



## **UMass Amherst AGC Student Chapter**

### **Guest Speaker Panel: General Construction Questions**

**Panelists: Jack Harney, Christa Spedding, and Harvey Oribhabor**

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### **Meeting Notes**

#### **Career Advice**

- Be a good listener and communicator:
- Take initiative
- Keep your cool
- When given the opportunity jump at the opportunity to work with your more experienced coworkers, they will appreciate your help and they have the connections to advance your career
- Go to career fairs
- Don't be afraid to have a conversation with someone (even if you don't see how it will help you advance your career) you never know how opportunities may present themselves

#### **What certifications have been the most useful:**

- Get OSHA-10, OSHA-30 when you are in school (employers are more likely to hire you if they don't have to take the time/money to get you these certifications)
- Other than OSHA-10 and/or OSHA-30 it depends on your job
- Focus on getting the certifications that your employer offers/recommends

#### **Handling difficult conversations/situations:**

- Take your safety and your integrity seriously
- Don't work for companies that put you in danger
- Get away from any immediate conflicts and tell your supervisor
- Be open, honest and yourself starting at the interview
- When you are a new employee be a friend to all, as you gain more experience you can take more authority
- If you want to correct someone don't be overbearing, give facts with a smile, nudge with kindness

#### **How do you manage being overwhelmed by a project:**

- Break the larger tasks down into a list of smaller action items
- Identify a path and the obstructions that are in the way of your goals
- Communicate obstacles to your coworkers/supervisor
- Don't be afraid of asking questions and saying that you are overwhelmed

How did starting off as a construction laborer affect your career:

- Being a laborer was hugely important beneficial to my career, especially as a scheduler, but it having the knowledge that you gain from work in the field could also make you a better project manager or coordinator

How do you deal with differences in race/gender as a construction worker:

- You may have to work harder/take more initiative and they might treat you differently at first, but you can prove yourself

What will the industry look like in 10-20 years:

- Faster calculations
- Better modeling technology
- More diversity
- Emphasis on safety
- Sustainability-centered projects/methods
- Client driven
- More cohesive team
- New project delivery methods