

# Ann Arbor Student Building Industry Program



The Ann Arbor Student Building Industry Program

The Ann Arbor Student Building Industry Program began as the dream of representatives of the school system, local businesses, and banking. They believed that high school students could, with proper supervision and assistance, build a quality house.

The history of the organization begins in 1968 when Earl Shaffer, the Consultant for Vocational Education for the Washtenaw County Intermediate School District, contacted Henry Landau regarding the possibility of beginning a program. Henry, a well-known local homebuilder, and then President of the Washtenaw County Association of Contractors (made up of the Washtenaw County Association of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors, (now the Greater Michigan PMC, Inc.) the Home Builders

Association of Washtenaw County (now the Builders & Remodelers Association of Greater Ann Arbor) and the Washtenaw General Contractors Association felt the idea had great possibilities. The two of them approached the Washtenaw County Association of Contractors with the idea of promoting a community sponsored training program for high school students interested in learning something about the building trades, specifically related to residential construction. At the same time, Jim Weldon with Ann Arbor Federal Savings and Loan, had been instructed

by his employer, Roy Weber, to have the bank become involved in a community service project. He contacted his good friend Henry Landau, who informed him of the ongoing discussions with the schools. They felt the two directives fit hand in glove and the rest is history.

Henry knew that for a program to be a success, it would need the full endorsement and participation of the whole construction industry. As his first step Henry contacted Jack Wheatley, Business Manager of the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 190 and President of the local Building Trades Council, comprised of all 20 major building trades unions.

After some persuading by Henry,

Jack and the building trades agreed that the program could have merit, and a voluntary Ad-Hoc Committee was formed which included all facets of the construction industry. The Committee addressed itself to the problem at hand -- how to take a profit making enterprise - the building of a house for sale, and turn it into a learning experience that would provide the necessary instruction and involvement for students eager to learn more about the building trades. After a game plan was devised, Landau, Shaffer, Wheatley and Weldon made a presentation to the Ann Arbor School Board requesting the opportunity to begin the program. After the perceived problems with owning property and making a profit were handled, the Ann Arbor School Board at their April 22, 1970 meeting approved the project. A non-profit corporation, for the purpose of owning and financing the projects, was formed and the Ann Arbor Student Building Industry Program was officially begun.



With all this in place, and after a great deal of planning and work, on September 9th, 1970, at a building site at 3377 Yellowstone Drive, a groundbreaking ceremony was held and the first student home building project was under way. Twenty-six students from Pioneer and Huron High Schools saw the project through to completion with assistance of local journeymen, craftsmen and the supervision of the "Builder of Record," Henry Landau. The students participated in every phase of the construction. The home was sold before it was completed and no commission was charged by a local Realtor. **The program was successfully under way.**



# 45 Years of Helping Students Begin Their Future In The Construction Industry

Throughout the forty-five years of the program, the students have built quality homes in some of the best neighborhoods in Ann Arbor. ***But the most important asset that comes from the program is not the homes -- it's the students.*** The AASBIP serves student populations within the Ann Arbor school district. These tradespeople of tomorrow will need to pursue studies beyond high school in order to compete in the competitive marketplace. For these young men and women, three scholarships were formed to assist the students with college as they study construction related courses and are often a lifeline to pursuing their dreams.

*Receiving the H.S. Landau Scholarship meant an enormous amount to me. This was the highest achievement we could earn coming out of the student home building program. To me, the award's stature meant the most, due to the respect I had for all the staff & local business members involved in the home building program. To this day, I remain in the industry, with my pouch on, as President of my own Custom Framing Company because of the opportunity this gave me in high school."*

*John Binder - Class of 1978*

In these recent difficult economic times, the proceeds from the sales of our homes had not been adequate to fully fund our scholarships as they had been in previous years. In 2009, the Scholarship Fundraising Campaign was formed with the goal to raise \$120,000 over four years to insure that qualified students will receive the support they need to pursue post-secondary education. All donations are 100% tax deductible. We welcome all contributions to this important program which supports our local students as they continue their studies towards a rewarding career in the construction industry. Anyone interested in pledging to this important program can contact Diane Calmeyn at the Greater Michigan Plumbing & Mechanical Contractors Association - [diane@greatermichiganpmc.org](mailto:diane@greatermichiganpmc.org).

