

### **Background**

*During my tenure as PR manager for a Wisconsin academic medical center, I served as communications lead for a major project: construction of a new \$140 million facility on the hospital campus. A unique component was a first-of-its-kind initiative that saw Milwaukee Public School students participating in hands-on and classroom sessions at the construction site through a two-year high school curriculum. The goal was to encourage careers in engineering, architecture and construction.*

*I developed the strategic communications plan and executed on tactics, working closely with key stakeholders including the architecture and construction firms, the urban school system and a nonprofit workforce development agency. Local and regional thought leaders visited the site on various occasions including state government department leaders. Below are examples of select internal communications, videos, earned media coverage, social media posts and more. NOTE: Some links are no longer live but are included to highlight scope.*

## **TECH TERNS COVERAGE AND VISIBILITY**

*Submitted to Tech Terns Planning and Operations Team*

*Beth Strohmusch, Froedtert & The Medical College of Wisconsin PR Manager, June 2, 2015*

### **Internal Communications**

1.) Article for employee newsletter (ghost-authored for hospital's facilities VP November 01, 2013)

#### **Tech Terns program gives high school students real-time exposure to construction project**

An exciting new project is underway as part of our Center for Advanced Care project, bringing high school students to our job site to explore careers in design, construction and operations.

Through a new Tech Terns program, 18 juniors from Bradley Tech High School come to our campus several times a year to learn from individuals with various careers who work at the job site. The program's vision is to extend Bradley Tech's focus on technical education by creating a multi-year curriculum that provides students interested in building design, construction and operations to track and participate in the building's development. Program partners include Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin, architects, Cannon Design; construction managers Mortenson Construction; Bradley Tech High School and The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership/BIG STEP.

While planning for the Center for Advanced Care, I approached Cannon Design and Mortenson Construction with the concept of incorporating a student learning component into the project. We decided that we wanted this program to be something much more than just a field trip.

Earlier this year, Bradley Tech teachers and staff chose the Tech Terns students. They initially visited the site in August and, on Nov. 10, attended the second of many visits that will occur over the next two years. Experts in the field – including architects, construction managers, technical and tradespeople, and hospital staff – are involved with curriculum development, teaching and interacting with students.

This unique and comprehensive project is unlike any other in the nation because it is industry-led and made possible only because of a strong partnership. The organizations are committed to career development initiatives including opportunities for individuals to be exposed to and involved with real-world workers, especially those who might not otherwise have the chance to do so.

As a former teacher, I believe Tech Terns will be invaluable to the students who come here for on-site classwork as well as the instructors involved with the program. The program fully supports our organization's service objective: to expand our reach to diverse communities. And, it will help grow the building and design workforce, an area experiencing a declining labor pool.

According to Tech Tern partners, no other career pathway model of this kind exists in the United States. We are developing and piloting Tech Terns so that it can be shared with and used in schools across the nation. For each of the 18 students we're seeing in our current program, we hope to see that number increase as this type of project is embraced by others across the country.

Our students and partners are very excited about the program. If you see Bradley Tech students on the job site or in the hospital, please wish them well with their involvement in the Tech Terns program.

## 2.) Article authored for Froedtert Hospital employee newsletter, February 2014

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### Wisconsin school superintendent and workforce development visit Tech Terns program at Froedtert construction site

State Superintendent Tony Evers and Department of Workforce Development Secretary Reggie Newson visited Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin Feb. 13 to learn about the "Tech Terns" program, a two-year career development curriculum being offered at Froedtert for 18 MPS Bradley Tech High School students.

The students are spending their junior and senior years learning both in the classroom and on the Center for Advanced Care construction site to have an expanded view of and hands-on learning about architecture, engineering, construction and trade careers. The program's leaders believe this is a first-of-its-kind career pathway development program in the United States.

Milwaukee Public Schools Superintendent Gregory Thornton joined Evers and Newson to observe students and instructors in action, and also went down into the excavated site where forms are being filled with concrete to create footings. The visit was part of this February's observance of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month.



Bob Amstadt, Mortenson project engineer, provides instruction to two Bradley Tech High School "Tech Terns" as they work on an AutoCAD scheduling system.



During a visit to the Center for Advanced Care's excavation and construction site, (from right to left) MPS Superintendent Gregory Thornton, Wisconsin State Superintendent Tony Evers, Department of Workforce Development Secretary Reggie Newson talk with Cathy Jacobson and one of the site's construction leadership.

"This is an exciting time to stay engaged in your learning and make the most of this unique program," Evers told the students, adding how impressed he is with their GPAs and how wonderful it is to see them so enthused about careers in construction and healthcare.

