimate objective.

## Develop Alternatives

A review of the 108 Career Connections grant applications for 2024 revealed wide variety in the types and sizes of career connection efforts, and these applications represent only a fraction of the work being done by HBA/BIA's across the country. This section will highlight a few representative efforts.

### Career Awareness: Grades K-3

Among the 108 the 2024 Career Connections grant applicants, only 4 targeted elementary-age youth (here designated as K-3, which may not align with all schools), and none was completely oriented toward that age group. However, many "all ages" community events include young children as participants.

#### **Career Awareness Event**

HBA of Greater Lansing

[Design and Build Day at Impression 5 Science Center](#)

Estimated Attendance: 1,000 families

Annual event for children ages 2-12 and their families to learn about the skilled trades in a hands-on environment. HBA members set up 10-12 stations for a full day and let families explore painting, roofing, plumbing, electrical and more.

**Event Budget:** \$5,000 event center rental; member donations cover materials and booths

#### **Best Practices:**

**Partnership:** Working with local science center greatly leverages the inputs of the HBA. Impression 5 Science Center creates a Facebook event, sends mailers to local schools and science center members, attracts local media attention, provides t-shirts, food, signs and promotional materials.

**Parent Involvement:** Builds career awareness and positive attitude for parents and youth.

#### **Career Awareness Event**

Watertown (SD) Area HBA

[Annual Home Show Toolbox Build](#)

Estimated Attendance: 2,000+

Annual event for children as part of the Home Show. Local high school students in the Building Trades make and sand the parts ahead of time; students from local community college building program help children assemble, demonstrate use of drills, etc. at the Show. Kids decorate their toolboxes with stickers.

#### **Best Practices:**

**Partnership:** Involves older students using their skills. Gives children the opportunity to use simple tools and a useful "take-away" to remember the experience.

**Parent Involvement:** Builds career awareness and positive attitude for parents and youth.

Find more resources on building activity ideas for K-3 and youth of all ages at [NAHB Workforce Development](#).

### Career Exploration: Grades 4-8

Students in this age group are making important progress in their academic learning, skill building and determination of their abilities and interests. As they approach high school, they will be making choices about what course of study to select. Capturing interest in the trades by 8<sup>th</sup> grade is good; gaining a commitment to further education in the trades is key.

#### **Career Exploration Event (small)**

HBA of the Sioux Empire

[Summer Middle School Construction Camp](#)

Estimated Attendance: 40

Annual camp held by the Sioux Falls Career and Technical Education (CTE) Academy and Sioux Empire Home Builders Care Foundation. The camp is for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders who have an interest in carpentry, construction and woodworking. The camp includes four half-days of hands-on activities. Students learn about basic safety, hand tool operation, basic skills in the carpentry trade and assist in various building projects.

#### **Best Practices:**

**Partnership:** The Sioux Empire Home Builders Care Foundation supports [this and other activities](#) through the Sioux Falls, SD public schools.

**Transition Time:** Engages youth with high school faculty and facilities, influencing future choices.

#### **Career Exploration Event (small)**

HBA of Fargo-Moorhead

[Herdina Construction Trades Camp](#)

Estimated Attendance: 24

Two-week camp provides students a unique opportunity to work alongside industry professionals, a contractor's lunch and speed interviewing session, and 3 college credits.

**Best Practices:** One-on-one connections with working professionals in the specialty trades, resume writing, interviewing practice.

#### **Career Exploration Event (large)**

Builders' Association of Elkhart County

[Career Quest](#)

Estimated Attendance: 2,000

Two-day career exploration fair for 7<sup>th</sup> graders from Elkhart County, IN. Careers in Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Information Technology and Healthcare are featured.

**Best Practices:** Career Quest is integrated virtually into county middle schools. Event includes lesson plans distributed before the event and a post-event activity.

### Career Preparation: Grades 9-12

Students in this age group are zeroing in on career choices and need opportunities to work alongside and make personal connections with working professionals. Capture the enthusiasm at the event by making the next step immediately available—have people on hand to enroll students for their “next step:” trades education classes, community college construction program, apprenticeships, internships, summer jobs or entry level employment.

#### **Career Preparation Event (Small)**

Rochester Home Builders Association  
Summer Construction Academy  
Estimated Attendance: 30

Second annual FREE 3-week summer camp for students entering 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades to work in carpentry, electrical or heavy equipment operation/repair and earn an OSHA 10-hour safety certificate.