## Scholarships

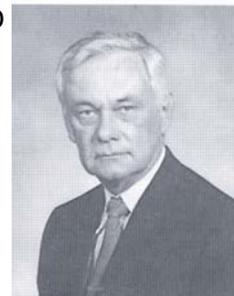


### Henry S. Landau Memorial Scholarship

In 1974 the H. S. Landau Scholarship was established. The Landau Scholarship was established to honor one of the program's first and strongest advocates, Henry Landau. It was the first established by the Board of Directors to honor Henry for his outstanding efforts in insuring that the program got started and stayed viable. It is awarded to a home building student who has an outstanding class record and a strong desire to gain further construction related education. ***After Henry's death it became a Memorial Scholarship, to honor his 33 years in the program.***

### James O. Weldon Memorial Scholarship

In 1986 a second scholarship was established. It honored James O. Weldon, who along with Henry, helped in establishing the program. It, too, is awarded to a student, interested in the construction fields, who has an outstanding class record. ***After Jim's death it became a Memorial Scholarship, with his family directing donations in his name to be made there to honor his 30 years in the program.***



### Earl W. Shaffer Memorial Scholarship

In 1999 a third scholarship was established in honor of Earl W. Shaffer, the third member of the original founding trio. Like the other two, it also is awarded to support an outstanding student wishing to pursue further education in a construction related field. ***After Earl's death it became a Memorial Scholarship, with his family directing donations in his name to be made there to honor his 37 years in the program. In 2005, Earl was also honored by having the street of our new Somerset Neighborhood development named after him, Earl Shaffer Court.***

Next year's home will complete this neighborhood of homes completely built by students in this program.

# AASBIP Mission Statement

The AASBIP provides Ann Arbor high school students with a unique learning experience. Through the actual construction of a new home, from raw land to finished product, students learn the importance of math skills, architectural dimension, job satisfaction, along with teamwork, responsibility and dependability. Upon completion of the program, students have an awareness of the many opportunities and benefits of the construction industry and related fields.

## Sumerset Neighborhood

Bob Guenther of Guenther Homes has been a strong supporter of the program including making a number of lots available to the program within the neighborhoods his company developed. In 2003, Bob made the Board of Directors of the program aware of a parcel of land that was ready to be developed. Through the support of Guenther Homes the program was able to acquire this parcel which resulted in the development of 11 lots.

Financing for the acquisition and development costs were provided by UA Local 190 Plumbers/Pipefitters/Service Technicians/Gas Distribution Pension Trust Fund.



Continuing with the strong community support for this program much of the time, effort and labor required to develop the site was either volunteered, donated or performed at cost by individuals and companies in the Greater Ann Arbor Area.



This year in September the students will begin construction on home #11 at Sumerset. The completion of this home in mid 2016 will be the final home built in the Sumerset Neighborhood. The construction of an entire neighborhood under the guidance of the

AASBIP and by our Students marks another milestone in the history of the Program. The AASBIP is likely the only Student building Program in the United states that has developed and constructed an entire community.

## Kirkway of Scio

In 2011, the Directors set forth an ambitious plan to acquire additional home sites to secure the future of the program. In early 2012 there was an opportunity to purchase 8 remaining home sites in the Kirkway of Scio neighborhood. At the time, due to the harsh economic environment, financing options to complete the sale were marginal. Once again the Trustees of the UA Local 190 Pension Trust generously provided financing that enabled the program to purchase the sites. Without their support this transaction would not have been possible.

Kirkway is a neighborhood of 36 homes plus 8 remaining home sites located in Scio Township in an area of growth and development. In September 2016, the program will construct their first home in this neighborhood. Currently a task force of the AASBIP is making decisions regarding floor plans and finishes of the first home to be built. Over a period of 8 years students will build 8 homes that will compliment the fine homes in the neighborhood. The Program will take pride completing the remaining homes at Kirkway fo Scio.



## Thorn Oaks

In late 2003 an anonymous supporter of the Program generously donated a single home site to the AASBIP. The site is nearly 1/2 acre located near the Huron River on the east side of Ann Arbor. While the Directors have not made firm plans for this site it does provide additional opportunities and security to the program for the future.

# Skills USA

Skills USA is a partnership of students, instructors, and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled work force. After a near decade long hiatus from competition, the AASBIP jumped back into the fray in 2007. Since then the program has seen a State level medalist every year but one, with many years seeing multiple medalists and five State champions and National competitors.

