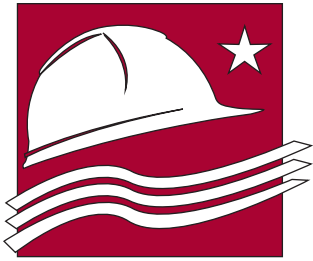


April 10, 2020



# CISCO

## CONSTRUCTION NEWS BRIEFS

Construction Industry Service Corporation - [www.cisco.org](http://www.cisco.org) - 630.472.9411 - Dan Allen, Executive Director

## Presidential *Perspective*



Unprecedented. We've all heard that word used frequently to describe what we are experiencing right now across the world, across the country, across our state, and across northeastern Illinois. It is truly unprecedented what our industry is going through, and more importantly, what we all are managing in our daily lives and with our families.

This is my third stint as CISCO's Board President, and I began serving on the CISCO Board of Directors in 1997. I remember the post-911 years and the challenges that followed. And we can all recall the recession of 2008-09 and how that downturn in the economy impacted our union construction workforce and our union contractors.

It took several years for our industry to recover from that punch to the gut, but recover we did, and the recent surge in construction, especially here in northeastern Illinois, put the construction industry back in a very good place.

But now we have a unique and dangerous challenge before us. An invisible enemy threatens both our livelihoods and our lives. Last month, our Governor deemed construction an essential business, and I am proud of how both labor and management have come together, once again, to place the safety of our contractors, workforce and our communities as our number one priority.

In addition, hundreds of men and women from various trades working tirelessly over two shifts have supplemented the Army Corps of Engineers to transform McCormick Place into a makeshift hospital to lessen the burden of our local hospitals in order to care for those stricken with this virus. This collaborative effort is truly heroic and it demonstrates how strong and community-centric our industry is during a crisis.

And while I am on that subject, Illinois AFL-CIO President Tim Drea recently gave a passionate speech during one of the Governor's press conferences about every single member of various unions who are serving on the "front lines" of this pandemic. He said we must never forget the selfless service of our healthcare workers, first responders, grocery workers, child care providers, letter carriers, mass transit employees, and of course, our tradesmen and women who are working on mission-critical projects such as utility facilities to keep our power grids operational, and on water and sewer projects to name just a few.



*Construction crews work at McCormick Place to convert the convention center into a makeshift hospital.*

**I salute all of these dedicated men and women for what they continue to do each day.**

In between prosperous times, our industry has been through adversity, and we have always managed to get through the turbulence stronger and more resilient. This will be again one of those times.

Sincerely,

**David Henderson**  
**CISCO Board President**

*More news and photos on the back page.*

## CISCO ON THE MOVE

### From *the* Desk of the Executive Director



Last week, I participated as a panelist in a virtual town hall meeting hosted by the Chicago Building Congress to discuss critical jobsite safety procedures related to COVID-19. More than 500 industry representatives listened in on their computers because of this new reality. I was asked a question about the level of collaboration among labor and management during this crisis. Here was my answer:

Collaboration and communication have been talked about as keys to success since the beginning of time. It has been the topic of thousands of books and seminars - the reason being - it is very difficult to achieve. True collaboration is most often the determining factor between success and failure.

The importance of collaboration in the era of COVID-19 is the most critical issue to face our industry in modern times. What is noteworthy: This collaboration didn't begin just three weeks ago.

Many of us represent every association, union and organizational acronym from A to Z. We are a melting pot of general contractors, subcontractors, employer associations, safety organizations, architects, engineers, health professionals, union trades and LMCCs – the list goes on.

**We would not be as strong and competitive in the region, the country and even the world market if we hadn't been collaborating for decades on issues such as work site safety, productivity and innovation.**

There have been many cultural and environmental changes that have impacted our industry in the past. Just to name two of those major cultural shifts - Safety and Drug Free workplaces. Our efforts have created the gold standard of best practices on these issues.

However, the advent of this COVID-19 crisis has caused us to grapple with a new reality. The entire industry has come together to embrace necessary changes. It should make us proud to see the level of swiftness and the level of detail with which we have acted. This is a tribute to the level of collaboration and the level of concern we all have to protect our workers and managers on the job, and for that matter, the public at large.

**Dan Allen**  
Executive Director

## EDUCATION *TO* CAREERS



*Johnetta Ryan, Director  
of Education-to-Careers*

With schools, and each of the building trades' Joint Apprenticeship Training Centers closed, getting the word out about career opportunities in the construction industry to students and young adults has been a real challenge.

CISCO's Education-to-Careers Program has worked with many partners such as CPS, CHA, CTA, HIRE 360, faith-based organizations such as St. Paul Community Development Ministries, veterans groups, the Chicago Women in Trades and other groups. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented us with an opportunity to use technology in order to practice safe distancing - and still carry out our goal of educating adults and students and making them aware of the construction industry as a career.

CISCO has recently teamed up with the Chicago Transit Authority and its Senior Project Manager - Workforce Initiatives Chynna Hampton to create videos in order to show various audiences a glimpse into the life of the skilled trades. The initial video will capture the transformation of McCormick Place into a makeshift hospital featuring interviews with specific members of that workforce. In addition, a series of "A Day in the Life" videos of different trades - carpenters, electricians, bricklayers, plumbers, etc. will follow. Zoom interviews with instructors/apprenticeship coordinators will be recorded and used to promote the trade and how to apply to the apprentice program. Watch CISCO's website ([cisco.org](http://cisco.org)) for the posted videos.