

## A Message from the CEO



Apprenticeship across Canada has achieved a higher profile and a greater status than it has enjoyed over the last 50

years. Some of this has been driven by enhanced promotion of apprenticeship programs, but most of the new found interest in apprenticeship is driven by a very favourable economy and a hot construction market. These factors have resulted in increased numbers of apprentices and trades certifiers in most provinces and territories as employers seek competent tradespeople to address their labour market needs.

Applications for apprenticeship and trade certification have increased dramatically, demands for technical training have accelerated, and the requirement for standards and examination development are at an all-time high. The number of current registered apprentices surpassed the 8,000 mark on May 6, 2008; this number compares to just over 5,200 registered apprentices in 2005. The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission and staff have responded well to the many challenges associated with increased numbers of apprentices.

With all of these demands, workload for the Commission has also increased and it is a testament to staff that we have managed to keep up with the pace by better prioritizing our work, finding new ways to do things and providing more supports. The Commission is serving its clients well and processing work in a timely fashion. These clients

- the apprentices - also recognize and value the work of Commission employees. Apprenticeship can be a very complex system and although there may be frustrations along the way, in the end, it is very rewarding to the clients and those who serve them.

I have been CEO of the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission for only six months; it didn't take me long to figure out that the Commission has a first class workforce, dedicated to the clients we serve, and competent in the jobs they perform. I thank each of them for their dedication, expertise, practical approach to tasks, their camaraderie and their collective sense of humour. My work with the Commission is tremendously rewarding personally. I very much enjoy working with Saskatchewan industry and look forward to working even more closely with them to address future challenges together.

## National Apprenticeship Survey (NAS)

Statistics Canada has completed a major survey of apprentices from across Canada and the results are scheduled to be released in September 2008.

This survey of approximately 30,000 apprentices in 2007 is the first completed since 1995. It surveyed apprentices registered in the years 2002, 2003 and 2004, sorting them into three distinct cohorts based on their current status – completers, discontinuers and long-term

continuers. The preliminary results provide some interesting glimpses into the experiences of apprentices based on the trade, the jurisdiction and demographic factors. StatsCan will simultaneously release the national report and the reports for individual provinces and territories. The Commission and agencies across the country will have access to a wealth of data to help with strategic planning and implementation of best practices.

The Commission has been active since 2005 in helping to design the survey instrument, providing a representative sample of apprentices from the years in question and in vetting the outcomes of the survey pilot in 2006. Through the National Apprenticeship Survey Research Advisory Panel, the SATCC will continue to contribute to the design of research projects arising from the survey and from other data sources. This will provide further knowledge about factors that determine success in a skilled trade career, in particular, the experiences of under-represented groups in the apprenticeship system.

Please watch the SATCC website for the announced release of the NAS reports and a link to the StatsCan website for access to the results.

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## Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiatives Survey Results

In 2001, the provincial government announced \$400,000 of new funding for the SATCC to encourage the participation of Aboriginal workers in skilled trades programs. With this support, SATCC developed the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiatives (AAI). The SATCC proactively sought proposals from community groups and educators. Beginning in 2002, projects were implemented in a broad section of trades including carpenter, plumber and electrical. A survey of the program was conducted in 2008 to measure the outcomes.

The survey revealed that the AAI helped to remove barriers that prevented many Aboriginal people from entering the trades. With projects having an emphasis on delivering training in or near the home communities of the participants, the AAI offered an alternative solution to training for those learners who were unable to commute or relocate to urban centres. In addition, high attendance

## Skills and Trades Centers

SATCC is involved in both the Regina and Saskatoon Skills and Trades Centres through the steering, program and communications committees.

The basic concept of both centres is to provide “bridging” training, primarily for youth who left high school, to assist them to find their first job in a specific trade or occupation. Courses at the centres don’t duplicate offerings available elsewhere in Saskatchewan. Rather, the courses give individuals basic job, trade and career knowledge so they can readily and comfortably fit into their new jobs. It is hoped that the new employees will then be positioned to take additional, more job-specific training, either through SATCC’s apprenticeship system or alternative programs.

rates and success rates were reported, with the majority of students passing their level exams. The study also revealed that the majority of participants expect to develop a career in a skilled trade and eventually receive their journeyman certification.

One area of concern from the survey was the low completion rate. While non-completion rates in trades programs tend to be of concern across Canada, the future workforce depends on industry and the SATCC to improve the completion rates of Aboriginal apprentices to at least that of the general apprentice population.

There are now over 1,200 registered apprentices of Aboriginal descent (self-declared) in the province; an increase of 818 in just five years. The proportion of apprentices who are of Aboriginal descent now exceeds the representation of Aboriginals in the general Saskatchewan population.

Industry involvement in the design of programming has been key. Both centres offer courses to meet local needs identified by regional industry representatives. Industry response has been supportive both in training and providing employment opportunities.

The Regina centre has leased facilities on Albert Street and offers a variety of training programs in both construction trades and hospitality occupations. The Saskatoon centre is based out of Mount Royal Collegiate and also offers both construction and hospitality bridging programs. The response rate from all applicants has been excellent.

## Unprecedented Growth in the Trades!

The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission is currently experiencing unprecedented growth in the number of registered apprentices. The Commission, as of May 31, 2008, has registered 8,140 apprentices into the system. This represents an increase of almost 1,300 apprentices (about 16 percent) since May 2007.

Of the 50 designated trades in Saskatchewan, the four most predominant trades are carpentry with 1,169 registered apprentices, electrical with 1,148, plumbing with 743 and welding with 658. This leaves approximately 4,400 other apprentices in the balance of the 46 remaining designated trades.

## Youth Apprenticeship Update . . .

Interest in the Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship (SYA) program continues to grow since it went province-wide in the 2006-07 school year.

