



## THE BEST OF 2013: A YEAR IN REVIEW

By Arnesa A. Howell

From talking job and economic development with D.C. Council member Kenyan McDuffie (D-Ward 5) to unveiling the city's first student-built house constructed by the Academy of Construction and Design at Cardozo, the *JOBS Coalition Pathways* newsletter this year continued to bring attention to the issues that are the foundation of the JOBS Coalition's mission: educating and training students in the vocational trades and providing employment opportunities for in-need District residents, including the underserved, unemployed and returning ex-offenders. Here, a look back through excerpts of the top stories of 2013:

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## 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. □



## SPOTLIGHT ON ... CONSTRUCTION LABORERS

Among the occupations that require less than a high school occupation, construction labor is projected to be one of the jobs with the most growth between 2012 and 2022, according to the Winter 2013-14 Occupational Outlook Quarterly special issue, *Charting the Projections: 2012-22*.

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The outlook reported that short-term, on-the-job training is “typically needed to attain competency in the occupation.” Individuals pursuing a job in this field can expect to bring home an average annual income of just under \$30,000 a year.

While health care industry jobs are expected to experience growth, construction remains the leader in most new jobs during the 10-year span analyzed for this report. “All of the projected growth in construction is to regain jobs that were lost during the 2007-09 recession,” the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics stated, “but these 1.6 million jobs are still not expected to be enough to return construction employment to its prerecession level.”

BLS added in a separate outlook – *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition, Construction Laborers and Helpers* – that the demand for construction laborers will coincide with the repair and replacement of roads, bridges and other infrastructure. And those with the most skills will have the best opportunities, BLS stated, noting that individuals in this line of work should expect employment to be “especially sensitive to fluctuations in the economy.”

For more information, visit the *Occupational Outlook Quarterly* at: <http://www.bls.gov/ooq>; and the *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition* at: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/construction-and-extraction/construction-laborers-and-helpers.htm>. □



### JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013

A homegrown son of Ward 5, D.C. Council member Kenyan McDuffie shared his pathway to success, which included a stint working for the U.S. Postal Service before attending college at the University of the District of Columbia and Howard University. In a one-on-one with *JOBS Coalition Pathways*, McDuffie talked about connecting residents struggling to find work with job opportunities in construction, and enhancing the value of career and technical education (CTE) in District schools.

**JOBS:** *Economic development and jobs are among your top issues. What is your vision for helping*

*residents struggling to find work in these tough economic times?*

**McDuffie:** *My vision – as we look across the city and see the number of cranes going up, the number of projects that have broken ground and still more in the queue – is to try and connect our residents to these great opportunities. When thinking about economic development, I think about economic security. Not simply the buildings that are going to be built for profit, but the people who are building the buildings, how our residents are being trained in acquiring the skills necessary to compete on these development sites, the hard hat jobs and the work in construction, and obviously, some of the work on the back end – retail-oriented jobs that are going to be*

*created as a result of the economic development that's occurring in the city. You want to make sure that our schools are giving our youth a solid foundation so that when they graduate from high school, either they are ready to go on to college or enter the workforce immediately. It's very important that as we think about economic development, we also think about how our career and technical education programs are working and areas where they can be improved.*

**JOBS:** *Historically, CTE has had a bad reputation. People are wary about going into the field and hold preconceived notions. How do you go about changing those notions, and how is that impacting the effort to get young people to work through vocational education?*

**McDuffie:** *You look at the number of [CTE] offerings that were available decades ago – Bell, Chamberlaine, Armstrong, Phelps, M.M. Washington – we just don't have those today. Part of the disconnect is that a lot of our students simply don't see the value. They don't know the career you can have, or the money you can earn as a carpenter, plumber or electrician. It's incumbent upon us to show them how it can lead to a meaningful career if they're engaged in CTE training programs that are available – Phelps Architecture, Construction and Engineering High School, McKinley Technology High School. Part of the challenge is educating the parents who are in their late 30s, early to late 40s and perhaps didn't have a parent, friends or family who went to Bell or Armstrong. So, they don't see the value that's inherent in acquiring these skills. It's demonstrating to them what the value is for their kids. – JOBS Coalition Pathways, [GETTING DOWN TO THE CORE ISSUES: McDuffie Talks Education, Jobs and Economic Development](#) □*



### MARCH/APRIL 2013

Marking a first for the city, the students of the Academy of Construction and Design at Cardozo

celebrated the unveiling of a three-level home they built in the Brightwood community of Washington, D.C. The newsletter highlighted the success of the project, which took more than two years to come to fruition with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in winter 2012. Cardozo Principal Tanya Roane, Academy Director Shelly Karriem and former Cardozo Principal Reginald Ballard were among those joining students to applaud the student-built house.

#### **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."*

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### MAY/JUNE 2013

The renovation of the historic Cardozo Senior High School took more than 16 months, and the resulting makeover proved noteworthy. Not only

did the facelift update the massive building with a new gym and modernized pool, but it also exposed the rich architectural history of the school. Unexpected finds included richly-hued tilework depicting nautical scenes behind water fountains, marble pillars with copper tops, original hardwood flooring, and an uncovered fireplace in the library.

