



CURTAINWALL BOOT CAMP

DIALOGUE & CUSTOMIZED HANDS-ON INSTRUCTION

SPOTLIGHT

On Boot Camp:

AGI recognizes continuing education is critical to business success. We partner with the design and construction community to provide meaningful education in architectural glass and metal applications, usages, constructability, and innovative technologies. Boot Camps reinforce the importance of collaboration and communication. Design professionals and glaziers team up to learn fundamental glazing craft through interactive instruction and hands-on application. Boot Camps range from half- to full-day sessions and can be customized for a specific topic or audience.



CUSTOM WJE EXPERIENCE

AGI recently presented a custom Curtainwall Boot Camp for Wiss Janney Elstner Associates (WJE), a global firm of engineers, architects, and materials scientists. The program was developed for WJE's Windows/Curtain Walls/Skylights Technical Resource Group and included 30 participants from across North America. The two-day Boot Camp was part of three days of dialogue and activities.

NACC DISCUSSION

A roundtable discussion with AGI members offered perspective to inform WJE's hands-on training. Terry Webb (Eureka Metal & Glass Services, Inc.), Lynn Guthrie (Guthrie Glass & Mirror, Inc.), Ellis Guiles (Graboyes Commercial Window Co.), and Joe Clabbers (National Glass & Metal Co., Inc.) spoke about the value of North American Contractor Certification (NACC). NACC establishes a baseline for competency, business practices, and industry-accepted guidelines for glazing contractors. All four panelists represent NACC-certified companies. Since its launch in 2015, NACC has given peace of mind to building owners, design professionals, and general contractors by ensuring glazing products are installed safely, efficiently, and professionally. The dialogue set the stage for hands-on training.

FABRICATION

The WJE Boot Camp was broken into three hands-on activities. During the eight-hour Fabrication session, participants fully fabricated a water-managed, stick-built curtainwall assembly. They gained experience cutting and laying out wall tubes; installing shear blocks, gaskets, and zone dams; applying sealants; setting glass; running backer rod; and creating structure and weather seal joints.

"Being able to build a curtainwall from scratch with the guidance of experienced professionals provided me so much insight," said Melissa Meikle of WJE's San Francisco office.

AGMT TECHNIQUE

During the 2.5-hour Erecting session, participants built and attached curtainwall sections including wind and dead load connection testing on an Architectural Glass & Metal Technician (AGMT) simulated certification mockup. While WJE staff admitted it was enlightening to see things that were easy to do wrong, they learned both correct techniques and about how AGMT certification validates individual glaziers. AGMT personnel

certification tests experienced glaziers' fundamental knowledge, skills, and abilities through written and hands-on assessments. AGI member contractors have over 74 certified glaziers on staff, leading the nation in regional concentration of those with the credential.

During AGMT certification, candidates undergo a three-part performance-based test, including a 3.5-hour curtainwall section, a 2-hour storefront/entrance section, and a 45-minute sealing section. All are administered by professionally trained examiners in a test center. The three sections combine for a comprehensive evaluation of a candidate's skills. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) skills are validated in all three sections. The curtainwall and storefront/entrance sections evaluate for layout, framing installation, sealing, and gaskets. The curtainwall section further evaluates for setting blocks, glazing, and pressure bars. The storefront/entrance section further evaluates for door installation. Finally, the sealing section evaluates candidates on construction documents, backer rod, and sealant.

VALUE OF CERTIFIED GLAZIERS

WJE Boot Camp attendees gained new perspective on the complexities of glazing and the value of certified technicians. Kyle Grunder of WJE's Houston office remarked, "This [was] a great experience for designers and engineers to gain a better appreciation for the trades and what they do for the industry." William O'Brien of WJE's Chicago office added, "It was a pleasure and great learning experience to talk with everyone in the certification program."

TESTING & LEARNING

The third session (also 2.5 hours) allowed participants to test a stick-built curtainwall section for water infiltration, teaching the steps to successfully trace and remediate failures. Leslie Scheppelmann of WJE's San Francisco office commented that, "Gaining hands-on experience as a consultant helps you to understand difficulties with curtainwall installation and how to avoid these problems."

Additional activities included cutting glass and virtual welding. The multi-day session earned rave reviews from participants across the country. Kirk Moss of WJE's Atlanta office enthused, "Fantastic hands-on experience for consultants and licensed professionals to understand the challenges and complexities of fabricating and installing curtainwall!"

Read more about AGI Boot Camps and Educational Programs:
<https://www.theagi.org/glass-worker-education.html>

Read more about AGI member involvement in NACC and AGMT:
<https://www.theagi.org/architectural-glass-company-profiles.html>

Top to bottom: WJE participants with curtainwall sections, assembling curtainwall, erecting curtainwall, water testing assemblies

