

The Benefits of ICC Membership



Jim Ellwood, center, ICC's liaison to the High School Technical Training Program, traveled to a career fair in Manhattan, Kan., in early 2014 to help Rod Haney, left, Building Official for Winfield, Kan., and Brad Claussen, Building Official for Manhattan, Kan., talk about the HSTTP. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROD HANEY

Kansas' Haney Catches HSTTP Fever, Wants to Spread it like Sunflowers

Rod Haney was intrigued when he saw the *ICC eNews* stories about the Code Council's High School Technical Training Program (HSTTP).

He got fired up when he heard Jim Ellwood, ICC's liaison to the HSTTP speak on the program at the 2013 Annual Business Conference in Atlantic City, N.J.

Two years later, Haney, Building Official in Winfield, Kan., has helped establish HSTTP programs this school year at Winfield High School and at nearby Washburn Institute of Technology. There are 12 students participating at the high school and some 27 at Washburn, including college students and students from 16 feeder high schools bused there daily for classes.

And he wants to help start more in Kansas. It's just a natural fit for him.

By Nick Reiher

Kansas' Haney Catches HSTTP Fever, Wants to Spread it like Sunflowers *continued*

“My parents were educators,” said Haney, who also is very involved in ICC’s Heart of America Chapter as a Past President. “I thought the HSTTP would be great for our area.”

Through the HSTTP, high school students take a class at their school focusing on one of ICC’s *International Codes*. It could be building or fire one semester, plumbing or mechanical another. When they successfully complete the course, students receive a certificate of completion.

“And what a great thing for those students to have when they go looking for a summer job,” Haney said. “A young person comes up to you for a job with that certificate in their hand. Who are you going to hire?”

Ellwood gladly accepted Haney’s invitation to join him at a building trades career fair in Manhattan, Kan., early in 2014.

Both men said there was a lot of interest at their booth, as students, building trades representatives and officials stopped by.

“It was great to have Rod there,” Ellwood said. “As part of Heart of America, he knew a lot of the areas these people were from. So he was able to give examples in specific areas, like, “You know such and such building going up in your town? Well, here’s how the HSTTP would apply.”

Haney didn’t wait for those visitors who got his business card to call him. He talked with officials at Winfield High School and at Washburn Institute about setting up an HSTTP program. He even paid the \$125 fee for the high school program.

A couple of other high schools in towns near Haney and farther west in Kansas have shown some interest, he added, and some are very close to jumping on board. Haney hopes they do, because his area already is showing a slowdown in construction due to a lack of contractors and other building officials.

That’s leaving some smaller towns depending on the knowledge of smaller contractors to make sure there’s safe construction. “And you can’t afford to make too many mistakes,” he added.

Still, Haney knows that even with a great program such as the HSTTP, schools need a lot of support to help them through the process. It takes the right teachers and modifying their curriculum, which can take some time.

“But more and more high schools realize college is not the answer for all of their graduates,” Haney said. “You have some kids who get to senior year and say, ‘Whoa. What am I going to do now?’”

Vocational training long has been an alternative, but Haney notes some schools had to cut it during the recession. With the economy beginning to heal, and the building industry in great need of young people to replace an aging workforce, he said now is a good time for ICC to get into high schools, junior colleges and colleges.

Tina Rakes, Baldwin City, Kan., Code Administrator and former member of the ICC Board of Directors, visits her local high school a couple times a year to talk about architecture, engineering and the codes.

“You have to put it on their level, or you’ll lose them,” Rakes said. “And, like all educators, you’re looking for that ‘aha’ moment. Like when one of the students said to me, ‘The code process is kind of like a debate.’ Bingo.”

Rakes said ICC can raise awareness of HSTTP and vice versa. She said more schools, even colleges, need to have more of a relationship with building safety professionals to help put a face on the need for codes, no matter if you’re a building official, architect, construction worker, or even a high school vocational student.

“They have so much thrown at them,” Rakes said. “Here they are, trying to crank out a hope chest in class before they graduate. The HTSSP can show them a lot more they can use in the workplace.”

Rakes’ successor on the ICC Board, Jerry Mallory, said he’s working with high school officials in towns in northeast Kansas.

“High school is where you need to start getting them interested,” said Mallory, Building Official and Fire Marshal in Johnson County, Kan. “By the time they’ve graduated college, it’s too late. They’re on to something else.”

Mallory said the HSTTP isn’t about just growing a new crop of code inspectors and building officials. “The program can help make better contractors, too.”

Ellwood is glad to have the kernel of interest beginning to blossom in Kansas. He’s also glad Haney saw the stories on the HSTTP, and even more glad he followed through.

“He caught the fever,” Ellwood said of Haney. “I hope more Members do.” **BSJO**

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