



Case for Support



Santa Rosa Junior College Foundation

SRJC's Construction Training Center: Rebuilding the North Bay

Santa Rosa Junior College is launching a new Construction Training Center to train the workforce needed to rebuild Sonoma County after years of wildfires, floods, and chronic underinvestment in residential construction.

High quality and affordable housing is critical for the future of the North Bay and the economic outlook of the region. A Housing and Fiscal Impact Report prepared by Beacon Economics estimated that Sonoma County needs to construct at least 30,000 housing units over the next five years to account for employment and population growth, fire rebuilds, and overcrowding. Until this challenge is met, Sonoma County remains at risk of losing residents who cannot find or afford a place to live. The housing shortage impacts the ability for businesses, nonprofits, hospitals, and government agencies to find and retain employees; and for local school districts to maintain sufficient enrollment.

But there is hope. Constructing more housing means more families living where they work, more kids attending our local schools, and more vibrant communities. In Sonoma County, construction occupations earn a higher median wage than all occupations, providing students with a living wage and a pathway to homeownership.

SRJC is partnering with local Unions to build pipelines into the Union Apprenticeship Programs for some of our students. SRJC is also partnering with local high-school construction programs and nonprofits that provide local youth with an introduction to the construction trades. SRJC believes in this "all-of-the-above" strategy for workforce development in the construction trades.

By investing in the construction training programs, SRJC will provide the North Bay community with living wage jobs, essential housing stock, and support the demands of local employers. SRJC is ready to meet the projected job growth and train the next generation of construction-related workers through the development of the Construction Training Center located at the SRJC Petaluma campus.

Construction Training Center

The Construction Training Center is focused on developing a skilled and “work-ready” construction workforce for Sonoma County and the North Bay.

In 2019, SRJC secured a \$8.12 million federal disaster grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and local donor Tipping Point with Sonoma County Economic Development Board to construct a state-of-the-art construction training center to prepare students for careers in construction-related industries. Due to the rising cost of materials, an additional \$4 million grant amendment from the EDA was secured by SRJC in 2022 to allow the project to move forward.

The Construction Training Center is a flexible use 10,000 square foot lab space, designed to facilitate learning in both traditional and technology-based prefabrication construction methods, specialty trades, and green building techniques. The SRJC Construction Center will be located on the SRJC Petaluma campus - the most accessible site location for greater Sonoma County, as well as for the four adjacent counties affected by recent wildfires: Napa, Lake, Solano, and Mendocino. The Petaluma campus offers a full complement of Student Services, with bilingual/bicultural Spanish capacity in all service areas, including a Student Success Team specifically designed to support Career Education students. The SRJC Construction Training Center is currently nearing completion by Arntz Builders of Petaluma, and will be ready for classes beginning Fall 2024.

Construction Training Center Programs

Introduction to the Building and Construction Trades - This introductory program exposes students to the different trades and career paths in construction; the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders such as clients, architects, general contractors, project managers, sub-contractors and suppliers; and additional training opportunities such as the SRJC Carpentry and HVACR programs and Registered Apprenticeships. The program includes courses in OSHA 10 certification preparation; blueprint reading; workplace math; and a survey of the building trades and construction industry.

Carpentry Fundamentals - This new program will provide in-depth, hands-on training in residential rough carpentry (framing), utilizing the new carpentry labs at the Construction Training Center. The program teaches the foundations of residential framing, including framing floors, walls, roofs, windows, and doors. The curriculum covers topics such as wood types and properties, measurement techniques, and blueprint reading. Students take an entire class in the safe and proper use of hand and power tools commonly used in the carpentry trade. By the end of the program, students will be ready to gain employment as a framer and help rebuild Sonoma County.

Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVACR) Fundamentals - This new program prepares students for exciting and in-demand jobs in the residential Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration (HVACR) industry. Students will learn how residential HVACR systems and their components operate; the fundamentals of airflow, refrigeration, ventilation, combustion, and thermodynamics; and the tools and equipment used for installation, maintenance, and repair work. Students also learn about jobsite safety, career opportunities, codes and regulations, and industry certification requirements for HVACR technicians. This program will serve students new to the HVACR industry and students who already have some industry experience. The program will offer online classes and classes in the HVACR lab at the Construction Training Center.

