



SHEET METAL WORKERS TRAINING CENTRE SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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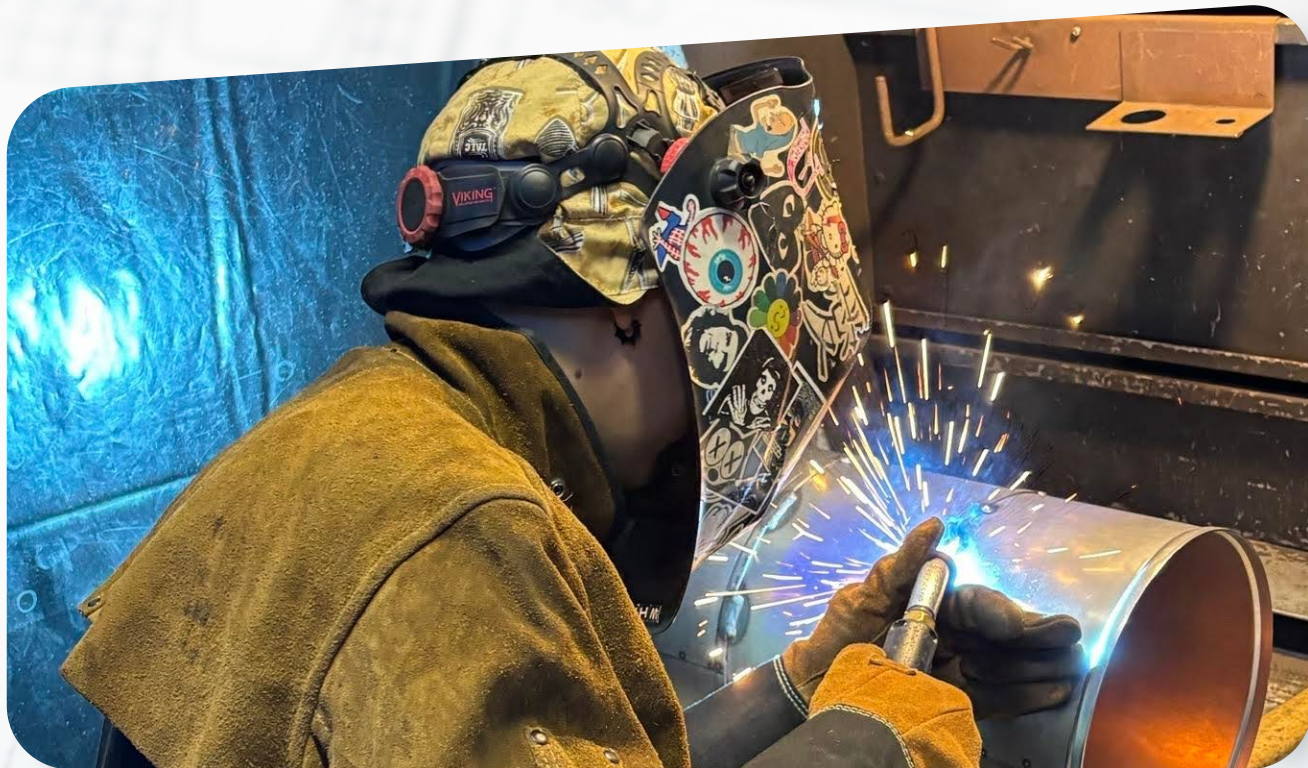
Historic Investment

*Strengthening trades training
with \$241 million
in provincial funding*

The B.C. government has announced a historic \$241 million investment in skilled trades training over three years to expand training capacity, reduce waitlists and better support apprentices throughout their training journey.

For the sheet metal trade, this investment will help strengthen training delivery, provide greater support for apprentices progressing toward certification, and ensure training keeps pace with industry workforce needs. It also represents an important investment in the capacity of schools such as SMWTCS to continue delivering high-quality, industry-driven technical training and preparing the skilled sheet metal workforce B.C. needs.





Contests

Showcasing Talent and Building Future Leaders

SMWTCS is committed to excellence and proudly supports apprentices competing in industry contests that showcase the skill, talent and professionalism of our trade. These competitions build confidence, strengthen skills and create pathways to future leadership.

Past participants and winners have gone on to hold leadership positions across the sheet metal industry. This includes SMWTCS instructors, SMITB trustees, executive positions with SMART Local 280, SMACNA-BC, SMART International, etc.

