

WHAT ARE YOU MADE OF?

TRADE STORIES FROM THE FIELD

ita
YOUR TICKET.

Find out why more young people are choosing trades, what it's like to be a trade apprentice and how you can get started on an apprenticeship of your own.

NEWS

THE ANALYZER



BETH REED, 20

Plumber

Kamloops, BC

APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAY

- SSA (Grades 10–12)
- ACE-IT

BETH'S STORY

Q: HOW DID YOU GET INTO TRADES?

My dad's a plumber and the owner of Campbell Creek Plumbing and Heating. When I was about 14, I started working with him after school and in the summers. We're always going to need plumbers. Tradespeople like my dad are getting older and starting to think about retirement, so there's going to be a shortage.

Q: WHAT'S THE TRAINING LIKE?

It depends what year you're in and what program you do. In general, first year is a six-month or six-week course, second year is a six-week course, third year is another six-week course and fourth year is an eight-week course—and you work between all of them.

In my first year, I took a six-month foundation program at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) where we spent most of our time in a lab learning how to work with different types of pipes. Right now, I'm in my third year at TRU, going to school every day from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Our class is like a big family: we're always talking, laughing and bouncing ideas off of each other. At this rate, I'll be a full-fledged plumber by next fall.

Q: WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY ON THE JOB?

My dad and I will have a bunch of calls lined up, mostly at people's homes in and around Kamloops. But if there's an emergency—like somebody's water main or hot water tank breaks—we try to get that done.

Q: WHAT'S THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING AN APPRENTICE PLUMBER?

Being a plumber is hard work, but it's very rewarding. The pay is good, there's a lot of flexibility, and the work is always changing. One day, we could be working in a house; the next day, we could be fixing somebody's furnace. I enjoy meeting new people and building things.

Q: WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO SUCCEED AS AN APPRENTICE PLUMBER?

You have to have drive and strength. The job sometimes involves heavy lifting and getting very dirty.

Q: WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?

I like being outdoors, hiking, swimming and riding my horses. You won't find me sitting in front of the TV very often.

“Being a plumber is hard work, but it's very rewarding.”

THE BUILDER



CARSON LAUNDER, 18
Construction Electrician
Langford, BC

APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAY

- Skills Exploration Course (Grade 12)
- SSA (started at the very end of Grade 12 and continued on after graduation)

CARSON'S STORY

Q: HOW DID YOU GET INTO TRADES?

Midway through my Grade 12 year, I went to my counsellor's office to get a course change. While I was there, Mr. Hargreaves, the career coordinator, mentioned a skills exploration course for residential construction at my high school.

Q: WHAT WAS THE SKILLS EXPLORATION COURSE LIKE?

It was a mix of classroom and hands-on training. At the end, we could choose carpentry, plumbing or electrical. I took pre-calculus and physics in high school, so electrical seemed like the way to go for me. Mr. Hargreaves and my teacher Mr. Leslie helped me get a job at Glenco and I started working a week before graduation.

Q: WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY ON THE JOB?

I show up at 6:45 a.m. and my shift starts at 7:00 a.m. From there, it really varies. So far, I've shaped pipes, run wiring, set up plugs, wired a switch and hung lighting. Each week, I work two 8 hour shifts, two 10-hour shifts and a 4-hour shift—so my weekend started at 11:00 a.m. today.

Q: WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO SUCCEED AS AN APPRENTICE ELECTRICIAN?

Be willing to do whatever your journeyman asks and be ready to put your head down and grind away. You just have to show up every day, ask questions and work hard.

Q: WHAT'S THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING AN APPRENTICE?

Working with the older guys has been cool. I didn't really know anything about electrical when I started, but I learned so much within the first few weeks. I'd been thinking about going to post-secondary but trades let me earn money while learning and working instead of sitting in a classroom.

Q: WHAT'S YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL?

I'd like to get my ticket, work as a journeyman and eventually become a foreman. After this job's done, I'll take my first year of technical training. Glenco has offered me the chance to work in Abbotsford, in which case I'd go to school at BCIT. Or I could stay here in Victoria, find another company and go to Camosun College.

Q: WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR SOMEONE CONSIDERING TRADES TRAINING?

Get started as early as you can. If you start when you're in Grade 10, you can have your level 1 technical training by the time you graduate.

