



BENSON TECH

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The Official Newsletter of the Benson Polytechnic High School Alumni Association (BPHSAA), February 2015 Edition

Benson Tech's new Booster Club is "boosting"

Once again, Benson Tech has a booster club. Formed this past August, the club has been raising money and lending support to Benson Tech's sports teams and extracurricular clubs. "Membership" is open to parents, students, alumni, and anyone who loves Benson Tech. No dues are involved — one just "joins" the club by volunteering their time or by making a donation.

Currently, the Benson Tech Booster Club is operating the concessions stand for winter sports and providing volunteer assistance for events held at Benson Tech. The club, in cooperation with the Benson PTSA, operate the concession stand, during the State Robotic Championships (see Page 4) that will be held at Benson Tech on March 7th and 8th.

Other planned activities include a Winter Sports Banquet to be held March 10, another one for spring sports, and the creation of a website. (The latter will be linked to the BPHSAA's website.)

Help, of course, is always needed. If you have a couple hours of free time a few evenings or afternoons, or a great idea for a fund raiser, please contact Lisa White (bensonboosterclub@hotmail.com) or Dale Bajema (dalebajema@comcast.net). Or come to the club's next meeting on March 18, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in the Benson Tech Library classroom.

Go Techmen and Techsters!



The Benson Tech Freshman Picnic welcomes incoming eighth-graders who will be attending the school the following fall. The 2015 Freshman Picnic will be held June 2.

Benson Tech alumni update

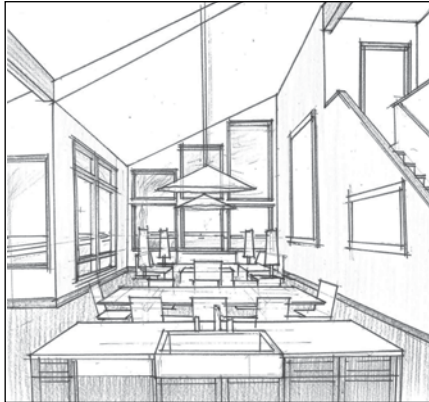
by Rob Johns, Chair, BPHSAA Board of Directors (Class of 1977)

Your BPHSAA Board has been active this past year. Highlights include:

- Benson Tech and Portland Public Schools (PPS) Summer School have set aside one week in the summer of 2015 to have CTE Summer Saturday Academy classes for the first time.
- A full-time architecture teacher was brought back in Fall 2014 — this major had been eliminated from the Benson Tech curriculum four years earlier. A CTE State of Oregon Grant paid for new computer-aided design equipment as well.
- The Freshman Picnic will be 6/2/15 to welcome the incoming class.
- While enrollment is still capped, PPS has agreed to manage enrollment upward steadily — for Fall 2014, almost 900 kids are enrolled.
- The BPHSAA provided \$500 financial support to help maintain summer radio programming.
- Benson Tech's Community Picnic will be 8/15/15 — all incoming freshmen and families are invited.
- BPHSAA Board members have worked with PPS on issues at the Site Council-level to help support athletics and future planning for the forthcoming 2016 bond measure.

For more information about the BPHSAA and how you can help as an alumni, visit the website at www.bensontechalumni.org or contact me at 503-314-0041 or email at robjohns@comcast.net.

Benson Tech House construction update and status of the next house



Perspective drawing of house interior.

*by Richard K. Spies, A.I.A.
(Class of 1964)*

The 2014-2015 house built by Benson Tech students is located at 130 NE Skidmore. It is a two-story home with three bedrooms. There is a master bedroom suite on the ground floor and two bedrooms on the second level. A large vaulted living room, dining, kitchen space looks east to a large tree on the corner of NE Skidmore Street and NE Mallory Avenue.

Work continues on the interior with a focus on interior trim, finishes, and cabinets. Exterior work remaining includes final color selection and exterior painting. Construction program instructors Rich Weber and Luke Hotchkiss, along with other Benson Tech staff, have made this project a great real life experience for dozens of students. They have also done an amazing job in reaching out and engaging our many industry partners. The project would not have been possible without their support. See the list of the firms and individuals that have contributed toward the project so far on the following page.

It's anticipated that this house will be ready for sale at the end of this current school year.

Drafting and Architecture Teacher Tammy Hite, a Benson Tech alumni, returned to

the school at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year to build and grow the architecture program. We will soon be in a position where these architecture students can help design the next house. The big issue to be resolved is confirmation of a site. There have been several conversations with Portland Public School officials and there appears to be a good chance that the district will allow Benson Tech to use one of three sites it owns south of Humboldt School in North Portland.

