

Texas

January 2020

MERIT SHOP Journal

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Neutrality in State
Government Contracting
Becomes Law...Finally!

Construction in the New
Year - A Look Ahead

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LETTER from the Chairman



HOLLIMAN

By the time of this writing, State ABC of Texas will have had our strategic planning meeting to prepare for the 87th legislative session and beyond. This past year was successful in many ways, not only in legislative activities, but also in the transition of leadership at the State level as a result of Jon Fisher, our past President of over 11 years, who retired in December. We are proud to welcome Will McAdams as our new President and look forward to working with him for many years to come.

This past November was a rather quiet election cycle overall for major issues statewide in Texas. There were 10 propositions for amendments to the Texas Constitution, all passed but one. While they may not directly affect construction, most will help our State economy and protect business.

The prosperity we enjoy in this great State of Texas is based upon the principles of free markets and limited government. We are proud of our culture in Texas and need to fight to protect free enterprise principles and prevent outside influences from hijacking the successes of our values and traditions. These principles have made the Texas economy and its citizens' way of life envied by other states. While we encourage new companies to move to Texas, we need to be watchful that failed governance of over regulation is not brought to Texas. Texans are known for welcoming newcomers with open arms, but we must remember the reasons why so many choose to move here, and why they are so ready to leave the places they came from.

While we have a lot of work to do throughout the next legislative session, I am confident that Texas is an example to other states on how smaller non-intrusive government regulations and free enterprise will support the businesses that help support employees and their families.

God Bless America, God Bless Texas, and God Bless each of You. Thank you for allowing me to represent this organization and be a voice on behalf of Merit Shop and Free Enterprise principles in Texas. 🇺🇸

GP Paul Holliman

2019-2021 ABC of Texas Chairman
SEDALCO, Inc.

LETTER from the President



McADAMS

Dear ABC Members,

I am honored to write for the first time in Texas Merit Shop Journal as President of Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas. I am extremely grateful to Jon Fisher, your outgoing President, for leaving the organization in a position for maximum effectiveness in Austin.

As I served in the Legislature over the last decade, working for senators, committees, and even a Speaker, it was a pleasure to work with ABC. The organization is known for its reputation for straight-shooting integrity, and its values based on fairness and fair competition, the core tenants of the Merit Shop philosophy.

I believe the ultimate strength of our association is within the diversity of our membership, comprising a cross-section of businesses of all sizes from across the construction industry. Policymakers know that when they hear from ABC members, they will find a perspective built on a tireless pursuit for consensus within the industry.

This will be an active time for our organization. The 2020 election will soon be upon us, driving policies that will impact our membership dealing with regulations imposed by every level of government. Here in Austin, we will be monitoring and engaging in many of the State Legislative races coming up before the 87th Regular Session in 2021. The men and women who emerge from elections this coming November will be determining policy outcomes for all of ABC Texas' priorities, including those that we consider a priority to never become law.

To be successful at such a critical time, the state association will continue to work with our partner organizations like the Associated General Contractors - Texas Building Branch and the Texas Construction Association to focus our resources most effectively. Our goal will be to provide a unified voice for the construction industry while leveraging our unique profile as an association to ensure that our state government develops policies that are good for us all.

As President of ABC Texas, I work for you, the members, and as such I hope each of you will feel free to contact me directly with any questions, concerns, or matters relating to ABC that you want me to know about. My cell number is (979) 587 -1734 and my email is will@abctexas.org. 🇹🇽

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Will McAdams". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Will McAdams

ABC of Texas

President



Neutrality in State Government Contracting Becomes Law...Finally!

BY JON FISHER

On September 1, 2019, it became illegal for any public entity using state funds or state credit to require or prohibit the use of pre-hire collective bargaining agreements by a contractor in order to be eligible to contract for public works including constructing, altering, or repairing public buildings. This statute applies to all state agencies, all universities and colleges and most school districts (even though school districts do not generally use state money for buildings, they access state credit to improve their bond ratings). Sounds simple enough and should have been an easy task to pass in a conservative state like Texas!

