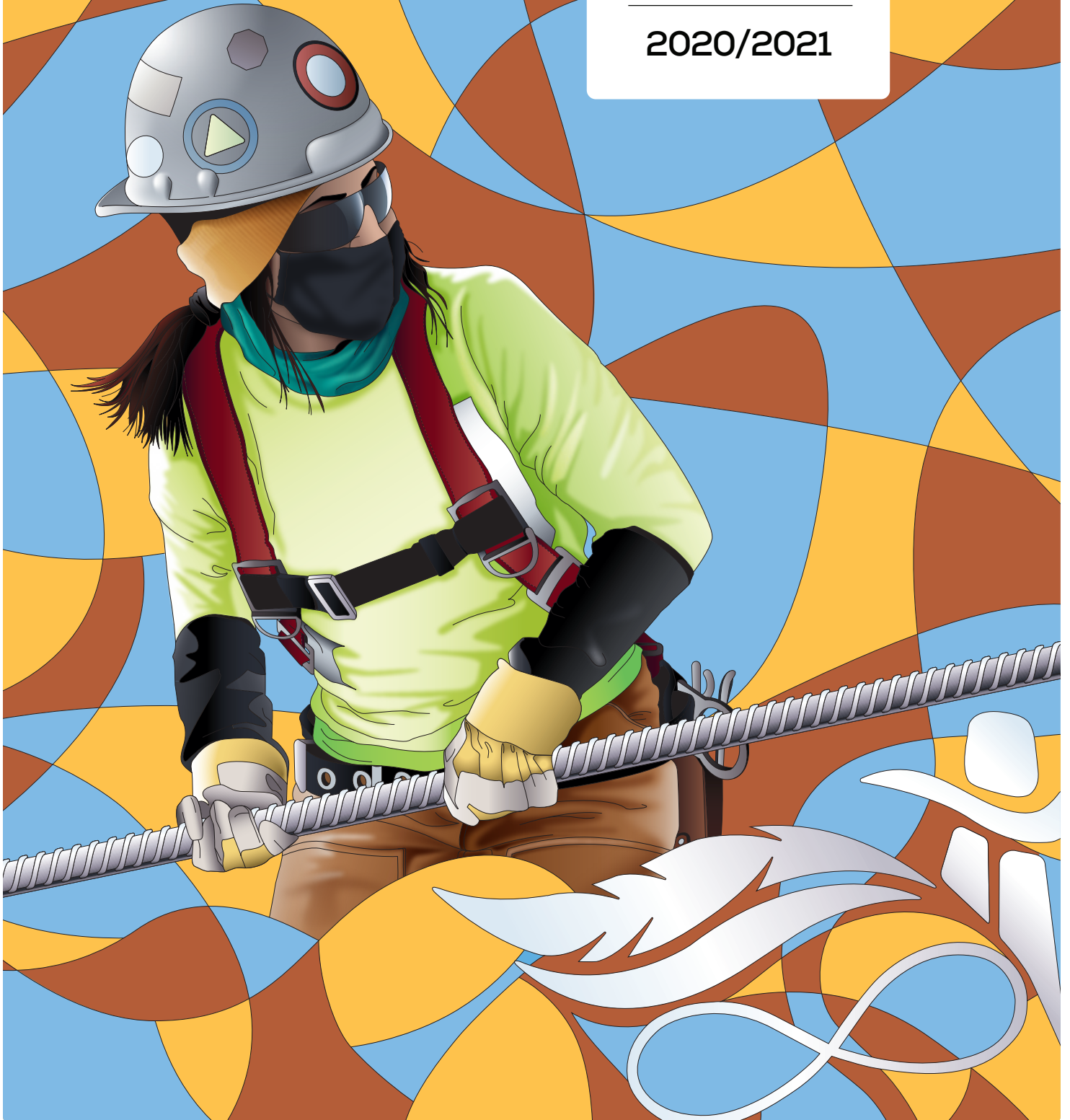




**TRADE WINDS**  
TO SUCCESS

**Annual Report**  
to the community

**2020/2021**



## **Vision Statement**

Trade Winds to Success builds the foundation for Indigenous people in Alberta to secure employment and achieve journeyman status, leading to economic well-being.

