

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

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With early Spring comes NWCC's annual opportunity to **R.E.A.C.T.**: Reflect, Evaluate, Analyze, Capitalize and Translate. We "Reflect" on the previous year, ultimately "Translate" these reflections into tangible opportunities for our students next year, and label it the "NWCC 2009 – 2010 Schedule of Classes." This article is a summary of those reflections and a glimpse at the expanding programs incorporated into next year's schedule.

The 2008 – 2009 school year at NWCC introduced many opportunities, 'value-added' subjects and experiences in our classrooms and training sites. We introduced a **Welding Fundamentals class for Parkrose High School students**. Our **Heavy Equipment Operators (HEO)** training sites were provided by the **Portland Parks and Recreation Department (PPR)** and **Emmert International**, where real (but unfunded) projects were accomplished for both organizations, including the creation of a neighborhood park at 136th and SE Holgate.

PPI Group assisted in the delivery of cutting-edge **GPS training** to our HEO students, essentially in the use of satellite navigation to operate heavy equipment. They were also taught state-of-the-art excavation safety training provided by **representatives from OSHA**, utilizing a fully-functioning, remote control scale model of an excavator in tandem with a PowerPoint presentation backdrop.

Brick Masons experienced specialized training on Terra Cotta brick installation, with lessons masterfully crafted by the NWCC instructor, while **Tile apprentices** were introduced to lathe and plaster applications by one of our participating contractors.

The coup de grâce: a collaborative effort between NWCC apprentices, their instructors, and the City of Gresham to erect the **Heroes Tribute and Memorial** to all veterans, which will be dedicated in May (see <http://www.heroesmemorialtribute.com/>).

We are surrounded by many talented individuals and companies, as well as our own teaching staff, and are excited about future prospects. Collaboration was key this year and alliances were formed that will provide continued and expanding opportunities next year.

In the **2009-10 school year** the above-mentioned partners plan to continue collaboration with NWCC. Other entities have approached us with programs to consider, including **Radian Construction Consultants, Constructive Solutions LLC, and the Oregon Air Conditioning Contractors Association (ORACCA)**, to name a few. One of the challenges, of course, is evaluating and prioritizing which opportunities best serve the NWCC constituency.

As we look forward to next year, we will utilize the lens of experience and evaluate both proposed and continued opportunities for our students using our R.E.A.C.T. process:

- **Reflect** on student, instructor, and contractor feedback of existing classes
- **Evaluate** their effectiveness in meeting employer and college objectives
- **Analyze** their merit for the student and/or the college
- **Capitalize** on the idea, if found to have merit
- **Translate** the concept into our program development. Translation goes through a subsequent sifting process, or S.W.O.T.: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats; an analysis to assure resources and support are available to launch the program.

Based on findings from this process, NWCC will be expanding program offerings next year, to include the following five categories:

1. **Craft and Technical Training:** includes all of the Related Training required for the ten apprenticeship programs represented at NWCC, as well as the six programs recognized under Oregon Department of Education's Private Career School licensure for career preparation.
2. **Professional Development:** includes OSHA-recognized safety training, management courses, NATE Certification test-preparation courses, ORACCA Brazing Training & Certification, Contractors Friday Focus seminars, and additional seminar courses including CCB-recognized, 16-hour test preparation, Green Building 101, and Building Envelope.
3. **Community Education:** designed to introduce the community, specifically homeowners, to a variety of "How-To" seminars, typically held on Saturdays, beginning with Sustainable Gardening, Ornamental Welding and Deck Building.
4. **High School Programs & Outreach:** instructional programs for local high schools and recognized for elective CTE credit, Construction Camp (June 15-25, 2009), and articulation agreements recognizing certain subjects as transferrable to NWCC as dual-credit.
5. **Assessments:** evaluation of the knowledge and skill level of an individual in a specific craft area. All assessments are based upon the Contren® Learning Series curriculum and have been developed in conjunction with Prov™, the National Center for Construction Education and Research's test development partner. Assessments are designed to identify existing skills of craft professionals to determine areas of strength and weakness. Specific assessments available at NWCC include: Commercial Carpentry, Concrete Finisher, Construction Technology, Finish Carpentry, Form Carpentry, Frame Carpentry, Industrial Carpentry, and H.E.O., which includes Backhoe, Dozer, Excavator, Forklift, Loader & Motor Grader, Mobile Crane.

Specific programs, seminars, and courses within these categories will be outlined in our Fall schedule, available toward the end of July at our offices or on our website: www.nwcoc.com. Further information is also available by calling our office: 503-256-7300. We are looking forward to next year and hope our expanding programs contain something that may be of interest to you or your company.