

CARPENTERS UNION, MAPLEWOOD SHOP AND BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS GIVE YOUTH A HANDS-ON TASTE OF THE TRADES

MILLVILLE, NJ, UNITED STATES, May 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) youth got a close-up look at careers in the construction trades during a hands-on woodworking event at the Cumberland County Technical Education Center in Millville on Thursday, April 16. Sixty-five BBBS participants spent the evening learning basic carpentry skills from mentors with [Maplewood Shop](#) and the [Carpenter Contractor Trust](#) (CCT).

“It was a fun-filled learning experience for the kids, because they combined adult mentoring anchored by a real-world introduction to the construction trade,” said [Dan Wright](#), Workforce Development Coordinator, CCT. “We understand that showing kids skills that might lead to a career is a worthy endeavor for everyone involved in this effort.”

During the session, BBBS students built a keepsake box out of a 1x6 pine board, learning tool safety, measurement and layout, hand sawing and basic assembly. The project gave the young people a tangible sense of accomplishment and a first-hand feel for what it is like to work as a carpenter.

BBBS is a national youth organization that builds and supports one-to-one mentoring relationships between adult volunteers and kids, helping them gain confidence, improve school performance and avoid risky behavior. By pairing that mentoring with exposure to the union trades, the event highlighted the trades as a viable and rewarding career path.

“There is a national conversation right now about the trades being a viable career opportunity,” Wright added. “Through this event, we are demonstrating opportunities for young adults in the union trades, particularly as a carpenter.”



BBBS youth and mentors join together for a night of building keepsake boxes and learning about a future career.



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Dan Wright, Workforce Development Coordinator, CCT.

With the generation retiring from the workforce larger than the generation entering it, leaders at CCT say events like this are vital to building career pipelines into high-demand fields such as carpentry. These pipelines benefit young adults, who can secure careers that allow them to work and retire with dignity, as well as local communities that depend on highly skilled tradespeople to build and maintain their neighborhoods.

This woodworking night is one of many initiatives the Carpenters Union is spearheading to meet the growing demand for highly trained construction workers and to

strengthen ties with community organizations.

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