



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Career Technical Education Instructor Honored with Construction Education Award

FONTANA, CA – When Fontana High School career technical education (CTE) instructor Lamar Hanger arrived on campus at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year to lead the school’s building and construction pathway, he had a vision to transform the traditional woodshop into a modern commercial and residential construction lab while conducting his classroom as a job site.

In less than three years, Hanger’s passion for teaching – and passing on his knowledge of the construction industry – has nearly tripled the number of students in FOHI’s Career Connections program, a CTE pathway in general construction.

For his dedication and enthusiasm in guiding the next generation of homebuilders, Hanger has been honored by the Associated General Contractors of California (AGC) with their Construction Education Friend Award. Hanger will be presented with the award at the AGC Installation and Awards Gala on Feb. 2 in San Francisco.

“This is a tremendous honor, but this is all about our amazing FOHI students, who come to class every day ready to learn and eager to work with their hands – I cannot say enough about these kids,” Hanger said. “We couldn’t do it here without our leadership team at FOHI, starting with Principal Ofelia Hinojosa and Assistant Principal Marisa Beitler. They have supported everything I have done, and the results speak for themselves.”

In April 2022, after only five months of carpentry instruction, Hanger led a small group of FOHI Career Connections pathway students to the Construction Industry Education Foundation (CIEF) Design Build competition, where they stunned participants and judges alike with a second-place finish, walking away from their first competition with Rookie of the Year honors.

In the aftermath of the Design Build competition, several students graduated into apprenticeships for a local construction company and are now working as carpenters. The quick turnaround from novice to apprentice is built into the pathway’s curriculum, with students assuming roles for every daily project, and maximizing their classroom experience.

Hanger worked as a union carpenter for 32 years prior to coming to FOHI. While working as a carpenter, Hanger performed freeform lathing on several attractions at Disneyland.

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Inspired to pass along his knowledge, Hanger worked as an instructor for the Southwest Carpenters Training Fund, training apprentices for eight years before serving as a special representative for Southwest Carpenters.

Hanger brought all his experience and expertise to FOHI, along with a long list of industry contacts. His first order of business at the school was to convert the old woodshop classroom into a modern training lab. Hanger reached out to contracting firms and asked for donations of tools and materials. While renovating the classroom, Hanger met FOHI students who were eager to help. Many of these students enrolled in Hanger's first class and accompanied him to the 2021 Design Build competition.

"I cannot say enough about Lamar Hanger. He has transformed FOHI's construction pathway into a pipeline for students seeking apprenticeships and employment," Hinojosa said. "Lamar is so deserving of his award from the AGC. He is an education ambassador who cares so much about his kids."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_HANGER1: Fontana High School Career Connections pathway teacher Lamar Hanger is interviewed as he leads a group of students who assisted a local general contractor with the renovation of a historic barn at the Pepper Street Agricultural Museum in Fontana in September. Hanger will be presented with the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of California's Construction Education Friend Award for his dedication in guiding the next generation of homebuilders at the AGC's Installation and Awards Gala on Feb. 2, 2024 in San Francisco.

FUSD_HANGER2: Fontana High School Career Connections pathway teacher Lamar Hanger instructs a group of students as they assist a general contractor with a renovation project. Hanger will be presented with the Associated General Contractors of California's Construction Education Friend Award for his dedication in guiding the next generation of homebuilders.

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