



New Cardozo Senior High School Principal Tanya Roane

NEW CARDOZO PRINCIPAL VOWS TO STRENGTHEN CTE

By Arnesa A. Howell

Continued on page 2

MAKING STRIDES: JOBS COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS



While raising awareness of workforce challenges and potential barriers to employment, the JOBS Coalition and its members have combined their resources and industry expertise to achieve the following results:

- Built the Bellevue Resource Center, a program facility serving the hard-to-reach, hard-to-employ, and returning ex-offender populations. The Center was completed on September 30, 2003.
- Guided the creation of the Construction & Design Academy at Cardozo, providing District students access, training, and preparation for careers in the construction industry and trades after graduation. The Academy officially opened in September 2005. □



WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER Student builders are flanked by (far left) Miller & Long Chairman John McMahon, (far right) Academy Instructors William Roberts and Marshall Janifer, and joined by Cardozo Principal Tanya Roane and Academy Director Shelly Karriem at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

THE HOUSE THAT STUDENTS BUILT: Transforming a Dream Into Reality

The three-level home on a corner lot in the Brightwood community stands out from the many older houses in the neighborhood. Not so much for its pale brick front exterior – a complementary façade amongst the mix of colorful hues and red brick single family homes – as for the crowd spilling out of its front doors, down the stairs and onto the sidewalk.

By Arnesa A. Howell

On this mild winter morning, present and past Academy of Construction and Design (ACAD) students gather alongside community and construction industry leaders, Academy staff and a host of other supporters to celebrate a major accomplishment: the completion of the city's first student-built house.

"We are so very proud of the students. We know that their futures are very bright," said Tanya Roane, new principal of Cardozo Senior High School, the birthplace of ACAD.

The snip of a ribbon on Dec. 6 marked a more than two-year journey that started long before the groundbreaking ceremony at 5734 13th Street, N.W. in October 2010. The vision for the "Build a House – Build a Future" program began roughly a decade earlier with a

commitment to revive vocational education in the District.

A Path Less Traveled

"There was a time when we went to the school board and every member had a reason why we couldn't do it," recalled John McMahon, president of the D.C. Students Construction Trades Foundation Board of Directors, at the ceremony. After listening to the encouraging words of a high school student at that meeting, McMahon and supporters that included former Cardozo Principal Reginald Ballard knew they had to move forward.

"When I walked out of there, I said, 'We're doing this,'" added McMahon, who also serves as chairman of Miller & Long.

Continued on page 2

Roane Interview *Continued from page 1*

When Tanya Roane signed on to be the new principal of Cardozo Senior High School in the summer of 2012, she knew it was the place she wanted to be.

“I felt it was an opportunity for me to really effect change in some schools that may be struggling,” said Roane, who’s spent 16 years in education, including as an administrator at the elementary and middle school levels. She continued that she wanted the opportunity to come and work with the students because she knew they could be successful.

Roane comes to the school at a time when it’s going through internal and external changes, including the continued renovation of the building at 1200 Clifton Street, N.W. During the renovation, students have been relocated to nearby Meyer Elementary School. Roane expects the move back to a modernized school to positively impact student learning by giving young people exposure to technology that can enhance their work quality and better prepare them for college.

“In our swing space, we are very limited in our technology, so that really limits what the students can do in terms of projects,” said Roane. “In [the new] building, we will have Mac labs, students will have an opportunity to produce digital media, we are going to have laptops that are on carts on every floor so teachers have easy access for lessons [and] we will have computer labs on each floor. So that new building will be outfitted with every type of technology you can think of.” That includes SMART boards, which are interactive white boards, and “we are even researching the possibility of having a CISCO lab.”

Among Cardozo’s specialized programs benefiting from these innovations is the Academy of Construction and Design at Cardozo (ACAD), whose students constructed the city’s first student-built house (*see main story, page 1*).