**Best Practices:** One-on-one connections with working professionals in the building trades. OSHA training gives a valuable credential for future internships or work and general safety awareness.

#### **Career Preparation Event (Large)**

HBA of Kentucky  
[K4C Career Days](#)  
Estimated Attendance: 3,500

Two-day hands-on career fair/construction expo that has more than 90 exhibitors and attracts more than 3,000 high school students. Part of [Build-Kentucky.com](#), a cooperative recruitment and image campaign to attract and connect people to education, training and careers in construction.

**Best Practices:** Direct email communication with all schools and career counselors in the state.

**Partnership:** Collaborative leadership team for first-time large event in 2023.

**Planning:** Immediate after-action review and planning for 2024.

#### **Career Preparation Event (Large)**

Frederick County BIA  
[Home Show Builder Olympics](#)  
Estimated Attendance: 5,000

Builder Olympics features judged competitions in carpentry, HVAC/sheet metal, plumbing, electrical, and landscaping. Completed sheds are sold with proceeds supporting the Construction Technology program at Frederick County Career and Technology Center.

**Best Practices:** Competitions judged by working professionals from the BIA members

**Partnership:** Builds connection between BIA and local CTE school, faculty and students

**Parents and Community:** Large events with wide publicity enhance the image of the building trades

### Career Application: High School and Post-secondary

This category represents the culmination of all previous efforts, the hiring of trained personnel and launching of a new career in the skilled trades. Few applications mentioned this closing of the loop, although undoubtedly many events include an interviewing/hiring component.

#### **Career Application Event (medium)**

Augusta HBA/Valley Career and Technical Center

##### Community Blitz Build

Goal of building 9 tiny homes in 9 days. Houses are constructed modularly off-site and erected over 2 weekends. Supervisors from local home builders are paired with 60-100 building trades students from the local career and technical center, and will work alongside each other to complete the project over 2 weekends. Employers and students get a “long interview” in a real-world, high-pressure setting. Students draw the building plans and work with local materials suppliers to estimate costs.

**Best Practices:** Employers and building trades students in direct contact in a workplace setting.



# Planning a Career Connection

## Introduction

After reviewing resources, developing objectives and studying alternatives, it is time to plan, execute and monitor a career connection effort. Every type of effort, even a classroom presentation, requires thorough planning to make the best impression. Apply the same level of planning, estimating, scheduling, material preparation and personnel management that is used for any successful home building project.

## Plan to Meet an Objective

### Plan for Awareness

At events aimed at elementary and early middle school students,

- Plan for positive publicity through live-streams, news stories and social media to reach parents, educators and the broader community
- Plan follow-up with the same group as they mature into later middle school and beyond to continue support of decisions for the building trades
- Involve NAHB Student Chapter students (high school and post-secondary) to work with younger students as more immediate role models for next steps.

### Example

#### [Greater Columbus HBA Building Our Future / Under Construction](#)

### Plan for Career Exploration

For older middle school and high school students, the objective is to channel students' early awareness and interest into decisions to enroll in building trades education.

- Plan or support events that allow young people to demonstrate their developing skills and build relationships with building trades faculty and working professionals
- Provide opportunities to enroll in education or training by including career development counselors, admissions officers or recruiters at events, as appropriate
- Support educational efforts and facilities that allow development of skills

### Example

#### [Careers in Construction Colorado](#)

### Plan for Career Preparation and Hiring

At events targeted at high school and post-secondary students or adults who have some prior training in building trades, plan for post-event hiring for internships, summer employment, post-graduation employment, apprenticeships, or further education at community college or trade school. Include interview sessions, admissions counselors and employers as appropriate.

### Example (small event)

A small-scale shed-building competition with 4 local high school student chapters is planned in conjunction with the annual home show. Students will receive plans and cut the parts at their schools, bring the parts, material list, cost estimate and necessary tools for assembly to the show and assemble

the sheds in a timed event. The schools must transport the materials and tools to the competition. HBA will auction the completed sheds at the Home Show and use proceeds for future competitions or support of student chapters. The objective is to obtain exposure and support for student chapters and employment for at least 4 student chapter members.

A sample activity planner for this activity might look like Table 3.

