

# SIBA hosts 24th annual Construction Industry Career Expo

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Efforts to encourage local high school students to consider entering careers in the various construction trades, by educating them about the advantages and opportunities offered plus providing hands-on experiences concerning what those jobs involve, were the subject of a special event held in Belleville recently that was attended by 1062 students from 27 different high schools and three specialty educational institutions in southwestern Illinois.

Presented by the Southern Illinois Builders Association with support from its Southern Illinois Construction Advancement Program, representatives of several construction trades unions in the area shared their skills and offered advice to students visiting with them at the 24th annual Construction Industry Career Expo at Belle-Clair Fairgrounds October 22, 23, and 24.

Among the groups sharing their expertise and explaining about their jobs when meeting with the students present were professionals from Operative Plasterers & Cement Masons Local 90 which is based in Troy, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 309, Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 360 and Painters District Council 58, all of Collinsville, plus Operating Engineers Local 520 of St. Jacob.

Other unions represented at this event included the Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Apprentice and Training Programs Belleville campus, Roofers and Waterproofers Local 2 of Maryland Heights, Missouri, Iron Workers 392 of East St. Louis, Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 553 of Alton, Sheet Metal Workers Local 268 and Steamfitters Local 439, both of Caseyville.

Accompanied by teachers and other school staff members, groups of students from as far away as Alton, Highland, Trenton, Marissa, Chester, Sparta,



The first station at the late October 24th annual Construction Industry Expo visited by these students from Belleville East High School was one where professional painting was one of the areas of focus. (Randy Pierce/Herald Publications)

Granite City, Edwardsville, Mascoutah, Coulterville, Bethalto and Steeleville, plus the Collinsville Area Vocational Center (CAVC), the Illinois Center for Autism based in Fairview Heights, the Career Center of Southern Illinois of Red Bud, and the Center for Academic and Vocational Excellence (CAVE) operated by Belleville Township High School District 201, were provided with the opportunity to get a taste of the construction trades by being momentarily provided with various tools and materials connected with those types of work along with being given thorough explanations about the tasks performed.

The event's skilled representatives included painters, carpenters, millwrights, roofers, water proofers, cement masons, electricians, plumbers, gasfitters, pipefitters, laborers, iron workers, sheet metal workers, operating engineers,

plasterers and steamfitters.

The purpose of this career expo was related to the acute shortage in workers coming into the construction industry in this area while raising awareness of the high-paying career options available.

There was also an evening open house for anyone outside of the visiting high schools who may have wanted to learn more about the various construction trades.

Information disseminated to the visitors indicated the potential earnings and benefits received by working for the various trades represented including how much a first-year apprentice would be paid which is a percentage of the fully qualified hourly wage ranging from 35 to 70 per cent of that total, depending on the specific type of work.

The current hourly wages, independent

of benefits and pension earnings, which can also be significant, range from \$33.49 for painters up to \$50.11 for plumbers and pipefitters who are members of Local 553 of Alton.

CEO Donna Richter of SIBA, which hosted this event, explained that there are considerable financial advantages connected to paid apprenticeships, which are set up on an "earn as you learn" basis, when compared to the large out-of-pocket expenses related to college or university tuition.

"The demand for skilled workers in the construction trades," Richter said, "is significant and this expo gives students a first-hand look at the many opportunities available," while adding that the apprenticeship process provides an excellent pathway toward a "stable, well-paying career."

## Burlington Stores debuts new Fairview Heights location

Burlington Stores Inc. debuted its new Fairview Heights store with a grand opening celebration and ribbon cutting ceremony on Friday, Oct. 18.

Its new store, at Fairview Center II – R; 6611 N. Illinois Street, is a relocation of the store that was previously located at One Plaza Drive in Fairview Heights. According to an official statement, the new store brings the total number of stores

in Illinois to 45.

The Fairview Heights location features Burlington's reimagined store layout and new store logo: "Deals. Brands. WOW!" The refreshed store layout provides a better and more enjoyable shopping experience, making it easier for consumers to discover deals and savings on their favorite brands.

The October grand opening included

a variety of giveaways for visiting customers as well as a \$5,000 check presentation to William Holliday Elementary School, made possible through their long-standing partnership with the national non-profit organization AdoptAClassroom.org. The donated funds are slated to be used to provide students with classroom materials they need to learn and succeed. The presentation took

place during the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

As Burlington continues to expand its footprint, they remain focused on finding great talent to join their growing company. Those interested in employment opportunities at Burlington are encouraged to visit online at [BurlingtonStores.jobs](http://BurlingtonStores.jobs) to view openings and apply.

<https://www.ibjonline.com/2024/10/29/burlington-stores-debuts-new-fairview-heights-location/>



The Burlington Stores Fairview Heights Oct. 18 grand opening celebration included a variety of giveaways for visiting customers as well as a \$5,000 check presentation to William Holliday Elementary School. The donation by the store to the school was made possible through their long-standing partnership with the national non-profit organization AdoptAClassroom.org. (Courtesy of Burlington Stores Inc.)

## Online Poll Results

we asked, you answered

**Illinois Business Journal**  
The Business of Southwestern Illinois

Take Our Poll

As an employer, would you support a 4-day full-time work week?

Yes, I would support a 4-day full-time work week.

No, I would not support a 4-day full-time work week.

Yes, but I do not support a reduction of total hours worked during a full-time work week.

Vote

Results of poll ending Nov. 15, 2024

45 percent

32 percent

23 percent

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