



Press Release

For Immediate Distribution

April 3, 2009

CONTACT: Ben DuPree 503-309-1276; Kate Newhall 503-467-1665

Brad Avakian and Local Leaders Praise New Corvallis High-School Pre-Apprenticeship Program; Join Students at Training

New high school pre-apprenticeship program gives Corvallis students valuable on-the-job training and promotes workforce development

CORVALLIS, OR- Today State Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian joined students, Corvallis Mayor Charles Tomlinson, Adair Village Mayor Bill Currier, Corvallis School Superintendent Dawn Tarzian, and other local leaders at the Oregon Southern Idaho Laborers Employers Training and Apprenticeship Program (Laborers) to promote a new pre-apprenticeship program offered to high school students in Corvallis. A joint effort between the Corvallis School District, the Laborers, and the Bureau of Labor and Industries, the new Corvallis pre-apprenticeship program gives students a chance to receive classroom education and on-the-job training as Construction Craft Laborers.

“These students are Oregon’s future,” noted Commissioner Avakian. “With unemployment continuing to rise, programs that promote workforce development are all the more important. It’s a great credit to our state that the Corvallis School District, BOLI, and the Laborers have partnered up to provide Corvallis students a chance to receive valuable on-the-job training and a leg up on starting a career.”

At the training center, Commissioner Avakian and other attendees saw a typical day in the life of these pre-apprenticeship students. The program is comprised of both in-class instruction and hands-on skills-based training in a wide variety of topics – safety, construction math, concrete preparation and placement, air tool use and safety. The experience is a valuable introduction to the building trades and apprenticeship programs.

“I’m glad to be a part of this program,” said Jennifer Green, a student enrolled in the Laborers pre-apprenticeship program. “As a woman, I’ve always been interested in construction jobs and earning credit for working, and being here allows me to get hands-on training. I’m learning a lot and really enjoying the experience.”

The partnership between the Corvallis School District, BOLI, and the Laborers is part of a larger effort to boost workforce development across the state. One of several similar pre-apprenticeship programs across Oregon, the Corvallis program is designed to expose students to new opportunities and potential career options. As part of the program, students receive classroom education in construction topics, become exposed to the work of construction craft laborers, and to receive a broad overview of the construction industry.

(continued)

"This program is a perfect match for the Corvallis community's vision for education which includes opportunities for students to pursue a professional technical education as one of many options they have after graduation," said Corvallis School Superintendent Dawn Tarzian. "Our economy is changing, and we need to broaden our perspective. We need to encourage our students to expand their thinking to include professional training programs and community college as they prepare for stable, meaningful employment."

First launched in 2008, the Oregon high school integration programs were created to expose a greater number of high school students to apprenticeship opportunities. Technical support is provided by BOLI and is used to create partnerships between local Apprenticeship Training Committees, industry professionals, and the Corvallis School District to show students the high-wage, high-demand apprenticeship opportunities in manufacturing and construction trades.

"I hope our program can serve as a model for other pre-apprenticeship partnerships across the state," said Al DeVita, Laborers Director. "This effort is all about recruiting and training the workforce of Oregon's future, and giving these students a look at a potential future as apprentices."

#####