But passing ANYTHING in the Texas Legislature is a major task. The constitution and legislative rules provide only about a 60-day window to pass legislation **EVERY TWO YEARS!**

ABC of Texas began in 2013 trying to enact this statute. In that session, former State Rep. Bill Caligari authored the bill in the House (State Rep. Tan Parker was the co-author) and State Senator Kelly Hancock carried the bill in the Senate. It easily passed the House but died in the Senate. We did receive a hearing in a Senate Committee chaired by a Democrat who told us the bill would not be reported. In that session, there were 19 Republicans in the Senate and it took 21 votes to bring something up. Although we appeared two votes short, we were actually only one vote short.

In 2015, things were different. The bill was authored by State Rep. Tan Parker and Kelly Hancock since Bill Caligari had retired. Both were chairs of their respective Republican caucuses. The Senate amended its rules so that it only took 19 votes to bring up legislation and there were 20 Republicans—should be a piece of cake! Once again, the bill easily passed the House and was sent to a Senate Committee chaired by a Republican. Little did anyone know, but this committee chair was not running for re-election. When the bill got to committee, ABC of Texas was repeatedly assured by committee staff that there was no problem with the bill. However, this Republican Chair had already told the Governor's office that

he did not like the bill, and it would not see the light of day. Thus, the bill died without even getting a hearing in the Senate. I was actively lobbying until the bill timed out having been diagnosed with pneumonia, but from my perspective, the deceptive Senate committee chair's actions could have sent me to the hospital for no reason! Yes, I was bitter!

Coming into the session in 2017 with the same authors, ABC of Texas received assurances the bill would pass from both House and Senate sources. The bill sailed out of the Senate (our author was chair of the Senate committee), but our House author wanted to pass the House bill that was already setting in the House Calendars Committee. Thus, the House committee held the Senate bill for a couple of weeks to see if the House bill would pass. It did not get set before the deadline because the House Calendars Committee generally does not like to set House bills late when the Senate bill is already in a House committee. Thus, we were left with the Senate bill which hurriedly was reported from House Committee to go to the House Calendars Committee. At a Senate hearing on another bill, the chair (our Senate author) asked me to come to the dais (as an aside, this was the day after my mother passed away) and told me that a Republican member of the House Calendars Committee was holding the bill because Chairman Hancock would not set one of his bills. He told me that he was not setting that bill and if the House wanted to wait until next session to pass it, it was their decision. We later found out that there were two other Republican members of House Calendars that sided with the author of the bill that Chairman Hancock would not set for a hearing. Basically, our bill was caught in last minute House and Senate conflict. Again, I was bitter!

Finally, in 2019 we felt we had our best chance yet. The new House Speaker, State Rep. Dennis Bonnen, was an ABC member who understands our issues. Of course, former Speaker Joe Straus had given us three clear runs himself for which ABC of Texas remains



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grateful. Once again (as in 2013 & 2015), the bill passed the House easily. And, as in 2017, the bill was quickly reported from Senate Committee. At this time, there were only 19 Republicans in the Senate so we could not spare a defection. We received the votes of every single Republican Senator. Governor Greg Abbott signed the bill on June 2, 2019.

