

YOUTH

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INDUSTRY TRAINING AUTHORITY YOUTH PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

Dual Credit Grad

Melina Sparks

Welding Trade Skills into
her University Career

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YOUR TICKET.



Dual Credit Grad

Melina Sparks

Welding Trade Skills into her University Career



Twenty-year-old Melina Sparks is no stranger to the welding trade. She grew up in Powell River, where her grandfather owned an auto wrecker business and her uncles are successful tradespersons. Add in the fact that her two brothers are Red Seal welders, and it's no surprise that Melina was interested in welding.

What may surprise you is what she wanted to do with that skill.

"I loved math in high school, and I loved my trades electives, especially metalwork. But my goal was to get a **mechanical engineering degree**," she explains. "I knew that I'd have to pay my own way through university, so I decided to get a trade doing something I loved, and use the good money I'd make welding to finance my university plans."

How's it working for her?

"Pretty good!" she laughs. "I worked as a lead welder and fabricator last summer at Wilson's Transportation in Victoria, fixing buses for BC transit. I enjoyed the work and I made more than enough money — along with my student loan — to pay for my university this year and still have a good lifestyle while I'm in school." Melina's welding job gave her a leg up on other university students struggling to get by on minimum wage. "My welding pay cheque gave me enough surplus that I can head to Mount Washington for a snowboard day, or go to Vancouver and get in a bit of shopping," she explains. "When I tell other UVic students that I can already make **\$22 an hour** part-time...they are pretty impressed!"

Melina signed up for the dual credit Welding Level "C" program at the Vancouver Island University (VIU) campus in Powell River. She credits VIU welding instructor Wes Irwin with giving her a "tough but fair" preparation for the real world. "It was great training for the work world and for university. The dual credit program is like a real job. You have to show up on time, be prepared for class and then get your work done. It's like a reality check with consequences. And those skills are important on the job and in university," she said.

Clearly, those skills add up to success. Melina took first place in the 2010 Regional Welding Skills Canada Competition and was awarded the **2010 award for Top VIU Welding Dual Credit Student**. She entered the UBC Mechanical Engineering Program in 2011, and switched to a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science at UVic in 2012. "I really liked the UBC mechanical engineering program, but discovered that I was even more interested in computer science. The UVic program is really working for me." Melina's university professors agree. In 2011 she took home a **BC Hydro Aboriginal Scholarship** and an **Engineering and Geosciences scholarship** from the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC. In 2012 her A-grade point average netted her the **Irving K. Barber Aboriginal scholarship**.

So what does this sparkling welder / computer scientist see in her future? "I hope to graduate from UVic in 2015. And by then, I think I'll be ready to do some travelling, then maybe buy a house and a nice car."

"I knew that I'd have to pay my own way through university, so I decided to get a trade doing something I loved, and use the good money I'd make welding to finance my university plans."

And student loan worries won't hold her back. "A lot of university students are anxious about not being able to get a job in their field and being saddled with big student loans," she said. "But not me. I always know I can use my welding skills to find work that pays well, and it's work I really like. So I have options." She pauses and says. "I'm pretty lucky." ■

“Find something you want to do and chase it! It’s yours. There’s nothing to stop you.”
That’s the attitude that got Spencer Phillips on track to live his dream.

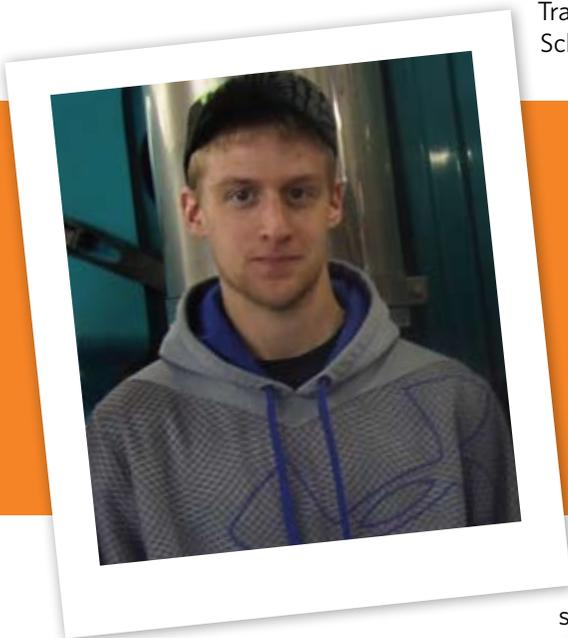
At 17, Spencer is a full-time student in the Heavy Duty Mechanic pre-apprenticeship program at the College of New Caledonia (CNC) campus in Vanderhoof. Weekdays, he’s on campus, learning the theory and putting it right to the test on equipment in the shop. Evenings and weekends you can find him plying his trade in the family logging business, either in the shop, or out in the bush.

school and summers. But he didn’t know about the high school dual credit programs till grade nine. “I kind of fell into it,” he explains with a smile. “I was in a detention, and the teacher started talking to me about the **SSA** and **ACE-IT** program. Since being a mechanic was always my goal, this seemed like a good way to start my ticket.”

