**Bay Area construction company gives HS students a #HeavyMetalSummer**

*Menlo Park’s Western Allied piloting hands-on intro to construction for students*

**Menlo Park, Calif.** — [Western Allied Mechanical](https://www.westernallied.com/), of Menlo Park, California has partnered with a group of construction industry professionals to kickstart the Heavy Metal Summer Experience (HMSE), a six-week-long hands-on introduction to plumbing, piping and sheet metal for high school students from underserved communities interested in the building trades.

Starting on June 22, 2021, Western Allied will host up to 16 high school students from East Palo Alto and other Bay Area communities for the #HeavyMetalSummer workshops. These sessions will occur on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30-5 p.m. over six weeks for a total of 12 workshops.

Just a few examples of things the students will learn include how to mold piping to make a lamp, build their own toolboxes out of sheet metal and form a device-holder out of copper. And the best part: everything that they make will get to go home with them.

HMSE is a pilot program being done in two locations: at [Western Allied Mechanical](https://www.westernallied.com/) in Menlo Park, California and at [Hermanson Company, LLC](https://hermanson.com/) in Kent, Washington. The [Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors’ National Association’s](https://www.smacna.org/) (SMACNA) [Western Washington chapter](https://www.smacnaww.org/) and [Construction for Change](https://www.constructionforchange.org/) are also helping support this pilot program through funding and administrative support.

“The goal in establishing HMSE was to creatively promote apprentice opportunities for young adults, and with the help of a couple of benevolent and professional construction contractors, we did just that,” said SMACNA CEO Vince Sandusky. “After the completion of the camps this summer, we look forward to expanding this model across the country, getting other SMACNA members involved to run similar programs for students in the future.”

HMSE is hoping to raise awareness for soon-to-be graduating high school students about the opportunities available to them in the building trades. Apprenticeships in this field are particularly attractive because it offers an opportunity to be paid while you train. And, while often presented as an alternative to college, many technical and community colleges count apprentice training courses as college credit.

Thanks to some generous donations from partners and sponsors, HMSE will provide each student with Red Wing work boots on their first day in #HeavyMetalSummer to wear for the entire experience and beyond, standard construction industry personal protection equipment (hard hat, vest, safety glasses and gloves) and a full took-kit to fill out the toolboxes they will build. The tools are theirs to take home at graduation.

Interested media are more than welcome to attend any session and HMSE will be happy to provide people from our partners for interviews. If you wish to come to Western Allied for one of the sessions, please contact Western Allied CEO Angie Simon via email at [asimon@westernallied.com](mailto:asimon@westernallied.com). You can also reach HMSE at [hmse@constructionforchange.org](mailto:hmse@constructionforchange.org).

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