

APPRENTICESHIP

Camp Sweeney Graduates First Pre-Apprentice Cohort

Beli Acharya, M.Ed, BBA

Executive Director, Construction Trades Workforce Initiative (CTWI)

On February 3, Camp Sweeney Juvenile Detention Center in Alameda County, graduated their first construction pre-apprenticeship cohort. High profile guests like Chief Wendy Stills, head of Alameda Probation, and District 2 Supervisor Richard Valle, came to support the success of the program. They also reiterated their commitment to expanding, improving and ensuring the success of MC3 at Camp Sweeney, including a commitment to pay graduates' initial union dues, purchase necessary tools and clothing and provide transportation.

The MC3 construction pre-apprenticeship program was established in partnership with the Alameda Probation Department and Construction Trades Workforce Initiative (CTWI), a nonprofit partner of the Building & Construction Trades Councils of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. The 11 students enrolled in this program endured a



Students at Camp Sweeney visit Bricklayers Local 3 Apprenticeship Training Center and engage in hands on construction.

rigorous six-week technical and soft skills training program to prepare them for career opportunities in the union construction trades. During the length of the program, CTWI coordinated apprenticeship training center visits to several trade union training facilities. Students had the opportunity to speak with current apprentices, get hands-on experience, the benefits of joining a union, details about the course and learn how to apply. Additionally, students learned the math and

mechanical skills needed to be successful on the job site, and earned OSHA 10, First Aid and CPR certifications.

Recent and impending retirements, coupled with the mass shortage of new skilled labor, has produced an urgent need to train the next generation of Bay Area builders. CTWI's commitment to educating and exposing incarcerated people to career opportunities in the union construction trades, not only helps to build a pipeline for non-traditional populations into the union construction trades, but also aligns with the State's initiatives to ensure that these formerly incarcerated people have the skills, access and connections they need to be successful upon re-entering society. The MC3 program at Camp Sweeney is CTWI's third program inside the penal system.

For more information on how to build pathways into the union construction trades for underrepresented populations, visit CTWI's website at www.ctwi-btca.org