

CIB World Building Congress May 19-23 2025

Industry Day Tuesday 20th May

Panel discussion

14:00AM – 14:50 PM

Workforce Development What do we need to be doing NOW & to be ready for the Future?

Panel member biographies

Kevin Comerford

Kevin Comerford is the Director of Professional Development at the Construction Advancement Foundation (CAF), where he works closely with regional high schools and universities to promote career opportunities in the construction industry. Each year, he delivers dozens of presentations at schools throughout the region, informing students about the diverse career pathways available in construction.

At the high school level, he collaborates with Building and Construction CTE programs, coordinating field trips to Apprenticeship Training Centers and construction site visits to provide students with hands-on exposure to the industry. He also helps organize the annual Hands-on Construction and Skilled Trades Day in Lake and Porter Counties, an event that connects students with apprenticeship programs through interactive construction activities.

To further support career awareness, he developed the WeBuild Northwest Indiana website (www.webuildnwi.com), a comprehensive resource for students and parents to explore both trade and college pathways in the construction industry. In addition to workforce development initiatives, he oversees CAF's professional development programs, which prepare incumbent workers for leadership and supervisory roles.

Beyond his work at CAF, he is also an instructor at Purdue University Northwest, where he teaches Construction Operations and Construction Law.

Eric Fisher (Fish)

Eric Fisher, commonly known as Fish, is a prominent leader in construction education and workforce development, currently serving as the Director of Talent Development for Indiana Constructors Inc. (ICI). In this role, he represents the voice of the highway, heavy, and utility construction industry in Indiana, making significant strides in both academia and industry, particularly in curriculum development, professional training for instructors, and work-based learning initiatives.

Eric's journey into the construction field began humbly as a laborer in civil construction, focusing on bridge building. His academic pursuit commenced at Ball State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Technology Education in 1988. He continued to advance his education at Purdue University, achieving a Master of Science in Construction Management Technology with an emphasis on Executive Construction Management in 2021.

With over three decades of experience in career and technical education (CTE), Eric has taught various subjects in construction, design, and civil engineering. His contributions to the field are noteworthy, especially in developing curriculum and industry certifications for organizations along with his involvement in the Indiana Civil Construction Pathway.

Currently, Eric is an active member of The Center on the Economics and Management of Education and Training Systems (CEMETS) iLab Indiana construction industry delegation. His research includes exploring vocational and professional education and training (VPET) programs for high school students and adults in Switzerland, further solidifying his commitment to advancing civil construction education.

Outside of his professional commitments, Eric enjoys fly-fishing as a novice angler and has a passion for baseball, Go Dodgers! He remains dedicated to promoting construction workforce development, lean construction methods, and emerging technologies within the industry, reflecting his unwavering commitment to shaping a better construction industry.

Amy Henningfield

Midwest Contracts & Compliance Manager | Industry Advocate | Champion for Women in Construction

Amy Henningfield is a passionate advocate for progress in the construction industry, currently serving as the Midwest Contracts & Compliance Manager at Superior Construction. With over 30 years of experience, she specializes in contract negotiation, regulatory administration, and compliance oversight—ensuring the successful delivery of complex, high-impact infrastructure projects.

A proud Northwest Indiana native, Amy is committed to building a more inclusive future for the industry. She leads and supports workforce development efforts that engage and empower young men and women to pursue careers in construction. She is actively involved with SWiC (Superior Women in Construction), CAFWIC (Construction Advancement Foundation Women in Construction), and ICI Women in Roads (WIR), where she helps create space for leadership, connection, and growth.

Amy was recently recognized by *Construction Dive* in the Mentor category and named the 2024 Overall Influential Woman of the Year by the Northwest Indiana Influential Women Association (NWIWA). A lifelong learner, she earned her bachelor's degree in Business Administration in 2022 and her MBA in 2024, both from Purdue University Global.

She and her husband take great pride in their two accomplished daughters and in shaping a future where possibilities are limitless. Amy is a trailblazer who believes in building bridges—across job sites, communities, and generations.

Audra Peterson

Audra began her career in Career and Technical Education in 1989 teaching Dental Health Careers at the Porter County Career Center. Her program moved in 1995 to Portage High School after winning an Indiana Award for Excellence award and she taught there in Medical Terminology, Dental Health Careers and was the Health Academy Director.

In 2003 she completed her Master's Degree and took a position at the Hammond Area Career Center as the Principal and Director of Career and Technical Education. Shortly after she started, she completed her Education Specialist Degree. In 2011, Audra made a mid-year change after Michigan City Area Schools offered her the challenge to lead the AK Smith Career Center through some major programmatic changes to align with their goals to initiate K-12 College and Career programming. The name changed to La Porte County Career and Technical Education to build a sense of community within the county. She came full circle in 2020 by returning to the Porter County Career Center where she began teaching 33 years ago. During her tenure as a CTE Director Audra has focused on the community needs with respect to Economic Development, the growth of Business and Industry and meeting the demands of the workforce. She carries this into the programs she has grown over the years and this is the focal point of providing state of the art programming for CTE. Her goal in the field of Career and Technical Education has always been to help students find their passion and purpose. Most recently, Audra spearheaded the first Civil Construction Program in Northwest Indiana. Her driving force has always been on what is best for her students and the community. High expectations of students and staff help promote positive outcomes. In 2022, Audra was nominated as a finalist in the Education Category and ultimately was selected to receive the prestigious Northwest Indiana Most Influential Woman Award.

Audra lives in Chesterton with her husband Glenn "Scott" and has three sons, Glenn and his wife Holly (grandchildren Ivy and Poppy and Brixen) who live in Chesterton, Jordan and his wife Mackenzie (grandchildren Ford and Goldie) who live in Kalamazoo Michigan and Austin (fiance' Nicole) who plays professional baseball.