

Building Trades Careers through Pre-Employment Training

Northern Lakes College (NLC) offers pre-employment training to learners who are interested in a trade career but do not have the necessary experience. Pre-employment training is an alternate way to enter into a trade by gaining the skillset and knowledge of a first-year apprentice needed to secure a job or continue into apprenticeship training.



Travis Wakefield is a NLC student from Slave Lake, Alberta. Wakefield's interest was piqued in high school by the opportunity to learn a trade while earning his high school diploma at the same time. He talked to his high school counsellor and enrolled into NLC's Pre-Employment Carpentry program, which provided him with valuable, learning experiences.

"I heard about the opportunity in school and talked to my school counsellor. I decided to take carpentry, and the program allowed me to earn high school credits and gain hands-on carpentry skills," Wakefield said. This was a great learning experience that

also assisted in his decision to register as a carpentry apprentice and continue his education with NLC. "I would tell anyone interested in a trade's career to take the opportunity and just do it. You won't regret the experience," he said.

During his time at Northern Lakes College, Wakefield has represented the College at Skills Canada, both in 2015 and most recently this year. "It was fun; I learned a lot. Skills Canada is a great learning experience; to see all the different levels of trades skills in one place like that was awesome. The competition made me step up my skills and abilities," Wakefield said. Today Wakefield is entering into his third year as a carpentry apprentice and works for EDGE Construction & Millwrighting in Slave Lake.

In the 2018-2019 academic year, NLC is offering the Pre-Employment Electrician and Heavy Equipment Technician programs in Peace River. The College campuses in High Level, Slave Lake and High Prairie offer pre-employment programs in carpentry, industrial mechanic, and welding.

Another student who entered into an NLC trade program while still in high school is Kenneth Halcrow, who has continued trades training at NLC's campus in High Prairie. Halcrow said, "I didn't really know what I wanted to do when I was in high school. All I knew is that I wanted to work and earn a couple of bucks. I decided to take welding after I attended a presentation in high school about the pre-employment programs offered by the College."



Halcrow has completed his second year and is entering into his third year welding apprenticeship. He hopes to complete his apprenticeship successfully, become a journeyman, and start his own company or work in the oil and gas industry. “If you’re in high school and aren’t sure what you want to do, try a pre-employment program. If anything, you will gain great work experiences. For me, it turned out I am really good at welding, and I really like the work.”

Northern Lakes College is the premier educational provider of Trades and Resource Technology training in northern Alberta. Students learn from experienced trades people who have worked in the field and train real-life scenarios. Northern Lakes College also offers flexible learning options, which allows students to learn anytime and from anywhere there is an internet connection available.

Find out where and when the Pre-Employment training you need is being delivered at www.northernlakescollege.ca