Fire Resilient Landscaping - SRJC and the Sonoma County Adult Education Consortium collaborated with community stakeholders to create a new fire resilient landscaping training program for the existing landscaper workforce. This hands-on training covers fire resilient and drought-tolerant landscaping; vegetation management and maintaining defensible space around homes; small repairs for home hardening and wildfire safety; and workplace safety and worker rights (including OSHA 10 prep). The objective is to offer a training program that enlists the talented landscaper workforce in our shared community goals of safer, more resilient homes and properties in Sonoma County. The Construction Training Center will facilitate the expansion of the equity-driven Fire Resilient Landscaping program and provide additional hands-on learning opportunities for students in residential structure hardening techniques.

Water Resources Technology: This program prepares students for state certification and employment in private or public water and wastewater treatment facilities. Courses also provide continuing education opportunities for current industry employees seeking to maintain certification. Instructors are experienced water and wastewater professionals, expert and current in best industry practices. Classes include practical examples of real-world scenarios, demonstrations, and field trips to maximize understanding of subject matter. The Construction Training Center will provide new and improved lab space for students in the Water Resources Technology program.

New Spaces and Naming Opportunities

The amazing spaces in the new SRJC Construction Training Center will only come alive when filled with the students, staff, equipment, and tools to inspire learning develop the next generation of construction professionals.

The Construction Training Center has multiple indoor and outdoor areas for hands-on learning to build real-world job skills. Naming opportunities provide long-term funding for students and programs by supporting the SRJC Construction Training Center endowment. Donors at this level set an example and bring other donors to the cause; their giving is more than generous, it is generative. Donors can choose to recognize the generosity of an individual, family, or organization. Your gift will help to fulfill the promise of higher education and provide opportunity for immediate impact in the lives of students and the community we share.

SRJC Construction Training Center Building	The naming for the entire Center represents the strongest commitment to rebuilding Sonoma County.	\$500,000
Construction Technology Lab	This lab classroom will be used for building scale-model homes and teaching residential framing techniques.	\$25,000 (reserved)
HVACR Lab	The HVACR lab will allow students to get hands-on experience with installation and repair of residential HVACR systems including heat pumps, compressors, and gas furnaces.	\$25,000

Carpentry Lab	This lab will be used for teaching carpentry tool safety, residential framing techniques and for cutting lumber and plywood.	\$25,000 (reserved)
Construction Training Area (Outdoor Lab)	Construction students will have covered outdoor space for large projects, such as building a tiny home and chicken coops. Hardscaping students will be able to construct gazebos, fences, and decking.	\$25,000 (reserved)
Safety Training Area (Outdoor Lab)	This outdoor lab will be used to demonstrate and practice construction safety techniques such as ladder safety, scaffolding, forklift operation, and scissor lift operation.	\$25,000
Fire Resilient Landscaping Area (Outdoor Lab)	Students will learn vegetation management and structure hardening techniques used to make residential and commercial properties safer from wildfire.	\$25,000
Courtyard	Gathering location for students and community members to interact.	\$15,000 (reserved)
Classroom	Flexible use classroom for all programs within the building.	\$10,000
Office	Faculty and staff space for curriculum development and meeting with students.	\$10,000

Additional Opportunities for Impact

SRJC has also identified several priority areas of focus for the expansion and enhancement of construction-related educational opportunities and career preparation, all of which require financial contributions and participation from community supporters.

Tools, Equipment, and other Instructional Support	Funds to purchase the necessary instructional tools, equipment, classroom speakers, faculty professional development, and transportation costs for students to go on field trips to construction worksites.	Total Needed: \$100,000
Bridge Capital Funding	Local match required for EDA construction cost amendment.	\$250,000 (secured)

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