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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Chuck Parker, President | John Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer | Justin Williams, Director

Hope Gas Opens New HQ Office in Morgantown, WV

On June 19, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the grand opening of the new Hope Gas Corporate Headquarters in Morgantown, West Virginia.

The new, 35,000-square-foot facility is located in the West Virginia University Innovation Corporation's Chestnut Ridge Road facility and will house all the logistical operations for the state utility.

Last year, Hope Gas was sold by original parent company Dominion Energy to Hearthstone, a holding company of Ullico, the only labor-owned insurance and investment company in the United States.

At the time, Hope Gas had approximately 300 employees, 111,000 West Virginia customers with 3,200 miles of gas distribution pipelines, and more than 2,000 miles of gathering pipelines.

Shortly thereafter, Hope Gas purchased an additional 900 miles of gathering pipelines from Equitrans Midstream Corporation.

Then, in January of this year, Hope Gas announced plans for further expansion, through the pur-

chase of Peoples Gas West Virginia. The pending transaction is valued at \$37 million and will increase Hope

Gas's customer base to more than 125,000 in their network.

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Jessie King, Business Manager for the West Virginia Appalachian Laborers' District Council, speaks to attendees at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the newly opened Hope Gas Headquarters in Morgantown, West Virginia.

Union Contractor Awarded High Voltage Work at Form Energy Battery Plant

Last month, union contractor Bruce & Merrilees Electric Company announced it would be partnering with Form Energy to work on their new battery factory project in Weirton, West Virginia.

Sources say the contractor was awarded \$200 million of high voltage work.

Form Energy is currently building the battery plant on 55 acres at the site of the old Weirton Steel property.

The Form Energy project began in the wake of the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), a piece of federal legislation which provided significant tax incentives for developers to build new and emerging

energy-related projects.

In addition, the company was courted by the West Virginia Department of Economic Development (WVDED) to locate their battery factory in West Virginia.

According to a January 2023 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Form Energy and

the WVDED, the state of West Virginia purchased the 55 acres of land and will be funding any "necessary infrastructure advancements" that may be needed as a part of the pre-construction.

The MOU also outlines how the project will be completed in three

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\$75 Million Project Racing & Gaming Facility Construction Underway at Ashland, Kentucky Site

Earlier this year, members of the Tri-State Building and Construction Trades Council began construction on a new racing and gaming facility in Ashland, Kentucky.

Tri-State has partnered with Revolutionary Racing Kentucky to build Sandy's Racing and Gaming, a \$75 million state-of-the-art quarter horse racetrack, gaming club, and equestrian center.

The project is being built on the abandoned Sears site at the old Kyova Mall in Boyd County, Kentucky.

The gaming club at Sandy's Racing and Gaming is set to open later this year, while construction on the racetrack is expected to be completed in Spring 2025.

Over the course of the last three months, hundreds of Tri-State workers have been hard at work to build the facility, and progress is on schedule.

"We are incredibly proud of our partnership with the Tri-State Building Trades

and the 50 local unions they represent," said Larry Lucas, Chairman

of Revolutionary Racing Kentucky. "The trades have been outstanding to work with, thanks to their commitment to quality and schedule."

Last year, Revolutionary Racing Kentucky received the ninth and final horse racing facility license from the State of Kentucky, which made the project possible.

When the racetrack opens in Spring 2025, it will feature a 600-yard sprint racetrack and equestrian center, built adjacent to the gaming club on the 177-acre property.

To date, the project has created more than 200 well-paying jobs for workers, and the facility is expected

to generate more than \$1 million in tax revenue.

"We truly appreciate the commitment shown by the owner Larry Lucas and the entire Revolutionary Racing Team in partnering with the local Building Trades Unions," said John Holbrook, Business Manager for the Tri-State Building and Construction Trades Council.

"We know Revolutionary Racing Kentucky will be happy with the result, and we believe this project will be another example of the great work that can be produced by our highly skilled, safe and drug-free workforce." ■

"We truly appreciate... the entire Revolutionary Racing Team in partnering with the local Building Trades Unions,"

John Holbrook

Business Manager

Tri-State Building and Construction Trades Council

Boilermakers Renovate Putnam Co. Statue



Members of Boilermakers 667 renovate a statue outside of the Putnam County Judicial Building in Winfield, West Virginia.

The brick was replaced and the statue itself was polished by the 3rd year apprenticeship class.

The statue is dedicated to the GIs, POWs, MIAs, and KIAs in the United States military. It was donated to Putnam County by Boilermakers 667 in 1991.

Hope Gas

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The sale is expected to close later this year.

Currently, Hope Gas has 400 employees, and according to representatives from Hope Gas, more plans for expansion are currently in the works.

If those plans stay on schedule, the company could serve more than 200,000 customers in 35 West Virginia counties over the next five years.

During the ceremony, members

of labor were also on hand to take part in cutting the ribbon on the new Hope Gas headquarters.

"We are excited about the expansion of Hope Gas in West Virginia," said Jessie King, Business Manager of the West Virginia Appalachian Laborers' District Council. "All of this means one thing: good-paying jobs with health and pension benefits. Ultimately, this will be a great thing for our people and the entire state." ■

High Voltage Work

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phases, setting production benchmarks for Form Energy, which then triggers the next phase.