Secretary Newson called these students trailblazers in creating a very new, unique way of learning. "You will be responsible for making Tech Terns a success. Are you up to the challenge?" he asked, with kids enthusiastically responding "Yes!" Newson also credited the sponsoring organizations for developing the Tech Terns concept. These partners are seeking to engage students more fully in learning to enhance career pathway development. Additionally, they believe this and other programs like it will help address projected workforce shortages.

"You cannot duplicate what you're doing here in a classroom. I'm betting on you to get this right. Imagine yourself working on this type of project in the future, maybe even on construction of some of the largest buildings in the country," said Thornton. "I challenge you to work together as a team and go back to school and share your experiences with other students as well. Your rewards will be great."

Tech Terns is a partnership involving Cannon Design, Mortenson Construction, the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership/BIG STEP, Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin and MPS. Architects, construction managers, technical and trades-people, and hospital employees developed the curriculum, serve as on-site instructors, and collaborate with the Milwaukee Public Schools Career and Technical Education program and Bradley Tech.

3.) Article authored for hospital system employee newsletter, May 27, 2015

### **Tech Terns Celebrate Completion of Successful Program at Center for Advanced Care**

Congratulations to students from Bradley Tech High School who celebrated their completion of the Tech Terns program at the Center for Advanced Care (CFAC) construction site on Thursday, May 14. The Tech Terns program exposes students to careers in high demand professions and skilled trades and helps them develop workforce readiness skills. Eighteen students attended 11 day-long sessions at the CFAC site during their junior and senior years, while also participating in school-based instruction. They learned about a building project from concept through construction including areas such as building codes, excavation, concrete quality and testing, design and construction technology and interior design. Students were present for the groundbreaking and, during their May 14 tour, saw the final finishing work being done for the building's October opening.



Students enjoyed curriculum-based instruction and hands-on learning from more than 100 design, construction and health care professionals as well as on-the-job craftworkers. Special thanks to several members of our staff who shared perspectives about their own careers. Appreciation is also extended to and to our Community Engagement staff members who helped orchestrate the Tech Terns program and to the Wisconsin Regional

Training Partnership/BIG STEP workforce development program for partnering with the program.

How did the Tech Terns program evolve? When planning the CFAC project, John Balzer, VP of Facility Planning and Development, challenged CannonDesign and Mortenson Construction, the building's architect and construction management firms, respectively. As a former teacher, John wanted to incorporate a community-benefit-based student learning program into the project – and he asked that it be more than “just a field trip.”

Kevin Matuszewski, the project's lead architect, embraced the concept and moved forward to develop a comprehensive career development program that is believed to be the first of its kind in the U.S. The vision was for Milwaukee Public School students to participate in a collaborative public-private initiative giving them a unique opportunity for wide-lens career exploration via a building project. The project was rooted in a philosophy of expanding supplier diversity and addressing labor shortages.

The program was a resounding success:

- The class valedictorian and salutatorian participated in Tech Terns
- Compared to classmates, these students have a 1.09-point higher GPA, nine percent better attendance and 3-point-higher ACT scores
- Most Tech Terns received numerous honors in various areas
- Many have summer jobs/internships at design/construction industry firms or in health care
- Some students received scholarships to schools including Morehouse, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and from organizations such as Coca Cola

Tech Tern organizers have heard from entities across the country wanting to know more about the program to potentially implement it in their areas.

## **Earned Media**

Milwaukee Business Journal, October 4, 2013

### **Builders beef up training to meet need of upcoming construction boom**

[http://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/blog/real\\_estate/2013/10/builders-beef-up-training-to-meet-need.html](http://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/blog/real_estate/2013/10/builders-beef-up-training-to-meet-need.html)

Milwaukee Business Journal, October 18, 2013

### **Tech Terns opens students' minds to careers**

<http://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/print-edition/2013/10/18/tech-terns-opens-students-minds-to.html>

Milwaukee Business Journal, October 18, 2013

### **Students don hard hats at construction site: Slideshow**

<http://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/blog/2013/10/bradley-tech-students-don-hard-hats-at.html>

Building Advantage, December 19, 2013

### **A future workforce and Mortenson's Commitment**

<http://www.buildingadvantage.org/blog/a-future-workforce-and-mortensons-commitment/>

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, February 8, 2014

### **Careers, training and students mesh at Froedtert site**

<https://archive.jsonline.com/news/education/careers-training-and-students-mesh-at-froedtert-hospital-site-b99195974z1-244574931.html>

DPI and DWD joint press release, February 12, 2014

### **Evers, Newson to visit 'Tech Terns' program at Froedtert**

<http://www.wispolitics.com/1006/140212EversNewson.pdf>

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development News Release, February 13, 2014

