



The NETCO Minute

News from the National Electrical Trade Council, Fall 2020 Edition

NETCO is jointly sponsored by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Canada and the Canadian Electrical Contractors Association (CECA) to address workforce development for Red Seal electrical trades.

In this edition of the NETCO Minute two world-class training facilities are highlighted; The Western Joint Electrical Training Society (Western JETS) in British Columbia and IBEW Local 2085 in Manitoba.

Training Centre of Excellence Showcase



Industry Collaboration Reduces Barriers for Minority Groups Entering an Electrical Apprenticeship

Launched in 2019, the Workplace Alternative Trades Training (WATT) program is a collaboration between the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), The Western JETS, and the Construction Foundation of British Columbia. The WATT program aims to reduce barriers to those seeking a career in the skilled trades by providing a new pathway to apprenticeship in the electrical trades.

WATT enables individuals who are unable to easily access a traditional training program such as Electrical Foundations but have the drive to pursue their career goals of becoming a Red Seal electrician. WATT reduces the barriers faced by youth, women, Indigenous communities and Newcomers and helps foster a skilled, inclusive, certified, and productive electrical trades workforce. Through the collaborative efforts of several organizations, the program is provided free of cost to participants. *"A few years ago, we saw an opportunity to help connect underutilized members of the workforce with a good career in the electrical trades,"* shared Adrien Livingston, executive director of the Western Joint Electrical Training Society. *"Since starting with our first cohort in 2018, we have experienced a 95% success rate and we continually see great outcomes from our participants."*



WATT training puts the focus on what employers are looking for most in a pre-apprentice: The basic hands-on skills, safety and the attitude for success. Participants are provided with the tools, boots, workwear, safety certificates and skills needed in the first years of their apprenticeship. This includes employment with an IBEW signatory contractor, individualized support and an ILP (Independent Learning Plan) to prepare for their Level 1 electrical training. *"The WATT initiative offers an innovative option for individuals who may not have the resources to enter the trades via traditional paths,"* says Abigail Fulton, executive director of the Construction Foundation of BC. *"Working with Western JETS on this initiative has been an absolute pleasure for our team and has yielded some amazing results for the participants."*

The program's 95% success rate is attributed in part to the support provided for graduates for 12 months following the successful completion of the three-week program. WATT first equips participants with the technical skills and work experience required in a successful apprenticeship. Then, over the next year, the apprentices build the academic skills required in trade school so that the academic prerequisites for Foundations programs are not a roadblock on top of the financial barriers experienced by most applicants.



A recent WATT graduate shared, "I wasn't in a position to go to school for six months and afford to live. The WATT program is the alternative, where you *can* afford to do three weeks. It sets you up to accelerate the path towards an apprenticeship where you are earning a pay cheque." To find out more about the WATT program please visit www.wjets.ca/watt/

The Western JETS is a partnership between the IBEW Local Unions 230, 993, 1003 and the Electrical Contractors Association of British Columbia. Their mandate is to assist, develop and foster the education and advanced training of journeypersons and the apprenticeship systems in the electrical industry. www.wjets.ca

The Construction Foundation of British Columbia builds community through their charitable initiatives and their commitment to industry focused education and research that benefits all British Columbians. www.constructionfoundation.ca

IBEW Local 2085 Partners to Host First Dedicated Pre-Apprenticeship Program for Indigenous Peoples



In 2019 IBEW 2085 entered a partnership with First People Development Incorporated (FPDI), who represent 34 First Nations communities in the province of Manitoba. This initial cohort went through a lengthy selection process and students have come from as far north as Norway House. With a mix of male and female students the staff of the training centre are learning just as much as the students through hearing the stories of challenges that they are faced with in their home communities. Going forward the partnership with FPDI has solidified where they have committed to placing 5 students in the program twice a year. IBEW Local 2085 is delighted that they will be able to send the class out to work and being able to give back to the First Nations communities of Manitoba.

For more information on this program please contact the IBEW 2085 Training Centre by visiting

<https://ibew2085.com/venues/ibew-training-center/>



Vision becoming a reality at EJTC with Solar Frame Structure



The concept of a Green Skills Campus was shaped in the mind of Training Director Emeritus Andy Cleven some half decade ago. The vision for the campus, that would include not only training for, but demonstration of renewable, leading edge technology, has been strongly supported by our partners IBEW local 213, and the signatory contractors of the Electrical Contractors Association of BC.

With the frame structure now in place, this vision is now becoming a reality. We have the solar panels, which will be attached to the frame, here on site at the training center. Over the next few months, the panels will be installed, and connected in to support the EJTC power system.

Our future plans for the site include the addition of two solar towers at the front of the building, a DC fast charger for electric vehicles, and visual displays to demonstrate the impact of the new systems on our power consumption.

The EJTC continues to add programs that highlight emerging technologies that will be the backbone of our industry in years ahead.

NETCO News From Across Canada

- **NETCO Executive Director appointed to Ontario's Skilled Trades Panel.**
NETCO Executive Director, Melissa Young, was recently appointed to Ontario's Skilled Trades Panel. The panel will provide advice and recommendations to the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development on developing a new approach to training and certification. <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/58716/ontario-helping-apprentices-cover-living-expenses-during-training>
- **NETCO Launches New Strategic Direction!** NETCO Board of Directors has introduced a new strategic direction for 2020 – 2023 including four vision pillars; Innovations and Standards, Government relations, Partnerships and Industry Leadership. For the full story see the article in the Ontario Electrical Contractor Q3 2020 edition at: <https://www.mediaedgemagazines.com/the-electrical-contractors-association-of-ontario-ecao/ec22/>
- **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Initiative Boosts Already Strong Canadian Diversity Efforts.** The IBEW has always been a leader when it comes to Diversity and Inclusion. To build on the work that has already been done, they've launched "IBEW Strong", their official Diversity and Inclusion strategy. Learn about some of the current initiatives already taking place as well as what's next as IBEW strives to grow a more inclusive and representative union. <https://www.ibewcanada.ca/news/ibew-initiative-boosts-already-strong-canadian-diversity-efforts/>

- **Canadian Electrical Contractors Association (CECA) promotes the Canadian Electrical Installation Standards (CEIS™)**! CEIS™ are intended to improve communication and consistency among designers, engineers, general contractors, specifiers, purchasers, and suppliers of electrical construction services. They define a minimum baseline of quality and workmanship for installing electrical products and systems. CEIS™ are intended to be referenced in contract documents for electrical construction projects. To learn more or to place your order, follow this link: <https://ceca.org/publications/#id=109&cid=1534&wid=601>
- **Congratulations to IBEW Local 402, Thunder Bay, Ontario, who are Now a Certified Network Cabling Specialist Training Provider!** As of August 21, 2020, IBEW Local 402 became the third IBEW local in Ontario to become an official training delivery agent (TDA) for the NCS apprenticeship program joining IBEW Local 353 Toronto and IBEW Local 105 Hamilton. For the full story, follow this link: <https://ibewcco.org/news/ibew-local-402-is-now-a-certified-ncs-training-provider/>
- **The Electrical Joint Training Committee**, a collaboration of IBEW Local 213 and the Electrical Contractors Association of British Columbia, adjusts to COVID-19 realities with Virtual Open House and Information Sessions! <https://ejtc.org/events-page/>
- **Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Construction Council of Ontario** launches "ASK ME FOR MY LICENCE" campaign to promote certified electricians. <https://ibewcco.org/ask-me-for-my-licence/>



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