



The Best Kept Secret: Finding an Aboriginal Worker

Presenter Elvera Garlow opened the day with her discussion on how to find Aboriginal workers through the various Aboriginal Employment Centres. To highlight the opportunities and programming available, Elvera shared what Grand River Employment and Training (GREAT) has done for the Six Nations community and its plan for moving forward from a training culture to an employment culture.



A New Day, a New Horizon: The College of Trades

Bob Guthrie of the Ontario College of Trades discussed the goals and purpose of the proposed College of Trades. As a professional regulatory association, it will:

- promote an industry that is built on self-regulation,
- encourage under-represented groups (ie. Women, Aboriginal peoples, youth) to consider professional careers in the skilled trades,
- promote excellence and innovation in the industry, and
- offer memberships that make tradespeople competitive in the marketplace.

Recognition of Apprentices and Journeypeople

John Wabb and Brian Pelletier presented plaques to recognize the support of the apprentices and tradespeople who provided their insight and helped to make the conference possible. Thanks to: Craig Montour (Electrician Apprentice), Jody Laurin (Powerline Technician Apprentice), Nick Saunders (Powerline Technician Apprentice), Gina Simon (Electrician Apprentice), Shawn Recollet (Electrician Journeyperson), and Errol Eashappie (Welder Journeyperson).



Literacy and Essential Skills

Emily Arrowsmith of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF) presented the results of their essential skills workshops. Essential skills are part of a successful retention strategy and are key to getting and keeping careers in the trades. That's why CAF has developed tools to incorporate essential skills into employment readiness training. Through their workshops CAF has also identified ways in which to improve the tools including: making questions more culturally relevant, incorporating Aboriginal culture into the design and continuing ongoing networking with industry to learn about hiring processes and workplace readiness. CAF provides a summary report on their workshops on their website at www.caf-fca.org.

Labour Market Information

Construction Sector Council (CSC) economist Jeff Barr presented information regarding prospects in the construction industry. As part of CSC's Labour Market Information team, they use a supply and demand model to forecast labour needs, which is intended to help labour organizations and government decision makers to plan training programs and development of construction in Ontario.

Breaking Ground

Presented jointly by Al Page and Brian Doolittle, the Breaking Ground initiative was intended to pool the overwhelming information related to apprenticeship and the trades into one central, easy to navigate location. The 30-month national project which was condensed to 15-months resulted in a comprehensive website for individuals and ASET holders. Moving forward, Breaking Ground is proposing to create materials customized to the Ontario construction industry.

Employment Opportunities in the Mining Industry

Madge Richardson – North Superior Workforce Planning Board - Presenter Madge Richardson of the North Superior Workforce Planning Board discussed the opportunities identified currently and into 2021. Through a labour market study they've identified that 40 per cent of the industry is 50 years and older and one-third of the workforce is eligible to retire by 2015. Specifically in the mining industry there is an overall positive hiring requirement, especially in the Thunder Bay district. The full Mining Industry Human Resource Council Report is available on their website at www.nswpb.ca.

Harvey Yesno – Ring of Fire - Director of Aboriginal Community Stakeholder Relations with the Ring of Fire, Harvey Yesno, gave an overview of the proposed mining projects in northern Ontario. In his role he coordinates and facilitates with First Nation, Metis, the municipalities, industry, and training organizations. With no roads or transmission lines to fuel the mining projects, there will be numerous jobs in the remote area.

Special Thanks

Special thanks to Erin Monture, Cathy Smith and Paul Armstrong of the Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre for their wonderful work planning and managing the conference. Thanks also to the many presenters from the ASETAs and construction industry representatives. Without you all we would not have been able to present this important information.