

# Construction Industry Workforce Initiative (CIWI): Working With District 10 Young Adults

To Provide Internship And Opportunities In Real Estate Development And Construction

By Monica Wilson

Why did you start CIWI?

To provide exposure, experience and opportunity for low-income, first generation college students that have an interest in construction management, real estate development, civic engagement, and A&E. CIWI's goal has always been to create opportunities for students interested in the professional side of construction so that they can have careers as Project Engineers, Project Managers, Estimators, as well as Developers, and Architect and Engineers.

In 2012, we had two interns, and now we reached our 2014 program goal of providing 10 internship positions. The growth has been slow, steady, and sustainable. We have also focused on the programs infra-

structure (partnering with College Track in 2014), developing a CIWI web site and an Alumni Program, and program assessment and monitoring tools, to keep us on point.

How is the program set up?

CIWI includes the following three core components

**Internship Component:** June through August (12 weeks), 20 hours per week, totaling 240 hours of direct experience.

**Leadership Component:** Participating in community, civic and related industry meetings such as Commission for Community Investment and

reviewing construction documents and plans, and finalizing Project Close Out documentation, etc.) but we also want to provide opportunities for students to learn about the sheer amount of community engagement, due diligence and planning work it requires to design a building or new community including active participation by the local community.

Who have you partnered with for the internship program?

CIWI has roots in both SF and the East Bay.

CIWI has grown from one General Contractor (Cahill Contractors, our Founding Partner/Funder) to now an impressive team of seven



**CIWI Leadership and Mentorship Program: Meet and Greet, with City of Oakland City Council Member Lynette Gibson McElhaney (District 3) and Michael Cohen, Principal, Strada Investment Group and former Director of Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD).**



**CIWI Leadership and Mentorship Program: Professional Speaker Series, including Omar Mutwakil, Project Engineer (Roberts-Obayashi/Shipyard) and Yusef Freeman (McCormack Baron Salazar/Alice Griffith) (HOPE SF), convened at College Track.**

Infrastructure (CCII), San Francisco Housing Action Coalition (SFHAC) and SPUR.

**Mentorship Component:** Speaker series including presentations from industry representatives, one-on-one counseling and small group events, such as a Resume and Cover Letter Workshop.

Each year, we try to expand our partners and program and one of the best partner investments we have made has been with College Track. College Track (a key D10 Stakeholder) provides an invaluable role in identifying D10 young adults who may be interested in participating in the CIWI program. As well, as part of our Leadership and Training component, we also convened a guest speaker series at College Track, including participation from key members from Roberts-Obayashi and McCormack Baron Salazar, both firms are active within D10 at the Shipyard and Alice Griffith. We have also had Meet and Greets with key stakeholders, including City of Oakland City Council Member, Lynette Gibson McElhaney (District 3) and Michael Cohen, Principle, Strada Investment Group and the former Director of the San Francisco's Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD).

All of the interns will learn technical skills over the summer such as in Estimating/Project Take-Offs, Document Control (RFIs and Submittals), participating in site inspections,

interview/recruitment, we have partnered with three great organizations that work with students to get them to and through college--College Track, Juma Ventures, and East Bay College Fund. They are key and extremely valuable partners that provide a critical role in coordinating our outreach, identifying potential candidates, and providing space to have workshops, team meetings, etc.

In 2014, we developed a strategic plan to identify and recruit young adults from San Francisco's District 10 (Southeast Sector). I am pleased to say that all of our San Francisco CIWI interns are from D10. In other words, 100 percent of our San Francisco participants are from D10.

What have the interns' experiences been like?

I think for most, the internship may be the proverbial "lightbulb or Aha moment!"--the time that helps them shape their interest, technical skills

and passion for pursuing a career in construction/real estate, as well as to know that there are numerous people, firms, mentors, and associations that are committed to their success (providing opportunities and opening doors). We try to stress the importance of developing their networking database, familiarity with the Bay Area construction industry and development trends. We have recently developed an Alumni program, and both graduates are still working with Cahill, and both are from D10. We are very proud of that.

As well, based on our GC/Developer Team, many of the interns are working on very high profile developments including Hunters View HOPE SF, and on developments within Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure's (OCII) Project Areas including Hunters Point Shipyard, Transbay, and Mission Bay.

General Contractors and Developers (Key Partners + Funders), including Cahill Contractors, Nibbi Brothers, Strada Investment Group, Roberts-Obayashi, John Stewart Company, BBI Construction and McGuire and Hester.

To assist in identifying students for



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# Congratulations D10 Students!



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Supporting the Renaissance of the Southeast Community  
and our Educational partners  
serving the youth and young adults returning to school



Construction Industry Workforce Initiative, based in the Bayview, is a program of

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