

Industry acts to solve its own labor shortage

## RCWP launches Jobs Bank

Employers are urged to sign up now, even if they don't yet have job openings.

By Paul F. Eno Editor

The long-awaited Jobs Bank is now online! Spearheaded by the Rhode Island Builders Association on behalf of the Residential Construction Work-

force Partnership (RCWP), the Jobs Bank is now the central hub for employers to find the employees they need and for job-seekers to find the employment they want.

"The Jobs Bank is a way for employers to post what they want in an employee. Also, career and technical education (CTE) students, and adults with skills, can upload their resumé," said Louis Cotoia of Arnold

see **JOBS BANK...**page 28

### FEATURED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES FOR APRIL

Center Section

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Nearly 300 students from 20 schools around Rhode Island are central to RIBA's 2016 Home Show.

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#### Networking Night draws 70 on March 10

RIBA's second Networking Night of 2016 draws nearly 70 members and guests to the association's headquarters to learn about the benefits of membership.

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#### PWB plans recruitment, event

RIBA's Professional Women in Building Council sets April 26<sup>th</sup> special event.

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## Leading in lead education



Students from the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center (WACTC) and the William M. Davies Jr. Career and Technical High School proudly display some of their hands-on work on February 17<sup>th</sup> at WACTC as they give up part of their school vacation to take the 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course, the first high school students in America to do so. At left are WACTC Instructor Charles Myers (holding a copy of The Rhode Island Builder Report) and Michael Weydt of the Rhode Island Dept. of Health. Mr. Myers taught the two-day course on his own time. Story on page 6.

# Continuing education for contractors is now mandatory

The Rhode Island Builders Association has been preparing the residential construction industry for the state's continuing education (CE) for contractors requirement for nearly two years. That requirement takes effect on April 1<sup>st</sup> for the next renewal cycle, which is April 1, 2018. Anyone who took the pre-registration classes will also have to take continuing education classes before their next renewal.

RIBA's expanded education program provides contractors with the courses they need to fulfill the new CE requirements.

If you are currently a registered contractor in Rhode Island, you have two years from your renewal date to take five credit hours of continuing education, as long as the curriculum and the provider are ap-

proved by the Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board (CRLB).

For example, if your renewal date is in July 2016, you will have until July 2018 to take your five credit hours.

The subject areas will not have to be the same as those required for new registrants. But they will be taught in categories approved by the CRLB, including, but not limited to, land use, development, planning and zoning, resource conservation or estimating.

The five credit hours do not have to be five separate classes, as long as all five subject areas are covered.

New registrants with the CRLB who are performing any residential work must have five credit hours of required training. They must provide proof of this training before registration.

However, if a contractor has been registered in Rhode Island within the previous 10 years, he or she does not have to take the pre-registration course.

While contractors may obtain the re-

quired instruction through any CRLB-approved provider, RIBA will keep its members informed about what they need, will offer the classes, will keep education records for members, and will provide the written proof that they took the classes.

## ***RIBA will provide all necessary classes***

Accordingly, the association's education program has expanded to accommodate any subject area the state requires, including the five mandated subject areas required for new contractors.

Need more information, have a course you'd like to see RIBA offer, or are you interested in teaching a course?

Contact RIBA Membership and Education Director Cheryl Boyd at (401) 438-7400. If you'd like to register for classes, call Sheila McCarthy at RIBA, (401) 438-7400.

For details on upcoming classes this spring, see pages 4, 19 and 20. Also visit [RIBUILDERS.org](http://RIBUILDERS.org) for information.

*The Rhode Island*

**builder report**

Official publication of the  
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## Who is an independent contractor? Rules are now tougher

**Girard R. Visconti Esq.**

The U.S. Dept. of Labor and the Rhode Island Dept. of Labor and Training (DLT) are investigating and reviewing many employers who have misclassified employees as independent contractors.

The guidelines to determine whether someone is an employee or an independent contractor are:

- Whether the work is economically dependent on the employer or the person is actually in business for himself or herself.
- Is the work in question an integral part of the employer's business?
- Do the worker's managerial skills affect the worker's opportunity for profit or loss?
- How does the worker's relative investment compare with the employer's investment?
- Does the work performed require special skills and initiative, which "are not themselves indicative of any independence or business initiative"?
- Is a relationship between the worker and the employer permanent or indefinite?

see **LABOR LAW...**page 29

# RIBA welcomes our new members and thanks their sponsors!

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**March 31<sup>st</sup>-April 3<sup>rd</sup>: RIBA Home Show** - Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, 3 to 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. Thursday is RIBA Member Night. If you are a RIBA member and have not received passes in the mail, contact Cheryl Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or [cboyd@ribuilders.org](mailto:cboyd@ribuilders.org). *Related story on page 7.*

**April 7<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>: 5-Hour CRLB Pre-Registration Course** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. This course is required by the Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board for new contractors before they register. This course is not required if you have been registered within the previous 10 years. Cost: \$250. You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 19.*

**April 11<sup>th</sup>: 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course** - 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., RIBA Headquarters, East Providence. Course is FREE for members with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$110 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee. This course is required to obtain or renew a Lead Safe Remodeler/Renovator License, which is necessary for work in all pre-1978 buildings in Rhode Island. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 19.*

**April 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>: OSHA 10-Hour Course** - 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day at RIBA headquarters. Course is FREE for members and their employees with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee. For more information and to register, contact Sheila McCarthy, [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 19.*

**April 21<sup>st</sup>: RIBA Breakfast, New Member Orientation, Open House and Networking Event** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, between 8 and 10 a.m. Participants may stay longer if they wish. This FREE event is held on the third Thursday of each month for new and current members who want to learn more about their member benefits and to meet the RIBA team. RSVPs are requested. To RSVP or if you or your company would like to sponsor a breakfast, please contact Cheryl Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or [cboyd@ribuilders.org](mailto:cboyd@ribuilders.org). *Related story on page 14.*

**April 25<sup>th</sup>: 4-Hour Lead-Safe Refresher Class** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. \$75 for non-members, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 19.*

**April 26<sup>th</sup>: Professional Women in Building Networking and Recruitment Event** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 6 p.m. Stop by and see what PWB is all about. Please RSVP to Tracey Boyajian at [tboyajian@abcleads.com](mailto:tboyajian@abcleads.com). *More information on page 13.*

**April 27<sup>th</sup>, May 4<sup>th</sup>, May 11<sup>th</sup>: Microsoft Excel™ for Beginners** - 5 to 7 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. RIBA members only. FREE for members, with a \$25 materials/registration fee. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. Refreshments will be served. *Details on page 20.*

**\*April 28: Asbestos Awareness Seminar** - 5 to 7 p.m., RIBA headquarters, East Providence. FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy at [smccarthy@ribuilders.org](mailto:smccarthy@ribuilders.org) or (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 20.*

**OS April dates TBA: Financial Literacy Seminars** - Navigant Credit Union, 693 Broad St., Central Falls 02863. For more information and to register, contact Betty Bernal, [bbernal@ribuilders.org](mailto:bbernal@ribuilders.org), or call (401) 438-7400. *THESE CLASSES WILL BE TAUGHT IN SPANISH. More information on page 19.*

**More information, registration and payment for most RIBA events is available at [RIBUILDERS.org](http://RIBUILDERS.org).**

◆ Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.

