
Competency Models In Action:

Career and Technical Education Institute Develops Construction Technologies Career Pathway

April 2015

- Starting secondary school students on career pathways
- Advocating for usefulness of competency models
- Utilizing multiple community partners to develop programs of study that meet area employment needs

Introduction

The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) is the largest national education association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for careers. Its mission is to provide educational leadership in developing a competitive workforce.¹ The Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development (Great Oaks), a four campus ACTE member institution, has developed a Construction Technologies Career Pathway and program of study that prepares junior- and senior-level secondary school students for gainful employment and/or postsecondary education.

“There’s not a lot of understanding and explicit use of career pathways and there should be,” says Steve DeWitt, Executive Director, Public Policy, ACTE. “Students need to have a more straightforward understanding of how to move from point A to point B when they make the transition from education to a career. The real value of competency models is that they demonstrate how students can navigate career ladders/lattices, and how to move through and industry. We are a ‘bully pulpit’ advocating for the use of competency models as a means to demonstrate the connection between education and the needs of business and industry.”

Workforce Need

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the outlook for construction-related occupations is very positive. It is anticipated that employment opportunities for carpenters will increase by 24% between 2012-2022, much faster than average, with median pay of \$39,940 per year in 2012. During that same time period, employment opportunities for electricians will increase by 20%, faster than average, with median pay of \$49,840 per year in 2012. Likewise, employment opportunities for brick, block and stone masons will increase by 34%, much faster than average with a median pay of \$44,950 in 2012, and employment opportunities for HVAC mechanics and installers will increase by 21%, faster than average, with a median pay of \$43,640 in 2012.²

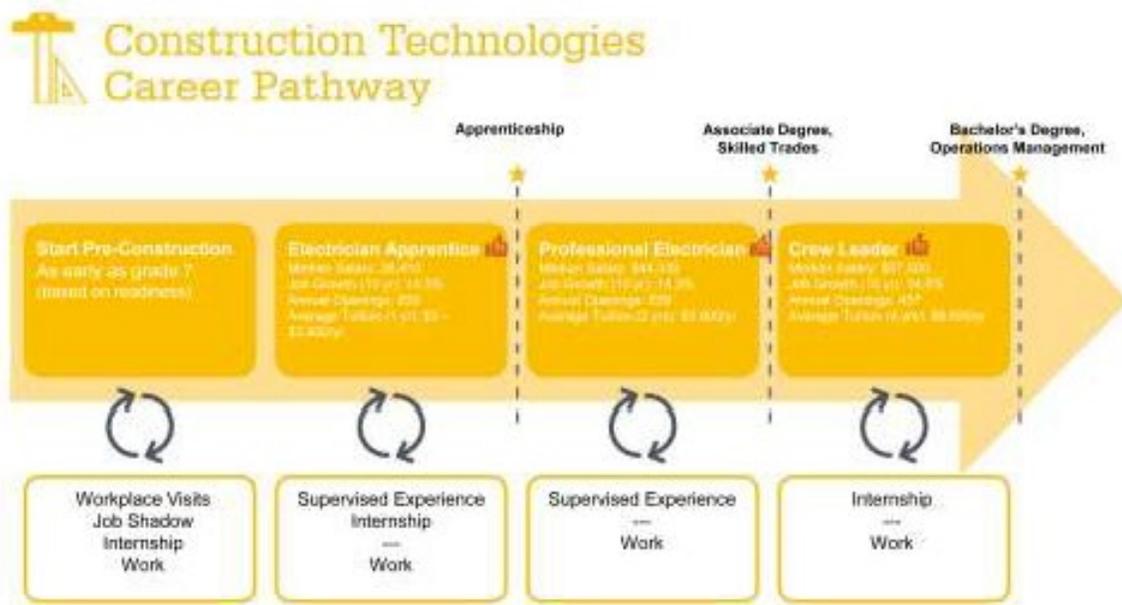
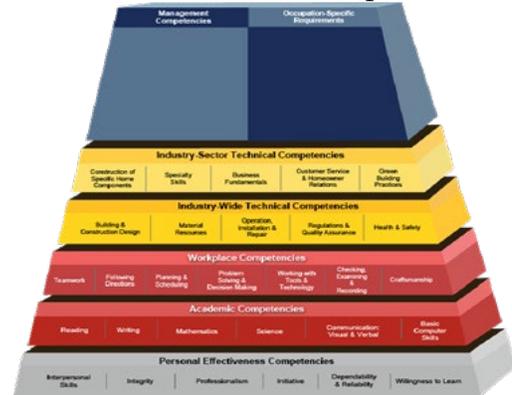
¹ www.acteonline.org

² Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-2015 Edition

Approach

“Our curricula are prescribed by the Ohio Department of Career and Technical Education,” says Pam Hunt, Curriculum Manager, Great Oaks. “In developing our secondary school programs of study, we work with individual advisory committees, composed of local and regional businesses, alumni, current students, and post-secondary educators. Business partners help us to customize the program of study to meet area employment needs, help with recruitment, and provide linkages to students for internships and jobs. Alumni, current students and parents provide guidance on the delivery of the program.”

The Great Oaks program of study reflects many of the principles of the competency model approach. “Foundational skills are embedded in our technical curriculum,” says Ms. Hunt. These include many of the skills delineated in the foundational tiers of ETA’s Residential Construction Competency Model (Personal Effectiveness, Academic and Workplace Competencies) including professionalism, reading, writing, mathematics, science, basic computer skills, communication, and teamwork.



Provided by middle schools, high schools, employers, Ohio Tech Centers, and colleges.

Preparing students for multiple options after high school: gainful employment and/or postsecondary study.

Ohio Incentives Database

Data reflects 2014 Ohio labor statistics and public institutions of higher education for 2013-2014. For specific tuition costs, visit ohiojobs.org

Next Steps

“Our Construction Technologies Career Pathway provides multiple venues to other credentialing programs,” says Jon Weidlich, Community Relations Director, Great Oaks. “Forty-five percent of our students go on to post-secondary education. Graduates can enter a Building Technology program at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College for an associate’s degree or a four-year program at the University of Cincinnati for a construction management or engineering degree. Other graduates may elect to enter a formal apprenticeship program. Further, our secondary school completers can go directly into our Construction Technologies program of study for adult learners.”

Related Links

Association of Career and Technical Education

<https://www.acteonline.org/>

Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development

<https://www.greatoaks.com>

Residential Construction Competency Model

<https://www.careeronestop.org/competencymodel/competency-models/construction-residential.aspx>