



Orange County Chapter

Building Industry Association
of Southern California

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Building Industry Association, Orange County holding Wine and Food “Safari” to benefit High School Construction Education Program

IRVINE, CA (August 14, 2008) – The Fall season is the perfect time of the year to appreciate delicious wine, and delectable food while supporting a worthy educational program. This year, the Annual Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) Wine and Food Fundraiser, Wine Country Safari, will be held on Thursday, October 2, 2008 at the Rancho Las Lomas Zoological Gardens and Villa in Silverado, California. From 5:30pm until 8:30pm guests will enjoy the pairings of fabulous wines from around the world from Morry's of Naples, Wine Pavilion and Capistrano Brewery. Tantalizing tapas and delectable desserts will be prepared by renowned chefs of Suzanne's Catering, Bad to the Bone BBQ, and Tutto Fresco Trattoria.

Proceeds from this event benefit the Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) program at Katella, Western High and Anaheim High Schools in Anaheim and Valencia High School in Placentia and Brea-Olinda High School in Brea. BITA is a BIA/OC member developed four-year high school program exposing young people to diverse career paths (labor, management, and professional services) available within the building industry.

Over the last several years, the number of high school graduates pursuing a career in construction has sharply decreased due to a lack of exposure to these careers in school. The California state budget deficit has resulted in decreased education funds for woodshop, construction technology, and many other vocational classes on high school campuses. The BITA academy inspires students to further their education at a higher educational institution in order to continue to learn about the industry while employing top instructors like Katella High School's teach John Puckett who was recently named one of Orange County's 2009 teachers of the year.

The unique opportunities that are offered through BITA, also benefit Special Education and At-Risk/Under-Achieving students. The Academy's high level of applied (hands-on) learning appeals greatly to the districts with several Special-Ed students.

BIA/OC Chief Executive Officer, Kristine Thalman comments, "BITA has been a major factor in changing students' perception of the importance of school in their lives. Students begin to understand the correlation between education and their future success. Having the ability to immediately apply their academic knowledge to their BITA classes has been very motivating for our students."

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The BITA Food and Wine Safari presenting sponsor is Electrolux Premium Appliance Group and Sommelier sponsors include: California Pacific Homes, Capital Drywall LP, CALPASC and Urban Resource Consulting Engineers.

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The Orange County Chapter of the Building Industry Association of Southern California (BIA/OC) is a non-profit trade association representing more than 1,000 companies employing over 117,000 people affiliated with the home building industry. The BIA/OC mission is to promote proactive participation in the development of economic and community issues in Orange County. The BIA/OC is affiliated with the California BIA and the National Association of Home Builders.

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