Spencer opened the right door. He looked up Darren Carpenter, the Career and Trades Programs Coordinator for School District No.91. Darren got him

This future mechanic has a plan. “When I graduate from CNC in May, I’m going to keep on with my apprenticeship and work at Pitka Logging for a few more years till I get my Red Seal. That will be major, and I’m looking forward to it! After that... I might do some travelling, head for Australia, do some scuba diving.”

Spencer has one eye on the future, but makes sure he has fun in the present too. With his earnings as a mechanic, he’s been able to pay for his truck, and “it’s nice to



Heavy Duty Mechanic Apprentice Spencer Phillips

On track with his training, trade and travel plans!

“I love it.” he says. “My grandfather started Pitka Logging Limited and my dad, mom, uncle and aunt work there too. They want to see me do well, to get my schooling and succeed. I always knew I wanted to be a mechanic, working on the bunchers, skidders, excavators, mobile heavy equipment and logging trucks. I get a lot of work in our shop, but I also get to work out in the bush — and that’s the best.”

Spencer got a head start in grade seven, learning about the family business after

signed up for the SSA program in 2010 then the HDM dual credit program in 2012. Darren says Spencer has made great use of the range of work experience programs. He got exposure to several trades in grade seven with the **YES 2 IT** program, and has never looked back. Spencer agrees. “I always knew I wanted to be a mechanic, and **this program is the best way to get ahead**. I’m going to graduate from high school with a real head start on college. By the end of May this year I’ll have my Module 1 HDM — and that **takes about 600 hours off my apprenticeship**.”

have money and be a bit independent from your parents,” he says. “I like to be able to pay for some things myself.”

Spencer thinks the dual credit program has helped him to succeed. “If you want to do it, it’s a great opportunity. But you have to be committed. Sometimes you have to get outside your comfort zone and make the challenge a part of you. Mould it right into your comfort zone.” ■

Employer Sponsor Profile

Russell Mechanical

Plumbing and Mechanical
for commercial, residential
and industrial.

In operation for: 15 years
Located: Maple Ridge



Owner, Prescott Bell

2007

Participated in the **YES 2 IT** program, learned about Heavy Duty Mechanic, Agriculture and Forest Management

2008

Started working at Pitka Logging Ltd, learning mechanic trade

2010

Started the **SSA** and **ACE-IT** dual credit programs

2012

Started full time Heavy Duty Mechanic pre-apprenticeship at College of New Caledonia (CNC)

2013

Currently in both **SSA** and **ACE-IT** programs Will graduate high school in June with HDM Module 1 and have 600 hours towards his apprenticeship plus 974 work based hours or more

2018

Red Seal! Time to travel!

Q: You have been a sponsor for a few Youth apprentices. Why do you hire apprentices from the school district?

A: We have eight apprentices right now and two of them are from Langley Secondary — Warren Thompson (class of 2011-12) and Dale Kimber (class of 2012-13). The Piping and Plumbing teacher at Langley Secondary, Jeff Dickson, really mentors his students well. They learn basic tool training, safety and job readiness. Jeff will call me up and say he has students ready for work placement and I know they will have what they need for apprenticing on the job site.

Q: An employer sponsor is responsible for hands-on-training. You're busy running a business — so why do you invest the time to train young apprentices?

A: For business reasons it works well to have a mix of experienced journeymen and apprentices.

For personal reasons, I believe we owe it to our communities to give back and coach youth. I also coach hockey and my philosophy with youth is that it is about teaching work ethic and pride. In our trade we can produce good work and be really proud of our workmanship.

Q: What do you look for when you hire an apprentice?

A: I look for apprentices that can demonstrate three important traits:

- that they've learned the basic piping and plumbing tools training;
- they know about safety on the job site; and
- they have a good work ethic. That means showing up at 7 am and wanting to work hard for 8 hours. It is also important to work as a team player.

Q: What advice would you give to other employers considering hiring a youth apprentice?

A: Find a high school that has your trade program. Develop a relationship with the teacher so you know what they are teaching, and be sure to let them know what you are looking for. It is good for your business to have a mix of ticketed journeymen and youth. It's an opportunity to teach pride in our trades.

Find Your Future in the Trades!

