

The BE&K School of Industrial Construction

What The Innovation Is, When It Began:

With a nationwide worker shortage and a booming economy, experts suggest our industry needs 250,000 men and women a year to help "Build America". Many young people today are unaware of the opportunities and benefits associated with a career in the construction industry. The *BE&K School of industrial Construction* (BE&KSIC) program was established in August '99 in an effort to attract high school students to our industry. As we compete with other industries for talent, the BE&KSIC reaches adolescents at the critical point where they make career decisions. The BE&KSIC is designed to complement the standard high school curriculum. In order to remain in our program, all students must maintain an average grade of C or better in both their normal school coursework as well as the BE&KSIC. High School students in the 11th and 12th grade enroll on an elective course basis. The class meets five (5) days a week for three (3) hours during afternoon school hours at our 5,000 SF training facility, located a short distance away from the high school campus.

The program curriculum is based on a combination of our BE&K Craft Progression Program and the ABC Wheels of Learning. The program is also recognized by the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), of which BE&K is an accredited sponsor. The curriculum is taught by certified instructors and involves both classroom training and hands-on task training with emphasis in areas such as welding, pipe fitting, electrical wiring, instrumentation, and mechanical / millwright work. Students are also taught the importance and proper use of personal protective equipment, and even learn to read construction blue prints. Upon graduation, BE&K guarantees these students full-time employment. From the first graduating class in May of 1999, 15 out of 18 students accepted offers with BE&K. Once a student arrives at a project, they are able to continue their training and career progression at our onsite training facilities.

Why It Is Innovative:

The BE&KSIC is innovative and distinguished from other training programs:

- This privately funded program is the first of its kind targeted at the high school age population and delivers an appreciation for a permanent career in the construction industry.
- The program changed the way BE&K recruits people to our industry by reaching out to the high school level.
- Students are provided with temporary paid field assignments during the summer prior to their senior year; helping to enhance their studies and opening up many new opportunities.
- Upon graduation and successful completion of the program, BE&K guarantees each student full-time employment (*with a starting salary of at least \$25,000 - adjusted for changing market and geographic conditions*).
- The program was developed in cooperation with and is approved by the State of Alabama Board of Education.
- In addition to **specific heavy industrial skills** learned, students **earn credit for their applied math studies**.
- The program is structured so it can be implemented and used as a model program for other businesses.

The program not only teaches students new skills, but also demonstrates to them, their parents, and school teachers and guidance counselors, that the construction industry can be a clean, safe, and fulfilling industry to work in. A special "Parent Night" provides an opportunity to meet the instructors, tour classroom training facilities, and learn about our thriving industry from course instructors, company representatives, and industry leaders.

The program recently received approval for statewide expansion from Alabama Governor Don Sigelman and the Alabama Board of Education. Plans are underway to open additional satellite schools around the state and expand this program. Enrollment in the second year of operation jumped from 15 students in 1999 to 50 students in August 2000 - a 250% increase! This program is a complement to other BE&K programs such as: Adopt-A-School, On-Site Day Care, Craft Training, and English-As-A-Second Language (where applicable). BE&K continues to implement such programs in order to attract a diverse and talented workforce throughout the company. The BE&KSIC has attracted both local and state media attention by enhancing the reputation of our construction industry. The BE&KSIC program not only gives back to its community, but also has total support from our management, the school board, the students, and their parents. We intend to continue the program for many years to come, and hope other industry leaders will implement similar programs, which can only help our industry in the long run by attracting and retaining good, skilled, and qualified individuals to our industry.

Photo ID's (*Following Page*) 1. The inaugural class assembled for a group photo, placed in High School Yearbooks; 2. Safety is emphasized during all classes; 3. Hands-on experience is a top priority; 4. All training is closely supervised; 5. All key heavy industrial crafts are taught; 6. Students actively participate in conduit bending; 7. Current class of 2001; 8. Students were BE&K guests at ABC's Award of Excellence Dinner, exposing them to industry's finest accomplishments and their personal career potential.

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The BE&K School of Industrial Construction



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