



ASA President's Monthly Newsletter-August 2010

Dear ASA Member:

The construction industry's loss of more than two million jobs over the last three years represents not only economic and personal losses, but also a loss of industry experience and knowledge that will need to be replaced when the construction economy turns around. As thousands of managers and laborers have exited construction firms, the pool of experience and knowledge from which our industry can draw has become smaller.

ASA supports efforts to provide individuals with ways to demonstrate that they have mastered a "body of knowledge," whether by earning a college degree, a professional designation, or an education certificate. Such programs make it easier for subcontractors to identify professionals who know how to manage and/or perform construction.

For example, ASA supports the American Council for Construction Education, which accredits two- and four-year construction science and management degree programs, and ASA endorses the Certified Professional Constructor program of the American Institute of Constructors' Constructor Certification Commission. Experienced individuals with knowledge of construction management, a skilled trade, or a specific construction process, and college graduates with degrees in construction science or management, will be at the head of the interview line when hiring picks up.

As the construction economy turns around, education and professional development programs will face an enormous task. They will need to replenish the construction workforce so that it can effectively manage and perform the higher volume of work. If other industries recruit from our talent pool first, however, their task will be even harder.

In the future, the construction industry will face challenges replenishing its force of managers and craft workers. The downsizing of the industry has created another challenge, and one that is harder to discern: a loss of thousands of individuals who joined associations, recruited association members, led advocacy campaigns, and represented our industry so effectively in the past. Subcontractors can't risk ignoring this loss, because successes like legislative reforms on prompt payment and retainage can be reversed with a vote and the stroke of a governor's pen. We need a healthy pool of industry advocates who have the knowledge and resources to stop reversals like that from happening.

ASA offers a solution to the recession's drain on industry leadership: the [ASA Champions Academy](#). This conference, held Sept. 18-21 just outside the nation's capital, is designed precisely to "pass on" to volunteers the knowledge of how to build and lead state and local ASA chapters, so that subcontractors' accomplishments are never lost. By participating in six hours of leadership development programming at the Champions Academy, ASA chapter leaders such as officers, directors and committee members can earn the credits they need for an ASA Certificate for Recognizing the Leadership Development of ASA Chapter Leaders.

Our industry is at a crossroads. The future of subcontractor representation and subcontractor rights depends on today's chapter volunteers learning the membership, education, and advocacy skills that have built ASA into *the* association of professional subcontractors.

If you have comments or questions, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at tmclaughlin@asa-hq.com.

Very truly yours,

Timmy McLaughlin
ASA President, 2010-11