\* Designates a course eligible for Rhode Island state-mandated continuing education credits. Contact RIBA for confirmation.

S Class will be taught in Spanish.

# President's Message



Roland J. Fiore

## Our industry has come together to solve our labor shortage

Workforce development has always been an important focus for the Rhode Island Builders Association, but over the last few years, as we have recognized the critical problem of labor shortages in residential construction, RIBA and our industry partners have come together, and we've made a commitment to solve this problem.

This month the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP), with RIBA as the main coordinator, is pleased to launch an industry website that will serve as a "Jobs Bank" for both employers and prospective employees.

It is at RCWPJOBS.com that our members, other industry-related firms, and the full partnership should post job openings and review applicants looking for work.

Of course the website is just a tool for employers to post these

openings and for skilled workers to find jobs. The hard work is in recruiting people to join the industry and getting them trained with the proper skills.

This is why the RCWP is also working directly with our local career and technical education (CTE) schools to support their efforts and to work in a coordinated way to get motivated people into a well-paying industry that needs them.

So all this said, we ask that you check out RCWPJOBS.com, sign up for a free account, post job openings, get involved with us to support the schools and training centers, and, above all, help us recruit for our industry's future.

For more information about RIBA's workforce development efforts, how to post a job, and the RCWP, please contact RIBA directly at (401) 438-7400.



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# R.I. has first lead-certified high school students in America

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

It was a first not only for seniors at the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center (WACTC) but for students anywhere in America.

It took WACTC Instructor Charles Myers, working with Frederick Gill of the New England Institute of Technology, three years and lots of coordination with the Rhode Island Dept. of Health (DOH) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to bring the 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course to his students on February 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Myers, a certified environmental lead instructor, taught the course himself.

"This is the first time this course has been offered to high school career and technical education (CTE) students anywhere in the nation," Mr. Myers said.

Not only Mr. Myers but the nine students taking the course gave up two days of their winter vacation to participate. Eight of the students were from WACTC and one from the William M. Davies Jr. Career and Technical High School in Lincoln.

The need for this course was great, according to Mr. Myers, who taught the course on his own time and bought snacks for the students with his own money.

"The lead-poisoning levels in Woonsocket are staggering," he explained. "Educating our CTE students about lead hazards will not only prepare them for careers in the residential construction industry, it will help keep them and their own families safe."

Woonsocket's lead-poisoning numbers are still among the highest in Rhode Island, Mr. Myers pointed out, adding that 78 percent of all lead poisoning occurs from remodeling within a home, either from work done by a contractor or a resident.

The course was very hands-on because that's what resonates with the younger students, he stated. That meant not only reading the course materials but also dressing in hazmat suits, installing lead-dust barriers and learning to use respirators. The students even lead-tested the school itself.

"That test came back negative, a relief!" said Mr. Myers, who hopes to offer the 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course to seniors annually. Word came later that all students had passed the written exam on the 17<sup>th</sup>. As of this writing, plans called for Lt. Gov. Daniel J. McKee to present certificates of completion to the students at WACTC on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Always enthusiastic to expand on a success, Mr. Myers is again working with DOH and EPA, this time to develop classes for older Woonsocket students to teach their younger counterparts about lead hazards in the home. He hopes to involve CTE students from all over the state.

"Charlie Myers was the first to step forward to get this lead certification for his students, and he wants to take lead education



**Instructor Charles Myers works with students at the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center during the 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course in February.**

even further," Mr. Gill commented. "We hope that many more teachers will do the same."

Michael Weydt, industrial hygienist from the Environmental Lead Program at DOH, monitored the lead course at WACTC.

"This is historic. It's never been done in a high school before," Mr. Weydt commented. "It's a big step forward for graduating seniors about to enter the workforce, and that means it's a step ahead for the residential construction industry and for lead-hazard education."

# CTE students play top role at 2016 Home Show



By Paul F. Eno Editor

The new Jobs Bank and the state's career and technical education (CTE) students will make a big splash at the 2016 Home Show from March 31<sup>st</sup> to April 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence.

"During the Home Show, we will have a Jobs Bank Live Registration Event set up in the Convention Center lobby, near the show entrance," explained Louis Cotoia of Arnold Lumber Co., a member of the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors who is organizing the Home Show CTE involvement from the RIBA end.

"All the CTE schools have been invited to set up information kiosks around this point to sell their schools and programs. Show visitors, including potential students and their parents, will pass this while entering and leaving," Mr. Cotoia added.

"So as mom and dad walk by with their 8<sup>th</sup> grader who's ready to enter high school, they might say, 'If my student goes to this or that CTE program, he or she will get college credits and be able to go on CCRI or New England Tech.'" See the interview on page 26.

## Nearly 300 students involved

Inside the Home Show, the state's CTE students and their work will be prominent and on display. Some 20 schools and nearly 300 students have worked to build the five main exhibits, and many will assist at the event itself. *Related stories on pages 7 and 26.*

"Companies and schools alike have been reaching out to us as they hear about these opportunities at the Home Show. There is excitement at the schools, among the students and in the business community about what we're doing, and they want to come along

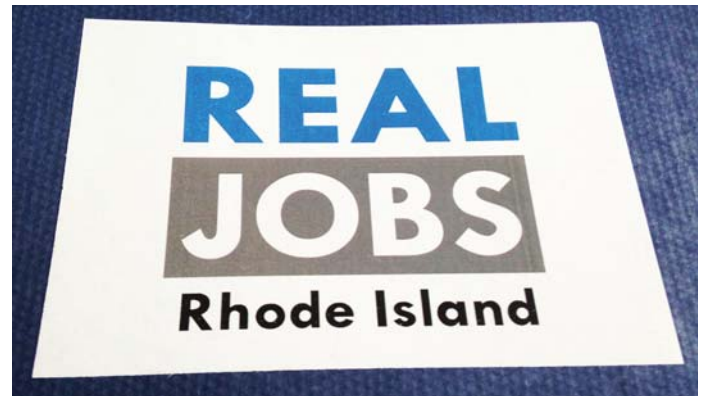
for the ride," Mr. Cotoia said.

"We are meeting the challenge Gov. Gina Raimondo has given all of us in the Real Jobs Rhode Island program: To lead by example and to put Rhode Island back to work."

## Members urged to attend

Mr. Cotoia urged RIBA members to attend the show to meet and encourage the students.

