

Construction Workforce Survey: Help Needed

By Associated General Contractors

Few candidates have the basic skills needed to work in high-paying construction careers, forcing short-staffed contractors to find new ways to keep pace with demand and undermining efforts to build infrastructure and other projects, according to the results of a 2023 workforce survey conducted by the Associated General Contractors of America and Autodesk. The results highlight significant shortcomings in the nation's approach to preparing workers for careers in construction.

"The biggest takeaway from this year's Workforce Survey is how much the nation is failing to prepare future workers for high-paying careers in fields like construction," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "It is time to rethink the way the nation educates and prepares workers."

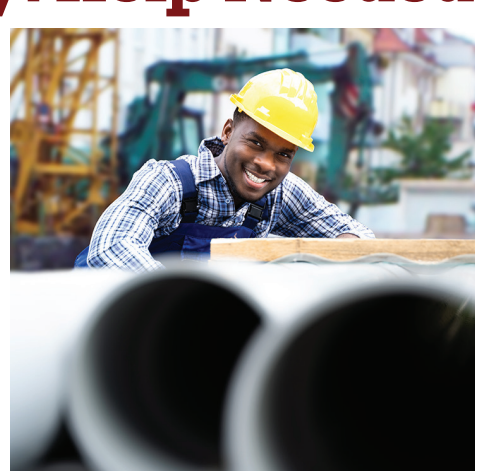
Simonson noted that eighty-five percent of construction firms report they have open positions that they are trying to fill. Among those firms, eighty-eight percent are having trouble filling at

least some of those positions—particularly among the craft workforce that performs the bulk of onsite construction work.

All types of firms are experiencing these challenges. Largely similar results were reported by contractors that use exclusively union craft labor and by firms that operate as open-shop employers; by firms with \$50 million or less in annual revenue and ones with more than \$500 million in revenue; by companies in all four regions of the country; and by contractors doing building construction, highway and transportation projects, federal and heavy work, or utility infrastructure.

One of the main reasons labor shortages are so severe, Simonson added, is that most job candidates are not qualified to work in the industry. He said that a "shocking" sixty-eight percent of firms report applicants lack the skills needed to work in construction. In addition, one third of firms report candidates cannot pass a drug test.

Workforce shortages are adding to the impacts of supply chain disruptions that have made it difficult for firms to get materials delivered on time and that are driving up the cost of those



materials. While these shortages have recently shown signs of abating, sixty-five percent of firms report projects they work on have been delayed because of supply challenges and sixty-one percent have been delayed because of labor shortages.

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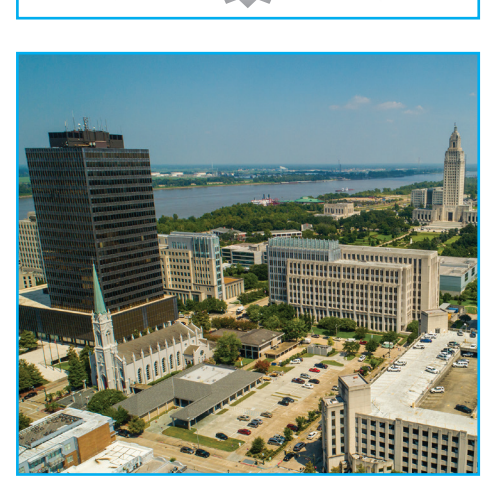
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SOUTHEAST EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

2023

Selling to the Federal Government Webinar
Thursday, September 28, 2023, 12:00 pm–3:00 pm CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required

Did you know that the federal government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world? Interested in learning how your business can market your services or goods to the federal government? Register on-line at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-sell-to-the-federal-government-tickets-21790713611> SBA helps to ensure small businesses get fair opportunities to share federal government prime contracts. Topics will include: How to Register, Small Business Certifications, Finding Opportunities, Marketing Your Firm, Federal Supply Schedules, Getting Paid, Tips to Prepare Your Offer, How to Seek Additional Assistance. All training sessions are held via Microsoft Teams Meeting. Participants must ensure Microsoft Teams is functioning.

8(a) Orientation and SAM Registration Webinar
Wednesday, October 18, 2023, 9:30 am–10:30 am CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required

Join the Small Business Administration (SBA)

Illinois District Office for a virtual workshop providing an overview of the 8(a) Business Development program, eligibility requirements, and program benefits. Also learn how to increase your potential for federal contract opportunities through System for Award Management (SAM) registration, including information that you need for the registration process. SBA presenters will offer additional tips, address FAQs, give directions on where to get further assistance, and answer your other questions. To register for this free webinar, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/8a-orientation-sam-registration-tickets-518989961947>

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Program Webinar
Thursday, October 19, 2023, 9:00 am–10:00 am CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/welcome-to-wosb-webinar-tickets-482397041537>
Fee: Free; registration required

Welcome to the WOSB webinar series! Are you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government's goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA's Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. The monthly sessions will include an overview of the self-certification process, as well as a discussion of the NAICS codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register for this free webinar at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/welcome-to-wosb-webinar-tickets-482397041537>

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