

Baker Technical Institute Program Helps Dufur, Oregon Students Learn Hands-on Construction Skills

Roundhouse Foundation grant supports free rural education program in operating heavy equipment; students gain skills for high-demand occupations in construction

SISTERS, OREGON, USA, August 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Oregon's [Dufur School](#) partnered with [Baker Technical Institute](#) (BTI) for a three-week program to educate Wasco and South Wasco County students for free in high-demand construction skills, including heavy machinery operation. The program was funded through grants, summer school funding and private donations, and received a significant grant from [The Roundhouse Foundation](#), which supports innovative programs in Oregon's rural

communities. BTI takes its educational model to rural communities around the state, including to Oregon's Tribal Nations - work that is also supported by the Foundation.

"As we work to support rural communities, programs like these think creatively about providing education opportunities that can meet the needs of the local region," said Erin Borla, executive director of The Roundhouse Foundation. "This program is a perfect example of low-barrier education, supported in partnership with community organizations and businesses, that provides students with skill sets that are desperately needed in their region and beyond. Students gain the foundational skills to prepare them for further educational opportunities and highly sought-after employment."

The Dufur School / BTI program covered specific areas of study such as first-aid/CPR, forklift operation, ODOT flagging, and heavy equipment operation, along with an introductory course to



CDL in Oregon. Students were able to operate heavy machinery in a BTI simulator before taking their skills into real life through a school district partnership with Crestline Construction. The program is a great example of public and private entities coming together to provide educational opportunities for rural students.

Doug Dalton, president of Baker Technical Institute, said, "From day one, what was so impressive about this project was not only how great the students were, but also the passion that was displayed by school staff, community members and the private sector. As we all know, the skilled trades are a fabulous route for students today. When communities come together to celebrate and support this, the economic impact by having a trained workforce can be the difference maker for sustained economic development. Congratulations to Dufur for championing this work."



Dufur students use BTI's heavy machinery simulator as part of the program. Photo courtesy of Leona Egeland, CTE Program Coordinator for Dufur School District.

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*Erin Borla, Executive Director
and Trustee of the
Roundhouse Foundation*

Baker Technical Institute partners with several school districts and other organizations in Oregon to bring training like this to rural areas. Another specific program supported by The Roundhouse Foundation, along with community and tribal partners, is BTI's "Big Machines & Big Opportunities" program, which expands career and technical courses offered to Tribes in Oregon. Courses include heavy equipment operation and truck driving.

About The Roundhouse Foundation

The Roundhouse Foundation is a private, family foundation, based in Sisters, Oregon since 2002. The

Foundation believes that solutions to the unique challenges of Oregon's rural communities can be found through creative thinking and problem-solving, innovation and collaboration. We partner with community organizations to develop, implement and sustain creative, place-based approaches and programs that strengthen and celebrate rural Oregon. In addition to providing grant services to rural communities and tribal regions throughout Oregon, The Roundhouse Foundation operates Pine Meadow Ranch Center for Arts and Agriculture (PMRCAA) in Sisters.

For more information about the Foundation or
PMRCAA please visit
www.RoundhouseFoundation.org.

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For More Information:
cathyc@roundhousefoundation.org, o: (541)
904-0700 mobile: (541) 390-4850

Cathy Carroll
The Roundhouse Foundation
[email us here](#)



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