“We are looking to expand our CTE (Career and Technical Education) offerings next year at Cardozo,” she said, noting new courses like computer science and interactive media that will introduce students to the basics of digital media, web design, visual effects and graphics, and animation. “We are exploring the possibility of offering renewable energy, where students will learn green technology, sustainable conservation, wind power, SMART grid technology and energy auditing. All of these pathways lead to industry certification,” said Roane.

With the addition of grades six through eight next year, there will be a greater opportunity to introduce young people to CTE and “pique their interest” in different career pathways. Part of that exposure includes

Continued on page 4



CUT ABOVE THE REST (l-r) Miller & Long’s John McMahon, former Cardozo Principal Reginald Ballard, current Cardozo Principal Tanya Roane, Academy Director Shelly Karriem and ACAD student Chester Broadway officially unveil the new student-built house.

Student-Built House *Continued from page 1*

“It’s almost like a dream standing here,” said Reginald Ballard, now director of School Operations in D.C. Public Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson’s office, when asked if he ever thought this day would come.

“I can remember the day John [McMahon] came to my office, and we talked about the possibilities of getting a program started of this type. We went to the Board of Education a few weeks later, and it was truly a long fight,” he said of the effort to equip students with more than a diploma – but much-needed skills as well.

With every success comes challenges, and Ballard said one of the biggest hurdles in making this dream a reality was getting people to understand that this could be done by students in the District. It would take numerous field trips to Thomas Edison School of Technology in Montgomery County, Md., some of which included Council members like David Catania because “we had to get funding from the city Council at the time.”

Bells and Whistles

Listed for \$385,000, the home is bright and airy, with amenities including an energy-efficient tankless water heater, hardwood oak flooring, ceramic and natural tiles and custom cabinetry. It has more than 1,200 square feet of livable space, not including a full basement, and the siding is weather- and rot-resistant Hardie Board.

“The quality of construction is superb. Commercial guys helped the students build it,” said Mike Lenkin, a vice president at Miller & Long. The three-bedroom, three-and-a-half bathroom home also has a unique “green” paver system feature that helps the environment by reducing stormwater runoff.



TAKING IN THE VIEW (l-r) Academy Grads José Cruz (Class of 2011) and Dominic Wright (Class of 2012) admire their work.

“Any rain water that ends up there,” explained Lenkin, “...flows through the joints in the pavers and stores underneath until the ground can absorb it.” He added that the house has two off-street parking spaces, an added benefit in a city where parking is a precious commodity.

“But the most important thing,” he told *JOBS Coalition Pathways*, “is that the students got real-world experience. It was a learning experience for the students who got to apply the skills they learned in school and see the fruits of their labor.”

It Takes a Village

McMahon told the crowd it only took phone calls to contractors across the industry for them to come together for a common good. “The support we got from all the contractors – from insulation and foundation to concrete – all donated,” he said. “That’s how the industry feels about youth and creating jobs for youth.”

As the director of ACAD, Shelly Karriem is equally proud of her students’ accomplishment. She’s witnessed the project’s progression, and reflected on the first time she visited the empty lot. “I stood on that empty lot and I cried because I knew what our children were capable of,” she shared. “During the build, we adopted President Obama’s first campaign slogan: ‘Yes We Can.’”

She credited Academy carpentry instructor Marshall Janifer and electrical instructor William Roberts, as well as Miller & Long and Donohoe

Continued on page 3

REMEMBER THE TIME
As president of the D.C. Students Construction Trades Foundation Board, McMahon recalls the journey of the "Build a House" program.



THIS NEW HOUSE The student-built house in the Brightwood neighborhood; (below) its contemporary kitchen.



Student-Built House *Continued from page 2*
Construction Co. among those leading the students through the project. "Our kids were here in inclement weather, they were here every day, and they built this house. I am so proud of them. As this city continues to build and grow, the Academy of Construction and Design will continue to make sure that we train the builders to do the building."

Karriem added, "This is about making sure our young people have the skills to go on and be successful."

A Passion for Building, Learning

For 11th grader Chester Broadway, the biggest reward was getting the chance to do what he loves. He installed electrical outlets from the first floor down to the basement. With his love of building, Broadway is already looking forward to pursuing

a possible career in electrical trades. "[She] is a wonderful person. We love her," he said of Academy "mom" Karriem.

