


CONSTRUCTIVE NEWS YOU CAN USE

**Pictured: Wendell Phillips Academy High School*

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WARNING!
ANY PERSON ENTERING
THIS BUILDING MAY BE

244 E. Pershing

A Message from Carina



The Public Building Commission of Chicago (PBC) has remained committed to developing cutting edge environmentally responsible infrastructure so that all Chicagoans can received the necessary public services – safely and effectively.

One of the challenges of designing buildings for the public sector is devising facilities that embrace the community through their public-facing functions while maintaining the security, functionality and financial stewardship expected by administrators and taxpayers.

During the first half of 2022, the PBC has taken on the complex and detailed process of designing and constructing five state-of-the-art facilities for the Chicago Public Schools and a variety of renovation projects for City of Chicago or its sister agencies.

The services provided by each project benefits thousands. Each of these facilities constitutes an important part of community’s quality of life. They ensure that the basic needs of the people are being fulfilled in an affordable way. The PBC’s work on each of these facilities helps to create safe working environments, reduce energy output costs, and provide the infrastructure that makes these public service facilities run smoothly and efficiently.

As you read the 2022 Q2 newsletter, I hope the news that we share illustrates our excellent stewardship of public funds and demonstrates how we are creating quality spaces that every Chicagoan can enjoy.

Sincerely,

Carina E. Sánchez
PBC Executive Director



Instituting a Cultural Change in the Construction Industry

“If you’re a woman without a college degree, your choices of occupations are typically low wage occupations. However, if you’re an entry level carpenter you’re starting at \$18 an hour but the real story is that four years later you’re making \$50 an hour with all your apprentice expenses paid for through the apprenticeship program,” Jayne Vellinga, Executive Director Chicago Women in Trades said. “So, apprenticeship, in any trade, is an excellent vehicle for women who can’t afford the expense or don’t have an interest in going to college, the opportunity to earn a middle-class wage.”

For the past 40 years the Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) have been helping women build satisfying careers in the construction industry. The 18 CWIT employees offer broad preparation for any construction trade instructing women on math/testing preparation, physical conditioning, workplace readiness, sexual harassment prevention, conflict resolution and resume/ interview skills, to name a few.

In May 2022, the inaugural class of all-women carpenters graduated from their pre-apprentice program. According to Vellinga, women only have four-percent participation in the construction trades and that “CWIT is trying to address this from the supply and demand standpoint. We have a lot of programs going on right now with lots of women interested into getting in these fields, however the challenge has been creating opportunity for them to do so.”

However, with federal policymakers now investing in infrastructure and jobs in construction, we are



trying to get ahead of all the spending because we have an opportunity to take a big step forward. This is why we did the women only carpentry class with Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council and why we are doing trade specific programs for more women to take advantage of opportunities that will materialize,” Vellinga said.

Vellinga emphasized that women have more than 25 distinct trades to choose from in the construction industry and that apprenticeship programs are the means through which construction trades pass on the skills of their craft from one generation to the next. She pointed out that apprenticeship programs have widely varying classroom training schedules, ranging from one day a week to one multi-week session per year.

“Apprentices are required to participate in both classroom and on-the-job training for between two and five years, depending on the trade. The greater percentage of time is spent working for a contractor on a job site and receiving training from an experienced journey-level worker,” Vellinga said.



Transforming Architecture with “BETTER LIVES BY DESIGN”

Rada Doytcheva

Principal | Head of Design RADA Architects

Rada Doytcheva, Principal | Head of Design RADA Architects, has been coming through on her architect’s mission – to transform lives by design, with the soon to be completed Sauganash Elementary School Annex. Leading her firm for a project with aggressive timeline and a tight site, she maximized opportunities for students and crafted designs that have positive impact on the neighborhood.

“Better Lives, by Design’ for this project means applying planning and design skills that allow the people in the Sauganash community to get more, in spite of existing limitations” Rada said. “In addition to new and high-tech teaching space, the community will have a gymnasium, a theatre stage, basketball courts - a place to congregate for events in a beautifully designed space to enjoy.”

Constructed in the 1920, during the “Art-Deco” era, the main school building has rich architectural language and elements to reuse in the new structure. When developing Sauganash’s new annex designs Rada incorporated period stone

and metal work salvaged from a demolished old gymnasium, carrying through the verticality of Art-Deco, while leaving full height glazed walls at corners for light and nature to come through.

“Giving character by reusing elements of the past makes the new designs unique to the area, so it is not just another school,” Rada said.

The love for cities, history and buildings - all blended together - have fueled Rada’s passion for architecture. She started her firm in the late nineties and has grown her practice, created innovative work, nurtured young architects all while becoming an advocate and role model for small and women led firms in the architecture industry.

