

Home builders want students for construction jobs

By Hudson Sangree, Sacramento Bee

Sacramento home builders are trying to deal with a severe shortage of construction workers by training high school students in summer internships. They want the teens and their parents to consider the possibility that a construction career might be a good alternative to college, though that can require some convincing.

“There’s a negative stereotype about dirty jobs,” said Rick Larkey, executive director of the North State Building Industry Foundation. The group is leading the effort to recruit 5,000 new workers over five years in Sacramento, Placer, Yolo and El Dorado counties. A big part of that is the outreach to high-school students through internships and after-school programs.

The foundation’s pitch on its website is that a four-year college degree isn’t the guarantee of financial success it used to be. The American workforce is in desperate need of skilled technicians, and incomes for construction work can rival jobs requiring four-year degrees without the expense of college.

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