

For Immediate Release

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ITA MENTORSHIP PROJECT A SUCCESS THANKS TO INPUT FROM LOCAL EMPLOYERS AND JOURNEYPERSONS

Pilot project part of ITA's increased efforts in the key areas of youth, the apprenticeship journey, and increasing collaboration with industry and labour

Vancouver, B.C. – The [Industry Training Authority's](#) (ITA) [pilot Mentorship Project](#) that provided mentorship opportunities to over 60 grade 12 students has come to a close. Over the past five months this successful project took place in three BC school districts: Vancouver, Terrace, and North Okanagan/Shuswap. The purpose of the project was to give students an inside glimpse into what a career in the skilled trades looks like. With a focus on youth, this initiative gave secondary school students who are interested in a career in the skilled trades the opportunity to receive coaching and support from experienced tradespeople. Mentors came from a wide variety of trades, ranging from Aircraft Maintenance Technician, to Carpenter, to Baker. The ITA thanks the 60 local employers and ITA certified journeypersons, including 24 employers and journeypersons from Vancouver, who participated in the project.

“We are grateful to the BC Employers and Journeypersons who dedicated their time and know-how to mentor and inspire these young people. This is especially important at a time when we’re looking to work more closely with industry and labour to build a skilled workforce that’s able to take full advantage of the significant upcoming economic growth opportunities here in BC” says Gary Herman, Interim CEO, ITA. “The goal of this initiative is to increase the support system available to high school students as they begin their Apprenticeship journey and to build strong linkages with employers”.

Mentors, who received prior career coaching training, spent approximately 3 hours each month with their mentees in specialized sessions that focused on a range of topics such as 'Getting a Job' and 'How Apprenticeship Training Works'. Vancouver Mentees were also given the opportunity to job shadow their mentor for a day.

Vancouver-based Mentor Hal Andrews, a carpenter with Contech Construction Ltd. felt that the project was a great success and encourages others to get involved. "It was a great opportunity (as

a mentor) to be part of the process and to get a little more in-tune with what it means to teach people or to have a positive impact on their lives" says Andrews. "For the mentees it's just a great opportunity to connect with people that have experience in the trades".

Hal's mentee Liam Smathers, an [ACE IT](#) Carpentry student agrees that the project was worthwhile, "I enjoyed meeting new friends, and networking with the mentors in the Mentorship Project. I learned that pursuing a career in the trades is a great path and as a mentee I learned that being curious isn't a bad thing" says Smathers.

Providing mentorship opportunities to youth and journeypeople was a key recommendation from ITA's Kindergarten to Certification Youth Apprenticeship Strategy, which included stakeholder consultations with over 950 students, parents, school districts, employers, post-secondary institutions and other stakeholders.

[Watch a video on the Mentorship Project.](#)

List of Vancouver Tradespersons and Employers who participated in the Mentorship Project:

- Doreen Wong: Vancouver Community College, Collision Instructor
- Ailin Wong: Vancouver School Board, Automotive AST Instructor
- Kevin Chiang: Formerly of BMW AST, currently at Royal Le Page Realty
- Dave Cross: Vancouver Community College, Auto Refinishing Painter
- Larry Nagalingam: Trades Qualified Cook
- Darren Clay: Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts, Chef and Instructor
- Timothy Budd: Art Institute, Culinary and Pastry Instructor
- Corbin Venida: Vancouver School Board, Red Seal Cook
- Poincianna Johnson: Professional Cook
- Bruno Feldeisen: Four Seasons Vancouver, Pastry Chef
- Fiona Chong: Vancouver Community College, Baking and Pastry Instructor
- Rachel Bennett: Whole Foods Markets, Baker and Team Leader
- John Zimmermann: Lafarge, Red Seal Carpenter and Sr. Sales
- Hal Andrews: Contech Construction, President and Carpenter
- Marco Wong: Vancouver School Board, Electrician
- Edward Beckett: Vancouver School Board, Electrician
- Daniel Geddes: Marine Cladding & Sheet Metal LTD., Manager

- Ken Korsch: Vancouver School Board Machinist/Millwright
- Gary Herman: Industry Training Authority, Interim CEO & Tool & Die Maker
- Rick Cahill: Seaspam, Marine Engineer
- Louisa Roberston: WestJet, Aircraft Maintenance Engineer
- John Martinolich: Vancouver Community College, Auto Collision
- Andy Russell: University of BC, Auto Service Technician
- Ed Domenco: University of BC, Plumber

Additional Quotes:

- Bruno Feldeisen, Pastry Chef at Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver, Mentor

"Mentorship reminds us to keep our hearts and minds open to the next generation in the workplace, giving mentors a glimpse into their world and mentees a glimpse into ours. I better understood the challenges and thoughts of the next generation and the mentee got a better understanding of the trade path they are pursuing. Staying open and dreaming big requires hard work, so encouragement from mentors or experienced tradespeople is crucial to a young person's success."

- Jennifer Tuley, [ACE IT](#) Baker program participant, Mentee

"It was a great learning experience. It really guided me towards what I should do next after finishing my program and it also really helped meeting people that have experience in similar jobs"

About ITA

The Industry Training Authority (ITA) manages BC's industrial trades training and certification system, and works with employers, employees, industry, labour, training providers and governments to increase opportunities in the trades. www.itabc.ca.

- *ACE IT*

The ACE IT program is a partnership between ITA and the BC Ministry of Education. It allows high school students to take first level technical training that gives them dual credit for high school courses and apprenticeship or industry training programs.

ACE IT provides school districts/board authorities with funding for students pursuing an



apprenticeship career path to obtain the first level of technical training in a particular trade. Technical training classes are most often taught at colleges, but can also be offered at school district facilities.

- SSA

The Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA) program is a partnership between ITA and the BC Ministry of Education. SSA lets students begin the work-based training component of an apprenticeship program while still in high school. Students ‘earn while they learn’ getting dual credits toward both their high school diploma and apprenticeship on-the-job training.

SSA provides a smoother transition from school to work and a quicker route to trade certification and a pay cheque.

- 30 -

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