



MEET THE FUTURE 101 with Beth Moore

For 12 years, the annual Meet the Future luncheon has celebrated the brightest students of the Academy of Construction and Design (ACAD), opening a doorway for them to “proceed to succeed,” says Beth Moore, program director for the D.C. Students Construction Trades Foundation. But newcomers to this event may ask: Why is there a Meet the Future luncheon? What is its significance? Here, Moore breaks down the basics to answer those questions.

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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. □



INFORMATION Students write life-inspired essays at a 2016 Bright Futures Bootcamp session.

BRIGHT FUTURES BOOTCAMP: Laying a Foundation for Success & Scholarship

What’s in a name? Well, everything from the moniker of the Bright Futures Bootcamp. “We are trying to help our students build bright futures for themselves,” says Emille Robinson, facilitator of the career fluency-centric bootcamp, which held sessions Friday afternoons during the 2017-2018 academic school year.

By Arnesa A. Howell

For almost eight years, the Bright Futures Bootcamp has largely equipped students from the Academy of Construction and Design (ACAD) with life and career skills to be successful in the “real world.” Whether aspiring to enter college or the workforce, they have experienced opportunities from speed networking with business industry leaders to elevator pitch sessions with peers. “There are some basic ‘survival’ skills students need once they graduate, and unfortunately, most don’t get this information anywhere else. The bootcamp tries to fill in this gap for Academy and other students,” Robinson explains.

Yes, the bootcamp helps students break out of the “cocoon” of their school environment to learn the basic building blocks of the business world: telephone etiquette, writing a professional email, interviewing, networking and

personal presentation, according to Robinson. “Many of these students have no idea about how to navigate the worlds of work and higher education,” she says. “I hope that their takeaway is a greater sense of self-confidence and skills they can build upon to help them grow personally and professionally into adulthood.”

For example, one former bootcamper recalled sharpening the skills introduced in the workshop at home by practicing on maintaining eye contact with his dad—that initiative gave him the confidence to portray a more professional image during an ACAD-hosted networking event.

And while providing valuable life tools for the future, the Bright Futures Bootcamp is also laying the foundation for a more immediate opportunity: the annual Meet the Future luncheon. Before this year’s Meet the Future luncheon, to

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What is the Meet the Future luncheon?

The Meet the Future luncheon is designed for students to learn first-hand about careers in the construction industry and related fields, and for industry leaders to share what it takes to be successful.

What is the significance of its name?

We chose the name “Meet the Future” to signal to our supporters and partners in industry, education and government that the event is an opportunity to literally meet the future workforce. Their participation is critical to engaging students in meaningful activities and discussion that will shape their vision for future careers. Our mission to “Build Bright Futures” is served well by the engagement of business owners.

How pivotal is the construction industry in supporting this event heralding ACAD student achievements?

Industry support is the most important aspect of Meet the Future, particularly when it includes the opportunity for our students to interact with business leaders. The private donor reception before the luncheon offers networking with ACAD students, and it’s the coolest crush of people sharing information and business cards. Students are dressed in professional attire and we get to watch them in action using the career fluency skills learned over the year. It’s fun to see how students listen and respond. We even had several students last year looking for opportunities for their classmates—they made sure to make that connection. It’s really great to see students learning as much as they can about the different types of career paths to get where they want to go.

Why is this luncheon important for the youth?

The students have the opportunity to practice their skills. We started the luncheon because we thought that our students had missed opportunities to go to a luncheon in a large hotel in D.C. where they could learn how to use table manners and interact with people in a business luncheon environment. Combine that with an opportunity to celebrate their successes, whether continuing to college or the industry, and these are important reasons why we started Meet the Future.

How is this event moving the city’s conversation forward on career and technical education?

We hope that we are an important voice in continuing to push the importance of career pathways and technical education in the high schools. Technical education is important in a couple of ways—a track that leads a student

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AT THE SPEED OF KNOWLEDGE
ACAD Grad Treymane Chatman (left) flexes his networking skills at a 2014 Academy event. (At right) Bootcamp Facilitator Emille Robinson announces student standouts at that year’s Meet the Future.



Bright Futures Bootcamp *Continued from page 1*

be held May 4, these students will officially get to put their skills to the test at a private reception with construction industry and other business leaders. “A focus of the bootcamp is helping students be more comfortable in presenting themselves to potential employers—learning how to approach and introduce themselves to someone, then start a conversation,” Robinson explains.