As of June 1, 2008, there were 142 schools enrolled in the program, and 3,745 grades 10-12 students who registered and either completed or are currently participating in the SYA program. Over the two years the SYA program has been running, a total of 611 students have received certificates. Of these, 43 have registered as Saskatchewan apprentices.

For the 2008-09 school year, the SYA program administration will increase from two to three consultants plus the administrative coordinator.

# Twelve New Aboriginal Apprentices



Left to right front row: Bruce Jack, Hubert Sakebow, Sheldon Bowman, Mark Tipewan  
 Left to right back row: Vince Morrissette (SIIT), Merle Morin, Garret Morin, Bob Sluchinski (Saskatchewan Apprenticeship), Daniel Chamakese, Horst Schultz (instructor), Darius Hyman, Gary Lachance (and very proud son in front of him!), Jared Ahenakew, Tracy Schira-Parker (AC Realty), Jeff Chow (SIAT), Chief Lyle Whitefish

March 28, 2008 was a proud day in the small Saskatchewan community of Spiritwood. Twelve level four carpenter apprentices were celebrated for their dedication and achievement to skilled trades training and certification. They are using their newly acquired skills to build ready to move homes for AC Realty in Spiritwood.

These 12 Aboriginal apprentices were the first group to complete their formal training and work experience together under the SATCC's Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiatives (AAI). It's a program that brings training and First Nations partners together to meet the skills training and labour market needs of Aboriginal people in their communities across the province.

"The AAI program is designed to increase Aboriginal access, participation and success in apprenticeship trades by delivering training and work experience close to First Nations communities where participants feel more comfortable with their training and can learn from each other," said Lyle Bear, Aboriginal Apprenticeship Liaison for the SATCC. "AAI projects are working to create long-term employment and economic development opportunities for the communities. It's a win-win

program for the Aboriginal workers and for their communities."

Partnerships in each AAI project are unique. The partners in the Spiritwood project included the SATCC,

Agency Chiefs Tribal Council, AC Realty, Ahtahkakoop First Nations, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, and Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology.

"We are very proud of our guys for successfully completing their level four carpentry apprenticeship program," said Tracy Schira-Parker, Finance Manager for AC Realty Ltd. Partnership. "For the past four years, these guys studied hard and were able to keep their long term goals in sight. This program required a lot of hard work, patience, and persistence, and this has attributed to where the apprentices are today."

AAI has registered almost 1,000 Aboriginal apprentices in 58 projects since students first enrolled in 2005. In addition, many apprentices of the AAI have elected to participate in, and graduate from, regular apprenticeship programs.

## New Look to SATCC Website

The screenshot shows the website's interface with a navigation menu on the left containing links like HOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, DESIGNATED TRADES, and YOUTH APPRENTICES. The main content area features a 'HOME' section with a quote from Todd Harder, an Outstanding New Journeyperson, and a large image of a carpenter. To the right, a 'DESIGNATED TRADES' list includes various professions such as Agricultural Machinery Technician and Aircraft Maintenance Engineer.

The SATCC is excited to launch a new look on its website - [www.saskapprenticeship.ca](http://www.saskapprenticeship.ca). It is anticipated that the organization of the site will make it easy for apprentices, journeypersons, employers, youth, parents and teachers to find the skilled trades information they need quickly.

## Calendar of Events

- During the week of July 14-18, 2008, SATCC field consultants will be conducting visits to Saskatoon employers who are involved in apprenticeship trades. The goal is to promote an increased awareness of apprenticeship training and trade certification.

## Profiling our Partners

*This section of the SATCC newsletter provides information on one of SATCC's partners and their interaction with the Commission. In this issue, we are profiling the Construction Sector Council.*

The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission historically has made substantial contributions to national initiatives that promote and enhance the quality of apprenticeship training and the mobility of journeypersons. Some years ago, the federal government began to fund sectoral councils that sought to provide the means through which jurisdictions could share best practices and support research on an ongoing basis. Several of these councils have come into being over the past decade and one of the most active is the Construction Sector Council (CSC). Given that some 50 per cent of Saskatchewan apprentices are registered in a construction-related trade, the Commission has been pleased to support the work of the CSC and to access the tools that have been developed as a result of the CSC's efforts.

Some readers may be familiar with the report published each spring by the CSC entitled *Construction Looking Forward*, which is available at the CSC website. A national issue of the report is

available, as well as one for participating jurisdictions. These reports are a great source of information on projected labour needs over the next nine years, and it is often referenced in SATCC studies and research. The latest version is scheduled for release in mid-June.

However, there is much more to the CSC than the production of the *Construction Looking Forward* report. Based in Ottawa, under the leadership of Executive Director George Gritziotis, the CSC leads discussion and formulation of strategies on many issues. Some examples of these include the role of essential skills in successfully completing trades studies, the recognition of foreign tradespersons, the development of national standards for operating engineers and a Gold Seal training program for managers and supervisors. The Commission has been a collaborator in all of these initiatives. While the Commission absorbs the cost of the salary for staff engaging in CSC-led activities, all other costs are covered by the CSC through its agreement with Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

The CSC can be reached at 613-569-5552, at [info@csc-ca.org](mailto:info@csc-ca.org) or at their website at [www.csc-ca.org](http://www.csc-ca.org).

## Changing Faces

- Andy Ryba - Field Consultant, Moose Jaw, effective April 28/08
- Twyla Mitchell - Term Field Consultant, Saskatoon, effective March 3/08
- Tracy McClurg - Youth Apprenticeship Liaison, Prince Albert, effective March 31/08
- Chris Stubbs - Assistant Director of Program Development, Saskatoon, effective May 26/08

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