

# DAILY COMMERCIAL NEWS

## AND CONSTRUCTION RECORD

LATEST NEWS 

Skills Training | O H & S | Professional Services

April 23, 2010

### Growth a top priority for Merit OpenShop Contractors Association of Ontario

VINCE VERSACE  
staff writer

The growth of Merit OpenShop Contractors Association of Ontario's footprint across the province will be strengthened by its education efforts, says its new chair.

"Our voices have not been heard very clearly for a long time. We want to educate buyers of construction about fair and open tendering practices," said Domenic Mattina, chair of MOCAO.

"At the end of the day, we are trying to demonstrate to them that it's in both their and the economy's best interest to award jobs to the lowest most qualified contractor."



Domenic Mattina

Mattina was confirmed as MOCAO's chair for 2010-2011 at the association's recent annual general meeting. It was clear in the association's first strategic planning session this year that growth is a priority.

"We do have growth but the potential is far, far greater if we are all moving down the same path and communicating the same words," said Mattina.

"Also, part of our growth is not just increasing membership but also leveraging our relationships with other member associations and we will continue down that path as well."

MOCAO recently joined the Council of Ontario Construction Associations and Mattina was selected to a provincial advisory panel tasked with improving Ontario workplace safety. This type of networking can only help the association, which currently has approximately 170 member firms, reach its targeted minimum 40 to 50 per cent growth per year, added Mattina.

"We are a voice in construction, not 'the voice' in construction, but one of the major voices in construction," said Mattina. "With the advisory panel, a top agenda item is to represent not just Merit but also the contractors of Ontario – many who are small to medium sized."

Problems with the non-construction employer designation, reviewing apprenticeship ratios, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board reform and broader consultation concerning Ontario's College of Trades are among the key issues MOCAO will continue to address.

Mattina anticipates MOCAO continuing to hold seminars which also educate contractors about the benefits of being an open shop. Some contractors do not necessarily understand how to best operate as an open shop contractor and the seminar helps fulfill that educational role.

The footprint of Merit OpenShop in western Canada, where it is strongest and solidly entrenched, helps give confidence to Mattina and the association's Ontario efforts.

"We at least have a flagship province we can refer back to and which is almost like our backbone," said Mattina. "If Alberta is doing that well, why can't we be a powerhouse when it comes to the economy of Ontario?"

Next week, the International Open Shop Conference will be hosted in Kelowna, B.C.

---



500 Hood Rd, 4th Flr., Markham, ON. L3R 9Z3  
Phone: 905-752-5408 | Fax: 905-752-5450  
Toll free: 800-465-6475 | Toll free Fax: 888-396-9413  
E-mail: [dcnonl@reedbusiness.com](mailto:dcnonl@reedbusiness.com)

© [Reed Business Information](#) a division of [Reed Elsevier Inc.](#) All rights reserved.