



PHCC and THE TRADES

“JUNIOR/SENIOR RIDE AND DECIDE PROGRAM”

The Issue:

For every 4 skilled workers that leave the Skilled Trades industries, only 1 is entering the field.

- The construction trades and virtually all skilled trades are suffering daily from the lack of skilled workers. At the current attrition rate, when the next two generations of tradesmen/women retire in 40 years there will be virtually no one to train. This problem affects all skilled trades from construction to mechanics to truck drivers and on and on thru an unlimited list of jobs and professions.
- We already feel the effects of this lack in our business and can only imagine how it will affect all businesses and consumers in years to come.
- At the same time, students and families throughout the entire country are either spending or borrowing money for college tuitions at an unbelievably alarming rate. The current college debt owed by students and families throughout the country today is over 1.7 trillion dollars. To put it in perspective that is equal to 6% of the national debt. In addition to that, families are paying for 30% of college tuitions with money that they have saved up for college or paid out of pocket as they go.
- That would be great if all or even the majority of the money spent on college actually produced an education, degree or just a job. The sad truth is that less than 50% of those ever get a degree and of the ones that do, only about 20% go to work in that field.
- As good stewards of the community and our industries, it is our responsibility to help correct this problem before it is such a problem for the next generation that it is almost impossible to address.

- As business owners, educators and good neighbors to our customers, we have a responsibility to the community, our individual industry and all consumers to provide the best information that we can for families to make the best future plans for their child as well as the best financial plans for their own personal situation.
- For many students, college is the answer but for many other students it could be Trade School. For other students it may be a combination of on the job apprentice training with either Trade School or some specific College courses. Careful planning with all the right information could save families hard earned dollars, help the economy and potentially give a young person a jump start to their future.

The Program Purpose:

Pair students with trade industry and businesses to allow them to experience the trade while assisting in paid work functions during their summer school break.

The Mission:

1. Offer options through High Schools and their Administrators to encourage the students that either cannot decide or have not thought about what to do when they graduate from High School to consider our trades.
2. Educate the students and their parents on the benefits of working in the industry including:
 - a. Competitive wages, get paid while you train
 - b. Little or no school debt or expenses.
 - c. Job security in a world that will always need skilled trades.
 - d. Expanded opportunities for career advancement and owning your own business
3. Organize a dedicated group including educators, businesses and administrators that will dedicate the time and effort it takes to establish a successful program as well as set in place a means of keeping it active and remaining successful throughout the years. If properly initiated, promoted and managed, this program will become successful enough to spread throughout the country. Although we are mainly effected by what happens in the HVAC and Plumbing industries, not all students will be interested in our trades, therefore this program must include all facets of skilled trades to attract as many students as possible and be a success.
4. Initiate the first step to form an alliance with other select trades to set forth the final plan for the program and the method of initiating it. Each individual trade will be responsible for forming their own group of contractors to promote their trade and participate in the program.

The Pilot Program

Student eligibility, student must:

- be at least 16 years of age before starting the program
- have completed their sophomore year of high school
- have at least a C average and excellent school attendance
- have reliable transportation to and from work location
- be recommended to the program by an educator, school administrator or PHCC member
- obtain parental permission with a Release for the PHCC and educational institution
- adhere strictly to the attendance and employment regulations required by the employer
- adhere strictly to the TN Child Labor Laws

The Procedure:

1. The program will be introduced to the entire incoming Sophomore and Junior classes and their parents or guardians at the beginning of the year at a Career Planning Day.
2. The program may also be introduced to individual students through their Guidance Counselor, Vocational/Technical Teacher, PHCC member or participating businesses.
3. Each student will receive an application form and brochure fully explaining the **“Junior/Senior Ride and Decide Program”**.
4. After hearing from representatives for all the different trades, students will be asked to complete the form and answer questions concerning their interests after high school. At this time they will have the opportunity to either decline to participate in the program or to complete the remainder of the form applying to participate in the program.
5. Those choosing to participate in the program will be asked on the form to choose from a list of trades their top three choices that they would be interested in working in during the upcoming summer vacation.
6. Students will be drawn and matched to an area business in one of their selected fields, based on availability of participating businesses, to experience the everyday workplace of their selection.
7. Each participating student will have the opportunity to work four to eight weeks of the summer for that business. Each student will be compensated by the employer at least minimum wage.
8. At the end of the summer, students will be asked to answer a questionnaire regarding their summer job experience and will have the opportunity to ask any questions concerning the pursuit of a career and/or an education in that field.
9. First year students in the program will have an opportunity to work two different four week jobs in the summer and second year students will have the opportunity to work the entire eight weeks with a business that they have worked for the previous summer provided that business is in agreement.
10. Students who have developed a positive working relation with their summer employer may be able to secure a job during the upcoming Senior year thru a Co-op program or Senior Project. For those students who choose to pursue a college education or select college courses related to a selected trade, arrangements will be made with their individual high schools to help them with those applications also. Either way, every family has a better opportunity to make the right decision.

Employer Participation:

- Each employer will be required to sign a Release for the PHCC and the educational institution before enrolling in the program.
- Each employer will be required to educate their staff on the TN Labor Laws and restrict their student employment activities according to the law.
- Each employer realizes that the student is working to gain knowledge about the profession and assist their employees with their tasks. Broad based experiences are preferred but at the contractor's discretion.

For more information or to book a speaking engagement or presentation for your group visit RideandDecide.com or contact Gordy Noe at 865-922-2817 or PHCC at 865-531-7422