



Cornerstone Craftsman Recognized As 'Rising Star' at Alexandria Chamber of Commerce Best in Business Awards

Alexandria, Va. (October 24, 2025) — Cornerstone Craftsman, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preparing Alexandria youth for rewarding careers in the skilled trades, has been named the 2025 “Rising Star” winner at the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce’s annual Best in Business Awards. The “Rising Star” category recognizes emerging organizations that demonstrate excellence, innovation, and community impact.

Cornerstone Craftsman works with Alexandria youth from low-income backgrounds who often lack access to opportunity and experience challenges in traditional educational settings, with the goal of setting them on a path that will allow them to thrive as they enter adulthood. The organization's vision is to break the cycle of generational poverty and build a proficient and marketable workforce in the skilled trades.

Founded in 2024 by Executive Director Roberto Gomez, the organization has a current enrollment of 28 pre-apprentices.

“We are driving a life-changing impact for youth, families, and the entire ALX community,” said Gomez. “Elevating the quality of life for young people lifts the quality of life for everyone. When they succeed, it’s a win for the business community, too: local contractors get access to motivated workers already trained in basic skills and ready to contribute from day one. That’s the definition of a win-win.”

Cornerstone Craftsman’s pre-apprenticeship model combines instruction and hands-on learning with mentoring and support services. Along with technical proficiency, the program emphasizes life skills, character, and personal responsibility.

"We're just getting started, but we've been getting tremendous support," said Gomez. "This recognition from the business community shows that people see the potential in Cornerstone Craftsman and the youth we serve."

For more information about Cornerstone Craftsman, visit cornerstonecraftsman.org.

About Cornerstone Craftsman

Cornerstone Craftsman is an Alexandria City-based nonprofit organization that provides youth with the instruction, tools, and mentoring required to earn a viable career in the skilled trades. The program’s innovative pre-apprenticeship model takes a holistic approach, going beyond technical instruction to include a range of essential support services to help its participants succeed.

