



Friday, July 14, 2023

The Masonry Foundation
1481 Merchant Drive
Algonquin, IL 60102

RE: Texas Masonry Council Grant Request

Dear Masonry Foundation Trustees:

There is no greater challenge to the masonry industry than finding the next generation of qualified, skilled masonry professionals. But, there is also no greater reward than putting programs in place that can help sustain our ancient trade and allow it to thrive as we continue to construct the buildings that will leave a legacy in our great country.

The Texas Masonry Council and our member companies have turned our full attention to finding a solution to the skilled labor shortage.

Please find attached our proposal for Phase III of our Masonry Rocks! Career Program. The generous support of the Masonry Foundation over the years have helped us grow our program faster than we imagined. We thank you for that support and look forward to continuing our partnership as we help make masonry a central part of CTE curriculum in Texas - and across the country.

Please reach out to us with any questions. We thank you for your support and leadership in the industry.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Topping', is positioned below the 'Thank you,' text.

Tony Topping
TMC Executive Director

Attachments: TMC Masonry Rocks! Grant Proposal



2023 Masonry Foundation Grant Application

Masonry Rocks! Career Program - Phase III

2023 Summary

The Masonry Rocks! Career Program Phase III grant request is a continuation of the highly successful program started in 2020 by the Texas Masonry Council to better engage, recruit, and train the next generation of our workforce. When the program started only 2 school districts in the State of Texas were conducting any meaningful masonry training at the high school level. In just a few short years we have increased the number of schools teaching masonry on a full-time basis to about 12 with dozens more schools regularly participating in masonry training and events hosted by TMC. We have tripled the number of students competing in the State SkillsUSA Masonry competition and placed dozens of young students with our mason contractor members to begin their career in the industry. With the continued support of the Masonry Foundation the Masonry Rocks! Career Program will continue the core activities that have made this program a success - with some exciting new additions detailed below.

Increased Teacher Training

As we increase the number of masonry training programs in high schools the limiting factor will soon become finding enough qualified instructors. For that reason, TMC has started a training program for teachers that will initially consist of a 2-day hands-on Level 1 course. This course will take teachers through mortar mixing, mortar spreading, tools, laying to the line, laying with a level (competition projects), training station setup, and other basic skills that can be used to start masonry classes. Level 1 courses will initially be offered twice a year as part of the TIVA Summer Conference (Texas Industrial Vocational Association) and the Texas Masonry Convention. A Level 2 course will be developed during the upcoming school year for teachers wishing to continue their training.

Masonry Training Live Streams

While this program has introduced the world of masonry to over 3,300 students with hands-on events over the last few years it does not begin to scratch the surface of the demand for classroom training and assistance. Every school that attends a masonry event hosted by TMC wants more in-class follow up instruction. There is simply not enough TMC staff time or resources to travel to the number of schools that want additional training. To address this issue, TMC will pilot a monthly live-streamed training session aimed at students that want to practice laying to the line and practice level work for competition projects. These live streams will be hosted by TMC's Masonry Rocks Coordinator Ashton White and will be interactive giving her the

ability to see and critique projects constructed by students. Teachers across the state think this will be a great addition to the program and allow students to get more face time with experienced masons. The streams will be available to any schools that wish to log in and view them and will be recorded and cataloged for students to rewatch and practice during their own time.

To help with the new initiatives and to continue on all the other activities of our program we ask for \$25,000 in grant funds to help continue and expand the Masonry Rocks! Career Program.

Full Program Description

The Texas Masonry Council (TMC) is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit trade association of masonry contractors and suppliers in the State of Texas working together to promote the expanded use and benefits of masonry. The organization's mission is to strengthen and grow the masonry industry by providing a voice of advocacy and a more sustainable workforce through targeted education and programming efforts.

TMC is a for-impact organization and the Masonry Rocks! Career Program is TMC's effort to build community relations, strengthen the future of our industry and ensure the future of the trade. The Career Program has a number of industry benefits – from recruiting hireable moldable talent and expanding company workforces to helping people get great jobs and make a living wage with room for advancement. The Texas Masonry Council in partnership with local masonry contractors and suppliers showcases the opportunities in masonry construction and how local school districts can prepare students for careers in the trade. This effort ultimately requires *changing the perception* of the construction industry and skilled trades with today's youth, parents, and school teachers. Today's message is that masonry construction jobs are interesting, rewarding, and offer great career pathways with a tremendous sense of pride.

