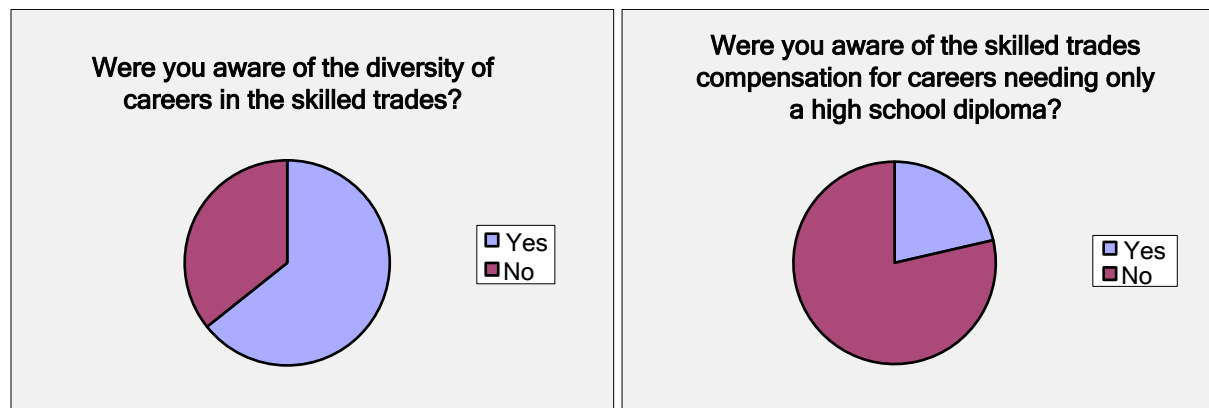


Business and Education Connected (BE Connected), LLC's, mission is to provide students avenues to future careers. BE Connected was formed in October 2012 to help address the acknowledged disconnect in the workforce between business needs and occupational skill levels.

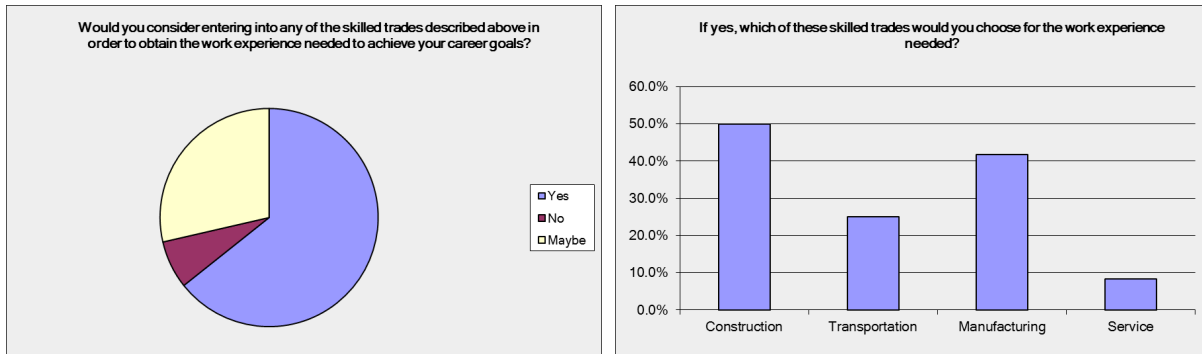
One of the first emails BE Connected received was from an Electrical Engineer who owns a tool company specific to the Heating, Venting, Air Conditioning (HVAC) industry. This business owner expressed his concern regarding the lack of skilled workers in the trades. He explained to BE Connected executives the many various opportunities for employment in the trades sector and the substantial earnings potential. He expressed concern, that many others in his industry share, that few students today are interested in the pursuing careers in the trades sector but instead pursue four year college degrees often resulting in significant student loans and limited career opportunities.

This conversation with the Electrical Engineer piqued the interest of BE Connected executives who made the decision to conduct a small independent research study into student interest and awareness of the trades sector and the compensation potential. Students from science and engineering programs at local Pittsburgh Universities were anonymously assessed to determine knowledge and interest level in skilled trade careers.

From this research survey, 64% of the students reported knowledge of the diversity of careers available in the trades sector, only 21.4% were aware of the earnings potential with some skilled trades reporting median salaries of \$57,000.



Of this sample group 64% were willing to enter into the skilled trades to obtain the work experience necessary to achieve their career goals, with 50% choosing construction, 41.7% choosing manufacturing, 25% choosing transportation and 8.3% choosing services.



According to this preliminary research, the majority of students studying science and engineering in college report being knowledgeable about the diversity of careers within the skilled trades sector, however, the majority report not being aware of the earnings potential. These students expressed interest in working in the skilled trades sector to gain valuable work experience.

In order to generate more interest into the trade sector for employment where demand for skilled workers is high, BE Connected recommends trade organizations consider this preliminary research in developing campaigns to attract talent to their industry. Collaboration between trade organizations and university engineering and science departments may want to be considered as it might provide innovative students with opportunities to gain career experience and increase awareness of opportunities within the trades sector. Finally, a larger scale study which measures secondary-level student awareness of trade careers and compensation is recommended.