The ‘Write’ Stuff

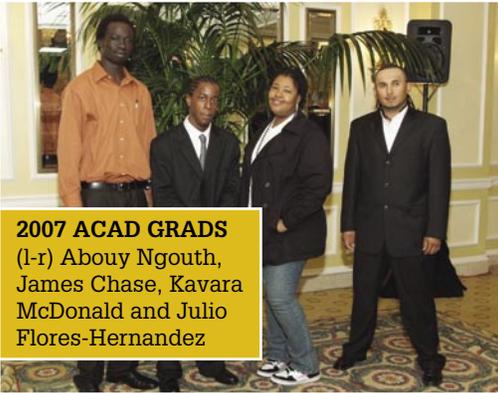
During the semimonthly classes held at IDEA Public Charter School, students also engage their writing skills. For the most dedicated participants, this can be a rewarding experience, culminating in accolades at Meet the Future, which honors ACAD students for their academic achievements, leadership and personal character. That’s because the largest scholarship awarded requires an es-

say—written during bootcamp. The topics vary from year-to-year, with Robinson helping to guide students through the process. Additional awards are also based on bootcamp participation, alongside input from teachers and Academy leadership.

Despite scheduling challenges that impact consistent student attendance, Robinson says the outlook for the bootcamp remains bright. She hopes for expanded, weekly sessions with support from an additional facilitator. And for the students who commit to showing up and investing in themselves, there is reassurance of success beyond high school. Says Robinson: “We have to help them see the bigger picture and the opportunities ahead for them.” □

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.



2007 ACAD GRADS
(l-r) Abouty Ngouth, James Chase, Kavara McDonald and Julio Flores-Hernandez



CLASS OF 2010



CLASS OF 2013



CLASS OF 2008



CLASS OF 2011



CLASS OF 2014



CLASS OF 2009



CLASS OF 2012



CLASS OF 2015

SIMPLY THE BEST

The Annual Meet the Future Luncheon celebrates the best of the best, including student scholars that have persevered in the face of life and academic challenges—from homelessness to language barriers—to become graduates of the Academy of Construction and Design (ACAD). Over the years, honors like the

Sigal Scholars Awards and Norman Dreyfuss Scholarships have helped students pursue their personal and professional aspirations during and after high school. Starting with the first awards ceremony in 2007, the *JOBS Coalition Pathways* looks back at more than a decade of Meet the Future in pictures. □

JOBS Coalition Pathways

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The *JOBS Coalition Pathways* is the exclusive property of the JOBS Coalition, 702 Otis Place, NW, Washington, D.C. 20010; 301-262-0560. *JOBS Coalition Pathways* is dedicated to disseminating information that will help strengthen the city's apprenticeship training and job placement programs, broadening the scope to reach the young, the underserved, the unemployed and the returning ex-offender. *JOBS Coalition Pathways* is published by the JOBS Coalition.



ALL CLASSES, 2016



ALL CLASSES, 2017



The DC Students Construction Trades Foundation celebrates its
12th Annual MEET THE FUTURE Luncheon

Friday, May 4, 2018

11:30 am Board and Executive Council Reception | 12:00 noon Luncheon
The Hamilton | 600 14th Street, NW | Washington, DC

*Supporting outstanding achievement in the **Academy of Construction and Design**,
an accredited skilled trades career and technical education initiative
serving students in the District of Columbia.*

For tickets and information, or to inquire about CTE sponsorship,
call **202.246.7662** or email meetthefuture@dcstudentsctf.org

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directly into a career, an apprenticeship, and a high-paying job that supports them and their families, or to help support their path through college. There are so many different ways for students to proceed to succeed.

What do you hope is the biggest takeaway for students?

We want students—and their parents—to see that they are on a pathway that will lead them to a successful future, that success is within their reach, that their success in ACAD and learning a career will lead them to college and career opportunities they might never have imagined, and that their work today will prepare them to be the business leaders in the room mentoring future students. Every year, we hear from students how a single interaction with an industry leader has inspired them to consider a different career.

What is the highlight of the event?

Definitely, the private reception before the luncheon. It's such a great opportunity for students and alumni to network with industry leaders from all types of careers. ACAD students really work the room! Supporters can see for themselves the impact of their support. □



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