

AZ Construction Career Days expects increased attendance

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The sponsor of the Arizona Construction Career Days, the non-profit Association for Construction Career Development in Phoenix, expects this year's November event will exceed the attendance in 2013, judging by early sign-ups that have been tallied more than a month prior to the event.

The 2014 two-day event will run Nov. 6 and 7, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. each day at the Arizona National Guard, Papago Site, 5636 E. McDowell Rd., in Phoenix.

Last year's event drew 1,700 students from high schools in nine Arizona counties, and Rose Ann Canizales, president of the Association, believes the 2014 Arizona Construction Career Days will surpass that total.

"Last year we had 78 Arizona schools participate in the Construction Career Days and at this point, with five weeks still to go, we already have 50 schools signed up with 1,000 students planning to come," Canizales said. "We also have given out transportation scholarships to three high schools that needed money to be able to attend. One of them is Paradise Valley High School, which has a very strong construction program, and is planning to bring 100 students to the event."

Students attending

the Career Days will have the opportunity to spend two days at work in the construction industry with real life applications. Hands-on demonstrations will include constructing a toolbox, estimating projects, cement mixing and setting, pipe design and building,

CADD and constructing brick walls.

As in the past, community partners with the Association that help sponsor the Construction Career Days are the Army National Guard, the Arizona Department of Education, the Arizona Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration. Added to that list this year will be the Arizona Energy Consortium.

"The Arizona Energy Consortium is associated with the Go Build programs in Alabama and Georgia and wanted to bring that program to Arizona, but the name wasn't trademarked yet so they couldn't use it here," Canizales pointed out. "However, because our messages are so similar, we decided to use our strong foundation and construction support to add them as a community partner for this year's Construction Career Days."

The schedule for the 2014 Arizona Construction Career Days is similar to past years, Canizales noted. On Nov. 6 and 7, the Construction Career Days run from 8 a.m. to noon, with the intent of splitting the event between two days to allow schools more flexibility to attend.

On the opening day, the event will have a VIP Reception that runs concurrently with the career days, starting at 8 a.m. with a meet and greet among attendees, and keynote addresses that begin at 8:30 a.m. and finish by 10 a.m.

Scheduled to speak on Nov. 6 are Canizales, who will give the welcome, and Steve Trussell, executive director of Arizona Rock Products Association, who will serve



Attendees at the 2013 Arizona Construction Career Days event.

as master of ceremonies.

Keynote speakers include Major General Michael T. McGuire, Adjutant General of the Arizona National Guard; John Huppenthal, superintendent of public instruction for the Arizona Department of Education; Karla Petty, division administrator for the Federal Highway Administration; John Halikowski, director of the Arizona Department of Transportation; Andy Biggs, president of the Arizona State Senate; Cynthia Bortello, an engineer for Turner Construction in Phoenix; Humberto Martinez, co-founder of the National Construction Career Days; and Dick Rizzo, vice Chairman of Tutor Perini Building Corp.

Canizales pointed out that Bortello's keynote at the event is especially interesting.

"She attended Arizona Construction Career Days five years ago and now is an

engineer with Turner Construction," Canizales said. "It's a shot in the arm for us to have her come full circle, coming to Construction Career Days to tell her story."

Major Gen. McGuire noted in a statement, "The men and women of the Arizona National Guard are proud to welcome young adults to Papago Park Military Reservation each year while they explore construction-related career opportunities. Construction Career Days are a valuable investment in our state's up-and-coming work force; young people who may one day play an important role in building the Arizona of tomorrow, either through service in the Arizona National Guard or through contributions to the construction industry, or both. We are honored to participate in this partnership with the community we serve."