“The mindset of this country is ‘small’ firms can do ‘small’ projects and ‘big’ firms can do ‘big’ projects. Nothing can be further from the truth. In Europe and Asia, major projects are done by modest sized firms,” Rada said.

When discussing how to increase representation for small business and women at all levels of architecture, Rada says that the procurement culture needs to shift to targeting and awarding sizeable commissions to women architects. She believes that women architects need the economic empowerment and resources that come from large projects – in order to grow practices and be able to show talent. “The better lives by design” concept works here as well, says Rada.

Rada has a long history of helping the next generation of small and women architecture firms get a foothold into the industry.



“I have given parts of some of my most cherished projects to up-and-coming architects, some that I didn’t even know, to give them the necessary exposure, experience, and good portfolio items so they can demonstrate what they can do to get more contracts,” Rada said.

The Sauganash Annex is the second time when she was able to incorporate all women led firms on the team, this vision supported by PBC leadership.

“It is my dream to have my women colleagues be more confident, have trust in themselves and be aggressive on building body of knowledge and skills. When it happens - the sacrifice to give away work that could be ours - is well worth it. Rada said. “As we near the conclusion of this project [Sauganash], I am happy to say that we did the right thing there.”

PBC Executive Director Joins Commissioner Maldonado at Ribbon Cutting for Integrity Wall



Photo Caption: Pictured (L to R): Ald. Cardenas, Carina Sanchez, Integrity Co-Founder Carlos Vazquez, Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Executive Secretary-Treasurer Gary Perinar, Integrity Co-Founder Luis Vazquez, Carpenters Local 54 Representative Jose Maldonado, and Carpenters Local 1027 President Jim Cooper.

Twelfth Ward Alderman George Cardenas, Public Building Commission of Chicago Executive Director Carina Sanchez and PBC Commissioner Jose Maldonado joined the leaders of Integrity Wall for the grand opening of its prefabricated panel shop.



Connecting People to Job Through Community Hiring Programs

Community workforce participation helps to ensure that residents of designated community areas surrounding PBC projects are provided opportunities to apply for employment. As part of the PBC's efforts to promote and sustain community hiring, the PBC is conducting intake sessions and working closely with elected officials, stakeholders and community partners to raise awareness of the community hiring program.

"The PBC is committed to providing residents who live in the community with opportunities to work on the projects being built in their community. The PBC has contract provisions that require a percentage of each project's labor force to be local residents," Carina E. Sanchez, PBC Executive Director said. "The PBC schedules hiring events to provide experienced community residents with the opportunity to apply for the available jobs."

These efforts ensure the PBC's commitment to economic sustainability is furthered with a workforce as diverse as the communities within Chicago. The PBC continuously seeks new and innovative opportunities to increase community

and diverse business participation on projects.

View the PBC's hiring events here: <https://pbcchicago.com/doing-business/community-hiring-events/>

Wendell Phillips Academy High School Annex Project Nears Completion



Named in honor of famed abolitionist, Wendell Phillips, and recognized as the oldest African American high school in the City of Chicago, Phillips Academy High School is undergoing selective interior renovations to the existing school and receiving a new two-story 21,000-square foot athletic annex facility housing a gymnasium/multipurpose space and sports hall of fame.

As the project enters its final stages of construction, Alderman Pat Dowell (3rd Ward) and Illinois Senator Mattie Hunter (3rd District) toured the facility to examine the project's progress.



"Phillips is one of the best schools in our state for athletics and should have a gym space that adequately fits the needs of students and staff," Senator Hunter said. "Former students who were stars and championship players will not be forgotten and will be featured in the school new hall of fame."

"This project will not only enhance the athletic experience of students and staff, but the community as well," Alderman Dowell said. "I look forward to parents and children to take pleasure in this new space and bring a refreshing aura to the school campus."



Phillips Academy High School is a public four-year high school located in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood. The annex and renovation project is scheduled for completion Summer 2022.



PBC Staff Continues Professional Development and Training

PBC's Development staff recently completed Fall Protection Training provided by Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council. The training material and real life experiences the Council shared were invaluable. PBC greatly appreciated the information and opportunity to share knowledge. Training and empowering staff remains a priority for PBC. PBC values the Council's continued support and partnership.



PBC Engages with Valuable Community Stakeholders

Beyond the physical projects we develop, public engagement continues to be a priority for the PBC. Since the outset of 2022, PBC representatives have attended community, assist agency and various outreach events, providing presentations about our role in the development process and project overviews.

These outreach meetings are an essential part of our work and offer residents, community stakeholders and service providers the opportunity to participate in discussions as we begin to shape our upcoming projects.

In 2022, the PBC has met with the Illinois State Black Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Women Contractors, Hacia, Chicago Women in Trade, Black Contractors Union and formed new partnerships with HIRE 360 and the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership.

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