

Crowder Construction Company

Crowder YOUiversity: We Build People



2010 Education Excellence Grand Award Winner

On Monday, October 18, 2010 the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) honored Crowder Construction Company by presenting them with the highly competitive Education Excellence Grand Award. Crowder YOUiversity, Crowder's education, training and development program was identified as one committed to the development of both the construction industry and professional growth for their employees at all levels.

"Crowder YOUiversity: We Build People," custom built in 2000, has provided more than 340,000 hours of training to some 4,000 employees ranging from craft workers to senior managers. It is based on the principles of career advancement and lifelong learning.

Crowder YOUiversity is built on four tiers:

1. New hire orientation;
2. Skill-based and technical training;
3. Management/supervisory training; and
4. Leadership skills and succession.

Some training programs are on one level, but many span two levels, helping employees transition through the tiers. The YOUiversity is linked to Crowder's strategic plan, so training initiatives are driven by the current and future business needs of the various divisions and their workers.

A centerpiece of the YOUiversity is the innovative Legacy Training Academy, which prepares future corporate leaders to take their place on the leadership team. This 18-month program is highly selective and considered "the ultimate reward and accomplishment at Crowder," according to the application.

Senior managers are encouraged to identify areas where new training is needed and then work to help create and implement new programs that have been assessed for their fit within the company's overall strategic plan. All programs are built with the specific audience in mind and a clear understanding of different learning styles, so craft workers' training includes a strong OJT and coaching component, field managers receive hands-on training with high levels of group interaction, engineers and project managers are provided with a forum for debate and participation during training, and senior managers are given a clear understanding of the outcomes and results so that training is valued as time well spent.

The judges were impressed with the size, scope, investment and passion instilled in Crowder YOUiversity, particularly as it relates to the company's \$180 million annual volume and 750 employees. "It's a stellar program," commented one Education Excellence Awards Selection Committee member, noting the relatively small size of the firm.

Article provided by the AGC.