

# STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

## November 2006 Support Document

(The corresponding article appears in the current issue and will be posted December 2006.)

### Economic Environment: Immigration, Labor Shortages & U.S. Construction Markets

by Al Schuler

#### Get Involved

In July 2006, the Home Builders Institute (<http://hbi.org>) published findings that identified six key areas where improvement is necessary to address the skill shortage in the construction industry:

1. the industry's image as a professional career choice is poor;
2. recruitment practices are fragmented;
3. skill training and career development are inadequate;
4. wages and benefits must be competitive;
5. the industry lacks adequate resources for training; and
6. the industry is hampered by some laws and regulations.

Consequently, builders are looking for "supply partners" that will help them navigate some of these issues. Additional training efforts and the creation of national skill standards will receive increasing attention by all building material trades. Here are some examples:

- The Steel Alliance (<http://www.steelframingalliance.com/mc/page.do?sitePagelId=1103>)
- The Portland Cement Association. (<http://www.cement.org/learn/>)
- The American Plastics Council ([http://www.americanplasticscouncil.org/s\\_apc/sec.asp?CID=297&DID=896](http://www.americanplasticscouncil.org/s_apc/sec.asp?CID=297&DID=896))
- The American Wood Council (<http://www.awc.org/HelpOutreach/seminars/awrd-sem.html>), Architectural Woodwork Institute (<http://www.awinet.org/>)
- WTCA - Representing the Structural Building Components Industry (<http://www.sbcindustry.com/education.php> and <http://www.ttw.sbcindustry.com/>)