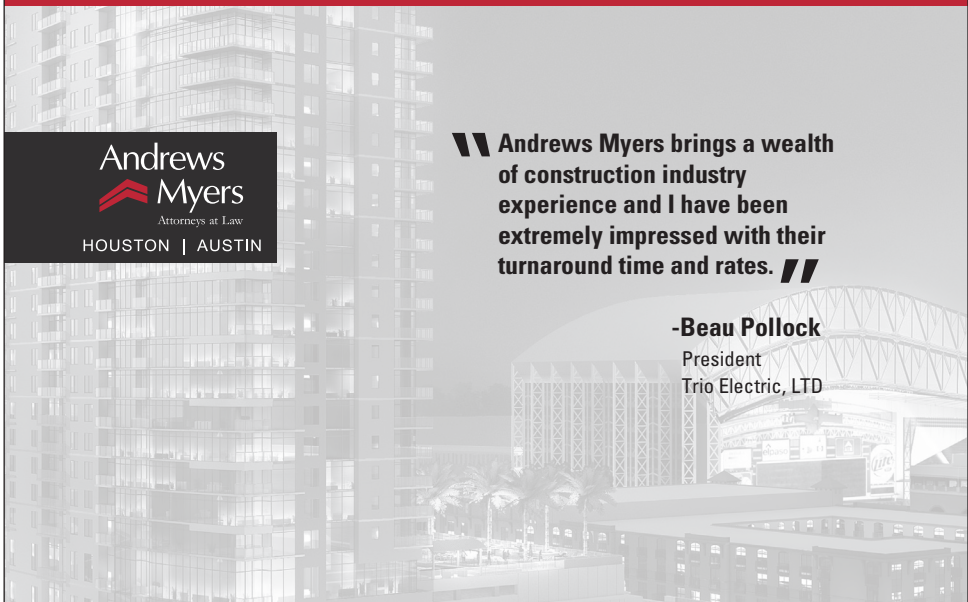
It took a while for ABC National to understand how it could take so long for this bill to pass in a conservative state like Texas, but they finally came around to understanding that because of the infrequency of meetings and the shortage of time, any little problem becomes fatal.

Of course, on a personal note, your author can retire knowing that success comes only if you are willing to keep after it! 🇺🇸



Jon Fisher retired from ABC of Texas on December 31, 2019 as President Emeritus. He served as President of ABC of Texas from July 2008 until his retirement.

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-Beau Pollock
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Construction in the New Year A Look Ahead

BY WILL McADAMS

Russ Garrison, President and CEO of SEDALCO Construction Services and Brandon Mabile, Business Development Manager for Performance Contractors shared their insights with the Texas Merit Shop Journal on where they believe the commercial and industrial construction industry stands moving into 2020.



I sat down first with Russ Garrison, who, as President/CEO of Sedalco leads a commercial construction firm with business throughout the State of Texas, and most recently established an office in the Woodlands.

As we begin the new year what do you see as some of the biggest challenges facing the construction industry?

RUSS: “We continue to find ourselves blessed with continued growth even though I saw a report recently that showed a dip in commercial construction. Most of the work Sedalco has are public sector, which is all growth related, and we still see continued demand for public works. Bond elections continue to pass, and this bodes well that 2020 will remain a strong construction year and into 2021.

My biggest concern is whether there will be a contraction in the private market where private dollar investment into Texas dries up. Right now, I have not seen that. In North Texas and Houston, we continue to see areas primed for development.

The biggest challenge for us is workforce. It’s at all levels, supervisors all the way down to trades craftsmen. Some of us could grow if we just had the people to do it. We are just not recruiting any new talent into the industry, and as a result it becomes more difficult to expedite construction schedules when you don’t have the people. For example, in the past we said we could finish an elementary school in a year, now it takes 15 months.

What about threats? Do you see any threats that should be a cause of concern for businesses operating within construction as we begin 2020?

RUSS: There are no threats to us in 2020, and over the long term these school districts have been able to fund their needs through growing appraisal values, and the bond elections have been passing. If there was a political swing against higher property tax appraisal valuations that would hurt the public’s ability to finance themselves, and that would certainly be a threat.



I next visited with Brandon Mabile, who as Business Development Manager for Performance Contractors works in the industrial construction industry in the Harris County, and Gulf Coast areas of Texas in addition to their operations in Louisiana.

Do you see any opportunities on the horizon that the industry should look forward to?

