
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Advanced Education

Premier Clark opens \$1.8-million trades training building in Merritt

MERRITT – Premier Christy Clark welcomed a new generation of Nicola Valley trades students with the official opening of the new \$1.8-million trades training building at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT).

“The foundation of a strong, growing economy is a skilled workforce,” said Premier Clark. “The new trades training building at NVIT will set up Aboriginal and other British Columbian students for success in good-paying, in-demand jobs they can depend on.”

The new 670-square metre facility is funded through B.C.’s Skills for Jobs Blueprint, which includes capital funding for new trades training infrastructure and equipment.

“The new trades facility builds on the strong trades programs provided by NVIT, reduces transportation issues for students, and positions trades students to participate in campus-life activities,” said MLA for Fraser-Nicola Jackie Tegart on behalf of Advanced Education Minister Andrew Wilkinson. “I’m looking forward to seeing the next generation of NVIT trades students graduate with the skills they need to join B.C.’s workforce.”

When it opens to students, the new trades training building will allow NVIT to accommodate 40 trades students each year.

“To-date, through rural and local training opportunities delivered in NVIT’s Mobile Trades Classroom, NVIT has graduated 117 Bridging to Trades students from across British Columbia,” said NVIT president Ken Tourand. “Since 2014, another 31 learners graduated from NVIT’s Electrician Pre-Apprenticeship, Foundations Plumbing and Piping and Foundations Residential Construction programs. Today, we are celebrating the opening of our on-campus trades facility, along with rural access for past and prospective learners seeking opportunities to acquire the critical training designed to provide B.C. with skilled trades workers.”

On April 29, 2014, the Government of British Columbia launched B.C.’s Skills for Jobs Blueprint to align funding and programs to a data-driven system where training dollars and programs target in-demand occupations.

The Province is investing \$185 million as part of B.C.’s Blueprint including new trades training facilities at Camosun College in Victoria and Okanagan College in Kelowna.

Increasing the success of Aboriginal students is a key component of B.C.’s Blueprint, the BC Jobs Plan and the B.C. Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan. The Ministry of Advanced Education supports Aboriginal students through numerous programs such as Aboriginal Service Plans, the Aboriginal Community-Based Delivery Partnerships Program and the B.C. Aboriginal Student Award.

“I think trades is a good fit for those who like to work with their hands, who like a daily challenge and also for those who like to help people – everyone needs electricity,” said Kaley Shields, a graduate of the 24-week Electrician Pre-Apprenticeship Program now working as a first year apprentice with Funk Electric Ltd. in Kamloops. “Trades is a rewarding career choice and I felt lucky to be able to get into a pre-apprenticeship program (at NVIT) without having to wait. Now I am working that much sooner!”

The Ministry of Advanced Education is providing \$1.5 million of the \$1.8 million with the remainder being funded by NVIT.

NVIT is an Aboriginal public post-secondary institution that offers a range of education and training programs. Approximately 80% of students at NVIT are Aboriginal.

Learn More:

B.C.’s Skills for Jobs Blueprint: www.workbc.ca/skills

Factsheet on Aboriginal post-secondary education and training in B.C.:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/aboriginal-post-secondary-education-and-training-in-bc>

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