



TOWER OF CHANGE

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News from the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Justice Center Project

Promises Made... Promises Kept

Minority employment is an important issue surrounding the Juvenile Justice Center Project. In order to build in the Fairfax neighborhood, you asked for employment opportunities for residents. There are. Read about Walt Collins of Minority Trucking and Contracting. He oversees the Neighborhood Watch program. Cindy Marizette is the executive director of UCIP-ASAP (Union Construction Industry Partnership – Apprenticeship Skill Achievement Program), an organization that trains minorities, women and the disadvantaged for construction careers. There are mentoring relationships like that of Lake Erie Electric and Power Mike.

You will find that when promises are made...promises are delivered.

Who's Watching The Neighborhood?

The eyes and ears of the JJC Project are neighborhood residents who know Fairfax. "They are not a security force," said Walt Collins, "but they are the contract manager's eyes and ears." Collins supervises the men who make sure everything is safe and secure in the contractor's trailer lot.

The group of seven ensure the lot and grounds are safe. "We're giving our Cleveland residents an opportunity to work. We also provide training that can lead to other jobs. The emphasis is on how well they perform," said Collins.

"The County has emphasized that we must utilize our residents. At the same time," he adds, "the reality is that the JJC Project is in a community that has had its challenges. If someone is not familiar with the people and community, there could be problems. We have not had any thefts or damage at the site. One of the reasons is that local residents are guarding the area. Many people we get in the program live here. They know the people."

Having an understanding of the people and neighborhood is the key to success when you are on Neighborhood Watch.



The Neighborhood Watch (left to right) Thorne Gore, Anson Lamar, Suvare Thomas, Walter Collins, Brent Benton, Richard Baxter, Sylvester Moore and Antonio Body.

Meet Walt Collins

Walt Collins is the president and general manager of the Minority Trucking and Contracting Association. He makes sure that contractors consider minorities on construction projects.

Daily Duties: I am responsible for several things. My primary job is to ensure minority employment. That is the main reason the association was formed...to make sure construction opportunities are available to minorities.

Why He Likes His Job: I love to see our people work...and to see the contractors observe them perform professionally.

How His Job Can Improve: We could have more trades people on these different sites. Training is very important. It's a combination of training minorities and finding those who are already trained. Once trained, they will not perform in a manner that will hold them back.

His Thoughts on the JJC Project: It's a good project. They made an effort to include local people's input - from the kitchen, to recreation, to the medical facility. We wanted to make sure that the Juvenile Justice Center was not just a lock-up jail, but where the youth have what they need to get better. It's all about rehabilitation.

When He Is Not Working...: I am a family person. I help take care of my nieces and nephews. I also enjoy trucking, horses, and dogs.

The Best Advice He Has Received: My dad told me years ago that a lie will catch up with you. When you start lying, you have to start remembering what the lie was. Whether someone wants to hear it or not, I try to speak fact. Also, to treat people how you want to be treated. Treat people fair.

Your Best Advice: Do not look back. There is no sense in looking back. It is not how many times you get knocked down; it's how many times you get up. To me, that's life. It's how you handle your down times that determine how well you will handle your up times. Everyone will make mistakes. If we don't get up and start over, the people that will be affected will be the kids. If they see us with our head down, chances are theirs will be down too.



Eric Benson

Quick Fact

The JJC Project uses 500,000, 8-inch face bricks. Bricks laid back-to-back equals 4 million inches (333,333 ft). This is equivalent to 1,111 football fields.

If you lose your copy, you can always find it online at CuyahogaCounty.us

"We must nurture our children with confidence. They can't make it if they are constantly told that they won't." – George Clements

Mentoring Relationships: New Beginnings

Choosing a name for Michael Barkley's new company was easy. He used the one he received during his work out days. "One guy began calling me 'Power Mike' and the name stuck," he said.

The name is fitting since Power Mike, a full-service electrical contracting company, is responsible for electrical 'power.' Laid off from LTV Steel after 15 years, Barkley was in unfamiliar territory. "It was devastating. The job market didn't look good. I had to make sure that I was never in this situation again," said Barkley. He attended Cleveland State University's Division of Continuing Education to take classes that prepared him for the Ohio Electrical Contractor Exam. Once licensed, Barkley invested his savings and bought a van, tools, everything he needed to run a successful business.

Power Mike troubleshoots, replaces, repairs, and installs electrical systems and fire alarms.

Barkley is grateful for the mentoring relationship they have with Lake Erie Electric. "I sent out invitations to be a part of an electrical contracting firm," said Barkley. "Armando Francisco called and asked that we sit down and talk. I felt deep down inside that it would be a start of something very special," he shared.



Armando Francisco of Lake Erie Electric and Mike Barkley of Power Mike take advantage of a productive mentoring relationship.

It has. "After meeting with Mike," said Francisco, vice president of operations, "We decided that he was very small, new to the system and needed a lot of training. It was a great opportunity for us to build a relationship with a small, minority contractor. We had a need as a large contractor for a good minority-owned firm. He is a very hard worker, honest and diligent. Whenever we ask him to provide us with information, he does it right away."

Power Mike and Lake Erie Electric are very pleased with their JJC Project relationship, which began August 8, 2008. "He will start doing a lot more work for us. The work that he has

performed has been very good. We mentor him on not only how to run a project, but how to look for work. We don't want to be his only client. We want to help him grow. The relationship is moving in the right direction," mentioned Francisco.

Barkley is grateful to Ozanne Construction and Cuyahoga County. "I thank them a lot, because they make sure that the minorities are working. They are very visible, and they actually come down to the site and make sure that the women and minorities are there."

"The number eight means new beginnings," offered Barkley. "August 8, 2008 was a great day for me. I have not looked back since."

UCIP-ASAP: Join the Union Workforce



Cindy Marizette, executive director of UCIP-ASAP.

If you are interested in building trades, UCIP-ASAP will prepare you for the challenge.

The Pre-Apprentice Training Program is an eight-week program for area residents. It is designed to assist minorities and women, those historically under-represented in the building and trades disciplines, in careers in the union construction field. "A client will come to the program for eight

weeks. They have to be a Cuyahoga County resident, must be over 18, have a high school diploma or GED along with 8th grade math and a 7th grade reading level," explained Cindy Marizette, UCIP-ASAP's executive director. "Once they meet the requirements, pass drug testing and an interview, they are accepted in the program."

The students meet from 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Monday to Friday. The program is a huge commitment. Once in, you are eligible to enter various building trades and become an apprentice. After

three to five years as an apprentice, the next level is journeyman. Once completed, they are on their way to a lucrative, rewarding career in construction and building trades. A student can choose from any of the following: Carpenter, Cement Mason, Electrician, Floorlayer, Glazier, Insulator, Ironworker, Laborer, Mechanical Service Technician, Millwright, Operating Engineer, Painter/Decorator, Pile Driver, Plumber, Roofer & Waterproofing, Sheet Metal Worker, Telecommunication Technician, and Tilesetter.

Marizette has seen an increase in displaced workers in their student population within the past six to eight months. "Displaced workers are coming in more frequently as they are seeing, first-hand, reductions in their respective industries and are in need of a second career," she said. "The UCIP-ASAP program is an excellent option. Our students receive a stipend of \$7 a day while attending the program."

"This is a great opportunity to enter the construction trades," encourages Marizette. "These careers are very important and equivalent to any other option out there today. There are endless possibilities. The sky is the limit."

Marizette is working with five individuals from the Greater Cleveland community for the JJC Project whom she feels will soon be hired. "They will be able to go back [to the site] after years have gone by, and proudly say to their children and grandchildren, 'I helped build that facility,'" offered Marizette.