

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

**CONTACT:**

Carolynn Bright  
Marketing and Communications Director, MCA  
(406) 442-4162 (w) or (406) 459-1916 (c)

**MCA Education Foundation awards \$8,000 to middle/high schools to support industrial arts programs**

The Montana Contractors' Association Education Foundation (MCAEF) recently awarded industrial arts programs at eight Montana schools \$1,000 MCA Construction Trade Awareness Grants to help raise awareness of construction as a career among their students.

Recipients include: Belt High School (Belt), East Middle School (Great Falls), Helena High School (Helena), Hellgate High School (Missoula), Highwood High School (Highwood), Lodge Grass Public Schools (Lodge Grass), North Middle School (Great Falls), and Whitehall High School (Whitehall).

"The construction industry on the national level is experiencing an extreme workforce shortage, and Montana is no exception," said Tyler Smith, president of the MCAEF Board of Directors. "We hope that by helping industrial arts programs in Montana schools, more students will have the opportunity to recognize that construction jobs are a desirable option for their future. Careers in construction should be a first choice, not a fallback."

The MCA Education Foundation Board of Directors evaluated the applications based on whether the applicants had partnered with MCA member companies for their event/project; whether the event/program coordinates with Construction Week (Oct. 7-11); how the event/project will impact the students' understanding of opportunities in the construction industry; and creativity.

Projects are as follows:

**Belt High School:** Students will construct park benches, picnic tables and a shaded area for the Belt Community Pool.

**East Middle School, North Middle School:** Students will each build a 2-foot by 4-foot wall on 16-inch centers and wire it for residential. (This project will affect more than 400 students.)

**Helena High School:** Students will rebuild welding tables in the school's industrial arts area.

**Hellgate High School:** Students will build and manage a "reader board" in the school's student commons area that will feature trades careers, slideshows, job opportunities and more.

**Highwood High School:** Students will design and build work benches, work tables, and work areas as part of an upgrade to the school's industrial arts facilities.

**Lodge Grass Public Schools:** Students will build small sheds for calving, storage, etc. and sell them in their community at a discounted rate.

**Whitehall High School:** Students will fabricate two, large storage racks to hold raw lumber in the school's wood shop and metal in the welding shop.

*The MCA Education Foundation is a 501(c)(3) foundation, and its mission is to promote and support careers in construction, stimulating growth of a diverse, skilled workforce for Montana contractors. For more information, visit [www.mtagc.org](http://www.mtagc.org) and click on "Let's Build MT."*