

# I'M GREAT.™

Gulf Rebuild: Education, Advancement and Training

## Gulf Coast Workforce Shortage

Post-Katrina clean-up and reconstruction of the Gulf Coast region has introduced a number of challenges including access to a trained and skilled workforce. Throughout the region, contractors have experienced significant labor shortages and continue to struggle to find skilled construction workers.



## 20,000 Skilled Professionals

In response to this challenge, Business Roundtable, in partnership with federal, state and local government agencies, businesses, community organizations, academic institutions and construction trade groups and associations, launched the Gulf Coast Workforce Development Initiative (“the Initiative”), as an effort to recruit and train up to 20,000 skilled construction laborers for the Gulf Coast region by the end of 2009.

The Initiative supplements ongoing efforts in both the public and private sectors and, to date, is primarily funded through members of Business Roundtable, which represents chief executive officers of the largest companies in the country, from every sector of the economy.

## Skills That Turn Jobs Into Careers

Through the Initiative, eligible participants can enroll in entry level skills courses, preparing them for employment in the construction industry. Safety training, which will satisfy the OSHA construction industry training program requirements, will be an integral part of the basic craft training that these students receive. Training is free and, most importantly, contractors are partnering with the Initiative to help ensure that newly-developed skills match the needs of the rebuilding effort.

Participants are trained by instructors certified by a number of construction accrediting organizations including the National Center for Construction Education and Research (“NCCER”). NCCER is a not-for-profit education foundation created to develop and maintain industry driven standardized construction craft training programs with portable credentials. New worker training is also being performed under the approved apprenticeship programs of the Building and Construction Trades. The initial training classes have started in Louisiana and Mississippi with funding made available through National Emergency Grants and the U.S. Department of Labor’s Pathways to Construction grants.

## A GREAT Opportunity

Initiative-sponsored recruitment efforts, through a campaign entitled **GREAT – Gulf Rebuild: Education, Advancement and Training**, is underway ([www.imgreat.org](http://www.imgreat.org)) to help increase the visibility of the program and attract more participants. Outreach efforts are underway in target cities across Louisiana and Mississippi, with expansion into other Gulf Coast communities in the future.



## Gulf Coast Workforce Development Initiative

### Partners

American Association of Community Colleges  
Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.  
(ABC) and local chapters  
Associated General Contractors (AGC) of  
America and local chapters  
Building and Construction Trades Department,  
AFL-CIO and its affiliates  
Business Roundtable  
Construction & Maintenance Education Fund  
(CMEF)  
Construction Industry Roundtable (CIRT)  
Construction Users Roundtable (CURT)  
Greater Baton Rouge Industry Alliance (GBRIA)  
Greater New Orleans Business Roundtable  
Greater New Orleans, Inc.  
Home Builders Institute  
Houston Business Roundtable  
Houston Community College System  
Lake Area Industry Alliance

Louisiana Chemical Association  
Louisiana Community and Technical College  
System  
Louisiana Department of Labor  
Louisiana Recovery Authority  
Louisiana Workforce Commission  
Minority Business Roundtable  
Mississippi Construction Education  
Foundation  
Mississippi Department of Employment  
Security  
National Association for the Advancement of  
Colored People (NAACP)  
National Black Chamber of Commerce  
National Center for Construction Education  
and Research (NCCER)  
Office of the Federal Coordinator for Gulf  
Coast Rebuilding  
United States Department of Labor

### Contributors

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Business Roundtable