### **Secretary Newson Highlights Bradley Tech High School "Tech Terns" Program**

[http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/newsreleases/2014/140213\\_cte\\_tech\\_terns\\_event\\_milwaukee.pdf](http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/newsreleases/2014/140213_cte_tech_terns_event_milwaukee.pdf)

MPS Superintendent Website, February 14, 2014

### **State supt., workforce secretary visit MPS' Bradley Tech 'Tech Terns' at Froedtert construction site**

<http://www5.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/dept/superintendent/2014/02/photos-bradley-tech-terns/>

Wauwatosa Now, February 18, 2014

### **Construction site is a classroom**

<http://www.wauwatosanow.com/news/froedtert-makes-its-construction-site-a-classroom-b99207646z1-246020491.html>

Building Advantage,

April 14, 2014

### **Tech Terns – Connecting Youth to Construction**

<http://www.buildingadvantage.org/blog/tech-terns-connecting-youth-construction/>

Fox6 Now, May 14, 2015

### **There's Been Nothing Like It**

<http://fox6now.com/2015/05/14/theres-been-nothing-like-it-techterns-gives-18-lucky-students-a-hands-on-career-experience/>

NOTE: TV 58 and TV 12 also came to the site this day and ran stories.

Daily Reporter, May 18, 2015

### **Building Blocks: Center for Advanced Care**

<http://dailyreporter.com/2015/03/18/building-blocks-center-for-advanced-care/>

Daily Reporter, May 21, 2015

### **Programs offer apprenticeships in response to talent shortage**

<http://dailyreporter.com/2015/05/21/programs-offer-apprenticeships-in-response-to-talent-shortage/>

Wisconsin Public Radio,

May 29, 2015

### **TechTern Program Provides Unique Learning Opportunity**

<http://www.wpr.org/techtern-program-provides-unique-learning-opportunity-students-and-organizers-say>



## Social Media

### Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Facebook

Tech Terns Construction Classroom in Milwaukee, February 13, 2014

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10152208090204749.1073741867.185417589748>

#### Froedtert Facebook

**Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin**  
February 14, 2014 · 🌐

Group of high school juniors is spending class time at the construction site of 480,000-sq-ft medical facility – hard hats and all. Students from MPS Bradley Tech High School are participants in Tech Terns, a first-of-its kind career development program bringing construction, engineering, architecture and the trades.

Thursday, as part of Career and Technical Education Month, State Superintendent Tony Evers, Department of Workforce Development Secretary Reggie Newson and Milwaukee Public Schools Superintendent Gregory Thornton visited the Tech Terns at the construction site of the Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin Center for Advanced Medicine.

"You cannot duplicate what you're doing here in a classroom," said Thornton. "I challenge you to work together here as a team and then go back to school and share your experiences with classmates. Your rewards will be great."



#### Thornton Executive Facebook

**Alicia Smith Dupies**  
May 14 at 9:46pm · Edited · 🌐

sweet indeed! An incredible journey with some amazing students. So excited to have gotten to work with them for 5 semesters. These kids are the future. And they WILL make it happen! Alton Bufford. Darrell Kirby. Morgan. Cj Wilson. Bridget Kraus Slack.



There's been nothing like it: "TechTerns program gives lucky students hands-on career experience"

MILWAUKEE (WITI) — There was a Milwaukee Public Schools commencement ceremony held on a construction site Thursday, May 14th — but why? Because it...

**Alicia Smith Dupies** added 5 new photos.  
March 26 · Edited · 🌐

There are times when your job just rocks. For the last 2.5 years, I have been blessed and so fortunate to work with 18 students from MPS' Bradley Tech High School. One more full-day session before they graduate. Intelligent. Hardworking. Great kids who will some day make their own mark. I will miss them and anything I thought possible. Many thanks to the visionary leaders at Thornton Construction, Froedtert & The Medical College of Wisconsin and Design for collaborating to come up with real-world learning experiences which are inspiring these students. Best part of today? One of our students was notified he rec'd a full ride to UW Madison! #THEYCAN TSMKEITHAPPEN!! — with Mariah Walker and 4 others.



## **Videos**

- 1.) Tech Terns Program Summary: <https://youtu.be/gRViD5pZSHc>
- 2.) Tech Terns In Their Own Words: <https://vimeo.com/81823919>

## **Other**

### **Report**

*Promising Practices In Young Adult Employment: Hands-on Multidisciplinary Career Exploration and Mentorships*

From the National Fund for Workforce Solutions Sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED560780.pdf>

### **Events** (Team members invited to present)

- Wisconsin Technology Education Association Conference, March 2015
- Healthcare Facilities Symposium and Expo, September 2016

### **Construction Management Firm Website**

<http://www.mortenson.com/company/news-and-insights/2014/tech-terns-partnership>