As part of the first group of students who worked on the house, Cardozo Senior High School graduate José Cruz knows firsthand the challenges of home construction. "We had to come out during the cold and during the summer. It was hard, but at the same time, I enjoyed it," said the 2011 grad. But he also realizes the benefits.

"I learned about safety when using the equipment – wearing [protective] glasses when cutting the wood," said Cruz, who credits Karriem for his involvement in the "Build a House" program and for cultivating his interest in school.

Knowledge is Power

As many students of the Academy can attest,

creative learning has ignited their passion for knowledge. And it seems D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) is taking notice. Dan Gordon, deputy chief academic officer with DCPS, said Chancellor Kaya Henderson is "very, very interested" in transforming the traditional "cookie-cutter" high school teaching model where classroom lecturing is the norm.

"This project and dream that Principal Ballard had years ago is the perfect model for what we want for all of our students," he said, "whether it's in construction, business, health sciences or IT (information technology). It combines something that's really engaging, gets kids really interested in school and puts it in a real world application ... and it prepares [students] with real skills."

Like many who were part of this endeavor, Michael Sigal, president of GCS Inc., praised the program for getting students out of the classroom and into the field to gain "real life" experience. "This is what it takes to help the kids get their hands-on experience," he said. "This is just the beginning."

Now that the program has reached a major milestone, Ballard is optimistic about its future as well. "This is the way we need to move. We need electricians, we need plumbers, we need brick masons, carpenters – and the only way we can continue to have these people in the city is to train them," he said. "That was one of the reasons this Academy was formed, and I believe the Chancellor has that same vision. I know that she's on board." □

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Roane Interview *Continued from page 2*

ACAD, a program Roane is focused on making even stronger. She has been discussing with Academy leadership that includes Director Shelly Karriem ways to put elective classes surrounding construction into the middle school curriculum. Among the questions asked: "How can we build an interest early, so by the time [students] get into ninth grade, they will have had some exposure to construction and design?"

Already unfolding is a "strong" recruitment campaign that includes attending District-wide middle school fairs to build excitement about the programs offered at Cardozo. "Our goal is to visit our feeder elementary and education campuses that feed into Cardozo and build excitement around the programs we have here," she said.

Cardozo feeder schools include Francis-Stevens Education Campus and Shaw Middle School at Garnet-Patterson.

Retention Challenges

While partnerships with the construction industry and other supporters have been invaluable to the Academy, Roane acknowledged that the program hasn't been without its share of challenges. The biggest challenge: completers, or the number of students starting the Academy and seeing it through for the entire four years.

"We have completers, but I want us to increase the number of students that complete our program," she said.

During the 2011-2012 school year, 96 of the 105 Academy students were eligible for National

Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) certification. That figure translates into over 50 percent of the students enrolled in ACAD classes receiving their industry-recognized certification in electrical and carpentry, according to Karriem. She reiterated that they are working to strengthen the program.

"We're working very closely with D.C. Public Schools and the administration so the students will follow the required CTE pathway to successfully complete the programs through the Academy," Karriem told *JOBS Coalition Pathways*.

Looking forward, Roane also realizes the importance of building vocational education acceptance among parents. She said exposure is key, and a Cardozo Expo Day planned for the spring will showcase ACAD and the various other programs offered at the school.

As the new principal, Roane is enthusiastic about the future of Cardozo, which she wants to make a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. "There's a great deal of work that needs to be done here, but the work can be done," said Roane. "The children are very, very intelligent, very eager to learn and I think we just have to put the right programs in place to build excitement around their interests so they will come to school every day excited."

Well said. □

JOBS COALITION MISSION STATEMENT

We will work together to develop a long-term strategy that creates an environment where aspiring District residents will have unprecedented opportunity to succeed. We strive to create a fair and open system, supported by government, industry, employers and the education and faith-based communities, which seeks to properly train today's apprentices while making an unparalleled commitment to educating students and others not yet in the workforce.

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