"When you're at the Home Show, make it a point to talk with the students and make them feel welcome. You might just find students you will want to mentor or hire someday soon!"



Robert J. Baldwin, a past RIBA president who serves on the state Career and Technical Education Board of Trustees, echoed Mr. Cotoia's call.


"Before this, CTE was one of the biggest secrets in Rhode Island. What Lou Cotoia and Cheryl Boyd (RIBA's director of membership and education) have done to change this is amazing," Mr. Baldwin said.

"The Home Show will be the biggest exposure for CTE in over a decade. It will give them publicity like they've never had, and it's creating a buzz among the students," he added.

"These are brilliant, talented young people who will be our future workforce. Through our activities with the Rhode Island Residential Construction Workforce Partnership, funded through Real Jobs Rhode Island, we are creating a springboard for their careers in our industry, and for solving our own labor problems."

Mr. Baldwin noted that school administrators and parents also are learning the value of CTE because of the Home Show involvement.

"The students are engaged in this whole process and are telling their friends, who in turn will get interested in CTE and careers in our industry.

Check the RIBA Home Show Facebook page for pictures of many of the student activities surrounding the Home Show. General Home Show information is at [RIBAHOMESHOW.com](http://RIBAHOMESHOW.com). 



# Board hears updates on finances, Home Show, legislative agenda

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Updates on many association matters, including a positive, in-depth financial report, highlighted the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors.

Local Director Louis Cotoia of Arnold Lumber Co., a member of the Home Show Committee, presented a report on that rapidly-approaching annual event, slated for March 31<sup>st</sup>-April 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Rhode Island Convention Center. The Home Show was projected to exceed the 2015 show numbers in exhibit space sold and in attendance.

Mr. Cotoia also outlined the extensive Home Show involvement by nearly 300 career and technical education (CTE) students. *Related stories on pages 1, 7 and 26.*

He also issued a call for help from RIBA members, especially those with flatbed trucks, for logistical assistance before, during and after the event. There is special need for help on Sunday night, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, when the main exhibits must be dismantled, he said.

For more information and to help, contact Membership and Education Director Cheryl Boyd at RIBA, (401) 438-7400 or [cboyd@ribuilders.org](mailto:cboyd@ribuilders.org).

RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio praised Mr. Cotoia and Ms. Boyd for their hard work on the Home Show, and he



**The Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors listens to a financial report from Kevin S. Hundley of Restivo Monacelli LLP on March 1<sup>st</sup>.**

noted how excited the CTE teachers and students have been about participating.

"Since the student involvement at last year's show, the CTE schools have been coming to us to get their students involved," Mr. Marcantonio stated.

"We expected to have five or six schools participating, but at this point we have 20. So we have nearly 300 students building the five major exhibits, with many helping at the Home Show itself."

Mr. Cotoia also noted that a Jobs Bank Live Registration Event will be set up in the Convention Center lobby during the

Home Show. *Related story on page 7.*

Mr. Marcantonio and Legislative Committee Co-Chairman Robert J. Baldwin updated the board on RIBA's advocacy agenda as the 2016 General Assembly session continues. *Related story on page 21.*

Ms. Boyd reported on the progress of the two new websites. These include RCWP-JOBS.com, online home of the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership's Jobs Bank, along with reconstruction of the association's main site, RIBUILDERS.org.

*see BOARD...page 25*

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## Member News: March Networking Night



The Rhode Island Builders Association's second Networking Night of the year took place at RIBA headquarters on March 10<sup>th</sup>, drawing over 60 members, potential members and guests. One highlight of the evening was a raffle for a number of Providence Bruins tickets, donated by Propane Plus. Here, Jay White of Propane Plus congratulates one winner, Paul Gagne of Douglas Lumber, Kitchens, Home Center.



The roving camera catches Angelo Pelleccione of Pro Roofing off guard as he chats with Scott Asprey of Risk and Safety Management and RIBA Health Insurance Administrator Robin Barlow.



Visiting with Latino Outreach Coordinator Betty Bernal, at left, are Nelson Sierra of Legacy Builders and Deb Schusterman of Homesmart Professionals Real Estate.



Ken Coury of Riverhead Building Supply and Kimberly Homs of Great In Counters fend off the pappazzi.



It's Bob Coogan of R.E. Coogan Heating and Art Dwyer of Wood's Heating Service!



Steve Fitzgerald of Fitzgerald Building and Remodeling meets up with Bill Stetson of Bill Stetson Carpentry and RIBA Director of Membership and Education Cheryl Boyd.





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### Member Profile: Ally Maloney of Maloney Interiors

# Blending passions gives her a unique career

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

In recent years many young people haven't been able to find jobs in the fields they've studied, but that never stopped Ally Maloney.

"When I found myself unemployed in 2013, I ended up starting Maloney Interiors," Ally states. But her unusual story begins long before that.

Ally, a native of Prospect, Connecticut, had an early interest in interior design, so that's what she studied when she enrolled at the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston in 2007.

"At the same time, I had a growing interest in yachts," Ally says. "But that would require naval architecture as a career path, and I didn't want to change majors and schools."

What to do? How about combining both fields? Instead of just designing home interiors, Ally decided to design yacht interiors (and exteriors) as well.

So in May 2009, she landed an apprenticeship in naval architecture with the legendary Frederick E. "Ted" Hood and Ted Hood Yachts in Portsmouth. When she graduated from Wentworth in 2012, Ally began a full-time job with Ted Hood.

"My interest in yacht design only grew, and I enrolled in the Westlawn Institute of Marine Technology, based in Bath, Maine, to study boat and yacht design," Ally recalls. "It was distance learning, so it didn't interfere with work at Hood Yachts."

Then came the big shock: Ted Hood died in 2013, the company closed, and Ally found herself without a job. But nothing can keep this girl down for long.

"I sat at home, unemployed, because it was impossible to find a job in yacht design, let alone in Rhode Island. People just weren't hiring," Ally recalls.

"Then I said to myself: 'Why don't I see if I have any friends or relatives who need interior design services or can introduce me to someone who does? So I started from nothing.'"

Thus Maloney Interiors was born. Nearly three years later, the company is already expanding. While most clients are from Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut, Ally says she's open to all geographic possibilities.

"I'll go anywhere as long as the job justifies it."

In fact, she just won her first international client, a man from



Ally Maloney, member of Professional Women in Building

Belgium who just bought a yacht here and has hired Ally to outfit the inside and outside of the vessel.

It was a desire to connect with people in the residential construction business that led Ally to the Rhode Island Builders Association and to RIBA's Professional Women in Building Council (PWB).

"I was looking for an organization to help me connect with builders and contractors so I could expand the residential side of my business," Ally says.

"I joined RIBA and PWB last year, and I remember the help I received from Cheryl Boyd when I asked about joining," Ally says.

Cheryl is now RIBA's director of membership and education.

