



**MAKE A DIFFERENCE
BUILD A FUTURE**



For Immediate Release: Building Futures for Youth program aims to help alleviate the construction labour shortage in Nova Scotia

Dartmouth, NS – (06/14/2021) Despite major project activity currently underway and on the horizon, Nova Scotia’s construction industry will face a significant labour shortage over the next decade – something the Construction Association of Nova Scotia’s Building Futures for Youth program is helping to alleviate in the years to come.

The Building Futures for Youth (BFY) program was developed in partnership with the Construction Association of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Nova Scotia Community College, local school boards and industry representatives. Building Futures for Youth has also partnered with Construction Safety Nova Scotia to train and certify students in Fall Protection and Scaffolding Awareness. In 2015, the program partnered with the Nova Scotia Road Builders Association to connect students with employment opportunities.

“The BFY program was created to help meet the current and future demand for skilled workers in the industry and ensure construction is seen as a career of choice for students,” says Duncan Williams, President and CEO at the Construction Association of Nova Scotia. “In order to keep up with demand for skilled labour, organizations will need to remain focused on attracting, training, and retaining qualified talent in underrepresented groups, in addition to youth.”

According to BuildForce Canada’s Construction & Maintenance Looking Forward report, an estimated 8,700 workers, or 28% of Nova Scotia’s 2020 labour force, are expected to retire over the next 10 years.

“Nova Scotia’s skilled trade sector is one of the highest job opportunity sectors in Nova Scotia,” says Kathy Greeno, Director of Career Pathways, Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. “With this projected increase in labour shortage, it is more important than ever for youth to explore careers in skilled trades.”

“The province is pleased to be a part of the Building Futures for Youth program to provide opportunities for students to explore career paths in skilled trades through paid work terms,” says Derek Mombourquette, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. “The construction sector is vital to the economic health of our province and this is a great way to introduce students to good paying careers, while also supporting the sector’s labour force.”

The BFY program offers grade 10 and 11 students the opportunity to safely explore careers in the construction sector through paid summer work terms. Through the program, students gain experience in a construction industry occupation, earn co-operative education credits, register as construction trades pre-apprentices, make connections with industry, become eligible for

scholarship opportunities, and most importantly, gather information to help make informed choices about their future career. Since the inception of the program in 2008, more than 800 students have participated, and just under 300 companies have become host employers.

Marjorie Davison, CEO of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, notes that it is critical that employers invest in more women and members of underrepresented groups, in addition to youth, to satisfy the growing need of skilled labour. “If you’re an employer that relies on skilled workers, apprenticeship is one of the best investments you can make. Not only is it a proven way to develop the right talent for your workplace, but it also contributes to the success of your business.”

By investing in an employment term for students, host employers are supporting local youth in construction industry career exploration, recognizing the role they play in developing and retaining our future workforce. Host employers not only gain a youth summer employee who is vetted, safety trained, motivated, and prepared to work, they also help to identify potential future employees, investing in their own company’s succession planning.

“Being a host employer since the very first year of the program has been a great experience,” says Lester Buckland, division manager at Black & McDonald Limited. “The students we have supported have always been eager to learn and arrive very well trained. I believe because of the rigorous selection process, we as employers are getting the best of the best.”

To learn more about the Building Futures for Youth program, visit www.buildingfutures.ca. If you are interested in becoming a host employer, please contact Lori Rogers, Building Futures for Youth Lead at 468-2267 ext. 710 or lrogers@cans.ns.ca

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Construction Association of Nova Scotia:

The Construction Association of Nova Scotia (CANS) represents more than 760 large and small companies that build, renovate and restore non-residential buildings, roads, bridges and other engineering projects. CANS is an industry trade association, representing the interests of contractors, suppliers and service providers throughout Atlantic Canada and across the country. The construction industry in Nova Scotia employs more than 30,000 workers and generates close to \$6 billion in economic activity.

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