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LPHS Building Trades Program gives students real world construction industry experience, skills and job opportunities

Students receive training and certifications in construction and carpentry while making connections for future employment opportunities

LINCOLN PARK, Mich.- The **Building Trades Program** at **Lincoln Park High School** offers advanced training in construction and carpentry and connects students with potential career opportunities. The innovative program provides real-world experience to help students lay the groundwork to become skilled tradespeople workers prior to graduation.

“Many of my students use the program as a stepping stone for future careers,” said **Tina Mies**, building trades teacher at Lincoln Park High School. “They know how important it is to always show up, put the work in and learn as much as they can in class so they have a leg-up later in life when they’re looking for jobs.”

Students can begin the two-year Building Trades Program their sophomore or junior year of high school. Each year, 60 new students enroll in the program, forming two classes that meet daily for one hour during the first semester of the school year. Second semester, up to 25 students are given the opportunity to continue the program, forming one class that meets daily for two hours.

Second-year students meet for three hours daily. Most second-year students become skilled builders and regularly participate in construction projects outside the classroom.

Students who enroll in the program as sophomores and complete the program’s second year are eligible to remain in the program for a third year and are given leadership roles in the classroom, assisting younger students with projects and training.

While enrolled in the program, students receive comprehensive training that prepares them to hit the ground running in the construction industry. Students receive heavy equipment training through the program’s newly acquired forklift simulator that teaches them how to operate a hi-lo, backhoe, and crane. This training, along with completion of the required 2,000 field hours and an additional 60 hours of training, satisfies construction license requirements and increases students’ chances of being hired.

Upon completion of the program and graduating from LPHS, students meet the necessary requirements to join the **Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights** without completing the customary interview process, and are able to walk right into a good-paying job. One of the program’s 2018 graduates took advantage of this opportunity and started working with the carpenter’s union just days after graduation.

“We are proud to help train future skilled tradesmen and women and set them on a path toward a good-paying job and rewarding career in an industry with high-demand,” said **Jamal Al**, career connection specialist for the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights. “Michigan is

currently facing a shortage of qualified skilled trade workers, and programs like Lincoln Park's Building Trades Program are helping fill that gap."

The program emphasizes the importance of developing the "soft skills" necessary to be productive in the workplace while teaching students general construction techniques including roofing, decking, siding, and insulation. They also receive OSHA 30 training and earn tool and master shingle certifications, which greatly improve their desirability as workers.

In the past, students gained building experience by working on various projects throughout the community, including building a new ticket booth and concession stand at the football stadium, helping build a house in Lincoln Park with the **Urban Development Program** and building out a classroom at Lincoln Park Middle School.

"Specialized programs like these make teaching and learning fun and I believe that is why my students get so much out of the program," Mies said. "The Building Trades Program is about more than teaching students to build. It's about teaching them to work effectively on a team, the importance of showing up on time and working hard and how these skills will serve them well in their future careers."

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