"I'm pretty active, and RIBA and PWB are both great. It's especially nice to meet other women who serve other sectors of the building industry. The networking and social events are very helpful to me."

When Ally says she's active in RIBA, she isn't kidding. She's one of the prime designers of the Interior Design Showcase at the 2016 Home Show, and a whole room features the work of Maloney Interiors. She also belongs to RIBA's hard-working Home Show Committee.

As to the future of Maloney Interiors, "I dream big," Ally declares.

"People tell me to be patient, that businesses usually don't expand until they're past their five-year mark. But I hope to have a large office, showroom and employees, and as soon as possible."

The youth of company and owner notwithstanding, Maloney Interiors was recently named "Best of Rhode Island" for Nautical Home Accessories by *Rhode Island Monthly* magazine.

Go to it, Ally!

### ***Maloney Interiors LLC***

***President: Alyssa L. Maloney***

***RIBA member since: 2015***

***Focus: Residential and yacht interior design***

***Serves: International***

***Founded: 2013***

***Based: Warren, Rhode Island***



## Recruitment event slated for April 26<sup>th</sup> at RIBA

**WHEN:** Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters,  
450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members, \$5 for guests

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One week before event

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact  
Tracey Boyajian at [tboyajian@abcleads.com](mailto:tboyajian@abcleads.com).

There's an old saying: It's not whom you know but who knows you.

Make yourself known and find out about what the Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council (PWB) can do for you and your business at this Networking and Recruitment Event.

RIBA's PWB is only one of many chapters across the country

operating under the wing of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) PWB, representing over 1,000 women who work in all areas of the residential construction industry. These women include business owners, marketing experts, interior designers, mortgage brokers, lawyers and more.

PWB meets monthly, often at members' facilities, to network, hear informative and educational presentations, enjoy holiday activities, help the community, and simply to have fun.

Come to this great networking event on April 26<sup>th</sup>, learn more and be cordially invited to join this select group of aspiring building-industry professionals who share strategies and solutions to promote, enhance and support professional women in our industry.

Bring your co-workers, your employees, your customers, family and friends. Meet our members and see what great benefits can be yours by joining RIBA and PWB!

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## Networking breakfasts continue at RIBA each month

The Rhode Island Builders Association's monthly Breakfast, New Member Orientation, Open House and Networking Event, is becoming increasingly popular as the event enters its fifth month.

Held on the third Thursday of every month between 8 and 10 a.m., the event is FREE and open to both members and non-members.

The April Breakfast will take place on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Over 30 members and guests attended the first Breakfast, on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

Members of the RIBA team are always on hand to answer questions about the many member benefits and how to use them, and to hear feedback. Participants also are able to meet industry peers, network, and will learn about their fellow members and what they do.

Many members have never visited the RIBA offices, and this Breakfast, New Member Orientation, Open House and Networking Event is a great opportunity to do so and to find out how things work at your trade association. The hot buffet includes eggs, bacon, home fries, fruit, coffee and more.

Non-members are also invited to stop by and learn about membership. Participants may stay past 10 a.m. if they wish, tour the RIBA offices and meet the staff. RSVPs are requested.

To RSVP, or if you or your company would like to sponsor a Breakfast, please contact Cheryl Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or [cboyd@ribuilders.org](mailto:cboyd@ribuilders.org). Sponsors are entitled to a display table at the event.

### ***To Our Members***

***If any Supplier or Contractor Member is hosting an event for contractors or subcontractors, please be aware that RIBA Membership and Education Director Cheryl Boyd or another member of the RIBA team would love to attend to represent the industry and provide information on RIBA membership and benefits.***

**Contact Cheryl at (401) 438-7400  
or [cboyd@ribuilders.org](mailto:cboyd@ribuilders.org)**

## Use your new HOUZZ benefits

Earlier this year the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) announced a strategic alliance with Houzz. Through this alliance, members of the Rhode Island Builders Association, who automatically belong to NAHB, can benefit from the digital tools to reach new clients and collaborate with current ones.

More than 35 million people use Houzz each month to find professionals to build and remodel their homes.

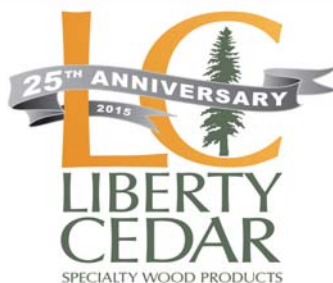
As an NAHB member, you benefit from a powerful package of benefits that will help grow your business on Houzz:

- Free access to Houzz Concierge Service for one-on-one consultations,
- Special pricing on Pro+ local advertising to reach homeowners in your area who are looking for your services, and
- Up to 10 percent off Houzz Shop products.

Start by creating a free Houzz professional profile online at [www.HOUZZ.com/pro](http://www.HOUZZ.com/pro) and join the community of 20,000+ NAHB members already on Houzz.

If you need assistance creating or improving your profile, a Houzz expert will help you get the most out of Houzz and walk you through the benefits of our new strategic alliance at no cost. Find assistance at [info.HOUZZ.com/NAHBconcierge.html](http://info.HOUZZ.com/NAHBconcierge.html).

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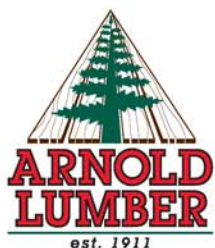


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## Courses in Spanish *Through May*

**WHAT & WHEN:** Since February 6<sup>th</sup>, with CPR/AED/First Aid, OSHA safety and classes in other subject areas as they are scheduled. Call for information. See page 4.

**WHERE:** Various locations as announced.

**COST:** FREE

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Latino Education Coordinator Betty Bernal at bbernal@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Do you have Spanish-speaking employees?

Make sure they are knowledgeable and safe on the jobsite with the Rhode Island Builders Association's new Spanish-language courses to improve their business and comply with regulatory requirements.

Taking place on Tuesdays and Thursdays through May 26<sup>th</sup> has been "English for Contractors."

CPR/AED/First Aid course in Spanish has been offered, along with the OSHA 10 Course and the 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course.

Financial Literacy Seminars will be offered in April at Navigant Credit Union, 693 Broad St., Central Falls. All Spanish-language courses are FREE.



## Initial 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler Course *April 11<sup>th</sup>*

**WHEN:** Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees, with \$40 materials/registration fee. \$110 for non-members, with \$40 materials/registration fee. Lunch is included.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One week before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

The Rhode Island Builders Association will once again present the 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course in April. This course is required to obtain a Lead Safe Remodeler/Renovator Certificate, which is necessary for work in all pre-1978 buildings in Rhode Island.



## Lead licensing refresher *April 25<sup>th</sup>*

**WHEN:** Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. A \$75 charge for non-members and a \$40 materials/registration fee.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One week before class.

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This is a four-hour RRP refresher class with Scott Asprey of Risk & Safety Management, for contractors who have their lead renovator/remodeler certification and whose certificate is up for renewal.

