

Pelican Chapter NEWS

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Florida or Bust!

Louisiana ABC Marks Another Grand Convention in 2006

Pelican Chapter's 2006 Annual State Convention was a success for one more year. This huge success would not have been possible without the help and support of so many people and ABC companies. Chairman of the event, Karl Weber of PBC Industrial Supplies, especially donated his time and energy to make this event one of the best. Thanks to our Convention Committee, all sponsors, and companies who donated items to our ditty bags and registration room, without you this event would not have been what it was.

The convention started with a welcome reception Wednesday night. This event gave everyone time to get settled in and mingle with all of the people there for the event. Thursday was a busy day starting with a breakfast and wonderful speech on *Rebuilding Louisiana College and Universities for a Competitive Edge* by Mr. Roland Toups of Turner Industries.

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It's true. ABC members work hard, and play harder.

Great things are happening in training and education

BY ALVIN BARGAS, President

By now I hope you have heard the "I'm GREAT" radio spots or seen the "I'm GREAT" bumper stickers or bill boards spreading across Baton Rouge.

GREAT, which stands for Gulf Rebuild: Education, Advancement and Training, is a campaign in the Gulf Coast region to find and train up to 20,000 skilled construction workers by the end of 2009.

With the financial support of the Business Roundtable a large number of businesses, contractors, community colleges, and others are joining with the state and federal governments in a landmark partnership to tackle this challenge. In addition to ongoing private sector efforts, the State of Louisiana has committed

job training funds, and the U.S. Department of Labor Pathways to Construction grants are also being used in this program.

In fact ABC Pelican Chapter has partnered with the Baton Rouge Community College and Sowela Technical Community College in Lake Charles to train over 40 entrants into the construction industry and classes are ongoing. Eligible participants can enroll in tuition free four-week entry level skills courses preparing them for employment in the construction industry including safety training that satisfies OSHA requirements and includes curricula developed by the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER).

With your support we can provide GREAT jobs and career opportunities for our residents and begin the process of building a work-force of skilled craftsmen to serve area industry so vital to our economy.

For more information about the program and the GREAT campaign call 1.888.52GREAT (1.888.524.7328), visit www.imgreat.org, call Tad Page at 225.932.2500 or call Melanie Searles here at the Pelican Chapter.

Another great happening is our expansion of the Commercial Electrical courses and the addition of an industrial carpentry class to the line up in the

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from the president

Great things are happening in training and education

training center. Be sure to read the enclosed article highlighting some of the instructors who continue to make our programs successful.

Another great thing going on at Pelican has been the success of our fund-raising effort on behalf of the Free Enterprise Alliance (FEA). You will recall that you were given the option to make contribution to FEA as part of your dues renewal. I am pleased to report that our members contributed over \$12,500 to this important fund.



ALVIN BARGAS
President

Four years ago, ABC National established the FEA to defend and promote free enterprise, open competition and equal opportunity in Washington, D.C. and across the country.

Thus far FEA has spent over \$800,000 to combat the misinformation and job killing policies of liberal special interest groups and others opposed to ABC's merit shop philosophy. These groups and organized labor have promised to spend millions in 2006 to regain control of Congress. I do not have to tell you what this will mean to your business in terms of pro-labor policies and the creation of additional red tape for your merit shop business.

If you have not already done so please add your generous support to a growing number of ABC member companies and individuals contributing to the FEA. These contributions will enable FEA to continue educating the public and our employees about ABC's merit shop principles through employee education programs, nonpartisan voter registration and Get-Out-The-Vote efforts.

Speaking of voter and elections and politics ABC National is currently recruiting **company coordinators** to disseminate voter information this election season. As Election Day draws closer, ABC will provide company coordinators with materials such as voter registration forms, voter guides and get-out-the-vote information to distribute to em-



GREAT stands for Gulf Rebuild: Education, Advancement and Training. It is a campaign in the Gulf Coast region to find and train up to 20,000 skilled construction workers by the end of 2009. Pictured left to right are Tad Page with The Shaw Group, Chapter President Al Bargas, and Chapter Director of Education and Training Robert Cloutre.

ployees. Please contact Grassroots Coordinator Stephanie Thienel at (703) 812.2035 or Thienel@abc.org or contact the Pelican Chapter office to sign up.

Be sure to look for our Director of Governmental Affairs article elsewhere in the publication. As Maria points out our elections will be quite interesting this round and I know she would like your active participation in the process. What better way to serve than as a **company coordinator** working both National and Statewide races.

Another Great is the continually increasing interest in ABC of our industry leaders in North Louisiana. Don Grimes, our man on the ground, continues to make strides in obtaining contractor commitments in this important area of our state. As this issue goes to press I will be traveling to Monroe, or I should say Sterlington, LA, to attend the second steering committee meeting hosted by

Angus Chemical Company a subsidiary of the Dow Chemical Company. I will provide an update on this area's activities in the next issue.

By the way, if you have not reserved your both for our Contractor Connection Trade Show please do so today. Scott Reed and the Programs and Events committee are planning a very rewarding experience for all exhibiting and attending. Mark the date, November 1 and 2, Baton Rouge River Center.

Leadership

Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.

~ Dwight Eisenhower