

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Builders, Burns & McDonnell Celebrate Opening of Career Development & Exploration Center

NORTH KANSAS CITY, Missouri — [The Builders](#), a chapter of the AGC, and [Burns & McDonnell](#) have teamed up to open the Career Development & Exploration Center (CDEC), an educational and training facility in North Kansas City, Missouri, dedicated to training the next generation of construction professionals and inspiring interest in a career in construction.

“We’re experiencing a construction renaissance, fueled by a massive investment into our infrastructure,” said Matt Ralston, senior vice president of [construction](#) at Burns & McDonnell. “The single most important resource we need to accomplish this is people. Above all we need skilled men and women in our construction trades. Those are the ones that will be safely and successfully building the future state of America.”

According to a recent survey from Associated General Contractors, 85% of construction firms report having open positions they are trying to fill. Among those firms, nearly 90% are having trouble filling some of those positions. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of construction laborers is projected to grow 4% a year over the next decade, leading to more than 150,000 openings a year on average.

“The CDEC is really going to support our mission to improve lives by advancing the construction industry,” said Dr. Caleb McCandless, vice president of education and training for The Builders. “The two things we’re focusing most on are safety and introducing young people to the trades and all the careers available to them in construction.”

The 3,300-square-foot CDEC features hands-on exhibits that help mimic real-life scenarios for a career in the construction trades. It also provides practical information about the types of careers available in the trades. Construction safety is a major focus of the CDEC, with exhibits dedicated to the history of construction safety, personal protective equipment (PPE), fall protection and energy isolation safety measures.

The space also includes an 8-foot-by-32-foot industrial training module, fabricated by [AZCO, a Burns & McDonnell company](#). The module includes common structural, electrical, instrumentation, mechanical and process components and will be used to train early-career professionals on scenarios they would see on a typical jobsite.

The Builders will make the facility available to its more than 2,000 apprentices who train at the organization’s Education and Training Center in North Kansas City, which houses the CDEC. Burns & McDonnell will bring between 100 and 200 early-career construction professionals to

the facility each year from field locations throughout the country as well as its Kansas City headquarters.

Additions to the CDEC are already being planned for 2024.

“One of my first jobs out of college was as an educator in the Teach for America program,” said Missouri state Sen. Lauren Arthur, who spoke at the grand opening and represents the district where the CDEC is located. “There I saw firsthand the importance of connecting students with the skills they need after they graduate. We’re making historic investments in our workforce because behind every job is a person, and investing in people will always yield the greatest return.”

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About The Builders

The Builders, a chapter of the AGC, is a nonprofit commercial construction trade association serving hundreds of member companies that employ more than 25,000 people in mid-America. Founded in 1887, The Builders, a chapter of the AGC, has advanced the construction industry by delivering safety, craft and management training; employment, labor and government relations; and construction plans and technology tools.

About Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies bringing together an unmatched team of more than 13,500 engineers, construction and craft professionals, architects, planners, technologists, and scientists to design and build our critical infrastructure. With an integrated construction and design mindset, we offer full-service capabilities. Founded in 1898 and working from 70 offices globally, Burns & McDonnell is 100% employee-owned. Learn how we are [designed to build](#).

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