Delta High School Construction Trades Teacher Recognized by Alaska Workforce Investment Board

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board recognized Gary Hall, Delta High School Construction Trades instructor since 2002, as its Secondary Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year during its February board meeting in Juneau. Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development Click Bishop said this year’s award recipients contribute significantly to “improving and promoting career and technical education.” Alaska business and industry representatives nominate candidates. Representatives from Delta Industrial Services, CampWater Industries, Copper Current Electric and Bechtel, along with Alaska Works Partnership wrote letters of support for Hall. Since 2002 Hall has taken his 35 plus-years’ experience in the construction trades industry and shared his work ethic and professional attitude with more than 100 students—many of whom have gone on to careers in the Trades or the construction industry.

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Board Member Develops “Drinking Water for Emergencies” Class

Jon Dufendach knows clean water can be hard to come by during natural and manmade disasters. He has been around the world trying to help remote and rural villages in South America and Africa to demonstrate proper techniques for making water clean enough to drink. His interests led to discussion with both the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Community and Technical College and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to develop a 16-hour workshop.

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t more than 60 attendees, Partners for Progress in Delta’s annual outreach to industry was the largest roundtable to date, completely filling the space in the shop area’s instructional space. Continuing and new participants exchanged ideas and listened to featured Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development Click Bishop describe the state’s commitment to career and technical education and training to increase, support and sustain Alaska’s skilled workforce.

During an exchange with industry and business representatives, board members and the Commissioner heard about needs for worker training and education in the area. In the agricultural industry, participants identified everything from getting a processing plant off the ground and developing the market for new barley flour mill, to providing culinary chef training using fresh vegetables and helping the red meat industry with mobile slaughtering training. Comments included, “The small family farm is not as commonplace anymore,” and “Alaska is something of an island.” For these reasons several folks pointed out the need “to help prepare folks to take care of themselves.”

The shortage of health care providers was voiced as a concern as well, with an interest in doing more “to grow our own.” Department of Transportation is having difficulty hiring operators in outlying areas and this ties in with a need for workers to receive training to secure a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL). Other areas of interest for training opportunities in the region noted include waste management, energy (wind and solar training) and small business management. Mining representatives pointed out the need for millwright training and process technology skills. And, as in past years, business folks want workers who possess soft skills and sales skills and continue to ask for job readiness training as part of the regular school curriculum.

Hall said the recognition was a total surprise and it reinforces his commitment to work with these young people. “I have seen so many young people’s lives change – they become focused, confident, and excited about their future and their opportunity to be contributing citizens to their community.” Hall not only teaches the Construction Trades and Welding sections at Delta High School, but also is the coordinator for the popular June Heavy Equipment Operator Academy—a three-week intensive program provided by the Operating Engineers, Local 302 and Alaska Works Partnership in June.

After appropriate review and vetting, Dufendach offered the first class in Delta in February. Topics covered included: a review of policy in Alaska, description of the range of threats from power outages and natural disasters to terrorism and equipment failure, planning, and response activities. Of the 13 workshop participants, 10 were personnel from the Alaska Sate Defense Force, including members from the 3rd Battalion (Fairbanks) and the fifth Battalion (Delta) with LTC Ron Magee, senior officer in attendance. Together they worked through emergency scenarios and participated in a field exercise. These two Battalions have been asked to spearhead preparedness for water treatment emergencies.

Dufendach reported that, “Many good ideas regarding ways of dealing with drinking water emergencies came out of this interchange.” Plans are being developed for an 80-hour course. Six of the students earned 1.5 Continuing Education Credits (CEU) through UAF CTC.

The Seventh Annual Industry Roundtable was well attended with representation from industry, government and other agencies.

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VISON: Greater Delta and Interior residents (high school students and adults) are competitive for current and emerging workforce opportunities and contribute to the state’s skilled workforce.

The Seventh Annual Industry Roundtable Participants Hear from Labor Commissioner Bishop

EIGHTH ANNUAL INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS HEAR FROM LABOR COMMISSIONER BISHOP

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Forthcoming on solar energy and pesticide application to assisting a thriving 4-H youth group, Cooperative Extension Service (CES) agents make good on the institution’s mission to educate, engage and support the people of Alaska by connecting them and their university.” With more than 80 years experience of providing factual and practical information to Alaskans, CES has been an active participant in ensuring the success of Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. CES agents have been involved in developing recipes using Delta grown and processed barley flour, planting at the Sullivan Roadhouse garden, organizing the annual Delta Farm Forum and Harvest Wrap-up, and offering a range of workshops and classes on gardening, food preservation and nutrition.

