

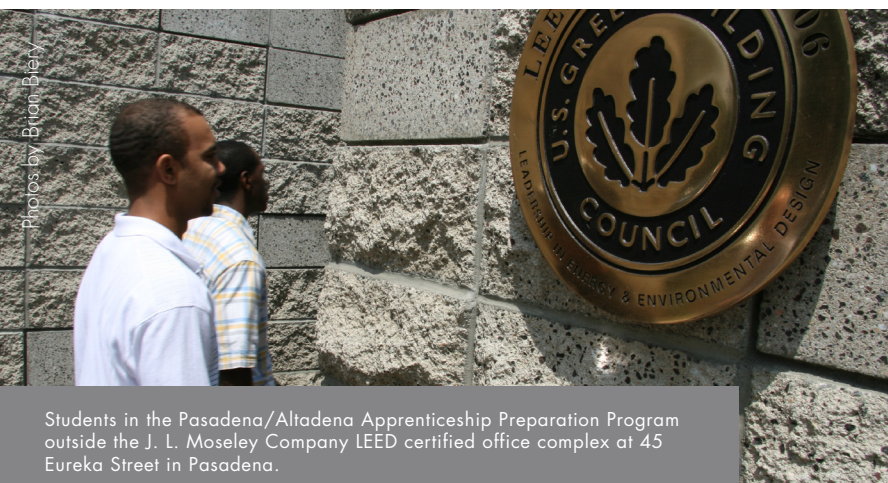


green TECHNOLOGY

strategy and leadership for clean and sustainable communities

Flintridge Greens the Pathway to Apprenticeships

By Karen Gerst



Students in the Pasadena/Altadena Apprenticeship Preparation Program outside the J. L. Moseley Company LEED certified office complex at 45 Eureka Street in Pasadena.



The class, along with contractor Andy Kaplan (front left) and Jaylene Moseley, developer and President of Flintridge Operating Foundation, tour the complex.

“Does anyone know what LEED means?” asks developer Jaylene Moseley, who is also the President of [Flintridge Operating Foundation](#). She looks around the light-filled lobby at the students who are visiting the first LEED Gold certified office complex in Pasadena, developed by J. L. Moseley Company. No one responds.

The nearly two dozen men and one woman, who range in age from 20 to 51, are on a site visit as part of the Pasadena/

Altadena Apprenticeship Preparation Program. Some have only a high school education and many lack the skills that would qualify them for anything but a low-wage job. But all hope to change their lives by becoming paid apprentices and then trained journey workers in the construction trades.

Everyone listens intently as the building contractor, Andy Kaplan, starts to explain the environmental features of the beautiful and energy efficient structure—for-

merly an industrial warehouse. The students’ eyes widen when they learn about the building’s heat-reflecting roof, use of recycled materials and discover that not only is energy use reduced, but that electricity is actually returned back into the city’s electrical grid. They crowd into one of the lavatories to see the waterless urinals, dual-flush toilets, sensor faucets and recycled glass counters. By the end of the site visit all will have a better understanding of LEED, Leadership in Energy and



Master instructor Eddie McFadden with students.

Environmental Design and what goes into making a building “green.”

The Apprenticeship Preparation Program is a free 240-hour course that covers the skills and information needed to successfully apply for union apprenticeships in the construction trades. The program, inspired by Pasadena Councilmember Jacque Robinson’s 2020 Initiative, is a collaborative effort, designed and administered by the Flintridge Operating Foundation and supported by an alliance of community partners. These include Pasadena City College Community Education Center (PCC/CEC), City of Pasadena departments, Five Acres and its affiliate the Pasadena Mental Health Center, businesses, numerous unions and local nonprofit organizations.

The program responds to the lack of job and career prospects for low-income, unskilled young adults and is a key strategy in the community’s efforts to deter disadvantaged youth from joining gangs. By providing a pathway to economic security and meaningful futures—the Apprenticeship Preparation Program is helping to transform troubled lives into empowered and productive men and women. While the program’s focus is on low-income, unskilled young adults, and recruitment efforts target them, applicants of all ages are applying.

The course is offered three times a year, often with a choice of an afternoon or evening session. Each class can accommodate up to 25 students. The par-

ticipants are recruited by local nonprofit organizations working on the front lines of gang intervention and prevention. Recent graduates also go out into the city’s neighborhoods and promote the program as a positive alternative to gang life and an opportunity to get a career.

The community partners all contribute to making the program a success. The City of Pasadena furnishes convenient classroom space at local community centers and offers special access to construction employment opportunities through its First Source Local Hiring Program. The Pasadena City College Community Education Center supplies the credentialed instructors. Union representatives make class presentations and help qualified graduates navigate the entry process into the apprenticeship system. Pasadena Mental Health Center provides case management. In addition to coordinating the program, Flintridge provides financial support for text books, journals, calculators, site visit transportation and case management services. Flintridge is also funding the development of a green construction curriculum.

The growing demand for green buildings is creating new job opportunities and the need for workers trained in green practices and techniques. The J. L. Moseley Company has always had a commitment to socially responsible development and is now a strong proponent of environmentally sustainable commercial real estate. As head of Flintridge, Jaylene

Moseley recognizes the importance of expanding the Apprenticeship Preparation curriculum so that it covers green concepts and LEED building principles in greater depth.

“Not only will our students have a competitive edge when they apply for apprenticeships,” she says, “but we hope to encourage their interest in environmental and sustainable construction.”

Bud Darling, one of the Pasadena City College Master Instructors who teaches the course agrees. “Our students will be entering the job market already aware of the changes in the industry and therefore better prepared for building trends that will impact their long term employment in the trades.”

After the site visit concludes, the students are treated to bag lunches, which they eat outside in a courtyard patio surrounded by shade trees and drought-tolerant native plants. They are clearly impressed by what they have just seen and aware that knowing about green construction practices may give them an advantage in being accepted as union apprentices.

But over and above the realization that green construction represents the wave of the future, the students who aspire to better their own lives, also aspire to better the lives of others. They hope that their career ambitions will improve the well-being of society.

“If this is the future, it should be the standard now,” says one young man.

“These building techniques are important for the environment and for our children,” the female student responds.

“If we can help the people, that’s the ultimate goal,” affirms a third.

The rest of the class nods in agreement.

Karen Gerst is director of communications for the Flintridge Operating Foundation.