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Highway Construction Careers Training Program (HCCTP) Interview



Interviewee: Roy B.

Position: Laborer on CREATE project B9 Argo Connections

HCCTP Completion Ceremony: Fall 2018

Tell us a little about yourself.

I migrated with my family to Chicago in my early 20s. While most of my family works in healthcare, I took a different path that wouldn't burden me with loans and debt. After moving to Chicago, I quickly learned that I needed to make money. Learning how much rent costs per month motivated me to find a career, not just a job.

Please describe the previous types of jobs you have had before starting Highway Construction Careers Training Program.

Before construction I worked as a security guard.

How did you hear about the Highway Construction Careers Training Program?

I heard about the program from Dawson Technical Institute, where I also earned my GED. I took the placement test for the program in 2018 and then began the August to December session that same year.

Tell us about your experience with the training. Was it what you expected? What surprised you about the training?

I thought it would be more like a traditional class, but to my surprise, HCCTP was more practice than theory. I learned about basic hand tools, the unions throughout Illinois and the Illinois Tollway. The program was stricter than I thought it would be. It is operated like you are on a jobsite. My class started with 22 students and ended with twelve. The program was taught by retirees from the construction industry, so you learned a lot from people.



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How did you hear about the job on CREATE Program project B9?

Once the 16-week Highway Construction Careers Training Program was over, Dawson staff helped set up my interview with R.W. Dunteman.

What is your job title? What types of activities do you do on the job?

My title is Laborer. I work on excavation, putting down new materials and learning on the job about the various machines on CREATE project B9 Argo Connections.

What does this job mean to you?

It's a job I can brag about and tell my kids about, just like workers at Ford 20 years ago. The coolest part about construction is you learn things you can use in the future. I feel like I could build a carport for a home now.

Before the training program, I would not have applied to construction jobs because I knew the first question would be asked is "What do you know about construction?" Before the program, my answer would have been nothing.

Looking into the future, what are your job aspirations?

I believe the job with R.W. Dunteman will take my career to the next level. For now, I am pleased to be a laborer but, in the future, I would like to move up in R.W. Dunteman. If nothing else, the position will look great on a resume. I hope to gain a greater understanding of construction projects.

What advice do you have for anyone considering the Highway Construction Careers Training Program?

Be prepared. Don't mess up this opportunity. Getting up early, arriving on time and business etiquette were all aspects of the training program that mirrored job sites.