Lead-hazard enforcement on residential jobsites is very strict, so keep your knowledge up to date!

The class will review lead-hazard controls and update attendees on any changes to state or federal regulations.

You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.



## 5 Hour Pre- Registration Course *April 7<sup>th</sup>, April 18<sup>th</sup>* New contractors only

**WHEN:** Both dates, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** \$250

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One week before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

The Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board (CRLB) now requires five hours of education for anyone who plans to register as a new contractor in Rhode Island. The course includes: Introduction to Construction Contracts, Introduction to Construction Codes and Standards, Introduction to Construction Regulations and Regulating Agencies, Introduction to Construction Business Principles and Practices, and Workplace Health and Safety. Pre-registration is required for admittance.

This course is not required if you have been registered within the previous 10 years.



## OSHA-10 Course

April 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>

**WHEN:** Wednesday & Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members and their employees with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER:** One week before class

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Scott Asprey of Risk & Safety Management will take participants through the OSHA 10-Hour Certification Course, which provides training in compliance with the Dept. of Labor & Training's municipal jobsite rules.

It trains safety directors, foremen and field employees in OSHA standards and highlights major safety concerns so that jobsite accidents can be reduced. Everyone completing the course will receive a copy of the OSHA Standard 29 CFR Part 1926 and an OSHA-10 certification card.



## Asbestos Awareness

April 28<sup>th</sup>

This course eligible for continuing-education credit

**WHEN:** Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 5-7 p.m.

**WHERE:** RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy. #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$50 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge.

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join Instructor Lance Comeau of Rhode Island Analytical Labs for a history of asbestos, and its various uses and forms.

Also learn about the health effects associated with asbestos exposure and see examples of suspect asbestos-containing materials (ACM) and their possible location within buildings.

The class will also show attendees how to recognize damaged and deteriorated ACM materials, and what personal protective equipment should be used when working around asbestos on the jobsite. Asbestos bulk/air sampling methodologies will be covered also.

Asbestos is a highly litigious subject, and a heavily regulated material, so it's important for contractors to be up to speed!



## Microsoft Excel<sup>TM</sup> for Beginners

April 27<sup>th</sup>, May 4<sup>th</sup>, May 11<sup>th</sup>

This course open to RIBA members only

**WHEN:** Wednesdays, April 27<sup>th</sup>, May 4<sup>th</sup> and May 11<sup>th</sup>, 5-7 p.m.

**WHERE:** Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

**COST:** RIBA members only. FREE for members, with a \$25 materials/registration fee.

**FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:** Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Learn the basics of this fundamental Microsoft Office<sup>®</sup> spreadsheet software in this class with instructor Kristine Ricci.

You can use Excel<sup>TM</sup> to create and format workbooks (a collection of spreadsheets) in order to analyze data and make more informed business decisions. Excel can be of great use to contractors for accounting, budgeting, planning, billing, tracking and more.



**For more information  
on scheduled RIBA  
classes, see page 19, the  
calendar on page 4 and  
RIBUILDERS.org.**

**If there is a class you  
would like to see offered,  
contact Sheila McCarthy  
at (401) 438-7400  
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smccarthy@ribuilders.org**



# RIBA active as 2016 General Assembly session ramps up



**Steven Carlino**

The most active part of the Rhode Island General Assembly's 2016 session is approaching, and we are actively advocating on over 20 different issues.

Our primary emphasis is on six of these issues: municipal development impact fees; wetlands buffers; developer liability during the approval process; height restrictions in flood zones; procedures affecting emergency restoration companies, often known as "fire chasers"; and allowing younger career and technical education (CTE) students to work on jobsites with proper supervision.

Other issues we have been monitoring include the "trigger" square footage for a septic system review when work is done in the "critical resource area" along the Route 1 corridor. Our environmental Committee co-chairs, Tom D'Angelo and Tim Sta-

siunas have successfully advocated for our position that the square footage remain at 600 and not drop to 400.

Also before lawmakers are some important energy matters, a possible fund for improvements to and expansion of the state's drinking-water and sewer infrastructure, proposals related to brownfields, and the continuing problem with high taxes on work trucks.

For more information on these measures, contact RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio at (401) 438-7400. Better yet, talk to John about getting involved in our Legislative Committee. We need your ideas, your concerns and your help to prevent laws and regulations that will harm the residential construction industry and Rhode Island's economy!



**Robert J. Baldwin**

## RIBA's Legislative Committee

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# RIBA members serve on new R.I. Housing advisory panels

Rhode Island Housing (RIH) announced on March 10<sup>th</sup> that it has created two new partnerships with industry leaders: Experts in Homeownership and Experts in Multi-Family Development.

The partnership was launched on February 11<sup>th</sup> and will involve conferences twice a year to update RIH on the industry trends, according to a statement from the agency.

Executive Director John Marcantonio represents the Rhode Island Builders Association on the Experts in Homeownership panel. The panel also includes RIBA members Joseph Garlick of NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley and Alfred Grant of Washington Trust Co.

The Experts in Multi-Family Development includes RIBA members John Bentz

of Property Advisory Group, Jose Montiero Jr. of Webster Bank and Julia Anne Sлом of Washington Trust Co.

“These partnerships present a great opportunity to learn from our clients and col-

leagues. Understanding what experts in the industry are seeing on the ground will ensure our programs and initiatives reach their full potential,” said RIH Executive Director Barbara Fields.



## Lead renovators face renewal, EPA changes refresher course

*National Association of Home Builders*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on February 17<sup>th</sup> published in the *Federal Register* the recently signed rule modifying the requirements for the refresher training course under the Lead Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) rule. The changes are not as extensive as the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) wanted.

However, EPA’s changes only apply to states where the federal agency administers the *see RENOVATORS...next page*

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# State Supreme Court mulls action on fire district impact fees

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

Did the defunct East Greenwich Fire District have the legal authority to collect impact fees on development? And, even if it did, were those fees correctly applied, especially when the town absorbed the fire district and its funds into a new municipal fire department?

While the Kent County Superior Court said “yes” on all counts in 2014, now the Rhode Island Supreme Court has been asked to reverse that decision.

The case carries the formidable title: “5750 Post Road Medical Offices LLC, Link Commercial Properties LLC, Amalfi Homes LLC East, Greenwich Acquisitions LLC and Coastway Community Bank Vs. the East Greenwich Fire District and the Town of East Greenwich.”

The fire district was absorbed by the Town of East Greenwich in 2013.

## Who can assess impact fees?

In oral arguments before the five-member Supreme Court on February 25<sup>th</sup>, Joelle C. Rocha of the Law Offices of Kelly & Mancini pointed out that the Rhode Island Development Impact Fee Act of 2000 spells out statewide criteria for the municipal levies, namely that only “cities and towns” can assess impact fees.

“This legislation enables only government entities that can enact ordinances to adopt impact fees,” Ms. Rocha noted.