SMWTC ANNUAL APPRENTICE CONTEST

Ready to Put Your Skills to the Test?

The SMWTC Annual Apprentice Contest celebrates the skill and talent of apprentices competing in theory, drafting and hands-on projects. Last year, the event was held on November 24, 2025 – congratulations again to our 2025 winners:

Alexander Howard, Ames Metal Fabricators;
Benjamin Winthrop, Apollo Sheet Metal;
Alexander Prechel, Bronswerk; and
Bryan Iwata, Modern Niagara.

The 2026 SMWTC Annual Apprentice Contest returns October 24—earlier than usual this year! Open to apprentices from Levels 1–4, the contest is a chance to put your training to the test, showcase your skills, connect with fellow apprentices and industry representatives. Thanks to the generosity of our industry sponsors, contestants can also look forward to an impressive selection of tools, equipment and door prizes throughout the event.

Whether you're a returning competitor or thinking about entering for the first time, make 2026 your year to compete! Contact Astrid (astrid@smwtcs.ca) to reserve your spot.

Contest Winners!



Level 1
Alexander Howard



Level 2
Benjamin Winthrop



Level 3
Alexander Prechel



Level 4
Bryan Iwata



Alex Donaldson Award

SMACNA-BC Christmas Party, November 29, 2025

The Alex Donaldson Award recognizes the Top Apprentice representing SMART Local 280 and SMACNA-BC and celebrates excellence in the sheet metal trade. Named in memory of Alex Donaldson, a Local 280 member dedicated to apprenticeship and training, the award has a proud history dating back decades. Today, the Level 4 winner of the SMWTC Annual Apprentice Contest has priority to represent B.C. at the Canadian Sheet Metal Apprentice Competition, competing alongside top apprentices from across Canada. The award celebrates not only technical excellence, but the commitment, professionalism and potential of the next generation of sheet metal leaders.

Natasha Hua's competition journey spans multiple years. While with Ames Metal Fabricators, she won Level 3 at the 2023 SMWTC Annual Apprentice Contest. That earned her the opportunity to represent SMWTCS at the 2024 Skills Canada BC Provincial Competition.

She then returned to the SMWTC contest in 2024, now representing Modern Niagara Vancouver, and won Level 4. As the Level 4 winner, Natasha received the Alex Donaldson Award. Brian Iwata is the 2025 winner.



Natasha Hua



Franco Pederzini

Memorial Award



Congratulations to Bryan Iwata of Modern Niagara Vancouver, the 2025 recipient of the Franco Pederzini Memorial Award. Bryan was presented the award in November 2025 after placing first in Level 4 at the 2025 SMWTC Annual Apprentice Contest.

Established by Apollo Sheet Metal Ltd., the annual \$1,000 scholarship honours Franco Pederzini, a former SMITB Trustee and SMWTCS Director, SMWTCS graduate and past Level 4 contest winner. Franco is remembered for his dedication to the sheet metal trade and his contribution to apprenticeship and training.

Bryan continued his competition journey in 2026, representing SMART Local 280 and SMACNA-BC at the Canadian Sheet Metal Apprentice Competition in Edmonton.

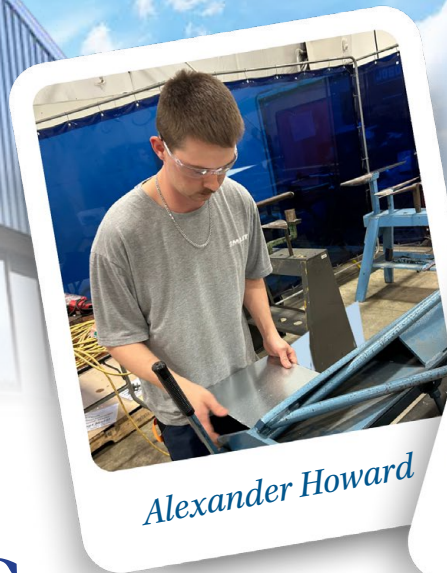


Skills Canada BC

SMWTCS “Alexander” Apprentices Take the Podium at Skills BC!

The annual Skills Canada event brings together talented apprentices and students from across B.C. to showcase their skills in trades and technology competitions. Our apprentices compete in the Post-Secondary Sheet Metal competition.