Table 3 Sample event planning timeline (small event)

Action	Budget	Time Prior to Event	Responsible Person	Completed
Assemble HBA team, select and plan the event		12 mo.		
Coordinate with school and HBA calendars; set tentative date, time, location		9 mo.		
Correspond with faculty about competition, transportation		6 mo.		
Finalize competition date and invite schools		4 mo.		
Write rules for competition		4 mo.		
Obtain sponsors, judges, volunteers, photographer, prize sponsors, member firms hiring for summer or part time		3 mo.		
Distribute plans, rules and grants for materials to faculty		2 mo.		
Plan food and giveaways for event, obtain sponsors		1 mo.		
Confirm laydown and work areas, back-up tools and safety equipment at competition site		2 wk.		
Develop evaluation forms for students, faculty, judges; scoring sheets for competition		2 wk.		
Confirm with schools, judges, volunteers, photographer, food vendor, employers		1 wk.		
Notify local news media		3 days		
Hold competition and award prizes; lunch with members		-		
Collect feedback from participants, parents, faculty, volunteers, sponsors, employers		-		
Write press release and distribute with photos to local media and schools, post to HBA media site		-		
Auction sheds		T-1 day		
Send thank you notes to volunteers, sponsors, faculty		T-1 day		
Evaluate feedback and plan for improving next competition		T-1 week		
Get feedback from employers on status of hiring from the event		T-1 month		
Begin planning next event		11 mo.		

Larger events will have many more details, but the basic idea is the same: think through every aspect of the event, make sure it is covered, how much it might cost, when it needs to be done and who is responsible, and check that it is completed at the appropriate time.

## Event Budgeting

The 2024 Career Connections grant applications yielded some useful information regarding budgets for events of various types and sizes. However, not all applicants included budgets for the entire event, only indicating how the \$3,000 grant money would be used. Many grant applicants indicated that expenses for small-scale events would be covered by donations from members without attaching a value.

For larger event such as career fairs, the largest expense was rental of a venue. Career fairs taking place on school property avoided that expense. Total budgets for career fairs (information booths with employers) were budgeted on the order of \$1,500-\$5,500, and ranged from \$3 to \$58 per expected attendee, with most under \$20 per person. Food costs (a full meal in one case) contributed to the cost on the higher end of this range.

For large “expo” type of events such as Build My Future, an excellent budget breakdown was provided by Lacrosse Area Builders Association for an expected attendance of 1,500 students, 125 adults and 100 exhibitors. Expense categories that remain blank in this template were not required but were left in the budget template to aid in planning for future event expansion.

<b>Income</b>	
<b>Sponsorships</b>	\$25,000
<b>Booth Sales</b>	\$13,000
<b>NHE Grant</b>	\$3000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	\$38,000
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Catering</b>	\$15,000
<b>Facility Rental</b>	
<b>Tables/Chairs/Pipe/Drape</b>	
<b>Staff Time</b>	\$10,000
<b>Professional Photo/Video</b>	\$1,500
<b>T-shirts Volunteers</b>	
<b>T-shirts Students</b>	\$7,500
<b>Safety Equipment</b>	
<b>Ambulance</b>	
<b>Insurance</b>	\$250
<b>Bracelets</b>	
<b>Lanyards</b>	
<b>Printing</b>	\$50
<b>Postage</b>	\$50
<b>Signage</b>	\$500
<b>Give Aways</b>	
<b>Bussing</b>	
<b>Other</b>	\$200
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$35,050

## Event Marketing

In the shed-building example above, minimal marketing is needed beyond personal communication with a limited number of schools and faculty. The same would be true of many privately-arranged or “invitation-only” events. However, in most cases, at least a flyer that can be shared electronically or posted on bulletin boards is desirable.