The TeamWorks teams won State gold medals in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, followed by the silver medal this year in TeamWorks and Bronze in Carpentry.

In 2015 AASBIP saw Nathan Corry a senior from Community high school take third place in the Skills USA State level Carpentry competition. Our TeamWorks team consisting of a mason Joseph Huppenbauer, senior Skyline High School, an electrician, Luis Esquivel ,senior Huron High , a plumber Ryan Snuverink, Skyline junior and a carpenter, Skyline senior Calvin Bultman took the Silver medal at States and came within a few points of advancing to the national competition.



Our students continue to show major growth and progress as we look to serve the greater Washtenaw/Ann Arbor business community with educated, competent skilled trades students looking to perform at the highest levels.

## Public/Private Collaboration

Collaborations between the public and private sectors have become a vital framework to the success of AASBIP. Corporate giving builds more than residential homes – it builds opportunities. Contributions such as donations from Delta and Merrilat made it possible for AASBIP to thrive during difficult economic times and continue supporting students in developing their craft and career options.

The opportunities provided by corporate contributions extend far beyond the students though; corporations can fulfill their social responsibility missions by supporting the community in which they live, work and play. Building more public and private relationships will continue to strengthen AASBIP by not only offering students the skills they need to acquire good paying jobs after graduation, but also enabling corporate citizenship creeds to be met in full.

In addition to corporate sponsorships, the entrepreneurial nature of the AASBIP board of directors is a central component to the program's long-running success. The board of directors represents many different disciplines in the Ann Arbor community, from lawyers and Realtors to education professionals and AASBIP alumni. The diversity of board members, combined with their entrepreneurial mindsets, help drive effective policymaking decisions that continue to build the success of the program.

The synergy between corporate and community support empowers AASBIP to be both profitable and impactful. This collaboration calls to action the need for more cooperation between public and private entities and to leverage the success of AASBIP into other career and technical education programs within the public school jurisdiction. Not every high school student will go on to postsecondary education. Boosting public and private partnerships is the best ammunition we have at ensuring all students have the opportunity to achieve career success.

# Career Technical Education – Creating Tomorrows Workforce and Business Owners Today

For years students have been taught the only way to be successful is to have a college diploma hanging on their wall. In today's changing economy, employers are looking for an employee that has not only an education, but knowledge, skills and ability. Those who will have a competitive advantage will have a blend of education AND technical skills. According to a Harvard study, by 2018, 33% of the jobs available will require a four-year degree, 10% will be unskilled, and 57% will require a certificate in a skilled trade.

The Home Builders Association of Michigan is creating an awareness campaign focusing on the importance of skilled trades. They were part of a coalition that worked with Governor Snyder's administration on changing the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) so flexibility could be created in a high school student's day to take an approved career technical education program.

During the debate of changing the math requirements the MMC, comments were made that changes would compromise students' education. The reality is average students excel in the CTE program. The pride can be seen in their faces as they proudly showcase their work. Not only does a CTE program teach a student a skill, it teaches life skills. They walk away with improved communication skills, team building skills, time management skills and the list goes on.

The AASBIP is thankful to have the support of Governor Snyder in his goal of making Michigan number one in skilled trades. As a matter of fact, this is such an important issue for the governor, he recently partnered with Mike Rowe to create 11 videos to address common misconceptions about skilled trades, highlight opportunities and inspire K-12 students in Michigan as they begin to think about careers. In partnership with Mike Rowe, one of the videos will focus on construction.

As an industry, we have hurdles ahead of us. Not everyone sees a career in skilled trades as being successful in life. We still have counselors and school districts who are continuing to guide students towards earning that diploma to hang on their wall. It is incumbent upon our industry to speak with students, parents and counselors about the success to be had in the building industry.

The residential building industry lost over 40% of our workforce over the last decade. Those are workers who are not returning to the field. Combine that with the fact that many in the industry are baby boomers, the increased demand for skilled workers is only going to increase.

The HBA of Michigan is working on creating an awareness campaign geared towards students. But students need your voices to be heard too. Students who have gone through a career technical education program and then entered the industry need to be the face of the industry. They are our future. They not only will become employees, they have the potential to become successful business owners and community leaders.

Visit [Ann Arbor Student Building Industry Program](#) on



at AASBIP

and our website at - [www.aastudentbuilding.org](http://www.aastudentbuilding.org)