



# ITA Youth

SPRING 2011

Industry Training Authority Youth Programs Newsletter



## A Solid Start

Apprentice Concrete Finisher  
Frankie Reichert Creates Art

### Look Inside

- Small-Town Successes
- Big-City Dreams
- A Talk with ITA's CEO, Kevin Evans



ita

industry training authority

[www.itabc.ca](http://www.itabc.ca)

# Small-Town SUCCESSES

● Iskut

● Prince Rupert

● Armstrong

● Tulameen



Across B.C., secondary school students are training for and working in trades they love. Here are just a few stories of youth who are building our province's future through perseverance, skills and dedication.

## FRANKIE REICHERT | APPRENTICE CONCRETE FINISHER | TULAMEEN

"There is so much more to finishing cement than the average person knows," says Apprentice Concrete Finisher Frankie Reichert. "Working with cement is like playing in the mud, applying finishes such as stamping, acid staining, colouring releases, and exposed aggregate. It is artistic."

In grade 11, Frankie registered in the SSA program at Princeton Secondary and started her work with cement, getting a solid start on the 3,240 hours of work-based training required for her Concrete (Cement) Finisher apprenticeship.

For Frankie, one of the big breakthroughs of her trades training was learning to 'read' the cement. "A Cement Mason must be able to read the cement, meaning you need to be able to tell when the cement is ready to work at each stage, factoring the sun, rain and wind," Frankie explains. "Once I got it, I knew I had really achieved something awesome."



“The best part of my job is turning a big stack of plate into a custom aluminum boat,” says Robert Ruston, a 22-year-old Apprentice Metal Fabricator.

“Most of the work happens over months in a large shop in town, but when the project is complete, we’re part of the trials. It’s great to see the look on the customer’s face when he moves the brand new boat through the water.”

Customizing boats also appeals to Robert’s creative side. A bass guitar player in the local band, Latex Nightmare, Robert says these two parts of his life share the common demand of working hard on a skill before putting it out there.

“With both my music and my trade, there is always a lot more to learn and a push to be better.”

After successfully completing the Welding Level C program at Northwest Community College and graduating from Charles Hays Secondary, Robert was employed by Broadwater Industries and changed his apprenticeship to Metal Fabrication to take better advantage of the work his employer offered. “I’m truly a ‘shop kid’ – this is the place I want to be,” says Robert.

Robert is now only a few months from completing his apprenticeship and earning his certification as a Metal Fabricator. “Starting my trades training in secondary school set me on my way to what I do today,” adds Robert.



MURRAY DENNIS | APPRENTICE CARPENTER | ISKUT

Apprentice Carpenter Murray Dennis is not afraid to go after what he wants – even if it means trying more than once in order to accomplish his goals.

Leaving his home in Iskut, Murray decided to complete his grade 11 and 12 education in Hazelton. Less than a year later, Murray attended Northwest Community College’s (NWCC) Level 1 Carpentry course in Terrace through ACE IT. While he did very well on his practical work, he did not pass the final exam.

Determined to push forward, Murray registered in the SSA program and returned to Iskut to work as an Apprentice Carpenter for the Iskut Band Council. Murray earned money and continued to learn his trade while collecting the work-based training hours he needed to complete his apprenticeship.



When Murray returned to Hazelton to complete his final semester of secondary school, he rewrote the NWCC Carpentry Level 1 exam. Murray passed. “I like working with my hands and I knew I was pretty good at it,” he explains. “Even when things got difficult, I didn’t want to give up.”

MAKAYLA HENTGES & DEANNE GARDNER  
APPRENTICE ELECTRICIANS | ARMSTRONG



Apprentice Electricians Makayla Hentges and Deanne Gardner share the same trade choice but they have very different career destinations. Makayla wants to apply her trade skills to large industrial projects, while Deanna is headed for the bright lights of the theatre.

Both students recently completed their Construction Electrician Level 1 technical training at Okanagan College through ACE IT and they enthusiastically recommend trades training to other female students. “There were no skills gaps in the college class of 20,” says Makayla. “We were like one big family.”

In June, Makayla and Deanne will graduate from Armstrong Secondary School. From there, the versatility of the electrical trade will take them along separate work-based training pathways. But they both agree on two features of a career in the trades. “An electrical trade career allows you to stay out of debt and make money while going to school,” they say. “And we just find the whole idea of electricity fascinating.”

Photo courtesy of Okanagan Advertiser

# Big-City DREAMS



## Reaching Out, Reaching Up

BEN TAYTELBAUM | PLUMBING APPRENTICE

Ben Taytelbaum is clear about a few life lessons. He learned at a young age that he had to look out for himself. He also discovered that when he reached out, there were people and programs that offered support. Both of these insights came from Ben's journey through secondary school that started as a struggle but led to his now successful career in the trades.

By Grade 11, Ben decided it was best to leave his foster home and move out on his own. He held three part-time jobs to help pay his way and considered not going back to school at all. "That's when my social worker told me about the Secondary School Trades Training program for plumbing," Ben says. "She was a great advocate of the program. I got excited about it because both my Grandpa and my Dad were plumbers. My Dad died when I was six years old, and I had this feeling that by doing the program I would kind of carry him on in me."

"I was at a time in my life where I either figured out what I wanted to do or do nothing at all, except get into trouble," Ben says.

Before getting into Level 1 Plumbing technical training through ACE IT, Ben had to complete his secondary school graduation requirements. "I worked hard at the classes that were required to graduate and I improved my marks from failing to a B average. I set myself up perfectly. I think I am more proud of that than anything else."

