

On September 14, 2016, AOBA brought together a variety of constituencies for a Commercial Executive Roundtable focused on Increasing the *Pipeline for Building Engineers and Helping to “Grow our Own.”*

Attendees included:

Name	Title	Representing
Bill Atkinson	Regional Engineer	Boston Properties
Bill Clark	Vice President - Operations	Blake Real Estate
Pam Haberstroh	Executive Director	NAPE Education Foundation
Ray Hutchison	Manager of Industry Partnership Programs	DC Public Schools
Ed Roberts	Dean – Applied Technologies and the Gudelsky Institute for Technical Education	Montgomery College
Greg White	Vice President	COPT
Peggy Jeffers	Executive Vice President	AOBA
Marie Tibor	Director of Communications and Education	AOBA
Marc Fischer	Principal	InspiRE

Highlights of the roundtable meeting include:

- Roundtable members believe it is important that whatever messaging we create resonates with parents of the high school and college students who are likely to become our target market for entry-level engineering positions. The key is to help parents understand that college is not the only option and that building engineering positions can provide a well-paying, stable career path – without having to make the significant investment of time and money in pursuit of a 4-year college degree.
- For many parents, there is a “stigma” associated with students who elect not to complete a college degree and who pursue careers in the trades. The messaging should help to overcome the belief that “technical education is great – for someone else’s kid.”
- An apprenticeship model – for high school and college students – might be an excellent way to expose potential employees to careers in building engineering.
- In terms of education, NAPE is “struggling to keep up with demand” for its education offerings – which span the entire spectrum of engineering education from entry-level training to management courses.
- Creating a “pipeline” of qualified candidates should be a goal of the task force. To connect with these potential candidates, many believe there needs to be a “grass roots” effort to expose more people to the benefits of working in a trade.
- There is a need to find creative ways to fund this initiative – including partnerships, grants, etc. It is unlikely the AOBA membership will support increased dues to support this program.

- BOMA Georgia has established a foundation to support a variety of initiatives – primarily focusing on industry research and education programs. The task force highly recommends creating an “AOBA Foundation” to support the engineering talent initiative.
- The participants believe AOBA should target these groups to identify potential candidates:
 - Trade schools (high school and for-profit)
 - Community colleges
 - Military (enlisted members seeking a post-military career)
- AOBA should create promotional materials (brochures, videos, etc.) to support the effort to entice potential candidates to consider a career in building engineering. More importantly, the program should include some sort of mechanism to make personal connections between potential candidates and the “best and brightest” building engineers in the region. Participants believe the “personal touch” is more crucial to the success of the initiative than the creation of any promotional materials.