

Popularity of Youth Apprenticeship Grows

It began as a two year pilot program in 2004 and was incorporated into the high school curriculum less than a year ago, but already the success of the Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship (SYA) program seems certain. People everywhere say this is excellent news for youth and for the trades.

The SYA curriculum helps grades 10-12 students explore careers in the skilled trades and learn what they have to offer. Students record their progress using a special passport book and receive a certificate of completion at the end.

With an aging workforce, an economic boom and a growing number of employers demanding skilled workers, the program is timely. For decades, the education system has worked almost exclusively towards preparing students for university-based careers, even though only about one-third of students end up in university. Realistically, not everyone is going to become a doctor or an engineer. Fortunately, those attitudes are changing. Teachers and guidance councillors are becoming much more aware of the need to give students a full range of career choices. A career in the trades opens other doors too, like foreman, entrepreneur, instructor, apprenticeship field consultant or CEO!

“In my 25+ year career working with apprenticeship and youth, I have never seen so much excitement generated over a class as I’ve seen with SYA,”

said Rennie Zabolotney, Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade’s Youth Apprenticeship Team Leader.

“Students, teachers, and parents across the province are very excited about the program. And, those who haven’t been able to get involved yet, plan to get the



program started in the 2007-08 school year.”

Flexibility is key to the program. Saskatchewan schools have the freedom to deliver the program in whatever way makes sense in that community. Some schools deliver it as part of the career guidance curriculum, some as a stand-alone class, and others as an extra-curricular activity. Some have even incorporated components of it into the English class. That’s innovation at work!

Growing program activity keeps the three staff members - team leader, northern consultant and administrative support - busy. So far, they issued

almost 5,300 passports, made nearly 100 presentations to teachers and students, and issued almost 75 certificates of completion.

The first student to complete the program and register as an apprentice was Tyrell Brown from Assiniboia. “I was already thinking of going into the trades, but the program really opened my eyes to the many different types of trades there are.” Tyrell, now a sprinkler system installer apprentice, also appreciated the financial boost from the program. “By completing the program and then registering as an apprentice, I received about \$1,000 of waived registration and tuition fees, as well as trade time credits. Bonus!”

Exploring the rewarding work of the trades helps youth make informed choices about their future in Saskatchewan. Still in its infancy, the Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship has met a need and is sure to stay.

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Apprenticeship Horizons 2007-08

The 2007-08 business plan and budget is taking shape, and is expected to soon receive final approvals and be adopted by the Commission Board. The year ahead will be characterized by continuing strong growth in the number of apprentices and tradespersons signing up for our program. All the available evidence indicates that residents of Saskatchewan, who choose apprenticeship training and certification, can look forward to a very bright future in skilled trades careers.

The growth in our program is creating an unprecedented demand for all the services that SATCC offers. In addition to record levels of apprentices and tradespersons in technical training, all the other services required to support apprenticeship are in demand. Assessment of work experience and training, counselling, registration, certification, promotion and enforcement activities are at an all time high. All these services are provided

by staff of the Commission, who have been intensifying efforts to maintain quality service to clients.

To respond to the high levels of activity and meet needs of employers and employees, the Commission is planning to add some staff and spend a record amount on technical training. The new staff will support the delivery of field services and the promotion of apprenticeship in general. In 2007-08, the Commission will spend over \$10 million to purchase technical training from a variety of training deliverers. In order to meet the demand, the Commission will draw down its accumulated surplus by nearly \$1 million, bringing it to the minimum acceptable level. In future years, the Commission will require significantly increased provincial funding in order to maintain its operations.

Apprenticeship fees have been largely unchanged for the past three years. This trend will continue in 2007-08, with only a minor adjustment

to address changes in a particular trade. In future years, it is likely that apprenticeship fees will need to increase. Revenue from fees supplements provincial funding of apprenticeship, and provides critical resources to maintain service to apprentices and employers.

The year ahead will be challenging and exciting in many ways. The Commission will be undertaking or continuing many new key initiatives to deliver its program to employers and employees. For example, the Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship program will be offered in more schools, technology enhanced learning initiatives will be expanded, rural and northern apprenticeship technical training will increase, and new inspection and enforcement activities will be launched. While the strong economy and these new initiatives create challenges for the Commission, they also represent opportunities and remind us that it's a great time to be in the skilled trades.

And the survey says...

The Department of Advanced Education and Employment (AEE) recently commissioned a survey of some 6,000 graduates of post-secondary programs in the province. Graduates from the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, SIAST, SIIT and private vocational schools participated, as did 973 journeypersons who received certification from the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) in 2004 or 2005.

The results of the survey confirmed what most people in the trades already know: the pay is great, job satisfaction is high, the learning of hands-on skills is a rewarding experience and a graduate is most likely to have a permanent

position available upon graduation. Some specific outcomes for journeypersons two years after certification included:

1. SATCC graduates had the highest annual income, some \$4,000 more than a U of S graduate.
2. SATCC graduates had the lowest education-related debt, just over \$1,000 and only five per cent of that carried by the typical U of S graduate.
3. SATCC graduates were most likely to have a permanent job, compared to university graduates where one in five were in a temporary or casual position two years after graduation.
4. While all graduates were satisfied with their educational experience, SATCC graduates were most likely to be "satisfied" or "highly satisfied" with theirs.
5. SATCC graduates were most likely to be in a job closely related

- to their training. Over 80 per cent of them had a probability of this compared to two out of three SIAST graduates, and half of private vocational college graduates, who did.
6. Details of the survey results are posted on AEE's website at <http://www.aee.gov.sk.ca/>.



Skilled Trades:
For everyone.

"Millwrighting gives me the ultimate technical challenge I love. My advice to women like me: be confident in your ability and be proud! There is a trade for everyone."

