



Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STUDENTS FROM ACROSS WASHINGTON BUILD TINY HOMELESS SHELTERS

Local teams selected for statewide competition that demonstrates real-world learning

OLYMPIA—Students from across Washington are busy building tiny homeless shelters this month as part of a statewide competition that demonstrates the value of Career and Technical Education (CTE) through real-world, hands-on learning that culminates in a construction contest in Olympia on March 27 and the creation of needed homeless housing.

Twenty teams of students from high schools, Skills Centers, and community and technical colleges were selected to compete in the first ever CTE Showcase of Skills Homeless Shelter Project. The state's Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) is coordinating the one-day competition that brings together students from both the high school and college level to demonstrate their technical skills as they build portable, energy efficient, homeless shelters. Finished shelters will then be transported to Seattle where they will provide transitional homeless housing.

"When students tackle hands-on, relevant projects, they learn better and more deeply. That's at the heart of CTE and why we wanted to showcase this in front of both policymakers and the public," said Workforce Board Executive Director Eleni Papadakis, noting the demonstration project is within walking distance of the Legislature. Legislators are expected to drop by and encourage the students as they put finishing touches on their shelters.

"This is truly a real-world opportunity for CTE students from across the state to show what they can do, while making a real difference in the lives of homeless people," Papadakis said.

The proposed line up of speakers at the March 27 event includes Gov. Inslee and his wife Trudi, as well as Chris Reykdal, the state's newly elected Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Low Income Housing Institute of Seattle will be on hand, and will bring a person facing homelessness to talk about the challenges experienced by those with no housing.

Students are busy working on their shelters right now within their CTE classes. They will ship their nearly completed shelters to Olympia in the days leading up to the competition, where they will add finishing touches such as hanging doors or painting trim. Each team is made up of five students and each was provided with a \$2,500 stipend to pay for supplies.

The shelters will measure 8-by-12 feet and each will include a door and at least one window. Solar panels will be installed on one shelter as a demonstration project.

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Winners will be announced on the afternoon of the competition and recognized for their accomplishments.

The event is expected to generate significant public and media attention. Already, it's drawn together a powerful partnership of public agencies and non-profits.

View the full list of partners, details: <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/CTEHomelessHouseProject.asp>

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The Workforce Board is a state agency that monitors and evaluates the state's key workforce programs and also provides leadership on policies that help all Washington residents get the education and training they need to obtain living-wage jobs. The Workforce Board is also the state licensing agency for private career schools.