

Cutline: COTR Carpentry Student Emily Loucks

## **‘YES 2 IT’ gives middle school students hands-on exposure to Trades careers**

On June 10, 45 grade nine students from Selkirk school in Kimberley, and Parkland and Laurie schools in Cranbrook, will come to College of the Rockies’ Cranbrook campus to take part in YES 2 IT and gain insight and hands-on experience in trades career options.

YES 2 IT (Youth Exploring Skills to Industry Training) is a new awareness program for younger students in grades six to nine and their parents. It provides students with an opportunity to experience some of the hands-on skills used in a variety of trade occupations and make connections with tradespersons in their communities.

June 10’s YES 2 IT event will give the students an opportunity to work on welding, carpentry and electrical projects with College faculty and student apprentices. They also will visit the heavy duty mechanic shop in the College’s new Pinnacle Hall Trades building and tour Tembec’s Finger Joint Plant in Cranbrook. The day will end with a fun skills competition and a barbecue at the College.

The local YES 2 IT event is a partnership organized by School Districts 5 and 6, College of the Rockies, Tembec Industries, Acklands-Grainger Inc., Elk Valley Coal Corporation, the Resources Training Organization (RTO), the Industry

Training Authority (ITA), and the Ministry of Education. “YES 2 IT is an opportunity to showcase and promote the apprenticeable trades as exciting and rewarding career options,” says School District 5’s Brian Conrad.

Michelle Skelly, RTO’s Youth Trades Project Coordinator adds, “We just completed a very successful YES 2 IT event in Victoria and are looking forward to our June 10 event in the East Kootenay. Our plans are to offer the YES 2 IT program in other areas of the province next year.”

RTO was established in 2007 to oversee the management and development of apprenticeship training for the resource sector in BC. RTO represents a cross-sectorial group of employees in the mining and smelting, oil and gas, pulp and paper, solid wood, and heavy shipping and repair sectors.

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