“A fire district is a quasi-municipal entity. It cannot enact ordinances,” Justice Maureen McKenna Goldberg commented in response.

“One developer had to pay a \$75,000 impact fee for a 12,200 square-foot commercial building,” she told the court.

Presenting opposing arguments on behalf of East Greenwich, Town Solicitor Peter A. Clarkin admitted that the fire district’s absorption by the town was “not smooth” and its record-keeping “not that good.”

It was not known when the Supreme Court would render a decision in the matter.



Joelle Rocha,  
Vice President/Secretary  
Professional Women in Building

## **RENOVATORS**...from previous page

program, and those do not include any New England state.

The Rhode Island Builders Association offers the 4-hour Lead Safe Refresher Class regularly, and it is free of tuition charge for members.

While the EPA changes to the course don’t apply in Rhode Island, it and the 13 other states that administer their own programs will have to take legislative or regulatory action to adopt an on-line refresher-course option.

Whether members choose to opt for the new online-only course or the traditional in-person course, many will have to move swiftly to complete the refresher training before deadline.

## Extension is over

March 31<sup>st</sup> marks the end of an unprecedented extension granted last year for those remodelers and other contractors who received their EPA Lead-Safe Certified Renovator certifications on or before March 31, 2010.

After March 31<sup>st</sup> the clock will resume ticking for the second phase of renovators. Those who became certified between April 1, 2010, and March 31, 2011, must be re-certified within six years from the exact date they completed the original training course.

In any case, if any EPA Lead-Safe Certified Renovator does not complete a refresher training course before their certification expires, he or she must instead retake the initial eight-hour training course to continue to be certified.

Learn more about the rule at [nahb.org/leadpaint](http://nahb.org/leadpaint), or contact Tamra Spielvogel at (800) 368-5242 x8327.




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Ms. Rocha also stated that, by resolution and without a public hearing, the Town of East Greenwich absorbed the fire district in 2013, creating a new municipal fire department.

The town then failed to return the unused portion of an estimated \$800,000 in impact fees, collected by the fire district, to those who had paid them, in accordance with the 2000 state statute.

The money went to the town’s general fund instead, she stated.

Some of the impact fees were enormous, Ms. Rocha added.

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**The Rhode Island Builder Report**

## R.I. Housing announces financing for four major projects

Rhode Island Housing (RIH) has approved financing for affordable housing developments in Cumberland, Newport's North End, the Olneyville neighborhood in Providence and Pascoag village in Burrillville. They include:

- A \$10.3 million refinancing for the Chimney Hill Apartments in Cumberland, a six-story, 131-apartment elderly housing complex that was first opened in 1978. The loan will pay for capital improvements and a new 40-year affordability agreement.
- \$1 million from the Housing Preservation and Production Program for the Park Holm III development in Newport's North End, to renovate 38 apartments and build four new apartments.
- The RIH board voted to reserve up to \$827,255 in 9-percent low-income housing tax credits and approved a first mortgage of up to \$390,000 for Amherst Gardens in Olneyville. Amherst Gardens will provide 36 affordable apartments and two commercial units, including several formerly foreclosed properties. The total project cost is \$10.2 million.
- Greenridge Apartments, a 96-unit development in Pascoag planned by NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley, was approved for a first mortgage up to \$1,735,180. The board also reserved \$1,072,000 in 2015 9-percent low-income housing tax credits, and approved a "forward reservation" of the same amount in 2016 and or 2017 credits.



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## **BOARD...from page 8**

A report on the growth of the Builders Insurance Group (BIG) was offered by its president, Kenneth Jones.

Environmental Committee Co-Chairman Thomas E. D'Angelo updated the board on the Dept. of Environmental Management's (DEM's) Rule 17, which sets the minimum square footage at which an addition or remodel triggers a septic-system review and possible upgrade or replacement. The provision in this Rule essentially applies to the "critical resource area" along the Route 1 corridor in South County.

"We have been pleased to see that the trigger area will remain at 600 square feet instead of going to 400, as originally proposed," Mr. D'Angelo stated.

RIBA members are invited to attend the informational portion of each Board of Directors meeting, usually held on the first Tuesday of each month, except July and August. To attend, please contact Elizabeth Carpenter at (401) 438-7400 or [ecarpenter@ribuilders.org](mailto:ecarpenter@ribuilders.org).



For membership information  
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# Frederick Gill & Louis Cotoia

## Residential Construction Workforce Partnership

*Louis Cotoia is with the Contractor Sales Division of Arnold Lumber Co. He serves on the Rhode Island Builders Association's Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, the Home Show Committee and is a key player in the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP).*

*Frederick Gill is project director at the New England Institute of Technology and a key participant in the RCWP.*



Louis Cotoia



Frederick Gill

**THE BUILDER:** An unskilled workforce has been a longtime problem in Rhode Island. One result is that employers in the residential construction industry have had a difficult time filling job vacancies. In response, the Rhode Island Builders Association and its partners have formed the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP) as a way for the industry to solve its own labor problems through job training, then bringing together the right employees with the right employers. How did all this get started?

**COTOIA:** It came about from the need you just stated. And we realized early on that the answer to that need is to remake how career and technical education (CTE) in our state is going to take place going forward. It's about bringing together all the necessary people and elements to attract and train good workers, and get them to stay in Rhode Island and work in our industry for the employers who need them. It's about awareness, recruitment and retention.

To some degree, the Rhode Island Builders Association has always worked with the schools and the CTE programs. For the past four years, I myself have been working with Youth Build Providence and, more recently, with the Providence Career and Technical Academy (PCTA) and with the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center (WACTC).

We established some relationships, and that's how I got to know Paul McConnell (CTE specialist at the Rhode Island Dept. of Education) and Freddy Gill.

**GILL:** Our vision going forward is to get all the state's con-

struction programs together, and build on our RCWP partnerships, and our teamwork with RIBA and the business community. These partnerships will be the engine of opportunity for the students and other potential employees in the residential construction industry.

This doesn't involve just post-high school job opportunities but chances for college pathways as well. Some of those opportunities will include chances for students to obtain college credits through places like New England Institute of Tech-

nology, the Community College of Rhode Island and others.

**COTOIA:** That's part of the push for awareness that RCWP is carrying out. Many students aren't aware that they can get these college credits to use if they go on to post-secondary education.

**THE BUILDER:** So we're talking about getting students into CTE programs, then getting them to work in the industry and stay in the state.

**COTOIA:** Exactly. We don't have a job shortage in the residential construction industry, we have an employee shortage.

One issue has been the perception by both parents and school administrators that high school students should all go to college. So there's an idea that only students who perform poorly in academics should be in CTE. This can be a big mistake, and one of our goals is to change that perception for parents, students and administrators.

