

Youth in trades project: recruiting Women, Indigenous People, Newcomers and all youth

by Heidi Riley

Youth are invited to information sessions on February 6, 2019 (Storm date February 7) at 9 am to find out more about the Youth in Trades project.

Information session locations:

Charlottetown: Lions Bingo Hall, Main Floor, Connolly Street and **Summerside:** Holland College Waterfront Campus, Room #73. Unemployed or underemployed (working less than 20 hours per week) youth between 16 and 30 years of age are eligible for the project.

High demand for construction workers

With the PEI construction industry booming and construction employers across the Island needing 300 to 400 new employees immediately, there is no better time than the present for youth interested in exploring a construction trade to apply to the Construction Association of PEI (CAPEI) **Youth in Trades project**.

All youth interested in trades are encouraged to apply. "With the demand for skilled people, the Association sees a great opportunity for Indigenous People, Women, and Newcomers to have a well-paying career in the construction trades," says **Janet O'Donnell**, Youth Employment Program Manager with the CAPEI.

During the project, 10 participants per location are paid for eight weeks of group-based employability skills training, which covers resumé development, positive attitudes, team building exercises, essential skills assessment, construction site visits, CPR/First Aid, WHMIS Fall Arrest, and CSTS Certifications. Orientation at Holland College for carpentry, electrical, welding, and plumbing trades is also included. Participants receive 240 apprenticeship hours with completion of the classroom portion.

The project will also place participants in an entry-level position with a construction trades employer for 14 weeks, with the expectation they will be kept on after the 14 weeks.

For more information on the **Construction Association Youth in Trades** project, contact **Janet O'Donnell**, Program Manager, at **902-394-3361**.

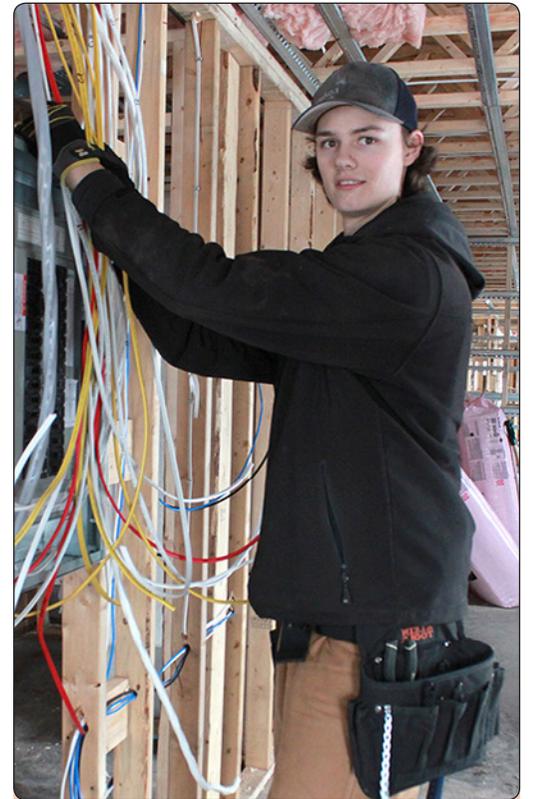


A participant in the Construction Association of PEI Youth in Trades Program 2018 speaks about his love of the trades

Caelan Ferguson, 19 years old

"Through the Youth in Trades Program, I was exposed to several construction trades and was able to determine the trade I was best suited for.

"I am now employed full time as an Electrician Apprentice with a great employer, R. Cudmore Electric Ltd. I intend to work towards my Red Seal."



Caelan Ferguson

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Skills Link Program.

Plumbing apprentice loves her new career path

When **Tiana Vandenberghe** signed up for the plumbing program at Holland College, she did not have a lot of background in the trades. "I went into the program blind, but I was open to everything, and I was ready to dive in and make it work.

"The summer before I decided to go back to school, my husband, his father, and I installed a wood boiler in our basement. I enjoyed the technicalities of the controls and soldering process.

"I looked into three programs offered at Holland College in Georgetown: plumbing, pipefitting, and welding. Friends and family told me that plumbing is a huge trade, and you don't have to go out west to find a job."

Financing her education

Tiana spoke to SkillsPEI, and was eligible to receive 70 percent of her tuition and was able to continue her EI while in post-secondary. The rest of the financing came from an RESP her mother had set up, which covered the cost of tools, books, and student fees.

On-the-job training

Tiana did her on-the-job training with a small residential plumbing company in Montague. The second opportunity was with the Plumbers & Pipefitters Union, which sent Tiana to work with Bevan Bros. Limited Plumbing & Heating.

Job prospects

Two weeks after graduation, Tiana had a full time job with Bevan Bros. "There is definitely a building boom happening right now. I have heard that at present, Bevan Bros. has 32 contracts for construction work, and they need more qualified people."

"The idea that the trades are not friendly to women workers is all wrong," says Tiana.

"When I am on site, I talk to carpenters, gyprock installers, and welders, and every one of them has told me that they would love to see more women in the trades."

Tiana admits that she is not as physically strong as some of the guys, but says that lifting duties are not as strenuous as she expected. "It is more about carrying large, awkward things that need multiple people to maneuver. We learn about safe lifting and carrying techniques."



Tiana Vandenberghe is a second-year plumbing apprentice employed with Bevan Bros. Limited Plumbing & Heating. She is working on the new site of Seafood Express in Charlottetown.

Wages and benefits

Tiana is a member of the Plumbers & Pipefitters Union. The high rate for first-year apprentices is \$16.40/hr. In addition, for every hour worked, the employer contributes \$6 to her pension plan with the Union. Dental and medical benefits are also included in the wage package. Union dues are \$30 per week.

For more about the **Holland College Plumbing/Pipefitting** program, visit www.hollandcollege.com and search **plumbing / pipefitting**. For more about the **Plumbers & Pipefitters Union**, call **902-894-5404** or visit **Facebook**.