There is currently an identifiable skills gap between the classroom and the jobsite—while there are many great programs and coursework available, there is often a misalignment between the classroom learning and the skills necessary on the everyday jobsite. TMC's role is to fill the gaps and recruit for Texas companies while making connections to and offering career services for educational institutions. TMC walks educators through how to connect to classroom resources for materials, tools, supplies, expert training, nationally certified curriculum, and ultimately, leading students to a career with award-winning masonry contractors. During this past year, TMC has also started a list of retiring masons and instructors who are willing and able to give-back to local schools by providing mentorship to new teachers, expert skills training for students learning the trade, and in some cases, become the part- or full-time instructor for a district starting a new Masonry I class.

The funding provided by Masonry Foundation Grants in 2021 and 2022 for the Masonry Rocks! Career Program resulted in more than 95 schools hosting or participating in Masonry Rocks! Masonry Day events, culminating in over 3,300 students getting hands-on with masonry.

| Spring 2021 | Fall 2021 | Spring 2022 | Fall 2023 | Spring 2023 |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 697 Students | 690 Students | 738 Students | 595 Students | 616 Students |
| 10 Schools | 16 Schools | 25 Schools | 17 Schools | 27 Schools |
| 13 Masonry Days | 16 Masonry Days | 9 Masonry Days | 11 Masonry Days | 9 Masonry Days |

The original two-day Masonry Day model was intended for one school and up to 30 students. During Spring 2022 the Masonry Day model matured into a larger-scale Regional Showcase event that accommodates more than 150 students from multiple schools. The events were a huge success - bringing together multiple community stakeholders, utilizing local resources more effectively, and involving more suppliers and industry partners to show the strength and opportunities that are available within masonry construction. The large-scale events also attracted several opportunities for high-quality media coverage and exposure for the local events and the industry’s workforce development efforts.

Additional outreach & engagement activities throughout the year included:

- Career Exploration & Recruitment Events for middle schoolers, junior high students, high school students, and recent graduates
- Industry Leadership Committees (ILCs) and school advisory committees
- Presentations at TEA Regional Education Resource/Service Centers
- Regional and State-Level SkillsUSA Masonry Competitions
- TIVA Teacher Training for industrial and vocational educators
- CTAT Presentation to school administrators and directors
- Partnership Exploration with organizations like Building Talent Foundation, Workforce Solutions, local community colleges, American Institute of architects (AIA), Assoc. of General Contractors (AGC), Assoc. of Building Contractors (ABC), etc.

After hosting/attending Masonry Day events, discussing workforce demand with local contractors, and coordinating with staff, several high schools began the process of adding a full-time Masonry I class to the course catalog:

- Barbara Jordan Career Center (Houston-Galveston Region)
- Belton High School (Central Texas Region)
- Bellville High School (Houston-Galveston Region)
- Copperas Cove (Central Texas Region)
- Dallas Career Institute East (Dallas-Fort Worth Region)
- Dallas Career Institute South (Dallas-Fort Worth Region)
- Ferris High School (Dallas-Fort Worth Region)
- Harlingen High School (Rio Grande Valley Region)
- Mercedes High School (Rio Grande Valley Region)
- Princeton High School (Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

- Red Oak High School (Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

A number of other schools are moving forward with what TMC is describing as *partial masonry programs*. These are schools that have not-yet approved a full-time masonry curriculum, and are interested in a continued partnership with TMC/the masonry industry and are implementing masonry education as part of other construction courses. One example, Dr. Kirk Lewis CTE School in Pasadena ISD is implementing a six-week masonry program where they will conduct hands-on training for the construction students and schedule field trips to masonry production facilities, attend job site tours, and begin training for SkillsUSA Masonry competitions. Other schools that have not been given approval for full-time masonry curriculum have committed to forming masonry teams or masonry clubs to begin preparing their students for various masonry competitions and to better prepare them for summer job placements with local masonry contractors.