BRANDON: In the industrial construction industry, we are in the third wave of the shale renaissance, and we all expect the fourth wave to be a little smaller with the cracker expansions we’ve seen since 2011 being pretty much done. Still there is a strong story in derivative and downstream chemicals that need to be built out. Over the next 4 – 5 years we are still going to see steady projects get built. The other thing is that after the ITC and Port Neches fires there will be more inspections, and as a result, more of a maintenance need.

I am not as confident in Louisiana as I am in Texas after the last election. There is a reason the work is growing in Texas and not in Louisiana.

As an industry leader, what would you recommend for ABC members to do to prepare for these challenges, threats, and potential opportunities facing our industry in 2020?

BRANDON: An old saying within ABC is ‘get into politics or get out of business.’ Support your ABC Chapter, ABC Texas, and ABC National, because we need to win these fights to continue to grow our business. Our members need to get involved and get passionate and pay attention to what’s going on around us. I always say our company can’t afford the attorneys bills if ABC didn’t do what it does.

Also, our folks need to get involved with STEP. We need to increase our awareness and participation in workforce safety. Where Labor is winning fights, New York and New Jersey, for example, are where we are unsafe, and we don’t have the story to back up our side of the issue.

I don’t think the Texas miracle is over yet. But we need to educate the young people in the industry as to what is important to keep it going.

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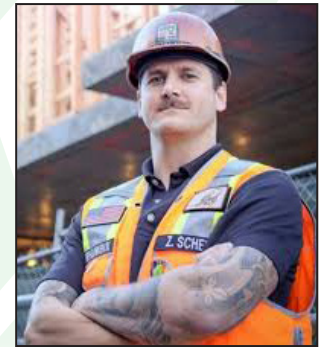
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One on One with State Representative Tan Parker



Representative Tan Parker has been a champion for the priorities of ABC Texas throughout his career in the Texas House. Parker has served the people of HD 63 located in Denton County since 2007 and has been a passionate advocate for economic development, tax relief, appraisal reform, and reducing overreaching government regulations on private business. For six years, he has stood with ABC as either the Author or Co-Author of top legislative priorities to pass the “Neutrality in Government Contracting” bill. His perseverance was critical to the success of House Bill 985 during the last session aligning Texas with the rest of the nation.

How do you believe the Legislature addressed the state’s needs in the last session?

We went into the 86th Legislative session knowing that the people of Texas needed property tax relief and at the same time, our public school finance system had to be overhauled. We were also dealing with the ongoing devastation from Hurricane Harvey which called us not only to help our coastal region but also to put in place safeguards to ensure our state is better equipped to overcome these types of natural disasters. At the end of the 140 days, legislators delivered property tax relief, more transparency protections for taxpayers, transformational reforms to the public school finance system that honors current and retired teachers as well as school safety measures, and provided the funding and creation of additional safeguards to make our state stronger after Hurricane Harvey. We also continued to address our infrastructure needs as Texas continues to grow and at the same time passed a responsible budget to keep Texas on track as the economic engine of the nation. Furthermore, as a legislator who has worked extensively on the issue of human trafficking, I was glad to see more funding put in place to better address this horrific reality that is harming our state, and greater awareness to

combat it for the safety of all citizens.

As a former chairman of the House Republican Caucus and former candidate for Speaker of the Texas House, what should be the priority of the Texas House of Representatives going into the 2021 Session?

Both of these experiences certainly gave me a deeper understanding of how our state continues to be prosperous and at the same time honors our values as Texans. However, the best input that I ever receive is directly from the people I serve. As one of the fastest-growing areas in the state, Denton County brings a constituency of great engagement and collaboration. As such, I am continually hearing from our local leaders, businesses, nonprofits, and educators as well as everyday families who openly share their concerns

and hopes for the future. Without question, while we have done much to keep taxes low, create greater opportunities for economic growth and entrepreneurship, and build upon our education system to strengthen the next generation, we will have several critical issues to further address next session. I think you will see the legislature continue to work on property tax relief and appraisal reforms to protect our economic growth, continuously work to make improvements to public safety, lessen regulations that are stifling to businesses and workers, and ensure our infrastructure meets the demands of the state. This includes increasing workforce development which encompasses broader education opportunities for students as well as those who are re-tooling their skills

along with veterans who are seeking new career opportunities after serving our nation. Furthermore, I think we will need to discuss rising healthcare costs and free market access for patients. In the last session, we ended balanced billing for state-regulated health plans to protect medical consumers from surprise medical bills. Going into the 87th session, I think we need to again lead as a state and look at federally