It is anticipated that the district will let us use the southernmost site of the three sites. The site is 50' x 100' and located west of N. Haight Stand and has an alley that provides additional vehicular access to the western edge of the site. With an east-west orientation, the site lends itself to a design scheme that could take advantage of good southern exposure to natural light. There also has been conversation about consideration of designing in a rental unit or an ADU (accessory dwelling unit) into the home design.

This will be an excellent opportunity for the architecture students at Benson Tech, along with Tammy Hite and other volunteers assisting in the program to design the next house to be constructed by students.



Benson Tech students at work in the 2014-2015 house construction.

Contributors to the Building Construction Program

COMPANY	CONTACT (if available)
Makita USA	Roger Russell
Emerson Hardwood	Sean Surratt
Woodcrafters	Bob Rierson
Neil Kelly	Pat Murray, Kelly Dobbs
Schulz Clearwater	N/A
Miller Paint Co.	Randy Stone
Parr Lumber	Ron Hanel
Oregon Roofers Supply	Gary McDonald
Ztec Engineers, Inc.	Chris C. Fischborn
W. E. Given Painting	Dan Diessner
JB Insulation Co.	Richard Lock
Southgate Wallboard Inc.	Randy Nielsen
West Side Electric Co.	David Grigonis
Rayborn's Plumbing	Kenneth "Kap" Provancher
The Joinery	Ariel Enriquez
Parr Lumber	Dave Frank
Tight Access Excavation	Mark Withright
ABC supply	Geoff Greenwood
Malarky Roofing	N/A
Pacific Overhead Door	Steve Harris
Paragon Pacific	N/A
Pat's Pound & Pour	Pat Scheafer
Toughstuff Industrial Floors	N/A
Precision Image	N/A
Green Structures N.W.	Tim Kort
Fortifiber Building Sys.	Frank Mendez
Cascade Radon	Steve Tucker
Daltile	Bob Kagawa
Mackenzie Group	Dick Spies
Buckland Sheetmetal	N/A

Benson Tech Foundation update

In March 2014, after 18 months from making our filing for the IRS 501c3 approval, the Benson Tech Foundation received its approved status. In June 2014, a checking and savings account was established at Point West Credit Union across the street from Benson Tech. Since then, contributions have exceeded \$2,000 and \$500 was donated to the new Benson Tech algebra class starting a new business to help use algebraic formulas for teaching math.

The Foundation's sole mission is to provide financial support or supplies/materials "in kind" for the Career Technical Education (CTE) programs at Benson Tech High School. Although the Foundation is new, its mission is longstanding. The Foundation is actively seeking donations and the largest donation to date was from Ziba Design, an international industrial and consumer design company headquartered in Portland. Ziba employees are on the recently established Architecture/Design Career Technical Advisory Committee.

For further information on the Foundation, please email Foundation President Rob Johns at robjohns@comcast.net or call 503-314-0041.

Design Center Advisory Group gets ready for PPS pre-design process

*by Richard K. Spies A.I.A. ,
Chair: Design Center Advisory
Group (Class of 1964)*

It was slightly over a year ago that the Benson Tech Site Council granted approval to the BPHSAA to form a Design Center Advisory Group. The purpose of this group would be to help inform the creation of a comprehensive design center to be located at Benson Tech as part of the projected school-wide modernization. This new design center would touch on a wide range of design-oriented careers such as architecture, urban design, sustainability, engineering, product design, interiors, and even fashion design.

This advisory group, along with the health occupation, manufacturing, transportation and other advisory groups, can play a crucial role in informing the district pre-design process in shaping a new curriculum and conceptual design for Benson Tech. Working with teachers,

students, parents and administrators, these groups can provide real-life input to help create an educational platform that more directly meets the needs of today's rapidly changing world of work.

Portland and Oregon enjoys a world-wide reputation for design excellence at a number of levels. From architecture and urban design, to sustainability and engineering excellence, to product and fashion design, the entire region stands out as a world leader. They are also blessed with excellent institutions of higher education in design and a robust community of design professionals. The only thing lacking is a first-class educational system that introduces middle school and high school students to the magical world of design. The goal of the Design Center Group is to change that at Benson Tech.

The Design Center Advisory Group has been on a monthly basis and contains educators

from higher education, architects, engineers, planners, contractors, and product designers. We are excited about the idea's potential and the impact it can have on inspiring students. It can open doors to higher education opportunities and a wealth of career choices.

Part of the group's work has been to look to other parts of the country for examples of this idea. One that stands out is the Baltimore Design School in Maryland. It is a comprehensive design-focused public school that serves the entire district of Baltimore for grades 6-12. The 6-12 idea is also something that the advisory group feels is worth looking at for Benson Tech as there appears to be great value in exposing students to CTE experiences earlier than 9th grade.