The MCAA has helped TMC to develop a Current Workforce Survey at the suggestion of Texas contractors. The intent of the survey is to collect information from current employees and crewmembers about their industry career and career journey in order to identify new avenues of recruitment, unseen opportunities, and to ensure the retention of current employees. The sixteen question survey was sent out to contractors nationwide in late 2022 and collected valuable information to help recruit the next generation of our workforce. Phase two of the Current Workforce Survey is already underway.

TMC has compiled resources from across the country and has developed a coffer of information for a Masonry Instructor Portal. This Portal will serve as an online database of information for prospective schools that details classroom needs, training stand designs, course/curriculum information, training resources, material resources, etc. Through our work with local companies and crews, TMC has developed a Field Team of trained masons and educators who are available and willing to work with local recruits and school districts to bring masonry training back into high schools. These individuals are essential in bringing the local resources together and providing the on-the ground talent necessary to train the next generation.

Project Scope and Objectives

This grant application requests 2023 funding from MCAA's Masonry Foundation to further support the growth and expansion of TMC's Masonry Rocks! Career Program. In the last year, the program has expanded from supporting specific local schools to promoting the Masonry Message across entire regions and allowing more time and engagement with target schools and new program areas. As the program expands its reach, TMC seeks to participate on more Industry Leadership Councils/steering committees, engage and participate with other workforce recruitment programs and organizations like Workforce Solutions, the Texas Workforce Commission, the prison system (Windham ISD), veterans organizations, and even local homebuilders and general contractors associations. This past year, TMC was able to expand its reach to the Rio Grande Valley with great success and future plans for collaboration. Additional program funding will continue to make expanding the program's reach and influence into new

areas a reality, and will expressly contribute to the achievement and progression of the objectives and goals outlined by the TMC Workforce Committee.

The Workforce Development Committee's 2022 - 2023 Goals and Objectives are:

2022 - 2023 TMC Workforce Committee Goals

- **Goal: Recruitment and placement of recruits with mason contractor members.**
 - Objective: Assist with Regional Bootcamps
 - Objective: Host Masonry Day events in major regions
 - Action: Regional Events (4+ per semester)
 - Action: 1-1 Masonry Days (target schools)
 - Action: University Masonry Days (1 to 2 per semester)
 - Objective: Complete a Current Workforce Survey
 - Develop and complete workforce survey with MCAA's assistance to look for other avenues for recruitment
 - Launch Survey
 - Share results and develop plan of action based on results
 - Survey contractors about number of hires at TMC Convention

- **Goal: Facilitate the creation of masonry training programs in high schools.**
 - Objective: Website – Finalize Portal for Masonry Instructor.
 - Objective: Classroom Details – floorplans, tool/material list, etc.
 - Objective: Site Tour(s) video: Jobsite Tour
 - Objective: Contact Metrics @ Data Tracking CRM
 - Correlation between target list and contacts made
 - Emails (#) / Phone Calls (#) / In-Person (#)
 - Regional Affiliations Map
 - Objective: Cultivate Masonry Clubs and Masonry Programs across the State

- **Goal: Partner with state/local education and career organizations.**
 - Objective: TIVA Instructor Presentation @ Ft. Worth - July 17,18
 - Objective: SkillsUSA Masonry Competitions @ Regional / State / National
 - Objective: Collaborate with Members to be on ILCs and Summer Camps
 - Objective: Research and establish organizational affiliations such as Windham ISD (correctional program), Texas Workforce Commission, Job Corps, Alamo Trade Club, Boys & Girls Clubs, etc.

- **Long-Term Goals:**
 - Objective: Digital Classroom Presentations for 9th/10th Grade CTE/General Construction and Architecture Students
 - Objective: Online (downloadable) Quizzes/Tests/Review to go along with classroom presentations (NCCER Mason Tender curriculum)
 - Objective: TMC / BYF Competition Award (student videos made and sent to national competition)

Scheduling and Production

The first component of this proposal is the scheduling and production of eight Regional Masonry Showcase events, five to six Mason Tender Training Camps/Workshops, and several SkillsUSA training camps throughout the 2022 - 2023 school year.