Q: WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?

I'm a huge football fan—mostly NFL, but a little CFL too. I also play guitar—a lot of classic rock and folk music like Bob Dylan and Dallas Green.

“I'd like to get my ticket, work as a journeyman and eventually become a foreman.”

THE ADVISOR



KYLE PRESTON
Apprenticeship Advisor
and Red Seal Cook
Victoria, BC

An apprenticeship advisor is someone who meets face-to-face with apprentices and employer sponsors to talk about BC's apprenticeship system. They're out in the field building relationships and connecting apprentices with resources to help secure new employee sponsors.

www.itabc.ca/apprenticeship-advisors

KYLE'S STORY

Q: WHAT'S YOUR JOB AS AN APPRENTICESHIP ADVISOR?

I help build knowledge and awareness of what apprenticeship programs and pathways look like. Among other things, I go to high schools and speak to students about the Industry Training Authority (ITA) and apprenticeship programs.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET INTO TRADES?

I started off in the culinary arts—so cooking—in Grade 11. I was looking for part-time work and a teacher got me into an apprenticeship program in a restaurant. I continued on with the apprenticeship after high school and spent the next 10 years cheffing in hotels, at resorts and on cruise ships.

Q: WHAT MAKES TRADES A GOOD OPTION?

There's so much gratification in building and creating. Not everyone is ready for—or interested in—a traditional college or university program right after high school, but you still need a career and goals. An apprenticeship can help you transition from high school into the workplace through the “earn and learn” model.

Q: WHAT'S THE BIGGEST MISCONCEPTION ABOUT TRADES?

Trades are not a default for students who can't achieve something else. Math, for example, is very important. Cooks need math for measurements and financial calculations, carpenters rely on trigonometry, and welders use pressure mathematics and physics.

Q: WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT APPRENTICESHIP?

The first questions I get are: How long does it take? And how much money can I make? An apprenticeship takes anywhere from two to four years, and salaries vary depending on the trade. Beyond that, students want to know what they'll do in an apprenticeship program and what they can do with a specific trade. Once you've completed your apprenticeship, there are so many opportunities to continue learning and to take on new responsibilities.

Q: WHY GET STARTED IN HIGH SCHOOL?

You'll have your first job, start developing skills and get a sense of whether this is the right path for you. The other added bonus is dual credit. With ITA's ACE IT and SSA programs, you can earn credits towards your apprenticeship and high school graduation at the same time.

“There's so much gratification in building and creating.”

NEWS & PROGRAMS

LIONS IN THE HOUSE

Between February and April 2015, members of the BC Lions football team will be travelling to 25 schools across BC to talk about trades as part of the “Lions in the House” initiative. Hear what players have to say about the importance of finding a career that feeds your passion and why trades could be the right choice for you. Then, show them what you’re made of in a series of athletic challenges.

Find out if the BC Lions are coming to your school at www.itabc.ca/lions-in-the-house

YOUR PATH TO TRADES

Get a head start on an apprenticeship while you’re still in high school with one of ITA’s Youth Programs. You could be earning a pay cheque and building your skills—in the classroom and on the job—before you even graduate.

SKILLS EXPLORATION 10/11/12

Interested in trying out a few trades before you choose one? Enrol in Skills Exploration to gain skills and hands-on experience in multiple in-demand trades.

ACE IT

Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training

Attend trades training classes at your high school or other ITA-certified training facility and earn credits that count towards your high school diploma and your trade apprenticeship.

SSA

Secondary School Apprenticeship

Find a job and start logging work-based training hours towards your trade apprenticeship. You’ll earn credits that count towards your high school diploma and take home a pay cheque.

To find out which programs are offered at your school, contact your counsellor.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

ITA TRADES GUIDE

Learn more about British Columbia’s 100 apprenticeable trades and the trade apprenticeship process in the ITA Trades Guide.

Download the PDF at www.itabc.ca/youth/educators

LIVE Q&A

Submit your trades-related questions and connect with others who are considering a trade apprenticeship during live Q&A sessions on Facebook hosted by ITA’s Youth Initiatives Administrator Maureen Phung.


Head to www.facebook.com/IndustryTrainingAuthority

EMAIL


Have a specific question about your trade apprenticeship or career? ITA can help.


Send us a message at youth@itabc.ca

#whatareyoumadeof

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