

For Immediate Release

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SCHOOL DISTRICT 53 RECOGNIZED IN OLIVER FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO TRAINING YOUTH APPRENTICES

Industry Training Authority (ITA) launches their 2016 Regional Roadshow to celebrate apprenticeship and acknowledge School Districts for setting students on the path to a successful career in the trades

Oliver, BC – The [Industry Training Authority's](#) (ITA) 2016 Regional Roadshow made its fourth stop in Oliver yesterday where 35 employers, apprentices, educators and ITA representatives gathered to award Okanagan Similkameen School District (SD 53) with the Youth Work in Trades Performance Award for having the highest program registration in the Thompson-Okanagan region. The award includes \$5,000 in additional funding to assist the district with the development of their [Youth Work in Trades](#) program (name transitioning from Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA)).

The Youth Work in Trades program is a dual credit program that allows youth to begin their work-based training component of an apprenticeship while still in secondary school. As 80 percent of training takes place on the work site and 20 percent takes place in the classroom, it is important that School Districts expose the skilled trades to students early in their education to build awareness about the opportunities available, and to help them get the hands-on experience that is a crucial component of their trades training journey.

As part of a recent \$7.8M funding increase granted by the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, ITA has expanded the Youth Work in Trades program to support and guide youth in securing employer sponsorship. The funding increase has made it possible for a greater number of districts to access this funding, and directly supports the goals outlined in [B.C.'s Skills for Jobs Blueprint](#) to better prepare BC's youth for successful careers in the skilled trades.

"Congratulations for the excellent work that is being recognized and thank you to the teachers and employers who are ensuring that students have the skills they need to be successful in the workforce today and in the future," says **Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism, Skills Training and Responsible for Labour**. "This is crucial, because B.C. has reached the point where fewer young people are entering the workforce than older people retiring from it."

"Our education system is adapting to suit today's young learner," says **Mike Bernier, Education Minister**. "There are certain skills that need to be developed in the workplace instead of the classroom. That is why apprenticeship programs are so important in creating a skilled and sustainable workforce."

"BC educators and the School Districts hosting ITA Youth Programs are crucial to the success of the apprenticeship journey across our province," says **Gary Herman, CEO, ITA**. "The Youth Work in Trades Performance Award was introduced to reward School Districts with strong youth programs, which have been instrumental in supporting Youth in starting their Apprenticeships in high school and helping them get a leg up in their careers."

“ITA’s Youth Programs have really opened my eyes up to the opportunities available in the skilled trades,” says **Elijah Vesprey, Professional Cook apprentice**. “My involvement has allowed me to earn while I learn, network with professionals in the industry, and work towards a career I am passionate about—all while still in secondary school.”

The ITA 2016 Regional Roadshow, which coincides with [WorkBC's Find Your Fit tour](#), will touch down in eight locations across BC, and consists of a number of elements:

- **WorkBC's Find Your Fit tour:** Fun, interactive events designed to provide students with hands-on experience at different career stations to help them discover and explore BC careers. An ITA representative will be available to share information about [ITA Youth Programs](#), while also connecting with educators to promote a pathway to the trades.
- **Youth Work in Trades Performance Award:** ITA will be presenting this award during a celebratory evening event in each of the eight regions across BC to School Districts with the highest program registration as a percentage of grade 10-12 enrollment within their district over the past school year.
- **Employer Certificate Presentations:** ITA will recognize employer sponsors in the region during certificate presentations to thank them for their commitment to the apprenticeship system.
- **ITA Youth Programs:** ITA is funding Youth Discover the Trades / Youth Discover the Trades the Maker Way / Youth Explore Trades Skills events (names transitioning from YES 2 IT, Maker Day and Skills Exploration 10-12) that will occur in each of the eight Regional Roadshow touch down locations.

In addition to SD 53, seven other School Districts are receiving a Youth Work in Trades Performance Award. Each School District presented with the award is considered a top performer within their economic development region among those School Districts who have received youth program support grants in the past three school years.

About the Industry Training Authority

The Industry Training Authority (ITA) leads and coordinates British Columbia’s skilled trades system. ITA works with employers, employees, industry, labour, training providers and government to issue credentials, manage apprenticeships, set program standards and increase opportunities in the trades. ITA is also a key collaborator in *B.C.’s Skills for Jobs Blueprint*, which sets out a plan for re-engineering our education and training system to support our growing and changing economy, and to help British Columbians take full advantage of the opportunities presented by these changes. www.itabc.ca

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