

Career Tech students learn to build Green

by Cynthia Price

“It’s embedded in our culture,” said Calvin DeLano, Executive Director of the Alliance for Environmental Sustainability, on the way LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is viewed in West Michigan.

DeLano was addressing a small group of guests who came to see the ribbon cut on a Muskegon home that was built by Muskegon Area Career Tech Center (MACTC) students to LEED standards, which may be a first in the nation for a high school-level training program.

Instructor Brian Peets oversaw the project “to teach the kids the future of building.” A lengthy list of students — 50 in all — from high schools all around the county contributed to the construction, heating/ventilation/air conditioning systems, or the electrical installation.

The result? A Silver LEED Rating was given to the home by

the U.S. Green Building Council, which is a third-party certifier operating through such affiliates as the Alliance for Environmental Sustainability.

The home incorporates such environmentally sound practices as geothermal pipes, low-Volatile-Organic-Compound paints and flooring, short-distance supply sourcing, low-flow toilets and an on-demand hot water heater.

It is also a very nice house, which did not escape the attention of Tom Dake of Kendall Electric. He was looking for a

house in the area, and he decided to have the students build one for him. Though he is not going to apply for LEED status, environmentally-friendly techniques will be used.

The home was the first stop in an open house for MACTC, in part to celebrate the hiring of Jeanne Roe as its new principal. Those who moved on to the MACTC school buildings could see other career-friendly programs in operation and snack on culinary students’ delicious cookies and punch.



The home tour was the first stop in an open house at MACTC, where the culinary students put on a lovely spread.



Participating in the ribbon cutting ceremony were, left to right: Cindy Larsen, Muskegon Area Chamber of Commerce; Jeanne Roe, new Principal of Muskegon Area Career Tech Center (MACTC); Calvin DeLano, Alliance for Environmental Stewardship; Susan Meston, Muskegon Area Intermediate School District; Brian Peets, MACTC instructor; students (see below); and Jerry Keene of Keene Lumber.



Students Chris VanderWest and Cameron Ontiveros shown on the beautiful deck they helped construct