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regulated plans to protect approximately 14 million Texans who remain at risk and unable to afford these unanticipated costs that have far-reaching negative financial consequences for families.

As a champion for ABC Texas, you worked for four sessions to pass the Neutrality in State Government Contracting bill, which became law this year. What do you see as the next big challenge for the construction industry in Texas?

First, I cannot thank ABC Texas enough for getting behind that bill that is so important to the future of the construction industry in Texas. Leveling the playing field was paramount to not only protecting the construction industry, but also critical to honor taxpayers who would be the ones to ultimately shoulder the increased costs associated with PLA projects. It was a big win!

Without question, we must continue to address labor shortages and ways to cultivate opportunities for our emerging workforce while allowing for broader educational/trade school access for Texans who find themselves in need of re-tooling their skills. Technology continues to shape the workforce and the career paths of workers at all levels. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has declared that two-thirds of the jobs that will be in high demand a generation from now do not exist today. It is imperative as a state that we are prepared, and we have the mindset in our education and regulatory environments that recognize the fast-moving changes in our labor market. As lawmakers, we need to be engaged and develop the policies that are needed while also being ready to reduce burdensome regulations that are stifling growth to accommodate these changes now and into the future.

Your House District sits atop one of the fastest-growing areas in Texas and the nation. As the representative for HD 63, and a seasoned legislator, what are your priorities going to be going into the next session?

That is correct, and I think we will continue to see growth from a residential and commercial perspective. Of course,

this brings more economic opportunities for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and students who are ready to enter the workforce. We are already seeing the landscape change and more people coming to Denton County than ever before, including several large-scale corporations either moving their headquarters to the area or establishing significant corporate hubs and campuses. Being responsive to the growing needs of my district is a calling I take very seriously, and I will always be engaged in these major policy issues I've referenced that will be priorities for the 87th Legislative Session. Outside of those items, my legislative work has also been very focused on protections for children against abuse, fighting human trafficking, defending life at all stages, and opening Texas' untapped medical potential to allow for innovative solutions for people who are chronically and terminally ill. I have worked extensively in these areas during my time of service in the Texas House, but the potential to improve state policy still exists, and my legislative agenda will certainly reflect those opportunities moving forward.

Is there anything else you want to share with our members?

Without question, Texas continues to be the best place to live, work, and raise a family. As the 10th largest economy in the world, we have much at stake to continue our prosperity for generations to come. However, our state has approximately one million jobs that are dependent on North American trade and 300,000 of these are at risk unless the United States Congress unites to enact a modernized trade agreement such as the USMCA to replace NAFTA. Trade is critical to a healthy and vibrant construction industry here in Texas and across the nation. During the 86th Legislative Session, I worked to gain bipartisan support in calling upon our federal leaders to ratify the USMCA and put protecting not only Texas jobs but also American ones as a top public policy priority. My colleagues agreed, and together we passed unanimously a resolution out of the Texas House of Representatives in support of the USMCA. 🇺🇸



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In October, CMEF held its annual Construction Careers Exposition in Pasadena.

GREATER HOUSTON CHAPTER

The ABC Greater Houston Chapter and its training affiliate, Construction & Maintenance Education Foundation (CMEF), have had a busy fall semester and are looking forward to the year ahead.

