

May 14, 2010

## **Bringing the construction industry to life for high school students**

HOPKINTON \_ Sunny skies and mild temperatures helped to make the Eighth Annual Massachusetts Construction Career Days (MassCCD,) held on May 5 and 6 at the New England Laborers' Training Academy in Hopkinton, one of the best to date. MassCCD is part of a national initiative to help educate high school students about the wide range of career opportunities available in the construction industry. More than 50 exhibitors of construction and related companies, vendors, equipment dealers, labor unions, apprentice programs and colleges donated their time, equipment and personnel in order to help bring the construction industry alive for students

Over 1,100 junior and senior high school students from 118 schools across the state were able to learn about the construction industry and its related fields at the two day event.

“The Construction Career Day Steering Committee was extremely pleased with the attendance and how well the participants engaged with the variety of contractors. Contractors, company owners, and special guests visiting the site were also impressed. The 2010 Construction Career Day event was a total success,” said Tom Misiewicz, director of River West School-to-Career Partnership.

Loretta M. Dansereau, Partnership Director of River East School-to-Career, Inc., agreed.

“The day was fabulous for students and chaperones alike. I can't say enough about the professionals who interacted so well with our students.”

One of the companies that has been a staple at the MassCCD, is P.J. Keating Company (PJK) of Lunenburg, whose primary business is quarrying stone, manufacturing Hot Mix Asphalt, and the construction of Asphalt Paving Projects.

“We do a live demonstration, laying down a thin layer of stone dust,” said Rick Ricker, field trainer at PJK. “The kids get to work both the paver and the roller. This has been very successful in the past, and this year we had more kids than ever.”

Nick Cormier, a student at Nashoba Valley Technical High School in Westford, was able to drive both the paver and the roller. “My grandfather runs a lot of these machines. I really liked being able to do this,” he said.

Students not only were given the opportunity to operate large pieces of construction equipment, they were also given hands-on projects as well as information on colleges, trade schools and certification programs that serve the construction industry.

“This is an event that P.J. Keating Company is proud to be a part of,” said PJK President Jim Reger. “It was created to help address the shortfall of young people coming into the

construction industry, and it's a fantastic way for high school students to get a real sense of the scope of the industry.”

This event has become an integral part of the Massachusetts construction industry and the Massachusetts Department of Education.

This year, participating schools were invited to do a signature project to be displayed at MassCCD. The project entailed the planning, designing and construction of an open-sided pavilion, to be located in the park at the training academy.

“Special thanks to all the schools and students who participated in the signature project. A lot of time and effort went into these projects, and the students and staff members overseeing these projects should be extremely proud of their student's accomplishments,” Misiewicz said. “A job well done!”

Since 1923, P.J. Keating Company's primary business is quarrying stone, manufacturing Hot Mix Asphalt and the construction of Asphalt Paving Projects. Headquartered in Lunenburg with locations in Dracut, Acushnet and Cranston, Rhode Island, it is one of the largest stone and asphalt producers in Massachusetts.

For more information on P.J. Keating Company, visit [www.pjkeating.com](http://www.pjkeating.com).