

For Immediate Release

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BULKLEY VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT 54 RECOGNIZED IN SMITHERS 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

Smithers, BC – The [Industry Training Authority's](#) (ITA) 2016 Regional Roadshow made its first stop in Smithers yesterday where 30 employers, apprentices, educators and ITA representatives gathered to award Bulkley Valley School District (SD 54) with the Youth Work in Trades Performance Award for having the highest program registration in the Nechako 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 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.

"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."

"Thanks to my involvement in the Youth Work in Trades program, I've been able to elevate my craft, work on-the-job while getting credits towards my degree, network within the industry, and train under Red Seal Chefs." says **Veronica Portscht, Professional Chef apprentice**. "This program has greatly benefitted my trade and has helped me begin my career in the culinary arts."

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 54, seven other School Districts will be 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.

The full list of Youth Work in Trades Performance Award recipients includes:

Region	School Districts to receive awards
Cariboo	SD 57 Prince George
Kootenay	SD 20 Kootenay Columbia
Lower Mainland	SD 33 Chilliwack
Nechako	SD 54 Bulkley Valley
North Coast	SD 82 Coast Mountains
Northeast	SD 60 Peace River North
Thompson–Okanagan	SD 53 Okanagan Similkameen
Vancouver Island	SD 69 Qualicum

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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