

AOBI Generation Us students deliver

By DK McDONALD The Daily News | Posted: Sunday, March 26, 2017 11:50 pm

BULLHEAD CITY — Students of the Academy of Building Industries' entrepreneurial class Generation Us delivered on their first commercial contract during the Mohave Valley Contractors Association's fifth annual Home and Garden Expo.

"They did an excellent job, I'm really happy," said Rich Lettman, Coit Cleaning and Restoration owner. "It was a great job from start to finish."

In January, the class was asked to take on a marketing project — the creation, from design to production, of 100 branded coffee mugs — for the local franchise.

"Mr. Lettman said he wanted the mugs to reflect the local area of his business, what he called 'bridge to bridge,' between Laughlin and Topock," said instructor Darlene Hiltner, Community Financial Wellness founder and executive director. "I'm proud of the students and the job they did."

Lettman chose the students as part of an initiative among Mohave Valley Contractors Association members to partner with the school.

"We're a member of the association and when Darlene came to a meeting and gave a presentation on Generation Us, I decided to ask them participate in one of our marketing projects," Lettman said. "The entire project was designed to help teach them important lessons about running a small business."

Academy of Building Industries is the MVCA's charter high school in Fort Mohave. Opened in 2004, the charter school provides a high school education with training in the building industries for students in grades 9-12.

"Generation Us is a student run and managed nonprofit service organization created in 2015," Hiltner said. "It evolved from a business-based curriculum for the school, originally an economics elective, centered on modeling a nonprofit startup."

Created in 1974, Mohave Valley Contractors Association is comprised of contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, insurance agents, title companies, pool and landscape professionals, and other trade-related businesses. It was formed to give members a forum to educate the community and keep the city and county on track with current building practices.



MARKETING PARTNERSHIP

Academy of Building Industries entrepreneurial class Generation Us delivered on its first commercial contract, 100 branded coffee mugs for Coit Cleaning and Restoration on Saturday during the Home and Garden Expo. From left are Darlene Hiltner, Community Financial Wellness founder/executive director and AOBI Generation Us instructor; Max Peterson, AOBI Generation Us; Rich Lettman, Coit Cleaning and Restoration owner; Trinity O'Bryant, Alycia Fish and Jacob Wiegale, AOBI Generation Us.

“AOBI is one of the ways we’re involved in the community,” said Catherine Lopez-Rajaniemi, MVCA Home and Garden Expo chairwoman. “Saturday’s Charity Car and Bike Show and water and other sales raised money for AOBI student programs.”

AOBI students worked as judges for the Charity Car and Bike Show as well as creating the trophies. Woodshop students sold student-created butcher-block cutting boards, furniture and other items created in their class.

The next project for Generation Us is setting up an e-commerce store stocked with student-made items to support school programs.

“The school was originally built to prepare employees for the building trades,” Hiltner said. “Jean (Thomas, AOBI principal) had the foresight to not only prepare these students as employees but also as potential business owners. Their work in running a small business — even if they never go on to have their own business — will make them better employees. It can only help them in the future.”

As for the mugs, Lettman said their reception by his customers has been terrific.

“Our customers have been waiting for them,” he said. “They’re all already gone.”