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Youth crew builds 2 yurts at Willow Lake

Campers at Willow Lake will soon have two newly constructed yurts, thanks to the efforts of a youth summer construction crew.

The 2009 Construction Academy is a collaboration between Rogue Community College, Oregon Building Congress Mathas and Mac Field Boosters. The eight-week academy, which runs through Aug. 14, is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

"This summer academy is a true public-private partnership, operating on funds provided by both industry and agencies," said Ralph Henderson, head of RCC's Construction Technology program.

RCC is helping oversee the project, said Henderson, and college students have helped develop building design drawings. Mitch Tucker, a recent graduate of RCC's Construction Technology program, is supervising the six-part

Academy participants will be eligible to earn RCC credit. Selection is based on a range of criteria including grade point average, attendance, and demonstrated motivation. This selection process also involves an interview process based on practical skills. The six academy participants, selected from throughout southern Oregon, are working 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Willow Lake, located 10 miles east of Butte Falls, is at the base of Mount McLaughlin. The campground is operated by Jackson County.

Taking part in actual construction projects, students apply math, science, communication, and problem-solving skills. They also develop work ethics, he said. Participants also explore construction career opportunities, including management, architecture, and engineering.

They can also identify potential pathways to a construction career from a wide range of post secondary opportunities that include apprenticeship, community college, and four-year university.

Past summers' projects include a gazebo at a BLM wayside, a roof on a Bureau of Land Management office building, and remodeling a nature center meeting facility, and remodel of a Salvation Army Hope House, noted Henderson.

For more information about the Construction Academy, contact Henderson at 245-7907.

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