



Reaching young workers on day one

Raising safety awareness during college orientation week

As the demand for workers in the skilled trades continues to grow in Ontario, it's no surprise that colleges across the province are seeing an increase in enrolment for skilled trades programs. In London, Fanshawe College sees an increase of about 35 students each year seeking a career in construction. In total, some 700 students are taking part in the training programs offered at Fanshawe, and each of these programs has a focus on developing the construction workforce of the future.

On Wednesday, September 7, 2016, the London and District Construction Association (LDCA) hosted a barbecue in Tech-Alley on the London campus. The LDCA represents a variety of small, medium-sized, and large construction companies in the London area. Its executive director, Mike Carter, is always happy to sponsor such an event, and there's no better time to start getting to know these students than on day one.

Our affiliation with Fanshawe is very deep and very important. If you look at our Board of Directors, the majority of them are Fanshawe graduates, and upwards of 40% of the businesses in the London district are populated by the talented students that come from Fanshawe programs. The programs here have turned out to be tremendously successful for the members of the LDCA.

Although the LDCA's involvement with these students kicks off with a barbecue, over the years it has led to co-op placements with LDCA members and career opportunities for graduates. "This is the beginning of a multi-year process for us with the incoming generation of students," says Carter.

It's a generation that Carter believes will have some outstanding and unique opportunities in the construction sector. He says that with the advances in and growing use of technology over the past few years, the construction industry is taking off and growing at an exponential rate. "I believe these students are entering into construction at the most exciting period, because I think that building technology is going through a massive revolution."

Over the next few years, these students will be introduced to the skills they'll require in construction. But that's only a small part of what they need to learn. They will also be introduced to the business of construction and the expectations and demands of an ever-growing infrastructure in the surrounding areas.





The habits they learn now will serve them throughout their future careers. But most importantly, they will be introduced to the safety culture that they are expected to cultivate:

The most important expectation we have as an association, the most important expectation our member companies have, and the most important message these students will learn at Fanshawe, is that everyone needs to go home at the end of the day.

Alongside the LDCA, representatives from IHSA were on hand as a part of the orientation process. They helped introduce this next wave of construction industry leaders to the materials, training, and mandate of IHSA. IHSA representatives also had the mobile classroom on display and shared space with

the Ministry of Labour, where they showcased some of the things to look forward to in this sector and tried to get the students thinking about safety before their training even begins.

Fanshawe's president, Peter Devlin, is extremely happy that IHSA is a major presence at this event:

We're very proud that we emphasize safety right out front and that we can assist in the development and strengthening of the relationships our students will get with the associations they will come to depend on. Starting the friendship in the very beginning with industry stakeholders is evidence of how important these students are to Fanshawe, and we know that investing in these relationships will help them to become successful in their career choices.