

# SOUTHTOWN CONSTRUCTION

The Newsletter for S.C.T.C



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## HARD WORK AND PROGRESS!

Check out our latest projects and follow our Cohort on their journey.

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In the last week of training, students continued to put forth their best efforts to get the job(s) done. We began the week with Linemen on the job training at the city's training yard. This was a great chance for students to observe, and experience for themselves the duties of a lineman. Therefore, also giving them a chance to consider themselves in such a role as they seek out career employment in the vast field of electrical work. Following their literal climb to success, the team jumped back to work getting their hands dirty during the SIU Day of Service as they assisted with neighborhood clean up. And if you are wondering where our Cohort goes from here or how you can become a part of our next Cohort you can look to page 4 for more details!

# REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

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The role and responsibilities of a lineman are not simple nor easy, a fact our Cohort discovered as they visited the Lineman Training Yard on Groth Street. A lineman's main focus is the installation and upkeep of overhead distribution and transmission lines. These lines take electricity from the power plant and distribute it amongst the city's businesses and homes. Similarly, a lineman's work also focuses on installation and upkeep of poles, towers, underground systems, as well as substations. Trainees got their feet wet first by taking a ride in the bucket truck. Because linemen work at heights ranging from forty to hundreds of feet in the air, the bucket truck is an essential element of the job. The "basket" that holds the occupants is known as the boom. Students received vital information concerning the truck's operation such as not moving the truck when the boom is elevated, maintaining proper clearance from energized lines, and always using fall arrest harnesses. Following their ariel presentation, the crew faced the task of pole climbing. This process is as intimidating and dangerous as it seems and this takes special equipment, training, and skill. Students prepared to begin their descent first by gearing up- strapping the large and heavy metal stilts to their lower legs. The spikes protruding from the stilts are known as gaffs. These spikes are only about an inch and a half long, but they still serve their purpose as they sink into the wooden pole just enough to sustain the weight of the climber. Students were instructed to keep their body at an angle from the pole. This inevitably uses the natural force of their body weight to drive the gaffs into the wood far enough to prevent "cutting out", the term used when gaffs are positioned loosely. Another key resource in proper pole climbing is the body belt. The purpose of the belt is pretty self-explanatory as it simply allows climbers to lean away from the pole both safely and effectively also helping prevent potential "cut-outs". Additionally, the team was able to gain experience using what is known as a hot stick to pull fuses out of transformers. A hot stick is an insulated pole, usually made of fiberglass, that allows linemen to work on energized high- voltage power lines without any risk of shock. A hot stick is multi-functional depending on the attachment piece at the end. Linemen are able to use this tool when testing voltage, tightening nuts and bolts, applying tie wires, opening and closing switches, replacing fuses, and more. Equally important, a transformer is a device that converts alternating currents from one voltage to another. Such a tool makes distributing high voltages from a powerplant to surrounding local buildings and homes that require far lower voltages possible. The Cohort was also given the chance to drive grounding rods. Each pole has a grounding rod that serves the purpose of supplying an electrical connection to the ground. This allows for an electrical current to be safely carried away from a circuit in the case of an electrical surge. All things considered, it was a very informative OJT day that allowed our students to gain a clear understanding of a lineman's role in the electrical field. Lastly, we would like to give a special thanks to Bruce Clark and everyone else at the training yard for assisting, instructing, and sharing their valuable knowledge.

# REACHING NEW HEIGHTS



# A DAY OF SERVICE

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Students devoted additional time last week to servicing the community during SIU's Day of Service. This day focused on community support and care as participants aide in neighborhood clean up of both parks and alleys, as well as set up of the community garden. The team worked alongside over 100 medical students in correspondence with the Enos Park organization to clean dirtied alleyways. They unloaded trucks full of trash, furniture, and even bricks that were dumped throughout the area. This is a known problem in our town, making it a hot topic amongst local officials and citizens alike. But the only way to solve a problem is to put people to work working towards its solution. And that is exactly what we sought out to do during this outing. Being responsible for our community and holding ourselves accountable for its condition will be key in seeking out the much-needed improvements not only in the Enos Park neighborhood but countless others in Springfield.



# IN THE NEAR FUTURE...

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## What's In the Upcoming Week.

Since training has officially ended in the weeks ahead the Cohort will be volunteering their time and efforts to continue their progressive learning journey alongside Mr. Pitts. This allows them to keep their skill set sharp as they anticipate their next step. Equally exciting is our graduation coming up! We plan to celebrate the group's hard work, dedication, and success in completing the training program. We will do so by enjoying each other's company and of course food. The SCTC administrative team is proud of this Cohort's perseverance and overall growth. We are eager to see what the next chapter holds for this group as they continue on their ventures of self-improvement. But we are also equally excited to enroll a set of fresh faces with different stories, backgrounds, and shortcomings so that we can build them up in the same manner. We are firm believers that it is never too late to make a change to better oneself. Therefore, if you feel like this program could be that stepping stone you've been desperately searching for, fill out our registration form online today!

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"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."

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