



SHEET METAL WORKERS TRAINING CENTRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

19077 - 95A AVENUE, SURREY, B.C. • 5514 - 275 STREET, LANGLEY, B.C.

Skills Canada BC - "BC Skills" Competition

[Skills Canada BC](#) hosted their 30th Annual Provincial Competition at the Abbotsford Trade and Exhibition Centre on April 17, 2024. Each year, this competition brings together the brightest minds and groundbreaking ideas in Skilled Trades. BC Skills helps thousands of students to explore rewarding careers through skills competitions, hands-on programs and resources for educators.

The Sheet Metal booth had four competitors representing SMWTCS, BCIT, and Okanagan College with instructors from each school onsite. SMWTCS was represented by Natasha Hua, from Modern Niagara as the 2023 Level 3 Apprentice Contest winner. The results were:

- **Gold:** Samuel Gasser from British Columbia Institute of Technology
- **Silver:** Mark Holowachuk from Okanagan College
- **Bronze:** Brandon Vangool from British Columbia Institute of Technology

Congratulations to all the contestants!



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SPRING 2024

Canadian Council of Sheet Metal & Roofers 2024 Conference

48th Annual Sheet Metal Apprentice Contest



The Canadian Council of Sheet Metal Workers and Roofers sponsored the [48th Annual Sheet Metal Apprentice Contest](#) in conjunction with their Annual Convention. This year's contest attracted some of the top 4th year Sheet Metal Apprentices from across Canada who competed in the 2-day event held in Saint John, New Brunswick.

Representing [SMART Local Union 280](#) and [SMACNA BC](#) was **Colin Nam** of Apollo Sheet Metal. Colin was our Level 4 winner of the annual SMWTC Apprentice Contest hosted in November 2023, and was presented with the Franco Pederzini award.



This year's project was a challenging copper and brass project, with the venue allowing members of the public to peruse the skills of our future generation of sheet metal worker and learn about the trades. The Canadian Council hosted a banquet to honour all the apprentices who competed and to recognize those who stood above the rest with awards and cash prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th place.



Colin placed 4th in the competition and was honoured with the prestigious Bob Brown Award! Bob Brown retired as the Director of Canadian Affairs for SMART in 2012 and passed away in 2016 shortly after receiving his 50-year service pin from the International. His passion was always that young people serving an apprenticeship be treated with respect and earn a fair wage as they progressed.

Thank you for representing our [SMART Local Union 280](#) and [SMACNA BC](#) at this year's competition.

Well done, Colin!



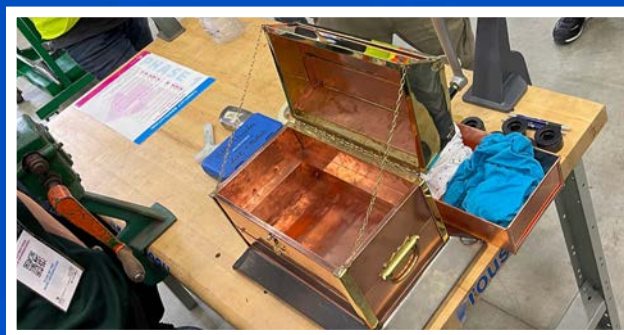
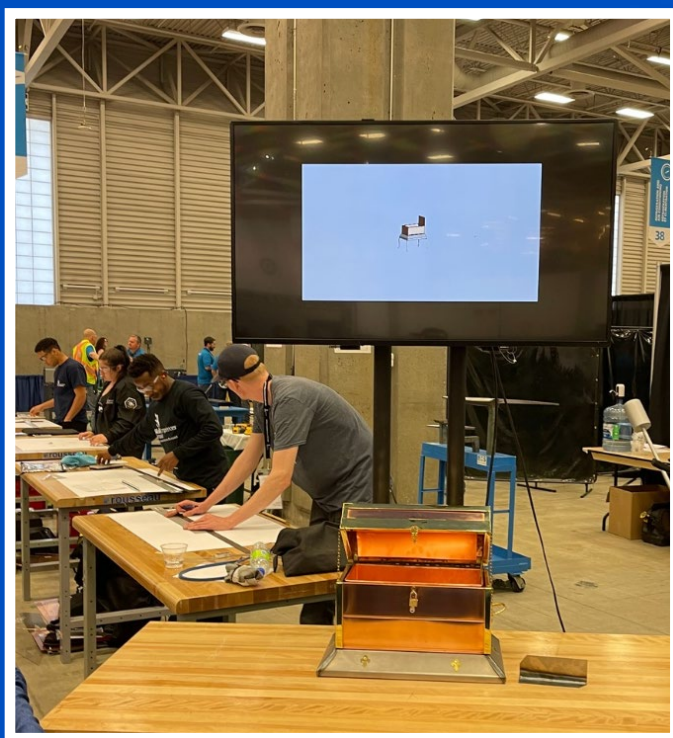
I am very grateful for the opportunity to represent our union and represent BC. I had a fantastic time meeting new people and learning new skills. All of the contestants were super friendly and we all got along pretty well. I think we all opened up pretty quickly and most of us were just there to have fun. I'm happy I took home 4th place with the Bob Brown Award. I went into it with the intention of having a good time and not stressing about the results of it. Overall it was a great chance to explore the east coast of Canada and it's an experience I would encourage other apprentices to try and go for. — Colin Nam