Imagine your future with a good paycheck, satisfying, important work and a lifetime of opportunities. Imagine yourself in the trades.

100 Doors to Open

Think you know about the trades? Carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and welders, right?

But hold on... did you know there are **100 trades to choose from in BC**? Take a look:

**Skilled
Trades
Build.
Fix.
Create.**

You'll find tradespeople working in the heart of Vancouver, and all across our province. They're in every community, in nearly every industry, working indoors and out.

Trades people work in aerospace and agriculture, they are hairstylists and heavy duty mechanics, plumbers and gasfitters.

Trades people build our bridges, homes and offices. They fix our roads and cars, cook our food, and manage businesses.

Look around —
Canada runs on the skilled trades.

Open 100 doors and find out how...

<http://www.itabc.ca/discover-apprenticeship-programs/search-programs>

Your Ticket to Success

When you start your future in the trades, you're opening the door to a great job...but you're also building a strong foundation for endless opportunities.

You might be surprised at how many business owners, teachers and other professionals started their career in the trades. Ask around. You might be surprised at how many of the people you know built their career on trades training.

Maybe you want to run your own business, teach, or explore other careers. Your trades training will give you a solid base to build on — so you can find the future that works for you.

100 Trade Choices

- Aircraft Technician
- Appliance Service Technician
- Arboriculturist (Urban Forestry)
- Architectural Sheet Metal Worker
- Asphalt Paving Technician
- Automotive Glass Technician
- Automotive Painter or Prep Technician
- Automotive Service Technician
- Baker
- Boilermaker
- Boom Truck Operator
- Bricklayer
- Cabinet Maker
- Carpenter
- Concrete Finisher
- Cook
- Crane Operator
- Cremationist
- Dairy Production Technician
- Diesel Engine Mechanic
- Gasfitter
- Drywall Finisher
- Electrician
- Embalmer or Funeral Director
- Floor Covering Installer
- Geothermal Technician
- Glazier
- Hairstylist (Cosmetologist)
- Hardwood Floorlayer
- Heating Technician
- Heavy Duty Mechanic
- Heavy Equipment Operator
- Horticulturist
- Inboard/Outboard Mechanic
- Millwright
- Instrumentation and Control Technician
- Insulator
- Ironworker
- Lather
- Locksmith
- Logistics and Distribution
- Lumber Manufacturing
- Machinist
- Marine Service Technician
- Metal Fabricator
- Mobile Crane Operator
- Motorcycle Mechanic
- Painter and Decorator
- Parts and Warehousing
- Petroleum Equipment Installation and Service
- Piledriver and Bridgeworker
- Plumber
- Power Line Technician
- Professional Cook
- Recreation Vehicle Service Technician
- Refrigeration Mechanic
- Residential Building Maintenance Worker
- Residential Framing Technician
- Rig Technician
- Road Builder and Heavy Construction
- Roofer
- Security Systems Technician
- Sheet Metal Worker
- Sprinkler System Installer
- Steamfitter / Pipefitter
- Tidal Angling Guide
- Tilesetter

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See us in action!

youtube.com/user/itabctradestraining



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www.itabc.ca

Discover apprenticeship. Learn more about trades careers, ITA Youth Programs and how it all works!

Okay, how do I start?

High school is the perfect time to explore the trades. Find out what you like and what's out there.

Start by checking out the 100 available trades <http://www.itabc.ca/discover-apprenticeship-programs/search-programs> and by talking to your school's career counselor.

Want a pay cheque now?

You don't have to quit school to get a head start on your career.

You can start your apprenticeship and earn high school credits at the same time.

Picture this... you walk out of your high school graduation with your diploma, and credits towards the first year of your apprenticeship.

The **ACE-IT** and **SSA** programs save you time and money. Your first year of post-secondary training is free, and you may also be eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship.

Here's how it works.

Fast track your trades career by signing up for both the **ACE-IT** and **SAA** programs. You earn while you learn, and get credits towards your high school diploma.

It's all about apprenticeship. Apprenticeship is a combination of on the job training and classroom instruction. You are in the workforce, earning a pay cheque while you learn your trade. Most apprenticeships take about 4 years, and you spend 85% of your time learning on the job and 15% of your time in classroom training.

This is you. In high school. And in your apprenticeship.



The ACE-IT program lets high school students take free trades training classes, usually at a college. You get credit towards your apprenticeship technical training and course credits towards your high school graduation.



The Secondary School Apprenticeship program lets high school students work for pay in an eligible trade while earning credits towards an apprenticeship. And you may be eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship.

Take charge of your future.

Talk to your high school career counselor about apprenticeship.

Learn more about apprenticeship and ITA Youth Programs at itabc.ca