## **Mission Statement**

Through our network of partners and stakeholders, Trade Winds to Success provides pre-apprenticeship training and support to Indigenous people in Alberta, leading to success in the trades.

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# Trade Winds to Success Training Society

The member organizations of the Trade Winds to Success Training Society (as specified in the by-laws of the society) include representatives from the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ISETS) agreement holders and the Union Training Trust Fund partners.

## The ISETS agreement holders include:

**Métis Nation of Alberta**  
Represented by Lorne Gladu  
of Rupertsland Institute

**Community Futures Treaty 7**  
Represented by Sanford Big Plume

**Oteenow Employment and Training Society**  
Represented by Lyle Donald

## The Union Training Trust Fund partners include:

**Pipe Trades Education Trust Fund**  
Represented by Chris Waples

**Millwrights Education Trust Fund**  
Represented by Dave Robinson

## Board of Directors

Each member organization appoints an individual to sit on the Trade Winds Board of Directors.



**Kristena Belcourt**  
Rupertsland Institute



**Patricia Kennedy**  
Oteenow Employment  
and Training Society



**Linda Domak**  
Community Futures Treaty 7



**Angus Potskin**  
Local 488 Plumbers  
and Pipefitters Union



**Mike Bohnet**  
Local 1460  
Millwrights Union

# Report from the Board of Directors

As the President of Trade Winds to Success Training Society Board of Directors, I am honoured to continue to serve this organization through the tumultuous times we encountered due to the COVID pandemic. I am proud that Trade Winds to Success has managed to continue operations with only two temporary disruptions. The flexibility of the staff to provide virtual classes while temporarily working from home meant that students were able to continue training throughout most of the past fiscal year.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank Joan Isaac, executive director, for guiding her team through a challenging year and to commend the staff who strived to maintain normal operations while operating under strict COVID procedures. The dedication of the staff to the clients of Trade Winds is outstanding and the reason why this program is so successful in assisting Indigenous clients to succeed in a career in the trades.

The Board continued to improve their operations during the year by developing a set of Board policies, developing a Board manual for directors and an evaluation process for the executive director.

We would like to welcome two new members to the Trade Winds Board of Directors. Kristena Belcourt was appointed by the Métis Nation of Alberta in February and Patricia Kennedy for Oteenow Employment and Training Society was appointed in March.

The Board would like to thank Roxanne Hall and Roberta Bearhead for their long-standing contributions to the Board of Directors. The knowledge and insight that Roberta and Roxanne brought to the Board are greatly appreciated. Both were avid supporters of the Trade Winds program throughout their time on the Board.

Over the years, the Trade Winds Community Workforce Development Program was able to provide training in 22 communities and build a total of 19 tiny homes. While we are sad to see the outreach program no longer being offered directly in Indigenous communities, we believe the new Residential Construction Program will continue to provide quality pre-apprenticeship training to Indigenous people and will bring a new talent pool to our employment partners in the residential construction industry.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead.

In Partnership,

**Linda Domak**  
President, Trade Winds Board of Directors



**Joan Isaac**  
Executive Director

# Report from the Executive Director

The 2020 - 21 fiscal year was a most challenging year as Trade Winds continued providing pre-apprenticeship training during a pandemic.

COVID also resulted in community shutdowns on the Nations and all but one planned project under our Community Workforce Development arm were cancelled during the fiscal year. The only tiny home project that went ahead was in the remote northern community of John D'Or Prairie. This first-ever all-woman Trade Winds cohort overcame COVID issues and difficulties with weather to build a tiny home. This only succeeded due to the flexibility of Trade Winds staff, the perseverance of the ladies and the strong support from the community.