Skills Canada

This year, the annual Skills Canada competition was hosted in Quebec City from May 29 – June 1, 2024. The 2024 Skills National BC Team consisted of 60 phenomenal young individuals, competing in 54 different trade and technology competitions! Each year, competitors from across Canada embark on a journey of innovation, creativity, and excellence by participating in this annual competition.

British Columbia was well represented with 27 medals including 10 gold winners in various trades! Mark Holowachuk of Okanagan College brought home the gold medal for sheet metal! Well done!

Congratulations to all the contestants for their hard work, dedication and passion for their careers in the skilled trades!



UTIP PROJECT UPDATES

UTIP

UNION TRAINING AND
INNOVATION PROGRAM

Canada

Funded in part by the Government of Canada
Union Training and Innovation Program

Our [UTIP project](#), *Technology and an Inclusive Workforce: Forging our Future Sheet Metal Industry* wrapped up in March 2024. The 5-year project was successful, despite COVID delaying implementation of training using UTIP funded equipment and outreach activities. We were able to regain momentum and accomplish our objectives.

We purchased a MEWP-VR simulator, AV & VR welders, advanced welding equipment, fan service units, IT equipment and sheet metal consumables, leading to higher quality training and a more skilled workforce. There were 564 sheet metal students who attended technical training between March 2019 – March 2024, of which 45.6% (257 students) journeyed, successfully completing their apprenticeship.



Mobile Elevated Work Platform Simulator



Multimatic® 220 AC/DC Welding Machine



Virtual Reality Welder VRTEX® Engage



Augmented Reality Welding System

*Between March 2019 –
March 2024,
257 students journeyed,
successfully completing
their apprenticeship*

We increased representation of three key groups (women, Indigenous Peoples, newcomers) contributing to a more inclusive workforce. As of June 2023, [SkilledTradesBC](#) ranked SMITB 6th overall of Top 10 Sponsors with over 100 Apprenticeships with 8% Indigenous Peoples, and 9th overall with 7% Women. Of note, there are now 75 female [SMART Local Union 280](#) members and we are seeing an increase in the number of newcomers with work permits.

We built broad-based partnerships to influence change in sheet metal industry to support a more diversified workforce. Our partnerships with [SMART Local Union 280](#), [SMACNA-BC](#) contractors and the [BC Building Trades](#) were instrumental to supporting outreach activities.

Our partnership with [Skill Plan](#) led to the implementation of our mandatory online assessment and their Build your Skills online learning modules better prepare apprentices prior to attending technical training.

[Skills Ready](#), an initiative of the [Construction Foundation of BC](#), contracted Sheila Sadler, a female journey to represent sheet metal for outreach activities at [BC Skills](#), career fairs, high school workshops, etc. as well as indigenous peoples' events.

To support the project evaluation, we conducted surveys with apprentices and hosted annual focus groups with sheet metal workers and contractors to gain better perspective on industry trends and emerging needs. We also launched a UTIP Women in Sheet Metal Advisory Committee, exploring empowerment themes aligned with [Belonging and Excellence for All \(BE4All\)](#) commitment to creating an environment of welcoming, belonging and excellence.

UTIP created opportunities to shift mindset about technology use and increase awareness of supporting greater diversity to address workforce needs. We thank everyone who supported this project leading to its successful outcomes.