Flyers should be eye-catching and convey the necessary facts (name, date including year, time, location, brief description) with links to more detailed information. Some examples from 2024 grant applications can be found here:

[Building Business News June 2024 - Home Builders Association of Greater Kansas City \(kchba.org\)](#)

[Frederick Home Show & CTC Builder Olympics | Frederick Fairgrounds | March 19 to March 20 \(happeningnext.com\)](#)

<https://www.bagl.info/assets/img/banner/c2e-2025.png>

Entry forms for competitions or contests may contain more detailed information:

[Microsoft Word - 2024 Backyard Getaway Contest.docx \(bchba.org\)](#)

Postcard mailer for schools:

[Building Industry Association of Lancaster County \(BIA\) \(lancasterbuilders.org\)](#)

Registration Packets for HBA/BIA members, including:

[flyer, sponsorship forms, exhibitor information:](#)

Event Websites:

[HERDINA CONSTRUCTION TRADES CAMP :: BIA \(buildrrv.org\)](#)

[SACCD | Southern Arizona Construction Career Days](#)

[Build My Future - Driftless Area \(labaonline.com\)](#)

Many HBAs use this branding created by a Missouri HBA and list their event on this page:

[Build My Future](#)

For additional marketing collateral, promotional materials, building activities and other resources, visit:

[Workforce Development | NAHB](#)

## Outcome Measurement

### Head Counts

Total head counts at large events open to the community may not provide useful information toward meeting a particular objective. Head counts at events open only to a target audience (e.g., 7<sup>th</sup> graders from XX School District) are more useful and should be obtainable from participating schools.

### Activity Participation Counts

For activities held at large events open to the public, count the number of people who actively participate in the career connection activities. Connect with faculty and parent chaperones by involving them in activities as well (e.g., a side-by-side contest “Am I as Skilled as a 5<sup>th</sup> Grader?”).

### Participant and Parent Reactions

Capture the reactions of participants, exhibitors, parents or faculty through post-activity or post-event surveys. Sample survey forms are provided in Appendix II.

### Course Enrollment

Count the number of students taking information packets, talking to career counselors or otherwise committing to next steps in career education.

### Apprenticeships and Internships

Count the number of students who speak to recruiters, admissions officers or enroll in further training opportunities.

### Direct Employment

Count the number of people interviewed or hired at or after the event. Collect feedback and hiring data from employers present. Feature success stories on social media, recognize and support the integration of new hires into student chapter or young professional activities and the industry.

### Post-Event Activities

Immediately after the event, take care of details that will help ensure the ongoing success of career connection efforts, such as:

### Event Review and Planning for the Future

Within one month of the event, hold an after-action review. Examine comments and ratings from participant, parent, sponsor/exhibitor and other surveys that were conducted. Make lists of what was done well and what can be improved. Sample questions for a review might include:

- Was the objective met? What contributed to success? What improvements are needed?
- Budget. Was funding adequate? Did sponsors and donors receive adequate return on investment? What can be done differently?
- Event timing/location. Did feedback from schools/exhibitors indicate this was a good date/day of the week/time of day? Was location sufficient in exhibitor space, parking, facilities? Is there room for expansion or was venue too large/expensive/remote, etc.?
- Event logistics. Did participants have sufficient time at popular demonstrations? Were some demonstrations/exhibits not visited—why, how can that be improved? Did exhibitors have enough space/time to set up/take down? Was food service adequate? What improvements are needed?

Thank-you notes

Finally, remember to thank all those who contributed to the success of the event: school administrators, faculty, sponsors, exhibitors, trade groups, judges, volunteers and especially members of the team. Recognize your supporters for going above and beyond for the sake of building up the industry and introducing young people and others to careers in building America's housing.

## Appendix I Other Resources

The NCCER Build Your Future website has many helpful resources on its Build Your Future program. The Student Outreach Guide has many helpful tips for connecting with schools.

[Home - Build Your Future \(byf.org\)](https://www.byf.org/)

[Student-Outreach-Guide-2024-updated sm.pdf \(byf.org\)](https://www.byf.org/Student-Outreach-Guide-2024-updated_sm.pdf)

## Appendix II Sample Evaluation Forms

### STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

Program Title: [example: Build My Future, Construction Career Days, etc.]

Date: [Pre-fill]

*Please indicate your reactions to today's event and return before you leave. Thank you!*