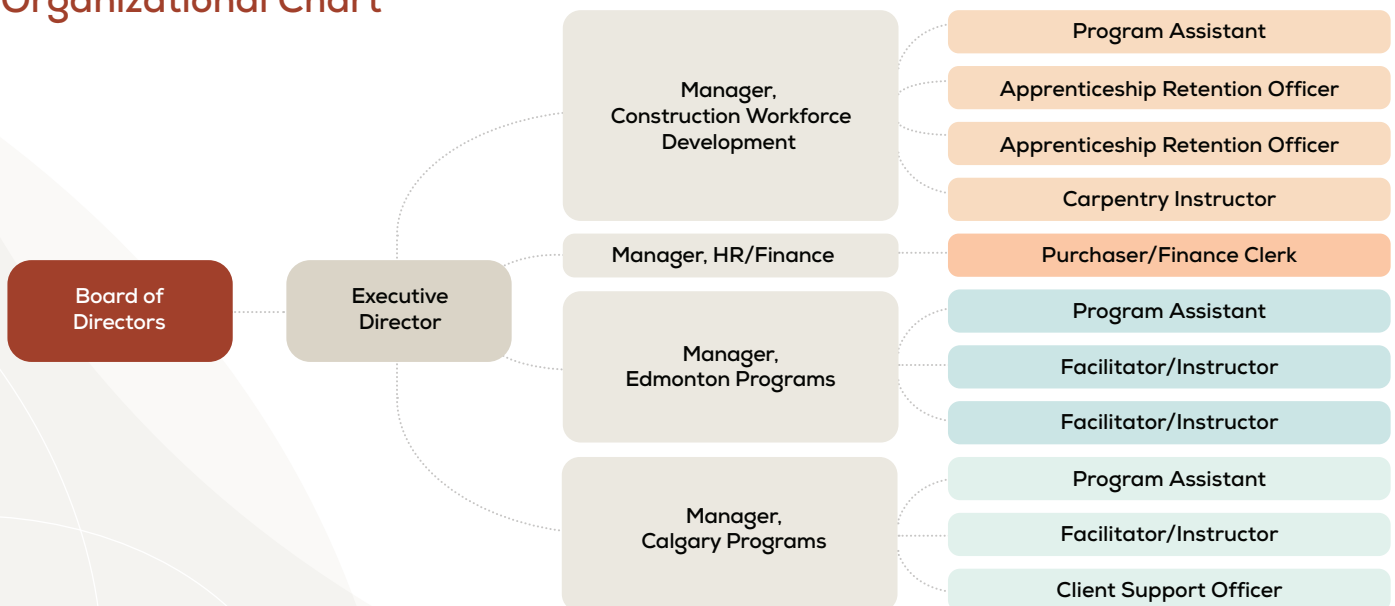
On March 16, 2020, we closed our doors as mandated by provincial directives. Staff began working from home, utilizing Microsoft Teams software for virtual meetings and maintaining contact with our clients. While working from home, standardized lesson plans for foundational training, development of a new client database, and revisions to policies and procedures were undertaken. Staff continued to place clients with employers and, in many cases, facilitated virtual employment interviews for clients looking for work, which was a new approach for both employers and clients.

Staff returned to the office on July 20, 2020, finding various ways of assisting the 30 clients to complete the training that had been interrupted in March. Regular classes resumed in July with fewer students due to social distancing requirements. The slowdown in the economy due to the pandemic also resulted in fewer employment opportunities for program graduates.

Looking forward, Trade Winds will continue to work with our union training trusts to provide pre-apprenticeship training and employment opportunities in the industrial and commercial sectors. We have also introduced a new Residential Construction Program in Edmonton where tiny homes will be built in an indoor shop space, reducing concerns about building in inclement weather and providing access to any interested Indigenous students from across the province. Under the direction of three Trades Winds journeyman instructors, four tiny homes will be built during the year to expose students to various residential construction techniques. Employers in the residential construction sector will gain access to a new skilled talent pool who will have over 480 hours of hands-on experience which can be applied as time-in-the-trade once indentured. To facilitate the residential construction training and provide space for future trade endeavours, Trade Winds moved its office to a new larger facility in Edmonton.