Ben also found out that when he asked for support, he got it. "You have to let people know that you want to do something with your life," Ben advises. "No one is just going to call you up. I reached out to my Social Worker, the Aboriginal Programs Coordinator

"You have to let people know that you want to do something with your life."

and the Youth Worker. They all helped in different ways. But my teacher at Langley Secondary School, Mr. Dickson, was for sure the number one person who helped me the most. When I lost my focus because things got so hectic, Mr. Dickson would keep me on track by talking about my goal to become a plumber."

Upon completion of the in-school training, Ben then needed to continue his apprenticeship with an employer-sponsor. During an interview with Trinity Systems, Ben learned a startling fact. "It came as quite a shock," Ben says. "The employer, Barry, asked me about my last name. Turns out that he had known my Dad through plumbing work. Barry told me that my Dad was a respected tradesperson. It confirmed that I wanted to carry on my Dad's reputation and become a certified plumber."

Ben graduated in June 2008 with both his Dogwood Diploma and his Plumbing Level 1 Foundation certificate from BCIT. He has since completed the second of four levels of plumbing technical training and he is scheduled for Plumbing Level 3 in January 2012. Now 21 years old, Ben is working in Vancouver, engaged to be married and fulfilling his dream of making his father, and himself, proud. "Secondary School Trades Training," Ben says, "was the stepping stone to having a great future."



# A Talk with ITA's CEO



Kevin Evans, CEO of Industry Training Authority (ITA), talks about the bright future for young tradespeople in B.C. Secondary School Trades Training programs have already enabled over 16,000 students to start their career while in secondary school. With more than one million job openings expected in the upcoming decade, now is a great time for young people to investigate the vast possibilities offered by a career in the trades.

## What do you see as the best reasons for young people to consider a career in the trades?

Potential and possibilities. As students get closer to graduation, they wonder what careers are out there that suit their interests and potential. B.C. offers more than 150 trades to consider as post-secondary options, and each one can lead to tremendous possibilities. For example, over 98% of businesses in B.C. are small businesses, and many of those are owned and operated by certified tradespeople.

## When you use the phrase 'post-secondary options', many people may think 'university degree'. Is a trades training program considered a post-secondary education?

Absolutely. In fact, students and their parents can check out the website [www.educationplanner.ca](http://www.educationplanner.ca) to compare several post-secondary options, including trades training programs.

## What are the benefits of trades training programs?

There are several key benefits. For example, trades training allows students to pursue their very specific skills and passions and it widens their options as they become more skilled. Plus, about 80% of apprenticeship training is on the job, rather than in the classroom, so you can earn while you learn. That means potentially completing your education without debt, which is a great way to start a career.

## Over 16,000 secondary school students to date have taken advantage of trades training programs. Why are the programs so successful?

These programs – ACE IT (Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training) and SSA (Secondary School Apprenticeship) – are successful because they enable students with broad and diverse skills and abilities to succeed. The current secondary school system does not always allow for different learning styles. Trades training programs value and reward students' hands-on learning skills and strong work ethics outside of the traditional desk and classroom environment.

"I see such pride in the faces of students who complete trades training programs as part of their graduation requirements. They bound onto the school stage for their diplomas, confident in their career pathways, knowing they can conquer the world."

— Kevin Evans,  
CEO, ITA

## What are some of the challenges that students may face when choosing a career in the trades?

Finding an employer to sponsor you as an apprentice can sometimes be a challenge. I encourage students to take the time to contact local tradespeople and get the message out that investing in apprentices is an investment in the future success of their business, especially in light of the aging population and a strong economic forecast.

## What does the future look like for today's student apprentices?

Excellent. Over the coming decade, B.C. will have more than a million job openings. Two-thirds of these job opportunities will need trades or college certificates. So, if you want to take control of your life after secondary school, start now. Secondary School Trades Training programs offer a solid start to a career with strong and expanding options.

## What if students are interested in the trades but don't know much about them?

Get information! I suggest they talk to their secondary school counsellor and check out ITA's website, [www.itabc.ca](http://www.itabc.ca).

# Educator News



Encourage your students to measure and improve their essential skills against the requirements for more than 50 Red Seal and other trades in B.C.

[www.ita.essentialskillsgroup.com](http://www.ita.essentialskillsgroup.com)



## Five stations of fun!

Seventy-five students from Alexis Creek Elementary/Junior Secondary and three Band Schools in the Alexis Creek area partnered up for a hugely successful YES 2 IT event that involved Thompson Rivers University, businesses, school staff, RCMP, parents, tradespeople and a First Nations Elder. Students experienced trades through five stations: safety, carpentry, welding, electrical and cooking.

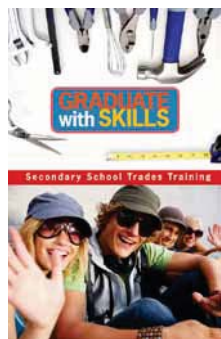
“The YES 2 IT event was magic!”

— Gord Armour,  
District Coordinator, School District 27

## free Order Your Resources Today

Check out the variety of communications tools and educator guides. Send your request to [youth@itabc.ca](mailto:youth@itabc.ca).

**Coming Soon! New 'Graduate With Skills' Secondary School Trades Training student brochure**



This easy-to-understand student brochure about Secondary School Trades Training programs – ACE IT and SSA – is a valuable communications tool for counsellors and educators.

- Display in career centres
- Integrate into career-planning classes
- Distribute to interested students and their families



For more information about ITA Youth programs, contact:

**Rodger Hargreaves**  
Manager, Youth Initiatives  
Industry Training Authority  
[rhargreaves@itabc.ca](mailto:rhargreaves@itabc.ca)  
604-649-4624

### Got Ideas?

ITA Youth is produced twice yearly. Send your story ideas to writer Linda Mangnall at [lindamangnall@telus.net](mailto:lindamangnall@telus.net).

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