



# CONNECTIONS

Western Ohio Chapter • National Electrical Contractors Association



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## Dayton Holiday Festival 2021

**C**elebrating 49 years of being a Dayton family tradition, the Dayton Holiday Festival is the region's premiere holiday event. Started by local philanthropist Virginia W. Kettering, the Festival offers free, family entertainment so that everyone, regardless of economic means, may enjoy the holidays. The Dayton Holiday Festival has become a local tradition, attracting multiple generations of families from around the Miami Valley each year.

The festival's signature event, the Grande Illumination, is Dayton's official kick-off to the holiday season. This popular event drew approximately 35,000-40,000

people to downtown the day after Thanksgiving.



Immediately following the tree lighting was the Dayton Children's Parade Spectacular in Lights - the region's only nighttime holiday parade. The

Children's Parade originated as a daytime event, but was

switched to a nighttime parade in 2008. The change was greeted with resounding public approval, as each unit is adorned with thousands of twinkling lights that not only light up the night, but also the faces of the thousands of children in attendance. Families line the streets of downtown to watch the magical parade, which

features lighted themed floats, marching bands, specialty units, and live performers.

IBEW/NECA became a sponsor for the 2019 Dayton Festival by donating \$5,000 and providing tools and LED lights needed to refurbish the floats, which had been previously vandalized. In addition, several volunteers worked many weekends prior to the event to make sure the floats were ready for the parade. According to Courtney Deutsch, Sponsor Relations and Events Marketing Manager with the Downtown Dayton Partnership, "We couldn't have done this without the help of the NECA/IBEW volunteers. Not only did they provide tools and

*Cont'd.pg. 2*

## 43rd Annual URS Telethon

**W**hile the 43rd United Rehabilitation Services Telethon, presented by IBEW/NECA looked a little different this year, the event continued its tradition of celebrating the triumphs of the people URS serves each day. This year's telethon, which took place on December 5, 2021 raised over \$140,000!

Due to the pandemic, much of the event was pre-recorded. Staff interviewed families and community partners via Zoom prior to the telethon and WDTN's production crew wove the recorded stories around limited

live segments hosted by Mark Allan and Brooke Moore. A film crew was at URS with Dennis Grant, URS's Executive Director and volunteers manned the phone banks virtually and checked in periodically using Zoom.

The Telethon was opened for the 8<sup>th</sup> year by the Presenting Sponsor, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 82 (IBEW) and the Western Ohio Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). Business Manager IBEW Local 82 Greg Gust says, "We are proud to help URS further

their mission of helping adults and children with disabilities, year after year." IBEW/NECA also sponsors the Rubber Duck Regatta, and has provided holiday turkeys for several years. Donations have totaled over \$90,000 since their involvement.

Other events that raise donations include the Young's Dairy Bike Tour which has been held for 19 years. It's a two day event where bicyclists ride 25 to 100 miles raising money for URS for each mile they ride.

The Rubber Duck Regatta raises thousands of dollars each year. Synchrony was the presenting sponsor in 2021 and

encouraged all of their employees to buy ducks to support the effort.

The Elks are a large contributor to URS and last year purchased a van for the URS community.

Harold and Mary Reich have contributed over \$120,000 through the years and developed the Reich Children's Center at the URS facility.

The Dayton Hollywood Raceway holds an annual charity horse race to raise money and host URS students.

For over 60 years, URS has been providing hope for families around the Miami Valley. The URS began in the 1950s as an informal support

*Cont'd.pg. 2*

## Dayton Festival, cont'd

materials, but they gave us their expertise as electricians, which was invaluable to the success of the parade.”

Last year, in 2020, there was no parade. The challenges



faced with regard to planning the downtown parade last December during the COVID-19 pandemic were significant. Initially, the Downtown Dayton Partnership had planned the Dayton Drive-Thru Children's Parade.

However, due to the stay-at-home advisory issued for Montgomery County, the parade had to be canceled.

