

Thank you for the opportunity to nominate a Pittsburgh Environmental Hero. As the Executive Director of Construction Junction (CJ), Mike Gable has been contributing to improving southwestern Pennsylvania's environment since 1999 when CJ first opened its doors to the general public.

Proposed as a social enterprise from the onset, Construction Junction (CJ) was formed in November 1999, with a five year business plan, by a group of green-minded Pittsburghers based at Conservation Consultants Inc. (CCI), the Green Building Alliance (GBA) and the Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC).

CJ's mission is to promote conservation through the reuse of building materials and its start up was capitalized with initial seed funding from the Heinz Endowments, the McCune Foundation and the Pittsburgh Foundation. By 2004, as planned, CJ became a self sufficient organization.

Every year since its inception, CJ's revenues have increased. Increased revenues directly relate to increased volumes of useable building materials that have been resold to the general public and thus prevented from going to landfill in our region. In addition to CJ's financial self sufficiency and the thousands of tons of material diverted from our area's landfills, success over its short history is evidenced by a quintupling of staff, more than doubling of warehouse space (now 72,000 square feet), receipt of tens of thousands of product donations, sales to tens of thousands of customers annually from over 600 surrounding zip codes and the recent launch of a deconstruction/salvage enterprise.

Last year (2008), CJ hit a milestone and sold over \$1,000,000 worth of used and surplus building materials from its warehouse in Pittsburgh's East End. In November of this year, CJ will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. There is much to celebrate. CJ has helped to reduce greenhouse gases, made home renovation more affordable for residents of the tri-state region and become an integral and active member of Pittsburgh's green and sustainable community by engaging many of us in the process and values of reuse. Beyond its huge donor and customer base, CJ's community building efforts have contributed to making southwestern Pennsylvania a greener and more sustainable region. For example, over the years, CJ has:

- Provided a location for environmentally minded and art focused organizations such as Free-Ride, The Pillow Project, Creative Reuse, E-Loop and G-TECH.
- Offered restoration and composting classes in collaboration with Belmont Technical and PRC.
- Hosted Handmade Arcade with over 6,000 attending this two day event.
- Hosted the City of Pittsburgh's most utilized recycling drop off center.
- Co-facilitated and hosted PRC's Hard to Recycle events.
- Allowed onsite construction of CMU's solar decathlon house as well as a community porch (a CMU Urban Design Build Studio and Institute for Ecological Innovation collaborative project).
- Hosted the Steel City Big Pour an extremely popular annual Craft Brew Festival.
- Co-created and hosted Worms for a Better World, a Sprout Fund/PRC project.
- Hosted the Four Frozen Farmers (local Christmas tree sales) and Roger Laib Carpentry (builder of The Gadget Shed made with reused materials).

There aren't many Pittsburghers who don't know about Construction Junction and Mike Gable has been behind it all every step of the way.