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Students from Florida's Bartow High School and Gadsden Technical College Place First and Second at the 2023 NAHB Student Competition

Las Vegas, NV – A team of students from Bartow Senior High School, a Polk County Public School in Florida, won first place for their Construction Management presentation at the NAHB Student Design Competition held during the 2023 NAHB International Builders' Show® (IBS). High school students from Gadsden Technical College in Quincy, FL landed second place in the 2023 NAHB Student Design Competition in the Architectural Design category for the high school division.

Both high school teams belong to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and Future Builders of America (FBA) student chapters. FBA is an educational program offered through the Home Builders Institute (HBI) designed to promote construction trades education to Florida's youth. For both teams, this marked their first time participating in a national competition.

"Most of the other NAHB student chapter teams have experience competing on the national stage," said Jimmy Giles, who runs the Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) program at Bartow High School. "Since this was our first time participating, I was just hoping we would place. I was speechless when we placed first."

"In our rural community, we are trying to expose more students to the benefits and opportunities of the construction industry," said Kerwyn Jones-Wilson, advisor to the Gadsden Tech team. "This experience was invaluable to the students, their hard work paid off."

During the 2022 Fall semester, students formed teams and prepared written proposals to solve real-life construction management and design problems. The teams then traveled to IBS and presented their solutions to a judging panel of residential construction industry experts. Competition winners were announced during the Student Chapters Awards Ceremony at the close of IBS on Wednesday, February 1, 2023.

"These students had to research the building codes for California...this can be parlayed into real world experiences should they decide to pursue careers in the construction industry outside of Florida," said Cindy Hall, Program Director for FBA. "It's amazing how well our students did for their very first national competition."



The 2023 NAHB Student Competition coincides with the start of CTE Month, which is held each February to raise awareness of the importance of career and technical education for students K-12, college and beyond.

“It is a mistake to think the current housing downturn might ease the shortage of construction workers,” said HBI President and CEO Ed Brady. “The severe worker shortage is intergenerational and directly affects housing affordability. Now is the time to invest in technical education programs that close the skilled labor gap and provide young students with great career paths. I am incredibly proud of these teams -- the PACT curriculum has given them the foundation on which they can build their careers.”



The Bartow High School team (left) and Gadsden Tech team (right) pose together outside of IBS.

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About Home Builders Institute (HBI)

[Home Builders Institute \(HBI\)](#) is the nation's leading provider of skilled trades training and education for the building industry. Through pre-apprenticeship training, certification programs and job placement services, HBI provides high school students, at-risk youth, veterans, transitioning military personnel, justice-involved youth and adults, and displaced workers with the skills and experience they need to build a career and change their lives.

About Future Builders of America (FBA)

[Future Builders of America](#) is one of HBI's educational programs promoting careers in the construction industry to Florida's youth. The mission is to engage secondary students in construction-related activities and encourage them to pursue rewarding careers in the industry. FBA links students in area schools with their local home builders associations and other members of their local building community. Guest speakers and field trips to building sites along with opportunities for summer and post-graduation employment help introduce students to rewarding opportunities in the construction industry.

About The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)

[The National Association of Home Builders](#) is a Washington-based trade association representing more than 140,000 members involved in home building, remodeling, multifamily construction, property management, subcontracting, design, housing finance, building product manufacturing and other aspects of residential and light commercial construction. NAHB is affiliated with 700 state and local home builders associations around the country and more than 130 student chapters. NAHB's builder members will construct about 80 percent of the new housing units projected for this year.