In October, CMEF had its annual Construction Careers Exposition in Pasadena. According to the Federal Census Bureau, the construction industry needs to attract over 440,000 new workers within the next year to keep up with the current employment demand.¹ Therefore, a primary goal of the exposition was for career and technical education students to have an opportunity to explore the many facets of the industry as they participated in 26 different hands-on activity stations in a safe environment and learned about career opportunities as they spoke with construction industry professionals.

Also in October, the chapter held its first annual Women's Leadership Panel. The panel discussed ways for women to get involved with the construction industry and provided leadership advice for those who may be interested in running their own business or applying for higher-level positions. The event was sold out, and the ladies who attended were able to gain valuable insight for their personal and professional lives.

In November, the chapter held its annual Cornhole Tournament. Funds from the event went toward the Scholarship Foundation, which benefits students in local community colleges and universities who are interested in pursuing a career in construction. The event was a success, as there were over 92 attendees and over \$5,000 was raised for the Scholarship Foundation.

In late November, the chapter launched the ABCast, a podcast for the industrial and commercial contractor community. The first episode highlighted the 2020 Technology Conference that will be held in February that highlights technology tools and trends. Future episodes will feature women in construction, artificial intelligence, and relevant safety topics. The podcast is available in Apple Podcasts and Spotify.

On February 5, ABC Greater Houston, in partnership with FMI, will host the first annual Technology & Innovation Conference in Stafford. The conference will feature learning lessons, exhibitor displays, and live-tech demonstrations from premier technology solution providers from across the globe.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. *Construction Spending : Historical Value Put in Place*. 26 Nov. 2019. Web. https://www.census.gov/construction/c30/historical_data.html



In November, the Houston chapter held its annual Cornhole Tournament. Funds from the event went toward the Scholarship Foundation, which benefits students in local community colleges and universities who are interested in pursuing a career in construction.

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER

On October 9, members of ABC Central Texas gathered at the Omni Barton Creek to celebrate and recognize their exemplary safety and project quality performance in 2019.

The annual Excellence in Construction awards banquet honors and recognizes ABC member companies who exemplify the highest quality of workmanship in their projects, while upholding a dedication to building projects safely, on time, and on budget. This year, 15 member firms, representing 25 projects totaling over \$565 million received the association's prestigious EIC Merit and Eagle Awards. Two projects received "Best of the Best" level recognition for surpassing the judging threshold with the two highest scoring projects. Those were American Constructors' Del Valle HS Career & Tech Educational Innovation Space, and Greater Metroplex Interiors' Inspire on 22nd.

The 2020 Board and Officers were inducted into office at the annual Chapter Membership Breakfast, held October 23 at Threadgill's. Tony Rader, 2019 ABC National Chairman, was on hand to speak to the members and conduct the swearing in ceremony.

In November, the chapter held its 6th annual OSHA Partnership Safety Rodeo, a unique event that provides OSHA Awareness training in 5 areas of safety in both English and Spanish. This year, over 200 workers from over 25 member firms, as well as 20 Crockett High School Construction Tech students, received OSHA Awareness Training certificates in Fall Protection, CPR/First Aid, Ergonomics, PPE/Silica, and Electrical Safety. The event also featured a fully catered BBQ lunch sponsored by DPR as well as a dozen vendor tables providing safety product information and demonstrations. Casey Perkins, OSHA's Area Director, welcomed the participants, stressing the importance of a consistent safety practice and culture.

Over 150 ABC Central Texas members attended the chapter's annual Holiday Party on December 4 at The Highball. As part of the event, members were asked to donate items to be delivered to the Austin Ronald McDonald House and the chapter was able to deliver over 200 donated items and gift cards to this beloved local nonprofit.

SOUTH TEXAS CHAPTER

The big issue for the South Texas Chapter is still the mandated Paid Sick Leave issue. This past November, an injunction was granted, but it could be appealed by the defendants. The Texas Supreme Court is taking briefs from parties involved in the Austin lawsuit with Austin's responses due the first week of January. This could mean a decision wouldn't be given until Summer of 2020.