Sheet Metal E.R.T. – our New Environmental Training Project

Building off our successful UTIP project, SMWTCS received @ \$246,500 from the Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy (CAS) - federal funding to facilitate access to trades training using new technologies, particularly targeting green initiatives.

Our new *Sheet Metal E.R.T.* environmental training project will promote environmental stewardship by training apprentices to reduce, reuse, and recycle sheet metal.

Project goals include:

- Our apprentices will learn to optimize material usage, reduce waste generation, and increase resource efficiency.
- Our training centres will foster a culture of sustainability, where environmental responsibility becomes ingrained in everyday operations and decision-making processes.



SMACNA-BC AGM

May 11th - Penticton, BC



The annual [SMACNA-BC](#) annual general meeting brings together contractors and SMART Local members to celebrate the year's successes. This year's event was hosted in Penticton May 9 – 11th with the opening reception on Thursday, followed by team building activities on Friday including the Amazing Metal Chase at the evening banquet. Saturday was the AGM, at which the Jud Martell presented the 2023 annual report for the SMITB and SMWTCs. The AGM wrapped up with a new president elected, Mark McLaren of Ridge Metal.

Comings & Goings

We bid adieu to one of our longest-standing SMITB Trustees/SMWTCS Directors, Aaron Smith of [Smith Sheet Metal Works Ltd.](#) Aaron has been at the helm of SMITB/SMWTCS for 24 years navigating through tremendous change over the years:

- Hiring, retiring or replacing 4 Training Coordinators, 3 Lead Instructors, a dozen instructors and half dozen administrators
- Negotiating first-time collective agreement for SMITB staff
- Creation of the Society (2002) for SMWTCS
 - as a result of government cut-backs to apprenticeship training triggered by de-certification, SMWTCS was forced to charge tuition
- Advocacy leading to re-introduction of Skilled Trades Certification 20 years after the government removed compulsory trades
- Leveraging Main facility (Surrey) to purchase second Valley location (Langley) to meet industry demand for training

Aaron, we thank you for your dedication, unwavering belief and willpower to leave the Training Centres well positioned to begin a new era.

Please welcome **Derek Crowie** of [Summit Sheet Metal](#) as Aaron's replacement as Trustee/Director.



Congratulations

Sheet Metal Level 4 Grads!

Since our last newsletter in the fall, we've had four – level 4 classes with 47 sheet metal apprentices wrap up their technical training at both the Main (Surrey) and Valley (Langley) locations:

- [2364V-H4](#) (October 3, 2023 – November 24, 2023)
- [2414M-H4](#) (January 8 – March 1, 2024)
- [2424M-H4](#) (March 4 – April 26, 2024)
- [2434-H4](#) (April 29 – June 21, 2024)

We are very proud of our Sheet Metal Level 4 grads for their class work and preparing for the Interprovincial Red Seal exams. Kudos to each apprentice for their dedication and hard work!



2364V-H4 class



2414M-H4 class



2434-H4 class



2424M-H4 class



Skilled Trades Certification

Effective December 1, 2023



[Skilled Trades Certification](#) (STC), also known as compulsory trades is now in effect in British Columbia, requiring tradespersons working in 7 electrical and mechanical trades. Employers are required to maintain a 2:1 apprentice to journeyperson supervision ratio for their workforce. STC will boost the credibility and prestige of the trades, leading to a highly skilled workforce.

As one of the identified trades, sheet metal workers are required to register as an apprentice or certified journeyperson or challenging their trade interprovincial (IP) exam. SMWTC has expanded to two facilities with more class offerings to meet industry demand for apprenticeship training.

[SkilledTradesBC](#) has both provincial and federal supports available to registered employers and apprentices. SkilledTradesBC has also enhanced their STC services to customers by:

- increasing apprenticeship training seats and certification support
- expanded Apprenticeship Advisors team to customize support for individual apprentices
- new dedicated team of Certification Advisors across province
- examination supports including webinars on best practices/strategies to succeed on the exams
- accommodation requests (e.g. translator, reader, additional time for exam)

Trade Qualifiers

Experienced workers with over 5 years' experience and more than 9,000 verifiable work-based training hours may plan to challenge certification exams as [Trade Qualifiers](#).

There are IP exam refresher courses available through training providers, including SMWTCS. Individuals with learning difficulties may be able to access one-on-one support and request accommodations arrangements.