However in 2021, the celebration was back in full

force with a new display of lights downtown. NECA/IBEW were once again a major sponsor of the event and IBEW Local 82 volunteers installed thousands of “Downtown Jingle Lights.” This was an

interactive light show choreographed to the beat of holiday music. Drivers tuned in their radio to 87.1 FM and drove along

Monument Ave., Main St. and Third St. downtown.

A special thanks to Ben Dehart, Estimator/Project Manager for ESI Electrical Contractors for organizing the lighting installations. Volunteers included: Dan Daughtry, CJ Pemberton, Ben DeHart.



Logan Klinedinst (front), Dustin Jackson (Chapel apprentice) (front), Larry Howard, Ryan Wilson, Rob Wilson, Rob Alexander (front), Steve Snavely (front), Nick Behnken (far right), Jon Threnhauser and his son, Scott Howard and his father (not pictured), and Zac Craig and sons (not pictured).

## URS Telethon, cont'd

group created by parents advocating for their children with cerebral palsy. The URS offers a wide variety of services for people with disabilities and their families including: adult daycare, adult latch key, augmentative communications, childcare, hearing aid service, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology and vocational training. With more than 12 special events each year, volunteers are essential to their success! Everyday URS relies on individuals, companies and community groups to fulfill their mission of enhancing the quality of life for their clients.

### Training Opportunities

The Boonshoft Museum offers an internship to teach retail skills to URS participants.

The URS Academy, a new training program, has placed 86 students in various jobs throughout the community. Project Search is a

5 week summer youth program that trains youth for employment as well.

### UD Partnership

URS values the community partnership it shares with the University of Dayton. The URS Therapy Department works closely with the School of Engineering students to develop and design assistive equipment and innovative solutions that help individuals become more independent. Students created a light box with special filters to help a visually-impaired patient see objects more clearly. On another project, students designed a special hair-drying device that allows a person with the use of only one extremity to operate it successfully.

The students studying with Professor Amy Doll, PhD, PE, Biomedical Engineer, in UD's

Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering, are creating a walker for a visually impaired child in their School-Age Classroom that helps cue her to hold on with both of her hands for



her safety. Since the young girl loves music, they have modified the walker so the music will only play if she's applying pressure with both hands.

URS also partnered with UD's School of Engineering on the Go Baby Go Project, to engage college students in designing assistive technology to help individuals with disabilities.

Dozens of student volunteers modified “ride-on” toy cars for children with limited mobility, giving them a chance to explore their environments. Modifications included adding electric switches, push button controls, seating support and headrests.

Students from Biomedical Engineering also created a bike trailer for an individual so he could carry his wheelchair behind his bicycle so he could still go out on bike rides with his family. The possibilities are endless, thanks to the partnership with UD and their continued support of URS on so many levels!

Visit [ursdayton.org](http://ursdayton.org) for more information



January, 2022

Your comments, suggestions and questions are welcome! Contact the Western Ohio Chapter - NECA.

website: [www.wocneca.com](http://www.wocneca.com)  
phone: 937-299-0384

# Construction jobs grow but workers are needed

**A** December 2021 report from the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) offered some good news for the construction industry: construction employment increased by 31,000 jobs between October and November 2021. Construction firms were likely to have added even more jobs if they could find more qualified workers to hire, with many firms reporting a growing number of unfilled positions.

## Keeping new hires engaged:

Young electricians from days gone by often learned from experience and some trial and error. They were put to work on a job site, and if they made a mistake, they got yelled at.

They learned from that failure and were better electricians because of it. They then climbed the ladder to journeymen, supervisors or managers, if they applied themselves, and luck was with them. However, that's not the way the older generation has raised millennials who were often raised in a culture of communication. They're looking for a culture with rich feedback. ECs most successful at and leveraging the benefits of millennials follow a few

approaches that are very different from the work environment of previous decades.