*All of these surprising historical elements are being carefully restored when possible during the modernization effort of the behemoth school, listed on the National Register*

*of Historic Places.*

*“We didn’t realize until it was uncovered that  
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### SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2013

They overcame personal challenges. Gained new skills in their respective trades. They are the 10 graduates of the D.C. Apprenticeship Academy, a program designed to cultivate journeyman electricians. With support from Academy leadership and instructors, these men successfully completed 576 hours of classroom training over four years to receive papers to get their licenses.

*You overcame challenges to reach this great moment and you’re equipped with the knowledge and skills to continue learning,” said William Roberts, an electrical instructor for the D.C. Apprenticeship Academy.*

*During the program, registered apprentices received hands-on training in the classroom while working full-time in the construction trades. The graduates worked at companies including M.C. Dean, Hawkins Electric Inc. and A. Wash and Associates, a provider of electrical services.*

*“We are really proud of all of you and I wish you the best of luck,” said Kavara McDonald, manager of the D.C. Apprenticeship Academy. She also praised the graduates and the program’s instructors for all their “very hard” work to help the apprentices learn and succeed. – JOBS Coalition Pathways, APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING PROGRAM CULTIVATES JOURNEYMAN ELECTRICIANS* □



### JULY/AUGUST 2013

2013 proved another inspiring year for the Academy of Construction and Design as it celebrated the graduation of its latest class during the 7th Annual Meet the Future Luncheon. While all the graduates prepared to follow their post high school dreams – whether college or career – a select few had some extra help: Dreyfuss Scholarships. Named after Norman Dreyfuss, executive vice president and chief operating officer of IDI Group, the scholarships aimed to help the grads follow their respective pathways to success.

#### Girls Rock

*This year, the top honor and a \$4,000 award went to Thelma Leggett, 18, and the only female in the carpentry program. “It’s a start for my future – me going to college and making a difference,” Leggett, who plans to attend Shaw University in North Carolina, told JOBS Coalition Pathways.*

*She added that being part of ACAD has been a life-changing experience. “In the beginning when I first got to Cardozo, I started off really bad,” Leggett said, adding that ACAD Director Shelly Karriem told her that getting into and staying in the Academy could help make her dreams come true. As she readies for college, Leggett is planning to put her art and construction skills to good use in architectural design.*

#### Giving Accolades

*Meanwhile, second-place Dreyfuss Scholarship winner Kendrick*

*Lewis received a \$3,000 award. Lewis, the first high school student apprentice with ACAD, plans to pursue a career in the construction industry. “This Academy has shown me that preparing the mind for working is just as important as learning the trade skills, because without the proper outlook toward the workforce, all the skills in the world would not impress an employer,” he said in a video presenting the finalists.*

*Like many graduates before him, Ricky Williams acknowledged the positive impact the Academy has had on his life. In taped remarks, he credited ACAD with helping him beat the odds. Without the Academy, he said, “I would probably be in the streets, just another statistic – a young black man who is doing nothing with [his] life or working a part-time job barely able to make it.” – JOBS Coalition Pathways, 2013 ACAD GRADUATES RECEIVE DREYFUSS SCHOLARSHIPS* □

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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.” – JOBS Coalition Pathways, **THE HOUSE THAT STUDENTS BUILT: Transforming a Dream Into Reality** □

**May/June 2013** Continued from page 3  
there were actually two levels of skylight. We knew about some of the tile, but as we were doing some of the demo we found additional tile- work,” says Mike Sigal, president of GCS Inc., the firm awarded the design-build contract for Cardozo’s renovation. He shares that the decorative tile – reminiscent of the arts and crafts style of the 1920s – also depicted “beautiful” forest and lake scenes that they’re “hoping to try and restore.” Also on the restoration project list: original hardwood flooring and stonework. Salvaged bricks are being used both internally and on the school’s façade, and a once-covered fireplace in the library has been restored.

“It captures the history and keeps the history alive of what the school originally was,” says Sigal of the significance in restoring these elements. He adds that specialists in historical restorations were brought in, a move that likely impacted costs, although he says the

project remains “on budget.” It’s been reported that the modernization is costing about \$100 million.

### **Upgrade It**

Major updates made during the renovation include the addition of a regulation-sized gym, an updated swimming pool and auditorium, and the enclosure of the atriums to make better use of the space. The entire building was also retrofitted with central air, and windows were replaced. Meanwhile, the Academy of Construction and Design (ACAD) at Cardozo is receiving a boost in workspace. “They’re taking one of the old gyms and they are going to have that as part of their space so [students] can do prefab work in that open space [and] put together parts of a house and assemble some rough carpentry,” he explains of the revamped area. – JOBS Coalition Pathways, **RENOVATION EXPOSES CARDOZO’S RICH ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY** □

## **TOP 5 QUALITIES FOR CONSTRUCTION LABORERS**

1. **Color Vision.** An ability to distinguish colors for daily tasks.
2. **Math Skills.** Basic math skills are important for on-the-job duties.
3. **Physical Strength.** Heavy lifting of equipment and materials are the norm.
4. **Stamina.** Physical endurance goes hand-in-hand with the job.
5. **Technical Skills.** Expect to operate heavy equipment.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition, Construction Laborers and Helpers; <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/construction-and-extraction/construction-laborers-and-helpers.htm>.

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