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NEWS RELEASE

Construction Carnival puts tools in the hands of students

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Interested in a career in construction? Join us on June 14, 2007 at the Smokey Point Naval Family Support Center Complex from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM for a day of hands-on demonstration and inspiring conversation about careers in the construction trades.

Hosted by Workforce Development Council Snohomish County (WDC), Thursday's Construction Carnival promises to be a life-changing event for those in attendance. With teams of journeymen on site to answer questions and offer students the opportunity to try their hands at a number of jobs, the over 100 high school and college students already registered will have the chance to see and feel what it's like to work in the construction trades.

Participating exhibitors include the Western Washington Sheet Metal Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee, hosting a booth at which students can build a sheet-metal tool tray to take with them, and Star Rentals, providing the three lifts (fork, scissor, and boom) which students can ride after attending a short safety lesson.

"This is a exciting event for the students," explains Eric Peterson with the Western Washington Sheet Metal JATC, "it lets them get their hands on the equipment. It's the fastest way to get them turned on to these careers. And we need more smart, hard-working candidates in the industry."

Energizing youth about construction careers is an important initiative in Snohomish County as workforce demands outnumber skilled workers. Often seen as a dirty or low-wage work, unions, workforce development agencies, and local educators are working to change the perception of these in-demand, high-wage careers.

"Most high school kids don't know about the apprenticeship opportunities available after graduation," explains Kelly Humann with the Glaziers Local 188. "They don't realize they'll start at over \$20 an hour and continue to move up the career ladder into very competitive-waged jobs, all while earning college credit."

For students who aren't interested in a traditional four-year degree, "apprenticeship is a terrific alternative. In fact, unions have long called apprenticeship 'the original four-year degree,'" explains Sam Samano, Business Services Manager for Workforce Development Council Snohomish County. "Not everyone is going to succeed in college, and we have to start

providing career options for students who are more hands-on in their learning styles. It's time for us to start talking about real high-wage, high-skill jobs in the construction and building trades that don't get as much air time as the doctors and lawyers."

Other event sponsors include the Snohomish County Construction Careers Partnership, Western Washington Sheet Metal JATC, The Glaziers Architectural Metal & Glassworkers, Edmonds Community College, Habitat for Humanity, Brightwater Treatment Facility, Star Rentals, the Master Builders Education Foundation, and CITC.

Additional exhibitors include Everett Electricians, Northwest Washington Electrical Industry JATC, Pacific Northwest Ironworkers, and more. Exhibitor fees cover the cost of providing, in typical carnival fashion, a corn dog and an ice cream bar for each student.

With the palpable excitement each journeyman brings about his/her industry, they'll be providing the students with a glimpse into a future in the building trades as well.

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