**Giving feedback:** Millennials want as much feedback as they can get from their superiors, not just once a year during formal reviews but on a frequent basis. They learn from communicating with those with more experience, and letting them know what they are doing right and wrong should be a regular strategy and part of an ongoing performance or mentor program.



**Mentorship:** Many companies have established strong mentorship programs. These programs typically pair the most experienced workers with the new generation, allowing the new hires to shadow an experienced electrician or supervisor, learn during the work process and receive a daily understanding of what they can do to improve their work.

**Creative workplace:** Millennials tend to challenge the

traditional operations at a work site or office. Many tend to expect to use digital information for an immediacy that could provide access to information with the touch of a finger on the work site as well as getting some work done from the comfort of their own home.

## A seat at the table:

Bringing the younger workers to the planning table is another incentive. Electricians today want to participate in meetings. They want to be part of the planning and other management conversations, and not only learn, but provide input where relevant.

## A clear path to leadership:

This will help new hires understand their role in the company and how they can grow. A contractor can spell out the incentives, for instance, communicate that staying with the company for a number of years will lead to a leadership opportunity. Ultimately, the construction industry is changing, and it will rely on the latest generation to ensure it does that itself, rather than be taken over by another force—consider the way Amazon and other technology companies are stepping into the grocery sales space. Just as some technology-based companies may be redefining a basic

*“While we are seeing tremendous growth in jobs, we are experiencing an even greater need for manpower,” said Kevin Tighe, Vice President of labor relations and field service at NECA. “We can no longer depend on a traveling workforce that moves from job to job. We have to develop and grow a local workforce. The construction industry in general, and the electrical trade specifically, provides a tremendous opportunity for our youth. It’s an opportunity that we continue to promote, and one that our educational system needs to prioritize.”*

industry such as groceries, there are also those looking at the automation of construction. The only way to stay in the industry as it changes is to be part of the transition, and hiring tech-savvy workers that think far beyond the standard box is going to have a big impact. As such, it is important to provide a work environment that keeps the youngest workers interested. By doing so, contractors can bridge a gap between the wisdom of the older generations and enthusiasm and innovation of the young people.

## Conductive Glass Technology Offers New Electric Aesthetic

**I**magine a glass worktable, kitchen countertop, retail display or even an autonomous vehicle's windshield that can supply power without all the cable spaghetti showing. Cohda Design Ltd. in Gateshead, England, has figured out a way to do just that, with its Power

Tap. The patented technology, called P-Tap for short, is a transparent lamination of conductive and nonconductive glass that



enables power or data to be transferred across individual layers within the lamination. How about autonomous windshields with virtual

dashboards, embedded LED headlights, wireless steering, pedals, parking brakes, safety sensors and door locks. Or all the new rage in kitchens with all the granite replaced with see-through countertops with floating electric stove elements and even a flatscreen TV panel built into a glass backsplash.



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- In This Issue**
- **Dayton Holiday Festival**
  - **URS Telethon**
  - **Hiring Millennials**
  - **Glass connectivity**



*Larry Beltramo, past NECA President.*

“The last two-plus years have been some of the most fulfilling of my career, filled with challenges and incredible experiences. I’d like to thank NECA’s national and chapter staff for all their hard work through one of the most turbulent periods our country has seen and for continuing to provide for our members as

electrical work continued uninterrupted.

I want to touch on one thing that will continue to be critical to our industry in the years to come: innovation. I know that word is often thrown around, and it isn’t exactly new, but I feel like in recent years there has been more clarity as to what “innovation” truly means for our companies. It does not mean just an embrace of new technology—though that is absolutely part of it. Above all, it means being proactive in all areas of your business, from your people, to your culture, to your strategy and your everyday processes.

Even as I end my term as NECA president, I am constantly looking forward and thinking of what the future holds for our industry. I encourage you to do the same and think how your company can be best positioned for success as the winds of change continue to blow. Because change is absolutely inevitable. It’s up to all of us to be ready for it.”

*Larry Beltramo was the president of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) from April 2019 through December 2021. Kirk Davis will begin his term as president next month.*

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