**Joan Isaac**  
Executive Director

## Organizational Chart



# 2020 – 2021 Program Results

**320**  
individuals applied to the program

**214** individuals completed the pre-trades assessment

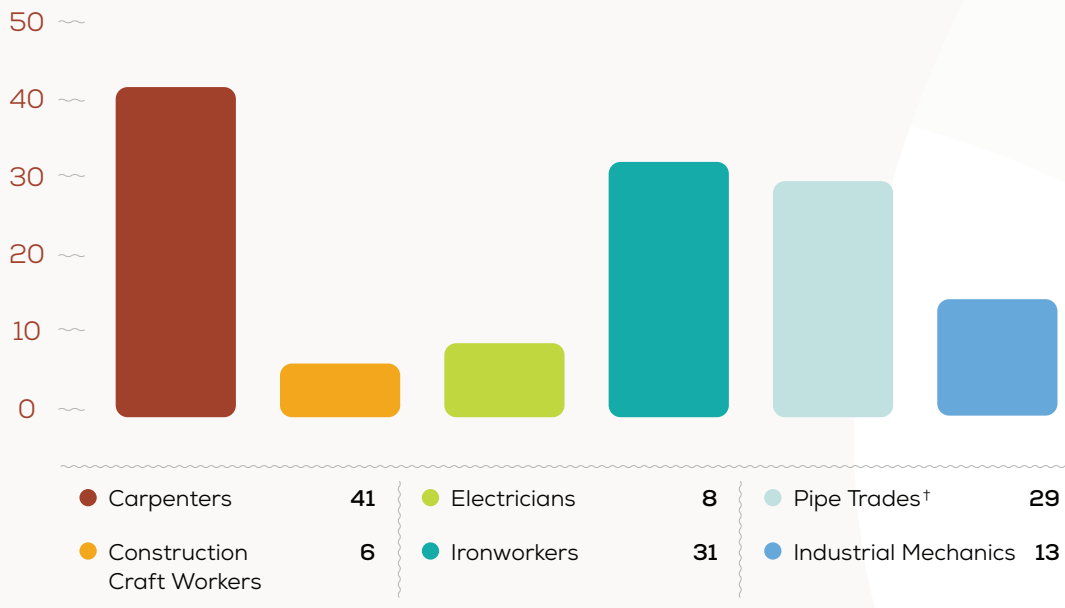
**128** individuals who were assessed met eligibility requirements and started the program

**91** clients completed Foundations, Academic Preparation, and Practical Trades Training components  
(71% of starters who completed prior to March 31<sup>st</sup>)

**45** graduates reported employment within six months  
(63% of total respondents)

**19** recent graduates did not have time to find and report employment by March 31<sup>st</sup>

Number of Clients that Started Pre-apprenticeship Training by Trade

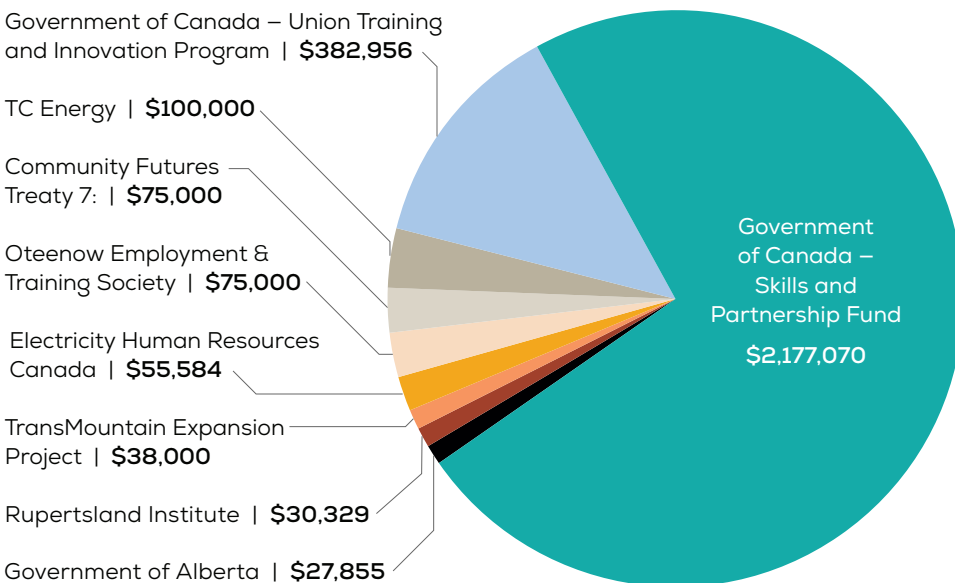


<sup>†</sup>Includes training for three trades: Plumber, Steamfitter-Pipefitter and Welder.