It is anticipated that the 2023 Fall semester will host the following events:

- July 24 - 28 - TIVA Summer 2023 Conference
- August 28 [Tentative] - Copperas Cove Masonry Class Grand Opening
- September 8 - Texas Masonry Convention Training
- September [Tentative] - Dallas ISD Masonry Class Grand Opening
- September [Tentative] - University of Texas Masonry Day
- October 11 - 12 [Tentative] - Masonry ROCKS Regional Showcase: DFW
- November [Tentative] - Masonry ROCKS Regional Showcase: RGV
- Nov 29 - 30 - Masonry ROCKS Regional Showcase: HOU

It is anticipated that 2024 Spring semester will host the following events:

- March 2024 - TMC Mid-Year Meeting & SkillsUSA Regional Competitions
- TBD - University of Houston Masonry Day
- TBD - Texas A&M University Masonry Day
- TBD - Masonry ROCKS Regional Showcase: ATX
- TBD - Masonry ROCKS Regional Showcase: FTW
- TBD - Masonry ROCKS Regional Showcase: SA
- TBD - Masonry ROCKS Regional Showcase: HOU
- April 2024 - SkillsUSA Statewide Competitions (Corpus Christi)
- May 2023 - Mason Tender Training/Recruitment Camps (3)

2023 TIVA Summer Conference

The Texas Masonry Council plans to ROCK the 2023 TIVA Summer Conference with opportunities for students and graduates to learn a trade and build careers. The TIVA Conference is the optimum opportunity for the industry to have one-on-one time with educators and tradespeople who are cultivating and bridging the workforce gap with today's youth. TMC is hosting two sessions at this conference:

- **Monday, July 17 and 18 Teacher Training**
- **Thursday, July 19 @ 3 PM - Masonry ROCKS Classroom Presentation**

Job Placement

One of the most important components of this proposal is the placement of recruits into jobs with TMC mason contractor members. TMC has a QR code system in place that is used to keep track of student contacts in each region, details about the contacts (birthdate, school, location, etc.), send information via text/email, and track their progress into successful employment.

TMC intends to recruit from local high schools, competitions, career fairs, expos, news stories, etc.-- in any way possible--in order to gain 50 recruits during the year. All interested recruits are asked to fill out a job intake form on the TMC website via QR code or email and send us their information so that we can send them to contractors working in their area. Their information is forwarded to the local contractors and the contractor can follow up with more concise questions and requests, including interviews, physicals, drug tests, etc. TMC continues connecting with the students and visiting them to encourage them during their first summer on the job.

Adding Programs

The regional events and the individual masonry days and demonstrations that are conducted are ways to promote the industry and begin changing the perception of careers in construction. These events are also ideal for the introduction of the nationally recognized curriculum and follow up with district administrators and counselors about the creation of NCCER-certified Masonry Tech 1 classes. TMC has developed a priority and target list of schools to help implement full time masonry programs.. TMC staff will meet and work with school superintendents, CTE directors, career counselors, and teachers to facilitate each step of development for all new programs.

Summary of Qualifications

TMC Leadership. *Mackie Bounds, President of the Board of Directors*, has led the organization for two years and has brought a consistent and unwavering commitment to workforce development. Mr. Bounds' companies lead the State in hiring Masonry Rocks! Program recruits and therefore has an intimate knowledge of this process, its challenges and how the process can improve.

Liz Graves, Legacy Masonry/SpecRents, continues to champion the Workforce Development Committee as its Chairperson and steadfastly drives each goal and ensures the committee's progress.

TMC Membership. The TMC membership has been involved and will continue to be involved with the production of the large, multi-day Masonry Day events, as well as participating in all local opportunities and volunteer efforts. Local contractors send qualified bricklayers and mason tenders to the events to help with the hands-on training and instruction, as well as logistics of stocking materials and stations. Local and regional suppliers and manufacturers provide material and tools to events, as well as join the discussion--explaining relevant materials and supplies to the recruits, as well as alternative industry career opportunities.

TMC Staff. The TMC staff is a team of three full-time individuals dedicated to promoting the industry locally, statewide and nationally. The team is detailed below:

Tony Topping, Executive Director. Tony has 8 years of experience with TMC and currently serves on the Board of Directors for SkillsUSA Texas. Tony oversees the day-to-day operation of the organization, as well as manages staff and volunteer work on our workforce initiatives and organization committees.

