

JANUARY 23, 2025

Pathway to Opportunity for Young Professionals

Dominic, Emil, Zachery, Dezmon, and Xavier embarked on a transformative journey toward building successful futures. In collaboration with Job Corps, these young men demonstrated a shared commitment to professional growth, leading them to the Young Professionals program that began in April 2024 at GST Michigan Works! They were invited to participate in the Transfr Construction Laborer Pre-Employment Program (PEP), where the participants utilized innovative tools like VR technology and online learning, dedicating their first two weeks to the Construction Laborer PEP, which included lessons, simulations, knowledge checks, and a certificate.

Although each participant had a distinct background and encountered different challenges, they were united by their determination to succeed. With the guidance of their career coaches from the GST Michigan Works! Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) program, they set personal goals and worked diligently to overcome the barriers that stood in their way. They received assistance in areas such as establishing bank accounts, obtaining necessary work clothing, acquiring industry tools, and securing identifying documents, ensuring they had the resources needed to thrive without setbacks.

Through the Young Professionals program, the group participated in hands-on training simulations via Transfr that utilized VR headsets. This engaging method enabled them to simulate real-world job scenarios, improving their technical skills, building their confidence, and offering valuable insights into what would be expected of them in their future career. Upon completing the program, they secured work experience opportunities with Fessler & Bowman, where they applied their skills and gained firsthand knowledge of workplace operations. Their commitment and professionalism impressed their supervisors, who took notice of their hard work.

Andrea Alvarez, Fessler & Bowman's HR representative, remarked, "This is the most prepared team we have ever hosted for work experience."

Impressed by their work ethic and skills, Fessler & Bowman offered each of these young men a position within the company, along with the opportunity to join the union. This milestone marked the achievement of their hard work and the support they received throughout the program. Joining the union provided stability in the construction industry, allowing them to envision brighter futures for themselves and their families.

As they continued their journey in the skilled trades, they celebrated with a Signing Day on August 28, 2024, officially becoming apprentices in their respective unions. This significant step allows them to continue their education while working at Fessler & Bowman.

Zach, one of the program participants, reflected on his experience, saying, "Working for Fessler & Bowman has been a great experience. It aligns with my career goals and provides me with the opportunity to build a better future. This job has allowed me to get my car and will help me move into an apartment, marking an important step toward my future."

Through the combined efforts of Job Corps and their GST Michigan Works! career coaches, these young men transformed their lives. They overcame challenges, developed essential skills, and seized the opportunity to build successful careers at Fessler & Bowman. Their journey illustrates the power of determination, innovative learning, and mentorship in shaping the future workforce. As they step into their new roles, they serve as inspiring examples of what can be achieved with the right resources and support, paving the way for brighter futures for themselves and their families.

Fessler & Bowman is a phenomenal partner who epitomizes the values of a great employer! Walking beside their employees and assisting them to overcome barriers and become successful and valuable members of the team!