This year, SMWTCS was proudly represented by two Alexanders: Alexander Howard of Ames Metal Fabricators 82 Ltd. and Alexander Prechel of Bronswerk at the 2026 Skills Canada BC Provincial Competition, held April 15, 2026 at TRADEX in Abbotsford.



Alexander Howard



Alexander Prechel

Both SMWTCS apprentices delivered outstanding performances, earning spots on the podium. Alexander Howard captured Silver, while Alexander Prechel earned Bronze, alongside Gold medalist Cameron Kerslake of BCIT.

Congratulations to Alexander and Alexander for representing SMWTCS and the sheet metal trade with skill and professionalism. Their success demonstrates the calibre of our apprentices and the value of opportunities that challenge them to showcase their talent on a provincial stage. Well done!



Skills Canada

May 28-29, Toronto

The Skills Canada National Competition (SCNC) brought Canada's top skilled trades and technology competitors together May 28–29, 2026 in Toronto. More than 550 competitors participated in 45 competitions, supported by over 400 volunteers and attracting more than 7,500 visitors. The event also featured 50+ Try-A-Trade® activities, giving visitors hands-on exposure to skilled trades careers.

The Sheet Metal competition showcased exceptional talent from across Canada, with Alberta earning Gold, Ontario Silver and Saskatchewan Bronze. Beyond the competition, participants demonstrated the teamwork and professionalism that define the trades, supporting and encouraging one another throughout the event. SCNC continues to provide an important national stage to celebrate skilled trades excellence, inspire the next generation and demonstrate how #SkillsChangeLives and create possibilities for Canada's future skilled workforce.

LEARNING FROM TRAINING CENTRES ACROSS CANADA

Jake Leblanc, Head Instructor represented British Columbia on the National Technical Committee for Sheet Metal at Skills Canada in Toronto, Ontario. He also visited three training centres: SMART Local 47 in Ottawa, Local 285 in Etobicoke and the Ontario Sheet Metal Workers Training Centre in Oakville. The visits provided valuable insight into the different approaches to technical training across Canada, including program structure, duration, delivery and assessment.

Jake also came away with a greater appreciation for the strength of B.C.'s training system and, particularly, the investment SMWTCS has made in instructor development and training. Comparing practices with other training centres provides an opportunity to bring new ideas home, evaluate what we are doing well and identify opportunities to continually strengthen the quality of training and support provided to SMWTCS apprentices.





CANADIAN COUNCIL OF SHEET METAL WORKERS
AND ROOFERS



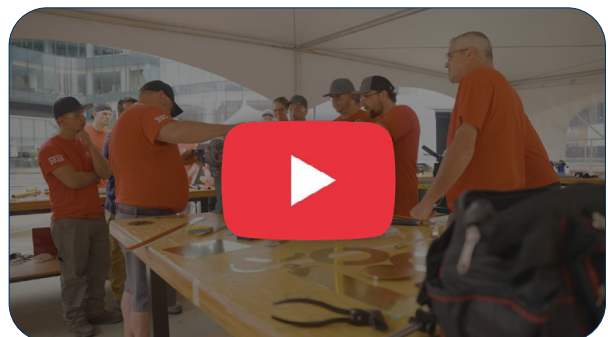
BC REPRESENTS AT THE CANADIAN COMPETITION

The Canadian Sheet Metal Apprentice Competition was held during the 50th Annual Canadian Sheet Metal and Roofers Conference in Edmonton on July 8-11, 2026. Congratulations to Bryan Iwata of Modern Niagara, our Level 4 winner of the 2025 Annual SMWTC Apprentice Contest, who proudly represented SMART Local 280 and SMACNA-BC on the national stage at the Canadian competition.

The milestone event brought together apprentices, sheet metal professionals, industry leaders and union representatives from across Canada to showcase skills, share knowledge and celebrate excellence in the trade. Congratulations to Bryan and all the apprentices who competed,

as well as the organizers, contractors and industry partners who continue to create opportunities for apprentices to challenge themselves, showcase their talent and build connections across the industry.

Watch Bryan and highlights from the competition on YouTube.



From Contestant to Career Opportunities: *Bryan Iwata*



For Bryan Iwata, entering the 2025 SMWTC Apprentice Contest opened doors he didn't anticipate. That experience led him to compete nationally in 2026, building his confidence, challenging his skills and expanding his perceived career possibilities.