CES director and Partners for Progress in Delta board member Fred Schultz believes the CES/Delta Partners for Progress is a clear example of how the University of Alaska Fairbanks can partner to deliver direct credit and noncredit education to Alaska residents.

It is also Extension’s opportunity to work with communities to create a continuing education program that meets their residents’ needs,” he said. “This is a new direction for Cooperative Extension, allowing Alaska CES to be a model for the Lower 48 programs.”

Since spring 2011, local 4-H clubs (DJJ Saddle Tramps and Healing Hoofbeats) have been holding meetings at the Career Center. According to Eric Stewart, “A partners’ board member and active parent involved with 4-H, the move to the center has been a “good thing.” He said, “Over the past 12 months we’ve watched the club triple in size. Due to the sheer size of these ever growing clubs, utilization of the Career Center couldn’t have come at a better time.”

Always popular, the CES workshop on Cold Climate Homebuilding Techniques attracted 20 participants in February. CES community sustainability coordinator Rich Seifert and energy specialist Art Nash teamed up to deliver the most recent workshop in Delta. Topics covered included ventilation, cold climate options, retrofit, indoor air quality, roots and foundations. They also taught the Home Retrofit Workshop to residents.

Delta agent Phil Kasparski is Extension’s expert on pesticide management and later this spring will teach the pesticide applicators course from the Career Center to sites around the state using the center’s videoconferencing capability.

Cooperative Extension Service Partner Offers a Range of Outreach in Delta

GOALS

° To excel in helping Alaskans to be competitive for current and emerging workforce opportunities and contribute to the state’s skilled workforce.
° To be a focal point for Alaskans who seek career advancement education and training, academic degrees and continuing education credit.
° To better prepare secondary students for career options.
° To facilitate on-the-job training for long-term employment.
° To build and nurture long-term partnerships with agencies, businesses, organizations, the trades and government.

For more information about the annual Industry Roundtable, call Julie Dufendach at 907-421-3289 or email jdufendach@uaf.edu.
Coming Academies to Focus on Heavy Equipment and Residential Weatherization

June 2012 will again see a Construction Trades Heavy Equipment Operator academy along with a new program focus. Operating Engineers Local 302 through its Training Trust will again provide instruction in heavy equipment operation. The three-week intensive academy continues to be popular and results oriented with annual placements into additional training or job apprenticeships. Based on the growing need for increased efficiencies in home windows, doors and insulation to reduce energy costs, Partners for Progress partner Alaska Works Partnership kicked off delivery of a weeklong Introductory Weatherization academy in March. Plans include another weeklong session in late spring or early summer.

Call 895-4605 for more information and check our website, www.partnersforprogressindelta.org. We will post an application online for you to print and return to us.

Spring 2012 Activity Spans Range of Topics and Headcount Increases

University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College (UAF CTC) spring classes at the Delta Career Advancement Center include Beginning AutoCAD, Digital Photography, Elementary Algebra, Computer Business Applications: Word and Excel, Elementary Russian, and a distance delivered computing networking class. Late start classes include Digital Photography Part II and Certified Nurse Aide. Fundamentals of Oral Communication—Public Context will be offered this summer.

We reported a total of 115 served through December; however, between January 1 and the end of February this year we have 50 enrolled in University classes, 44 who have been served through Cooperative Extension workshops in January and February—cold climate techniques for building and pesticide application—and a special topics workshop on drinking water for emergencies. In addition, during this same period 30 people have used the Center for testing services for either placement or course work completion.

With late start classes and at least two more workshops on the horizon before the end of FY12, as well as the popular Heavy Equipment Operator Academy set for June, this spring promises a record head count.

Thank You for Your Support

- ALYESKA PIPELINE COMPANY gave Partners for Progress in Delta $1000 in support of our workforce development programs.
- BOEING COMPANY made possible our Pizza Night for 10th and 11th graders and their parents. Plans are underway to continue these evenings to share information about options for career pathways through classes offered by our partners at the Delta Career Advancement Center.