Many students are coming out of college with a huge debt. If they can find jobs in their fields at all, they might be making \$30,000 a year. Some might have done far better going with CTE in trades they're really interested in, that are just as academically challenging, and where they could start at a much higher salary based on their skills and willingness to learn more.

So one of RCWP's goals, working along with Bob Baldwin, Paul and Freddy, will be to help schools promote their CTE programs and help them attract more students. We will use our re-

see *INTERVIEW...next page...*



## **INTERVIEW...from previous page**

sources, including the grant money we have received through the Real Jobs Rhode Island program, to help the schools do things they can't do on their own. That will include television and radio spots, and promotional materials that can be used inside or outside the schools.

We'll also sponsor construction-career fairs at the schools, along with special projects. These projects will not just be building flower boxes. They will be ambitious and special. For example, if a family is in danger of losing their home because of code violations, we'll have students from one or more schools trained, equipped, supervised and supported to go in and save that home.

**GILL:** Another goal is to raise awareness of CTE earlier when it comes to students, starting when they're in middle school level or even earlier. We need to start building a foundation then, making them aware that there are all kinds of opportunities in the construction trades.

As Lou said, we have to start changing any negative perceptions about construction.

**COTOIA:** Administrators, parents and students all have to be made aware that CTE isn't about "wood shop" anymore. These are technology shops! And they have the best equipment, the best resources, and the best teachers around.

**THE BUILDER:** Paul McConnell recently told the RIBA Board of Directors that there is a critical shortage of CTE teachers. Will RCWP address this as well?

**COTOIA:** Yes. In fact, Paul and I are banging that drum wherever we can right now. That's going to be part of our awareness effort as we deal with contractors, the business community and other potential instructors.

**THE BUILDER:** You've both laid out some broad plans, but how will RCWP actually reach school administrators, parents, contractors and everyone you must approach to fulfill these goals?

**COTOIA:** We're going to reach parents by working through the guidance departments at every school, one-on-one and in groups. We'll find out what their needs are, and we'll try to get them to think outside the box by discouraging the negative stereotypes we've mentioned.

We'll help them with job fairs, come to parents' nights, PTO meetings and orientations if they're willing to have us. And it won't be just about carpentry, but electrical, HVAC, plumbing and everything else our industry stands for.

**GILL:** In line with what I said about reaching younger students, we're looking into having career fairs at middle schools. These will be hands-on activities for the students, not just speeches or slide shows.

When we encounter interested students, we can nurture and mentor them into the right CTE program. This is a passionate industry, and we will look for students who have the passion they need for the trades.

We also need to get across to students that if they have the drive

and the passion, they can make a lot of money in the residential construction industry.

**COTOIA:** That's right. Sometimes there's a perception by administrators and parents that this isn't a money-making industry. That's completely untrue. If a student works hard, there are all kinds of possibilities.

**GILL:** An important part of our work is building relationships between business and education. We've already done research about how this takes place in different states. We'll show them how to make the programs better, and how to maximize opportunities for the students.

**THE BUILDER:** So that's where the Worcester Technical High School model comes in?\*

**COTOIA:** Exactly. That's the model for the RCWP. We're going to bring in our business community, both from RIBA, from the Rhode Island Lumber and Building Materials Dealers Association, from chambers of commerce and all the RCWP partners – wherever we can get business people involved with the schools.

This will make the business community aware of the programs these schools have, and it will open their eyes. There are outstanding CTE programs in this state that the business community, and even many in our own industry, aren't aware of.

These programs are the source for new, skilled employees who can be brought up in a contractor's business and be further trained the way the contractor wants them trained.

There are RIBA members who are aware of the value of these students. One of those is Jim Deslandes (of Deslandes Construction Inc.) who swears by these CTE programs. He hires one to two CTE students from Warwick every single year, and Jim is now a partner for WACTC.

We need a lot more contractors involved to that degree.

**GILL:** There's something else to be said for our CTE programs that many people don't realize. Rhode Island CTE students get more certifications than Massachusetts CTE students do. These are excellent credentials they can showcase to any employer and to meet industry needs.

In Rhode Island, they're following a standard curriculum, proper protocols, preparing for work-based needs through project-based learning.

**THE BUILDER:** This is obviously a huge team effort, and school administrators have to be part of the team. After CTE reform legislation passed in 2014, there was resistance from some administrators to the goal of creating a statewide CTE system in Rhode Island, as opposed to the current independent programs. Have these administrators come around to the idea at this point, and are they supporting RCWP?

**COTOIA:** Time and performance as RCWP cooperates with the Dept. of Education is going to show any administrator who still has doubts that this program is going to work. I think their full cooperation will result.

One of the best examples of this will be the 2016 RIBA Home

*see COTOIA & GILL...page 28*

## **COTOIA & GILL...from previous page**

Show. We have 20 schools and nearly 300 CTE students intimately involved with the Home Show. The administrators are seeing that this hasn't been just to help us build the attractions. They're seeing the tremendous talent and teamwork of these students, and the fact that they're managing their own projects, and exercising leadership and responsibility on a jobsite.

Not only school administrators but all of southeastern New England will see this at the Home Show, raising awareness about CTE and its value for the whole region. Sure, there are still a lot of kinks that have to be worked out as far as the academic rules are concerned, but we can do that.

**GILL:** I honestly think we're at a turning point. In the five years I've been doing my job, this is the first time I've seen this kind of cooperation. Instead of relying on our own resources in the schools as we have always done, we now have the entire residential construction industry offering resources through RCWP.

For the Home Show, this is the first time all construction programs from across the state have come together and been involved in a common project. I've never seen that happen before. And 99 percent of the schools received the idea with open arms.

The teachers and students are very excited and enthusiastic, and the administrators realize that it's a great thing for student recruitment and retention.

### **THE BUILDER: Isn't there going to be an RCWP Jobs Bank kiosk at the entrance to the Home Show?**

**COTOIA:** Definitely. As everyone enters the show, they will see – in the Convention Center lobby in front of the gate -- the Jobs Bank Live Registration Event. But flanking and surrounding that kiosk will be others representing every CTE school that wishes to participate and talk to visitors, especially potential students and their parents, about their programs.

All the schools have been invited to participate free, and many have already accepted. All 20,000 or more Home Show visitors will see this as they enter and leave.

At the Jobs Bank Live Registration Event itself, employers and potential employees will be able to open their online accounts and post job openings and resumés at RCWPJOBS.com.

### **THE BUILDER: What kind of timeline do you see for getting the jobs flowing?**

**COTOIA:** We're going to go as far as we can as quickly as we can. The train is moving very quickly.

**GILL:** And the reason the train is moving so quickly is that Bob Baldwin, Lou, Paul McConnell and I have built a great relationship from the time we started working on this. We're a team to move this forward with the single-minded goals of helping students progress while helping the residential construction industry fill the jobs it needs.

RCWP and the Jobs Bank will be the go-to source for talent.

