

2nd Annual Southwest Georgia Construction Career Days Event a Huge Success

ALBANY - Paul Deloach of Pellicano Company had a big smile on his face. He was standing in the middle of an event he knew was possible. On October 1, 2009, it became reality.

More than 220 students from area high school construction programs visited with contractors from this part of the state at the 2nd Annual Southwest Georgia Construction Career Days. The event, organized by Albany Technical College and Georgia Branch, AGC members, was designed to introduce students to the construction industry in a hands-on, interactive way.



Glenn Singfield (left) of Artesian Contractors and Paul Deloach (right) of Pellicano Company address students at the 2008 Southwest Georgia Construction Career Days Event.

It included various pieces of earth-moving equipment; opportunities for students to build small structures using brick and wood; a unique chance to learn safety like the professionals do with the Georgia Branch, AGC Site Safety Van; and opportunities to ask questions of industry professionals.

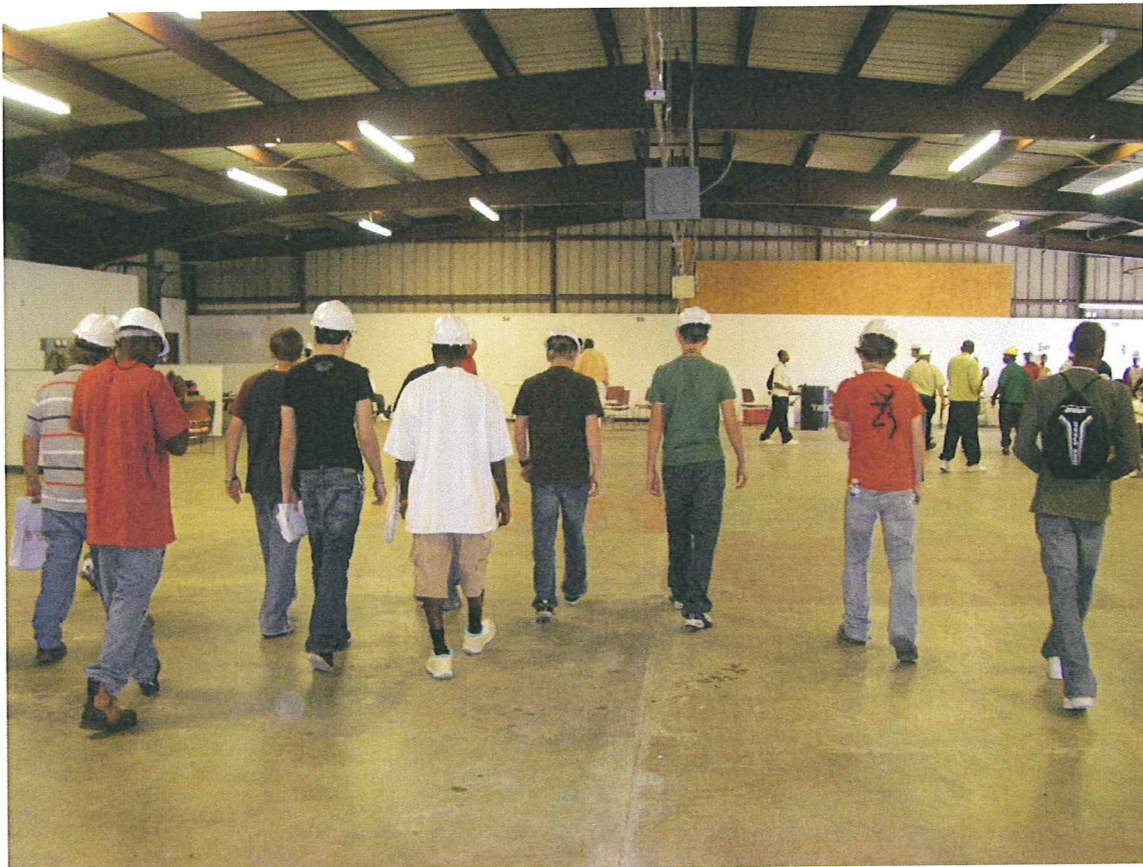
At least one construction teacher who was in attendance said the event really got their students' attention

“I think a light has come on in a lot of my students’ heads as a result of this event,” said Willie Jones, a construction teacher at Monroe High School. “When we go back to the class, their interest in what I am teaching and their motivation to pursue a career in construction will change.”

Another objective of the event was to get kids talking about careers in construction back in their schools, so that even more students enroll in the construction programs.

That, according to Deloach, is already happening.

“The teachers are saying that enrollment is growing in all of their programs,” said Deloach, who chairs the Southwest Georgia Workforce Alliance. “Participation in this event more than doubled from last year to this year. Last year, we only had about 100 students.”



A Very Nice Gesture ... Before they boarded their bus to head back to school, students from Lee County High School do a clean-up walk of the venue.

Deloach credited Betty Steel of Albany Tech and Glenn Singfield of Artesian Contractors, the lead organizers of the 2008 Construction Career Days Events.

Steel was already thinking about how to improve the event for next year.

“This year is definitely better than last year, but we still need more things for the students to do,” said Steel.

Singfield agreed.

“We are pleased with this event and so appreciative of all the contractors who stepped up this year to help out,” Singfield said. “But, we would like to see the construction community in Southwest Georgia step up even more next year.”

To get involved in the Southwest Georgia Construction Career Days event or to start a similar event in your area, contact Kevin Ward at CEFGA (678-889-4445) or Cherri Watson at the Georgia Branch, AGC (678-298-4100).