Ashton White, Masonry Rocks! Coordinator. Ashton is particularly qualified to lead the Masonry Rocks program. She is a graduate of a high school masonry program out of North Carolina and 2-time SkillsUSA National Champion bricklayer. Her social media experience is perfect to help connect with the next generation of students that we are recruiting. She has already recruited and placed a number of students with Texas Mason contractors and will take this program to the next level of success.

Cori Hancock, Marketing Coordinator. One of the important components of the Masonry Rocks! Career Program is exposure of the industry and the job opportunities available to young people in traditional and social media. Cori has experience in vocational and trades marketing and assisted the program in gaining recognition in several newspapers and television news reports in multiple markets across Texas. She will continue to help expand the media exposure to local, state and national markets, highlighting accomplishments and events as the program grows.

TMC Masonry Field Team Members. TMC has introduced the opportunity for tradespeople and educators to become part-time, locally-focused Masonry Field Team Members. Texas is the second largest state in the U.S. with more than 3,000 local high schools that should be considered future masonry training centers. Funding from this grant will contribute to the hourly wages of four to eight TMC Masonry Field Team Members that will liaison with vocational training programs and high schools in their respective regions. Field Team Members will execute hands-on masonry training and demonstrations at schools, TMC-sponsored regional masonry events, masonry training camps, instructor training, and other events. Field Team Members will be experienced teachers and/or masons that have actively participated with TMC events or committees within the previous two years.

Anticipated Impacts

The impacts from this program are beginning to materialize; work over the past two years has already resulted in new masonry programs across the state and increasing the image of masonry as a skilled trade within the school system. The Texas Masonry Council now sits as equals with other trades on various Texas Education Agency committees and task forces dealing with CTE education in the state. The schools that have worked with the Program in the past are all incorporating masonry training into their current curriculum, encouraging students to participate in the SkillsUSA Masonry Competitions, and planning to engage with TMC in the upcoming school year at Regional Showcase events, industry programs, and via field trips.

The preliminary goal for 2023 is to place 50 mason recruits with local contractors across Texas. The TMC intends to host Mason Tender Training Camps during both the Fall and Spring semesters to assist all-sized contractors with hiring efforts and recruitment/training. Ultimately, this Program aspires to create more full-time high school masonry classes in Texas that will become pipelines for mason contractors to replace their aging workforce. These recruits will become the next generation of mason tenders, pursuing the goal of entering local apprenticeship programs to become skilled masons, foreman, superintendents and beyond.

Request Payment Procedure

TMC requests the trustees of The Masonry Foundation to provide a grant totaling \$25,000 for the 2023/24 time frame.

Other Funding Sources

TMC is currently funding the Masonry Rocks! Career Program thanks to donors, sponsorships, TMC general membership dues, and a generous \$12,500 grant from the Masonry Foundation.

2023 Budget

Program Expenses*

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Staff and Field Team Wages | \$70,000 |
| Large Regional Masonry Events and boot camps | \$30,000 |
| <u>Travel and Lodging</u> | <u>\$20,000</u> |
| Total 2022 Expense: | \$120,000 |

Program Revenue

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| TMC General Dues Revenue | \$95,000 |
| <u>Masonry Foundation Grant</u> | <u>\$25,000</u> |
| Total 2022 Revenue | \$120,000 |

Proposed Grant Deliverables:

1. Provide an update about all proposed grant deliverables/activities to MCAA Masonry Foundation after the completion of the spring 2024 semester.
2. Share resources with MCAA, state, and local organizations across the nation, including TMC staff knowledge and expertise.
3. Continue to build Portal for Masonry Instructors, including Classroom Details – floorplans, tool/material list, etc.
4. Interviews with contractors and successful recruits turned into promotional videos.
5. Create a Regional Showcase playbook with content outline, resources, station descriptions, and photos.
6. Continue Current Workforce Survey and develop plan of action based on results
7. Site Tour(s) video: Jobsite Tour
8. Research and establish organizational affiliations such as Windham ISD (correctional program), Texas Workforce Commission, Job Corps, Alamo Trade Club, Boys & Girls Clubs, etc.
9. Develop digital classroom presentations for 9th/10th Grade CTE/General Construction and Architecture Students