Phase 1 of the project includes the construction of a 100,000-square-foot facility to house the battery manufacturing equipment.

Once Form Energy sells 5 MW of energy contracts and hires 65 employees, Phase 2 will begin.

Phase 2 includes an expansion of the facility up to 350,000 square feet and requires Form to sell an ad-

ditional 45 MW of energy contracts and hire 178 full-time employees.

Finally, Phase 3 of the project will be an expansion of the facility up to 400,000 square feet and requires Form to sell 500MW of energy.

As a part of the deal, West Virginia will own the buildings and land, with Form leasing it back.

The property will transfer to Form Energy after five years if the company meets all of the criteria and benchmarks laid out in the MOU. ■

WVSBT Begins Filming Recruitment Ad for Construction Apprenticeship Programs

Earlier this month, the West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades and ACT began work on an upcoming advertisement, featuring apprentices, to recruit the next generation of construction craftworkers.

The advertisement is part of a larger campaign to rebrand the trades and increase the number of applicants for construction craft apprenticeship programs, in response to the increase in work due to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act.

In addition to the commercial,

the larger campaign also includes the development of a new website, which will be used to provide information for contractors as well as those interested in starting an apprenticeship program.

The website will serve as a landing page, to which other print and media advertisements will direct interested applicants.

“There has never been a better time to start a career in the trades,” said John

Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer for the West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council. “It’s

“It’s important for us to get the word out about our programs, and increase our numbers, to take advantage of this incredible opportunity.”

John Epperly

Secretary-Treasurer

West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council

important for us to get the word out about our programs, and increase our numbers, to take advantage of this incredible opportunity.

The opportunity Epperly is speaking about is the influx of federal infrastructure dollars to our state due to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Over the course of the next de-

cade over \$6 billion dollars has been allocated to West Virginia for public infrastructure projects from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law alone.

In addition to these funds, the Inflation Reduction Act will provide billions of dollars in tax incentives to developers and contractors who pay Davis Bacon Wages and use apprentices on a jobsite. ■



An apprentice with Painters DC 53 prepares for an interview as part of an upcoming promotional video for WVSBT apprenticeship programs.

Millwrights #443 New Jurisdiction



With the expiration of the Millwright Local 1090 Collective Bargaining Agreement in May 2023 and the commencement of the new Millwright Local 443 agreement starting June 1, 2023, Marshall, Ohio, Brooke, Hancock, Cabell, Wayne, and Lincoln counties working conditions, wages and fringes are now part of the 443 agreement and Local.

Any questions from members or contractors can be answered by contacting Millwright Local 443, 4600 Camden Ave, Parkersburg, WV 26101. 304-422-1593.



John Epperly, WVSBT Secretary-Treasurer (right), looks on as a drone operator captures jobsite footage for a promotional video.

+\$58 Million Raised

Tri-State Trades Annual DAD's Day Event Raises \$14,000 for Diabetes Research

Last month, the Tri-State Building and Construction Trades held their annual DAD's Day Golf Outing. The event raised \$14,000 for diabetes research.

This year's fundraising total broke a record by topping the total from last year by nearly \$4,000.

'DAD's Day' stands for Dollars Against Diabetes Day.

The event has been a long running effort by the North American Building Trades Unions in the U.S. and Canada to support research for a

cure to diabetes.

Over the years, the trades have raised more than \$58 million for the Diabetes Research Institute, located at the University of Miami.

Opened in 1994, the Diabetes Research Institute at the University of Miami was built entirely by union construction workers.

Today, the Institute is internationally known for its state-of-the-art research and technology related to diabetes research.

"We are thrilled to have been able

to raise so much money this year for the millions of Americans suffering from this disease," said John Holbrook, Business Manager for the

Golf Course in Olive Hill, Kentucky.

"We thank all those who sponsored and participated in the event from both Labor and Management,"

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Apprentice Places in UA District 2 Plumbing Contest



Last month, Shawn Cook, an apprentice with Plumbers and Pipefitters 625 in Charleston, was selected to participate in the UA District 2 Plumbing Competition in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Cook placed 3rd out of 7 contestants in the Plumbing competition, all of whom were selected to compete due to winning their own state competition.

The states in District 2 include Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland as well as Washington D.C.

"The contest is a showcase for the training we do. It's a great opportunity for our apprentices to show off their skills and find places where they can improve," said Brett Matthews, Training Director for UA 625. "We are very proud of Shawn and all our apprentices who competed in both the state and district competitions this year. They are all to be commended for their hard work."

Tri-State Building and Construction Trades Council.

The Tri-State Building Trades Council holds their golf outing event every year for DAD's Day, and this year's event was held at Hidden Cove

said Holbrook.

"I also want to thank all the volunteers who helped put this event together. Everyone's time and effort truly help to make a difference for those with diabetes." ■



Shawn Cook, apprentice with Plumbers and Pipefitters 625 in Charleston, competes in the District 2 Plumbing competition in Pittsburgh, PA.