### **THE BUILDER: How can a RIBA member get on the bandwagon with this?**

**COTOIA:** Start by signing up for the online Jobs Bank, even if you don't need any new employees right now.

And please participate! Be on an advisory board. Visit the schools. Mentor students who could eventually become the best employees you ever had. Find out how the CTE schools work. Give your opinions and tell them what you need.

Ideally, please consider becoming an instructor in a CTE program because there is a huge need for this. Paul McConnell can tell you all about it and can get you on the track (401-222-8453).

Contact Cheryl Boyd, RIBA's director of membership and education, at (401) 438-7400 or cboyd@ribuilders.org to find out more and to start getting involved.



*Worcester Technical High School (WTHS) has been declared by School Planning and Management magazine as "The #1 Public Education Facility in the Nation." The largest of that Massachusetts city's seven high schools, WTHS has 1,400 students in 24 technical programs. The students, 51 percent of whom are female, have exceeded the national benchmarks in English, mathematics and every sub-group in five out of the past six years.*

*In 2014, WTHS became the model for Rhode Island's career and technical education (CTE) reform plan, which involves combining the state's CTE programs into one, based on the WTHS model.*

## **JOBS BANK...from page 1**

Lumber Co., a member of the RIBA Board of Directors who is spearheading RCWP activities.

"I think of it as a kind of online dating site to bring together job seekers and employers," Mr. Cotoia added.

People are already posting on the site, RCWPJOBS.com, stated Cheryl Boyd, RIBA's membership and education director and the site administrator.

"The Jobs Bank website launched on March 1st," Ms. Boyd explained. "Signing up for an account is free. Employers can post jobs, and job seekers can go there to find jobs."

The Jobs Bank is a crucial part of the RCWP strategy to help the residential construction industry solve its own labor problems, said RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio.

"The Jobs Bank will dovetail with RCWP's intensive efforts to partner CTE schools with the businesses who need employees, to recruit and retain students for the CTE programs, to recruit adults with skills the industry needs, and to arrange for other job training where needed," Mr. Marcantonio said.

Mr. Cotoia suggested that employers sign up on RCWPJOBS.com even if they are not currently looking for employees.

"I would sign up right away. That way you will be in the loop, will learn how the Jobs Bank works, and you will be ready if and when you need a good worker," Mr. Cotoia said.

RCWPJOBS.com is easy to join and to use, according to Ms. Boyd. For more information, contact her at (401) 438-7400 or at cboyd@ribuilders.org.





# NAHB looks at the roots of the industry's labor shortage

*National Association of Home Builders*

The construction industry has been dealing with its “elephant in the room” — the skilled labor shortage — for years, and the conversation is getting louder as stakeholders search for solutions to the issue crippling stronger growth in the sector.

During a recent NAHB HomeAdvisor Insights Forum, experts addressed the complex circumstances surrounding the labor shortage, as well as possible solutions. The panelists said the conversation needs to advance beyond the industry to reach the general media, officials and others who can help drive significant change.

Between April 2006 and January 2011, the construction industry eliminated more than 40 percent of its work force, cutting nearly 2.3 million jobs. And most of those workers haven't returned. Companies are struggling to attract millennial workers to careers in the trades that the aging workforce will soon leave behind. Industry groups have consistently warned that the construction industry needs to develop a plan to build up the worker pipeline.

In a September Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) survey, 86 percent of contractors across the U.S. reported they were struggling to fill hourly craft jobs or salaried professional positions.

Earlier this year, a HomeAdvisor survey found that 93 percent of industry respondents said the labor shortage is preventing their businesses from growing over the next year. Although half of respondents plan to hire one or more skilled workers in the next year, 76 percent said they believe it will be hard to find new employees.

Ramifications of the labor shortage have reached far into other sectors of the economy, including housing.

Jonathan Smoke, chief economist at Realtor.com, said the top issue standing in the way of potential homeowners purchasing a property is their inability to find an affordable home or one that meets their needs. This severe lack of inventory has pushed up home prices and priced many

first-time buyers out of the market.

“New construction is always the escape valve when there's tight inventory,” Mr. Smoke said during the forum. “There's no question we're not producing enough.”

He added that when builders are asked why they aren't constructing more homes to keep up with demand, they almost always cite the availability and cost of labor.

## Lack of young people

The labor shortage conversation has been largely dominated by one issue: the lack of young people entering the industry. During the recession, the workers who fled the industry were disproportionately younger.

Now, millennials often seek careers in the hot technology sector, even when they might earn a higher wage in construction, according to CNBC real estate reporter Diana Olick.

“When you look at the tech sector and young people's expectations, the Googles of this world ... are just packed to the gills with 20-something workers making less than they would on the construction site, but thinking this is their ticket to being Mark Zuckerberg,” she said.

Along with the issue of reaching young people is the growing perception that careers in the trades aren't as respected as white-collar jobs, the panelists noted.

AGC CEO Stephen Sandherr said those misconceptions are entrenched among students, parents and educators. “It's a cultural issue,” he commented.

Panelists suggested possible solutions to the shortage through marketing, attracting more young people to the industry (related stories on pages 1, 6, 7 and 26), better career and technical education (CTE), immigration reform, and better collaboration among industry sectors.

In Rhode Island, all this is the goal of the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership. To learn more, contact Cheryl Boyd at the Rhode Island Builders Association, (401) 438-7400 or [cboyd@ribuilders.org](mailto:cboyd@ribuilders.org).

# Know your 'fair employment practices'

**Girard R. Visconti Esq.**

Under Rhode Island law, if you employ four or more individuals in your business you are subject to the Fair Employment Practices Act (FEPA), which protects against employment-related discrimination based on protected classifications.

A recent amendment to FEPA expanded on the protection for pregnancy-related conditions. Employers must reasonably accommodate conditions related to pregnancy and childbirth, such as modification of equipment, job restructuring and allowing an employee a private, non-bathroom area to breastfeed a baby unless undue hardship can be established by the employer.

The Rhode Island Dept. of Labor and Training has issued a new notice for employees that must be posted in the workplace. This notice should be placed in a common area, visible to employees where related wage and discrimination notices are displayed by the employer.

If you have any questions regarding your compliance with this provision of state law, please consult your attorney or contact Shechtman Halperin Savage LLP at (401) 272-1400 and an employment attorney at the firm will address your questions and concerns.



## LABOR LAW...from page 2

- What is the nature and degree of the employer's control, i.e. “whether the worker is dependent on the employer or truly an independent contractor”?

- The worker must control meaningful aspects of the work performed, to the extent that it is possible to view the worker as a person conducting his or her own business.

For more information, visit [www.EMPLOYMENTLAWDAILY.com](http://www.EMPLOYMENTLAWDAILY.com) or contact the author at Shechtman Halperin Savage LLP, (401) 272-1400 or e-mail [gvisconti@shslawfirm.com](mailto:gvisconti@shslawfirm.com).



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