The national competition pushed Bryan outside his comfort zone—from completing drafting by hand rather than AutoCAD to adapting to different terminology and competing alongside apprentices from across Canada. He describes the experience as empowering, eye-opening and ultimately life-changing. Bryan's journey continues at

SMWTCS, where he has now joined the instructional team as a math tutor.

***"Sign up, show up and give it a try. Get ready to be uncomfortable — but trust yourself. It builds your confidence, makes you a better tradesperson and opens your eyes to opportunities you may not have considered."* — Bryan Iwata**

Consider being a competitor and see where it takes you! Register with Astrid (astrid@smwtcs.ca) for the 2026 SMWTC Apprentice Contest on October 24, 2026.



SMACNA AGM 2026

SMITB Training Coordinator Jud Martell and SMWTCS Head Instructor Jake LeBlanc attended the SMACNA-BC AGM in July, where Jake presented the 2025 Annual Report on behalf of SMITB/SMWTCS. The report highlighted a year of significant growth, with apprenticeship participation reaching record levels and 332 apprentices trained across 20 classes. Jake also shared updates

on increased provincial training funding, apprentice competitions, industry outreach and environmental training initiatives. The AGM provided an important opportunity to connect with SMACNA-BC contractors and reinforce the partnership between industry and training in developing B.C.'s future sheet metal workforce.

Congratulations to Our Level 4 Graduates!

SMWTCS is proud to celebrate 63 Sheet Metal Level 4 students who successfully completed their final level of technical training since the 2025 newsletter. A 100% classroom completion rate! All 63 graduates also took the next important step in their apprenticeship journey by writing the Interprovincial (IP) Red Seal examination.

Reaching Level 4 represents years of commitment to technical training, on-the-job learning and developing the skills required to succeed in the sheet metal trade. Congratulations to our graduates on this significant milestone and to the SMWTCS instructors, employers and industry partners who have supported them throughout their apprenticeship journey.

Well done everyone!