In the meantime, the San Antonio City Council is considering limiting when construction can occur (no activity between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.). This would have a negative impact on large projects. A city committee has been appointed to develop a workable solution. Part of this effort will be an education effort on the construction process. One suggestion was to prohibit roofing activity during the summer months (but it's not going anywhere).

The Fall Golf tournament held this past September sold out in three days – a first for this particular event. The Fishing Tournament in October was a success in spite of the first major cold front hitting the day of the event. And the Sporting Clays Shoot held in November was the largest since moving to the National Shooting Complex. There was no winner in the Member Bucks drawing at the Volunteer Appreciation Mixer so the drawing in January will be for \$1,000.



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The chapter is very proud of its membership growth accomplishments in 2019. At the end of the year, ABC Central Texas will be at a net growth of slightly over 15%. This was achieved by tremendous support from the chapter's outstanding Board of Directors as well as the highly-engaged chapter Membership Committee!

Five more area high schools were audited as part of the South Texas Chapter's NCCER process. Now over 36 high schools in the South Texas region offer NCCER construction related programs. And enrollment in the chapter's apprenticeship program increased for the second year in a row.

The chapter retreat held in October determined the top three issues for 2020 will be increasing participation and engagement in the chapter's workforce development efforts, membership recruitment, and the board becoming more vocal in highlighting chapter successes. The board is aware of all the successes – large and small – while the general membership may be knowledgeable about a select few.

The chapter is undertaking a Monday through Friday social media campaign. Each day will be a different focus. Monday's will highlight a chapter member. Tuesday will be a safety tip. Wednesday will highlight a particular ABC program such as STEP, AQC and Advocacy. Thursday will recognize a volunteer. And Friday will highlight meetings and activities in the coming week. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

SOUTHEAST TEXAS CHAPTER

On October 24, the ABC Southeast chapter held its 26th Annual Outdoor Extravaganza and Member Trade Show. This event continues to get bigger and better year after year, so much so, that the chapter once again took in Ford Park's Arena area in addition to their Exhibit Hall.

It really has turned into the most popular "must attend" event of the year by everyone in the Petro-Chemical Industry in Southeast Texas. Approximately 2,500 people came out to Ford Park and bought extra chances to win over 200 door prizes, 9 shotguns/rifles and 9 pistols.

A big thank you goes out to the chapter's Suppliers & Associates Council, as well as all the exemplary volunteerism and leadership throughout the year; another outstanding job planning and coordinating this magnificent show. Additionally, a special thank you to the new ABC of Texas President, Will McAdams, for driving in to attend the show and meet with the chapter members. It was very much appreciated!



Pictured: Katy Driver (ABC National) and Will McAdams (ABC of Texas President)

TEXO CHAPTER

Its been a very busy summer and fall for TEXO and its members as attendance records were broken for the remaining two 2019 Challenge Cup events, the TEXO Clay Shoot and TEXO YCC Tailgate.

Over 350 shooters took to the course at the Dallas Gun Club in September for the annual TEXO Clay Shoot in which some of the finest shooters in the construction industry competed in the individual and team categories.

The final Challenge Cup event was held on a beautiful day in October at Grapevine Lake where over 1,200 members and their families attended the YCC Tailgate party. The event provided something for everyone from games and entertainment for the kids to competitive cook-offs and washer tournament for the adults. A great time was had by all.

TEXO Safety division conducted several safety training programs which included OSHA 30, CPR/First Aid and TEXO Safety First classes where 480 member employees were trained. In November, the annual TEXO Construction Safety Professionals Conference was attended by 275 members.

Big issues continue to dominate the government affairs arena on the local level of which included the Dallas Sick Leave Ordinance, regional M/WBE issues as well as building code enforcement interpretations throughout the metroplex.

