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STEM, STEAM, and CTE-- What's the Buzz About?

NWESI is passionate about the services we provide to K-12 schools that help facilitate the education of future generations in our local area. We have extensive experience with operation and troubleshooting of HVAC and energy management systems for both new construction and existing schools. Some of these School Districts include Reynolds, Portland, Beaverton, Central Valley, Sherwood, and Elko County.

Most recently we were awarded the Commissioning scope of work for the Portland Public Schools (PPS) 2017 Bond program projects. As part of our support for the local community and our industry we are teaming with three COBID firms on these projects; Whole Business Solutions (WBS/WBE), Helix (ESB), and AKANA (MBE).



Even more fundamental than supporting COBID (OR) and QMWBE (WA) firms is our goal to *get kids excited* about careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). A great side-benefit to our work with Portland Public Schools has been the opportunity to work with [Partner Connect](#), their well-established arm with a mission to promote technical careers to K-12 students. Over the years, NWESI has supported similar organizations, both financially and with team members' volunteer hours. Other organizations we'd recommend are the [ACE Mentor Program](#) and [Spokane STEM](#).

[But back to the title of this article . . .](#)

You've no doubt heard the term STEM, but you may not be as familiar with the more recent terms above. STEAM is an acronym we first heard several years ago, shortly after one of our employees volunteered on an industry advisory board for the EET department at Portland Community College.

The "A" stands for Arts, and it's meant to reflect the importance of creativity in the design process. Being involved with so many architects in the building industry, we'll attest to the value of creative minds. (If designs were left solely to us engineers, we'd have a lot of identical square buildings for easy assembly, or spherical ones to maximize the volume to surface area ratio).

Another "buzz-phrase" is Career Technical Education (CTE). Although the concept is not new, there has been a renewed emphasis on training high school students directly for STEM careers, accompanied by concerted efforts to get industry-standard CADD stations, manufacturing equipment, and laboratory instrumentation directly into classrooms. An exciting example of this in the Portland area is the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center (OMIC), starting to take shape in Scappoose.

All that said, the most effective way to get young men and women to consider a technical career, is to *personally invite them* to consider it. Be generous with your encouragement to children, starting in elementary school, and show them how proud you are to be part of an industry that is building and improving America.

UPCOMING EVENTS



September 12-17, 2018
[OSHE Fall Conference](#)
The Resort at the Mountain, Welches, OR



October 9-12, 2018
[WSSHE Annual Conference & Technical Exhibition](#)
Greater Tacoma Convention Center and Trade Center / Hotel Murano, Tacoma, WA



October 18, 2018
[OPPA 13th Annual Reverse Vendor Trade Show](#)
Holiday Inn, Portland Airport



October 17-19, 2018
[CREW Network Convention and Marketplace](#)
Manchester Grand Hyatt, San Diego



November 08, 2018
[IPPA 7th Annual Reverse Vendor Trade Show](#)
Jack's Urban Meeting Place (JUMP!), Boise, ID

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