2544-H4 class



2614-H4 class



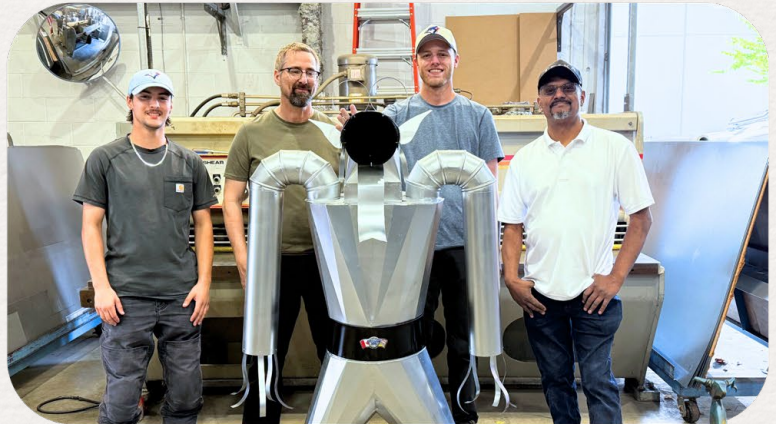
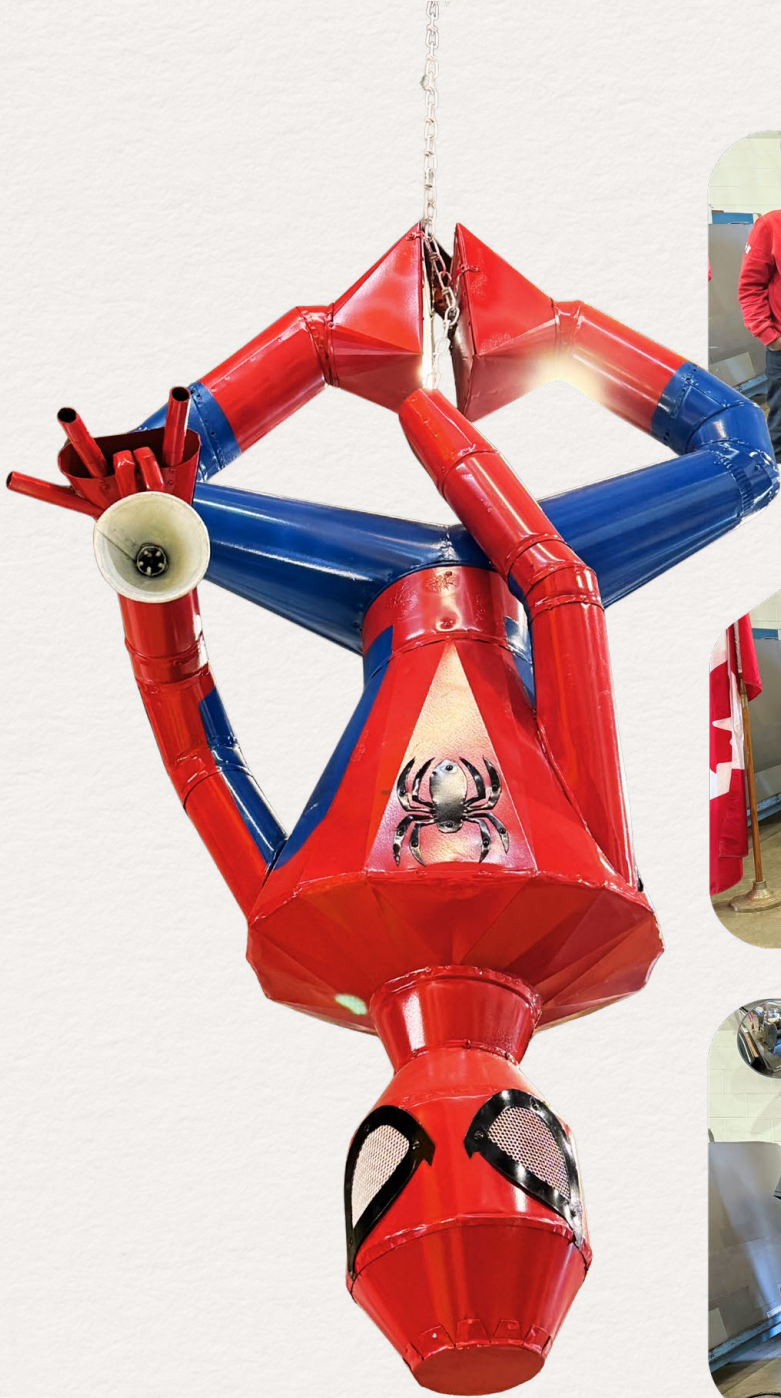
2624-H4 class



2644-H4 class

STUDENT PROJECTS GALLERY





Green Initiatives

Sheet Metal E.R.T.



Our **Sheet Metal Environmental Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Training (E.R.T.) Project** continues to promote environmental stewardship by training apprentices to reduce waste, reuse materials and recycle sheet metal.

In its second year (2025–26), the project trained 272 Sheet Metal and Architectural Sheet Metal apprentices. To date, more than 200 Sheet Metal apprentices have also completed SkillPlan's online Building It Green (BIG) Foundations course.

Through our partnership with Skills Ready and the Construction Foundation of BC, more than 1,000 youth have participated in hands-on workshops using recycled scrap metal to build toolboxes, copper bracelets and other projects. These activities introduce environmental practices while creating awareness of sheet metal as a career choice for the next generation.

E.R.T. participants shared how the training is influencing their work:

"I always use offcuts before full sheets and reduce waste by planning first."

"Being more conscious about how I use material and always on the lookout for ways to reduce and reuse material when possible."

"Explain the importance of recycling to younger apprentices."

As we enter the third and final year, SMWTCS will continue to build apprentices' environmental skills, promote sustainable practices and strengthen environmental stewardship across the sheet metal industry.



Federal UTIP Funding Supports Expanded SMART Canada Training

The **Green Futures Training Partnership** is a five-year national initiative led by SMART Canada in partnership with Canada's Building Trades Unions (CBTU), SkillPlan and SRDC, supported by \$8.9 million in federal funding through the Sustainable Jobs Stream. The project will provide green training to more than 2,000 sheet metal apprentices and journeypersons across Canada.

Now in its research and program development phase, Green Futures is focused on developing a national SMART Green Certification, modernizing and digitizing apprenticeship training, and enhancing the Building It Green climate literacy program, including Indigenous content. Consultation with training centres, instructors, apprentices, journeypersons and industry will help ensure the new training reflects regional and workplace needs.