During the TEXO October Board of Directors meeting chapter leadership along with ABC of Texas Will McAdams presented Eagle awards to TEXO members and Texas House of Representative Jeff Leach and Texas House Representative Justin Holland. These gentlemen were recognized for the outstanding work they did during the legislative session getting legislation authored and passed that will be beneficial to the commercial construction business community.



The final Challenge Cup event was held on a beautiful day in October at Grapevine Lake where over 1,200 members and their families attended the YCC Tailgate party.



Will McAdams presented Eagle awards to TEXO members and Texas House of Rep. Jeff Leach and Texas House Rep. Justin Holland.

TEXAS MID COAST CHAPTER

The ABC Texas Mid Coast Chapter has expanded student enrollment at the Mid Coast Construction Academy (MCA). Classes started up again in the Fall and offers pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships for plumbers and electricians. A Fall Fundraiser and Apprentice Signing Ceremony was held on September 7, to recognize students and donors participating in the MCA.

The mission of the MCA is to promote and educate students and jobseekers about the construction industry and develop skilled labor. The MCA will prepare students with career-ready job skills to enter the workforce with confidence. This workforce development initiative will promote regional job growth in: Bee, Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca, Refugio and Victoria Counties. The benefits of MCA are vast, including: contribution to the economic development of the region, training of future taxpayers, and offering lucrative career opportunities to students (which promotes better self-esteem, discourages drug usage and high school dropout). Educating local individuals for construction jobs will allow businesses to bid more work, which increases revenue, and fulfills the need for skilled labor in the construction industry. For more information, please visit and Like the Facebook page (search "Mid Coast Construction Academy").

On October 1, another NCCER Construction Site Safety Technician class began. The class went on a safety field trip hosted by Service Supply on November 5, where they learned about personal protection equipment from subject matter experts.

The Young Professional group hosted a Chili Cookoff and Cornhole Tournament on November 7, at VCS Companies. Over 100 attendees enjoyed chili cooked by 9 teams as they watched the cornhole teams battle for first place in the tournament.



NCCER Construction Site Safety Technician class began with field trip to learn about personal protection equipment.



The MCA will prepare students with career-ready job skills to enter the workforce with confidence.

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GULF COAST CHAPTER

Will McAdams, the new President for ABC of Texas, gave the keynote address at the ABC Texas Gulf Coast Membership Event in September. His background in working within the Texas Legislature provided valuable insights into the achievements and the challenges ABC faces regularly on the political front. Additionally, Will was able to provide a detailed summary of the accomplishments of the 86th Texas Legislature.

Also at this event, 27 contractor members were honored for their achievements in STEP, ABC's world-class safety management system that dramatically improves safety performance among participants regardless of company size or type of work. This demonstrates the commitment of ABC members to safety and is the reason members perform up to 680% safer than the industry average.

In early November, ABC Texas Gulf Coast and its educational affiliate MSTI hosted the annual ABC Local Craft Championship. As a result, the chapter is pleased to announce that two local craftsmen will represent our chapter at the ABC National Craft Championships in March 2019 held in Nashville, Tennessee.

The chapter is excited to have yet another Millwright competitor to represent ABC and MSTI and the exceptional training program at Brazosport College, which has enjoyed a long tradition of excellence. Over the years, this training collaboration program has resulted in ABC sponsoring 23 Millwrights and 18 Millwright Medalists at the ABC National Craft Championships. This year Greg Gatrell of RPM Services will represent ABC in the Millwright Competition to do his part to contribute to the legacy.

And for the first time since 1998, ABC Texas Gulf Coast is sponsoring a pipe welding competitor. Adrian Ballew of KCG Industrial won first



place at the local competition and is eligible to go on to compete at the ABC National Craft Championship. Both competitors will now begin additional practice (both hands-on and written exams) to prepare for the competition in the spring, thanks to many mentors who will assist them with preparation during their off time. They will be working many Saturdays between now and the contest as they train for various aspects of the competition.

Whether it's on the front lines of legislation, safety, or workforce development, ABC and its members are leading the way to excellence in the merit shop construction industry.

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