We look forward to the Design Center Advisory Group playing a significant role in assisting the district as it moves through the Benson pre-design process.



Oregon high school robotics competition at Benson Tech

Benson Tech High School and its Robotics Club will host the 2015 Oregon Robotics Championship and Outreach Program FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) on March 7th and 8th in the Benson Tech gym. The event will bring together dozens of Oregon high school robotic clubs and the robots that they have built.

Benson Tech's own Robotics Club has always done well in the competition and this year should be no exception. Last year, one of the school's teams won an opportunity to compete in the U.S. Regional competition in Sacramento, CA. The BPHSAA and many others helped defray the costs of the Sacramento trip.

Matt Pellico, a Benson Tech teacher, and John DeLacy, a Benson Tech graduate, guide and coach the Robotics Club. If you like robots, or have never seen a high school robotics competition, this would be a great event to attend and support Benson Tech students.



The annual Benson Polytechnic High School Alumni Association (BPHSAA) Community Picnic was held on Benson Tech's front lawn in August 2014.

Benson Tech alumni give back

As we approach the centennial celebration for Benson Tech (the school was originally constructed in 1916), we are honored to represent a diverse population of people who individually benefited from the high level of education and experience that the Benson Tech High School experience offered and to help grow it for future generations. We encourage each alum to seek out their interest in helping promote the school. We all can find a way to contribute time, money or influence to support Benson Tech's growth. Here are some ideas:

1. Volunteer at the Counseling Center helping kids consider their future career and college options.
2. Volunteer to be on the BPHSAA Board or a committee, we meet the second Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the conference room in the Benson Tech Library.
3. Consider participating on career technical advisory committees in your old major at Benson Tech, particularly if you are still in that industry sector.
4. Volunteer with the Benson Tech Boosters Club at athletic games.
5. Make a cash donation to help meet needs that simply need funding outside of what the school will pay for, such as providing transportation to the Robotics Club to get to regional competitions
6. Donate equipment that meets identified needs in the shops.

Benson Tech is very much alive and well— it just needs you to find a place to participate to make it even better!

Benson Tech included in 2016 PPS bond measure

Benson Tech will be on a May 2016 ballot measure to rebuild the school along with Lincoln and Madison high schools. There are approximately 900 kids currently enrolled at Benson Tech, a 10-year high, and now public educators are recognizing the positive impact that a Career Technical Education (CTE) school can do for Portland's kids, as Benson Tech consistently graduates its students at a rate of 85 percent.

Thank you, Curtis!

Curtis Wilson, who has been Benson Tech's principal since August 2013, has shown himself to be a quick study of the needs for the school's CTE programs and a strong supporter of the BPHSAA, Boosters Club and Site Council. We are fortunate to have such an involved principal open to new ideas to support and improve Benson Tech.

Benson Tech receives grant for dental clinic

The Dental Program leader currently has a \$300,000 grant submitted to OHSU and Kaiser to build and operate a dental clinic staffed with students to provide public dental care. Benson Tech's central location lends itself to having such a clinic and the need in Portland is very high.

Community health clinic planned for Benson Tech

Through the diligent work of the lead Benson Tech counselor and an Oregonian article published regarding the need, Benson Tech is currently planning a health clinic for the students. Kaiser Foundation provided a \$40,000 planning grant, PPS facilities has the plans, and the school now needs \$200,000 to build the clinic space.

A short history of the diesel program at Benson Tech

*by Brett Anderson, Diesel/
Automotive Instructor*

There is a 30+ year history of diesel being taught as part of the automotive major at Benson Tech. The program was established in the mid-1980s. I was hired in 1994 as the diesel/automotive instructor and inherited a well-established program.

In 2004, Freightliner Corporation presented Benson Tech with a large donation of then-current diesel engines that really gave our program a boost at that time.

Last spring, a former colleague of mine from Portland Community College, Dale Klier, who now works in the training department at Daimler Trucks, contacted me to see how Benson's diesel program was going and asked if there was anything we could use. We talked about my desire to upgrade our engines and our semi-truck to more current technology.

Dale was then able to arrange for the donation of a 2005 semi-truck and 10 new diesel engines that include current technology and

perfect for the long-term viability of the diesel program at Benson.

With the addition of this latest donation from Daimler Trucks, Benson Tech now has a world-class high school diesel program. The timing of this could not be better since there are many high paying, heavy equipment/diesel technician jobs that are currently available and the future looks bright for this industry.

Find more news and information at www.bensontechalumni.org.



Benson Polytechnic High School Alumni Association

546 NE 12th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232

*2015 Benson Tech Community Picnic
August 18, Noon - 4:00 p.m. at Benson Tech*