SMITB is contributing to this national work through participation on the SMART Canada Advisory Committee, helping bring B.C.'s training perspective to the development of future green skills training for the sheet metal trade.

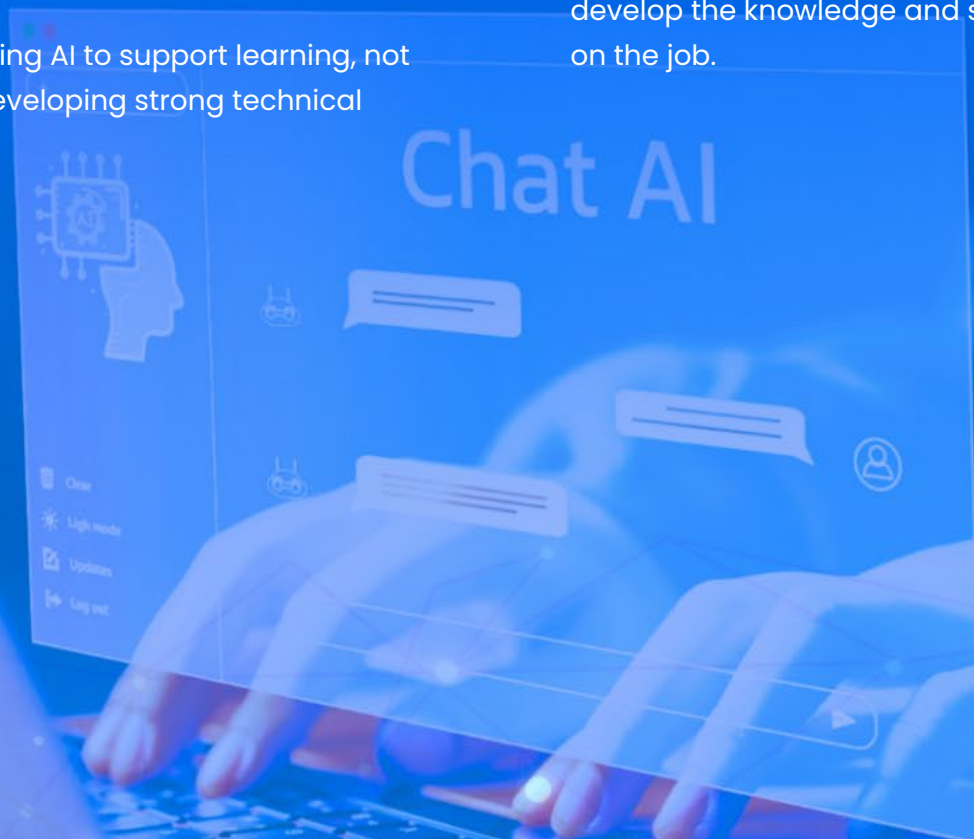
THE IMPACT OF AI ON LEARNING

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing how we work, communicate and learn — and skilled trades training is no exception. Used effectively, AI can be a valuable learning tool for students by helping explain difficult concepts, generate practice questions, summarize information and provide additional support when preparing for in class exams, SLEs and IPs. It can also help students learn at their own pace and explore concepts in different ways when they need extra clarification.

The key is using AI to support learning, not replace it. Developing strong technical

knowledge, problem-solving skills and hands-on competency remains essential to becoming a skilled tradesperson.

SMWTCS has developed an AI Use Policy to provide students with clear expectations for the appropriate and responsible use of AI during technical training. As these technologies continue to evolve, SMWTCS will explore opportunities to use them to enhance learning while maintaining academic integrity and ensuring students develop the knowledge and skills required on the job.



Comings & Goings

In Memoriam: *Wayne Fagrie*

SMWTCS recognizes the passing of Wayne Fagrie, a longtime sheet metal worker and member of SMART Local 280.

Wayne's career in trades education began as an instructor with public training providers PVI and BCIT.

In 1992, he was recruited as the first Head Instructor of the Sheet Metal Workers Training Centre when it opened. Wayne later held both the Head Instructor and Training Coordinator roles in the early 2000s, before retiring in 2006.

His many years of service helped establish and strengthen apprenticeship training at SMWTCS and supported generations of sheet metal workers.

We extend our condolences to Wayne's family, friends and colleagues.