Kimberly Andrew
Outstanding Trade Journeyperson, 2006
Millwright

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Doug Muir Retired!



After nearly a quarter century of dedicated service, Doug Muir, Director of Apprenticeship, retired May 23, 2007.

Doug came to Saskatchewan from the Manitoba Apprenticeship Branch. He joined Saskatchewan Apprenticeship at a time when the organization was being reconstituted after years of amalgamation with a different agency. Doug's first task was to establish and head the program development section, which has gone on to be one of the most successful in Canada.

Doug has guided the apprenticeship organization through numerous organizational changes. Retirements in 1987 added the management of the field operations to his portfolio. In 1989, a further reorganization resulted in his assuming the helm as Director of Apprenticeship, a role he willingly and competently undertook, and which he has successfully fulfilled to this day.

Over the years, Doug has taken particular pride in his national work. He has been Chair of the Interprovincial Standards and Examination Committee (ISEC), and also of the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship, on which he has served and chaired several committees. Doug has

been active on the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum and has met with, and worked with, many national industry and other groups. The first National Apprenticeship Conference was initiated by Doug. Of particular pride, is Doug's work on the Interprovincial Computerized Examination Management System (ICEMS). Doug has been one of the fundamental driving forces behind the project, which has significantly improved the quality of interprovincial journeyman examinations used across Canada.

Doug is known for his ability to derive a broad picture from just the bare facts. He brought a keen analytical approach to any problem and could come to workable solutions, no matter what the dilemma. He has helped many individuals over the years, including both our clients and the many people who work in the apprenticeship system.

Retirement will not find Doug inactive. Apart from his personal life, he will be active at his cabin at Lake Winnipeg and his trailer in Texas. Doug's other passion is jogging, and he has run in several marathons, including the Boston Marathon. He has an ever increasing personal jogging streak, which started on March 30 1991!

Post-retirement, Doug will be continuing his contribution to trades training and certification in this country. Doug has accepted a position providing support to the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA) and the Interprovincial Alliance of Apprenticeship Board chairs. Doug is uniquely qualified for this through his connections and long personal service on CCDA.

We wish Doug the very best in the years ahead, and thank him again for his many contributions over the past 24 years.

Al Douglas Retired too!

Al Douglas, Assistant Director/Industry Liaison retired on April 13, 2007. Al started with the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission on July 1, 1998 and worked with many industry representatives across the province. His knowledge and expertise around SIAST was extremely valuable when the Commission was formed in October 1999.

In its infancy, the Commission had to develop new business arrangements with many organizations, including SIAST, and Al's insight was very important. He was able to work with industry, understand the concerns they had, and work with them to facilitate solutions.



Al spent nearly 30 years in the delivery and administration of apprenticeship training. Al started as a term instructor at SIAST in the electrician trade on September 6, 1977. His career within SIAST included Electrical Program Head, Dean of the Industrial Division and Principal of SIAST Wascana in Regina.

Al's knowledge and expertise around apprenticeship and trade certification will be missed and the Commission wishes him all the best in his retirement.

Skilled Trades:
Good pay. Respect.

Opportunities for skilled tradespeople in Saskatchewan are limitless. From journey-person, moved to manager. Pick a trade and work hard - your goals are possible!

Skilled tradesmen
Qualifying new apprentices, 2006
Examination Question

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Saskatchewan
Trades Council and
Association

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What's New?

The SATCC is proud to feature a number of outstanding new journeypersons, and some outstanding employers too, in a series of new advertisements, banner bugs and large displays promoting opportunities in the skilled trades. Watch for them to appear in the newspaper, career fairs and trade shows near you.



Profiling our Partners

This section of our newsletter provides information on one of our partners and how they interact with the Commission. This issue we profile the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission.

The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission is pursuing means to increase completion rates in our programs. Anecdotal evidence and research from national organizations indicates that a major barrier to a candidate being successful in completing a journeyman certification is the lack of essential skills (also called workplace literacy). The problems relating to literacy that arise in the case of an apprentice are reflected in the broader society in that a lack of literacy prevents citizens from contributing to their full potential.

Recognizing that improving the literacy of Saskatchewan citizens could unlock the potential for social and economic progress, the Government of Saskatchewan mandated the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission (SLC) to develop and coordinate a literacy strategy. Established in 2005 under the leadership of educator Dr. Margaret Lipp, the SLC brings together a broad spectrum of practitioners in the

field of literacy and supports efforts throughout the province to promote literacy. The strength of the SLC is that it builds on the success of existing literacy programs rather than “re-inventing the wheel”.

The SLC references the following agencies and programs:

- Saskatchewan Literacy Network
- Educational institutions
- First Nations and Métis peoples
- Libraries
- KidsFirst
- Business and industry
- Community-based organizations
- Adult Basic Education programs
- Volunteer organizations
- The research community

The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission is one of the key connections to business and industry, and we will continue to support the SLC and local employers to build awareness of workplace literacy. Development of workplace essential skills will make it possible for apprentices, tradespersons and journeypersons to fully participate in the labour market and to create a better quality of life for themselves and their communities.

The Saskatchewan Literacy Commission can be reached at 306-787-2514 or you can visit their website at www.sasksmart.ca.

New Faces

- Barb Rodgers, Training Coordinator Supervisor, December 24, 2006
- Tracy Masko, Youth Apprenticeship Liaison, January 22, 2007
- Darren Brown, ATC Consultant in Swift Current, January 29, 2007
- Tracy McClurg, ATC Consultant in Moose Jaw, January 29, 2007
- Sean Alcorn, ATC consultant in Saskatoon, February 12, 2007
- Dean Frey, ATC consultant in Saskatoon, February 13, 2007
- Sandra King, Training Coordinator, March 19, 2007

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