Value	Not at All	Somewhat	Neutral	Very
1. How interesting was the event today?	①	②	③	④
2. Did this event give you a favorable impression of the construction industry?	①	②	③	④
3. Are you interested in any of the following for your future education or career based on today's event?				
a. Carpenter	①	②	③	④
b. Plumber	①	②	③	④
c. Electrician	①	②	③	④
d. Mason	①	②	③	④
e. Concrete Worker	①	②	③	④
f. Iron Worker	①	②	③	④
g. Painter	①	②	③	④
h. Roofer	①	②	③	④
i. Construction Manager	①	②	③	④
j. Other role in the homebuilding industry	①	②	③	④
k. CTE classes at my school	①	②	③	④
l. Apprenticeship	①	②	③	④
m. Internship	①	②	③	④
n. High School Diploma	①	②	③	④
o. Associate Degree	①	②	③	④
p. Bachelor's Degree	①	②	③	④
q. Master's Degree	①	②	③	④
r. Doctoral Degree	①	②	③	④
4. How important are the following in your future career choice?				
a. Salary/wages	①	②	③	④
b. Flexible Work Schedule	①	②	③	④
c. Opportunity for promotion/advancement	①	②	③	④
d. Job Security	①	②	③	④
e. Work Location	①	②	③	④
f. Community Engagement/Service	①	②	③	④
g. Work/Life Balance	①	②	③	④
h. Sustainability	①	②	③	④

About You: Please check one in each row

Your Current Grade	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 9 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Have you taken a career/technical class at school?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Yet	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Interested	<input type="checkbox"/> Not available				
Do you have a family member who works in a skilled trade?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Please describe _____						

*Thank you for helping us improve our future career events!*

## PARENT EVALUATION FORM

Program Title: [example: Build My Future, Construction Career Days, etc.]

Date: [Pre-fill]

*Please indicate your reactions to today's event and return before you leave. Thank you!*

Value	Not at All	Somewhat	Neutral	Very
1. How interesting to YOU was the event today?	①	②	③	④
2. Did this event give YOU a favorable impression of the construction industry?	①	②	③	④
3. How favorably would you view your CHILD'S future education or career in the following?				
a. Carpenter	①	②	③	④
b. Plumber	①	②	③	④
c. Electrician	①	②	③	④
d. Mason	①	②	③	④
e. Concrete Worker	①	②	③	④
f. Iron Worker	①	②	③	④
g. Painter	①	②	③	④
h. Roofer	①	②	③	④
i. Construction Manager	①	②	③	④
j. Other role in the homebuilding industry	①	②	③	④
k. CTE classes at my school	①	②	③	④
l. Apprenticeship	①	②	③	④
m. Internship	①	②	③	④
n. High School Diploma	①	②	③	④
o. Associate Degree	①	②	③	④
p. Bachelor's Degree	①	②	③	④
q. Master's Degree	①	②	③	④
r. Doctoral Degree	①	②	③	④
4. How important to YOU are the following in your CHILD'S future career choice?				
a. Salary/wages	①	②	③	④
b. Flexible Work Schedule	①	②	③	④
c. Opportunity for promotion/advancement	①	②	③	④
d. Job Security	①	②	③	④
e. Work Location	①	②	③	④
f. Community Engagement/Service	①	②	③	④
g. Work/Life Balance	①	②	③	④
h. Sustainability	①	②	③	④

About You: *Please check one in each row*

Child's Current Grade	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 9 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 <sup>th</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Please indicate your highest level of education	<input type="checkbox"/> Some High School	<input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/> GED	<input type="checkbox"/> Assoc. Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS	<input type="checkbox"/> MA/MS	<input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D.	<input type="checkbox"/> Other post-grad degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Trade School
Do you or a close family member work in a skilled trade?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Please describe _____						

*Thank you for helping us improve our future career events!*



## SPONSOR/EXHIBITOR EVALUATION

Program Title: [example: Build My Future, Construction Career Days, etc.]

Date: [Pre-fill]

*Please indicate your reactions to today's event and return before you leave. Thank you!*

<i>Value</i>	<i>Not at All</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Very</i>
1. Did the event today meet your goals?	①	②	③	④
2. How useful was this event in interacting with students interested in residential construction?	①	②	③	④
3. Did you receive enough information to adequately prepare for this event?	①	②	③	④
4. Did you like the format of this event?	①	②	③	④
5. Did you like the location of this event?	①	②	③	④
6. Did you like the timing of this event (month/day)?	①	②	③	④
7. Will you be interested in returning to future career events of this type?	①	②	③	④

*Please give us your feedback. Use the back of this sheet if necessary.*

Please indicate the skilled trade or service you represent \_\_\_\_\_

Please estimate how many students you engaged with at this event \_\_\_\_\_

What did you like most about this event?

What did you like least about this event?

What changes would you recommend for future events of this type?

*Thank you for participating today and for helping us improve our future career events.*