# Finance and Funding Overview

## Contributions from Funders

Trade Winds has multiple funding agreements with government, industry and Indigenous organizations, all of which provide financial support to different parts of the Trade Winds program.



**Total funding for the year: \$2,961,794**



**Michelle Kostic**  
Finance/HR Manager



**Sarah Ambrose**  
Purchaser/Finance Clerk



## Sponsoring Partners



TransMountain partnered with Trade Winds to Success in 2019 to prepare nearly 70 clients for work on the TransMountain Pipeline Expansion Project.



TransCanada became an official sponsor and partner of the Trade Winds program in November 2020. Their support and efforts towards Trade Winds help our Indigenous clients find employment in the trades.



# Meet the Trade Winds Staff

## Calgary Team



**Norma Jeremick'ca Gresl**  
Manager – Calgary Program



**Peggy Gallagher**  
Program Assistant



**Robert Bryenton**  
Foundations Instructor



**Leanne Froese**  
Client Support Officer

# Edmonton Team



**Carol Lee**  
Manager – Edmonton Program



**Iris Ayers**  
Program Assistant



**Ben Hosker**  
Foundations Instructor



**Mike Nay**  
Foundations Instructor

# Construction Workforce Development Team



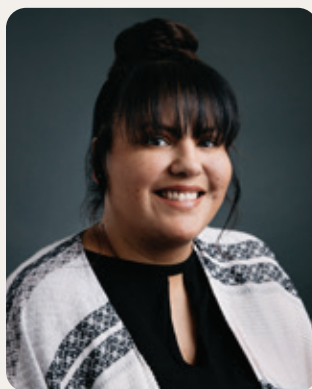
**Mary Collins**  
Manager – Construction  
Workforce Development



**Kristy Steinhauer**  
Program Assistant



**Gary Dureski**  
Carpentry Instructor



**Roberta Giroux**  
Apprenticeship  
Retention Officer  
*Journeyman Electrician*



**Thurston Kesteris**  
Apprenticeship  
Retention Officer  
*Journeyman Plumber*



# Client Recruitment

Each year, approximately 1,000 clients express interest in the programs offered by Trade Winds. After screening criteria is applied, an average of 260 candidates are offered admission into the program.

Trade Winds has traditionally attracted most of its applicants through word of mouth generated by career fairs, previous clients, and social media. This year, Trade Winds shifted its marketing direction towards Alberta's Indigenous Communities' ISET managers. This has proven particularly effective, with information sessions being regularly booked to maximum capacity each week.

Trade Winds' Facebook page provides regular updates to upcoming programs, which are rapidly distributed across the network by past and prospective clients alike.

 [facebook.com/TradeWindsToSuccess](https://facebook.com/TradeWindsToSuccess)

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## Client Selection Process

### Information Session

Clients begin by attending an information session where they learn about what is required to be accepted into the program. Information sessions occur weekly in both Edmonton and Calgary. Interested participants complete an application.

### Academic Assessment

Academic assessments determine if clients possess the basic math and English skills required to enter a trades occupation.

### Selection Interview

Screening criteria determines if clients are ready, willing, and able, and have the supports in place to be successful in an extended training program.

### Funding Support

Clients accepted into the program are referred to the appropriate funding authority to secure a living allowance while in training.

# Program Overview

The Trade Winds program operates continuously in Edmonton and Calgary with 16 intakes offered in this fiscal year 2021-2022.

## Part 1: Foundational Training (6 weeks)

Topics include orientation, overcoming barriers to training, computer technology training, registering for the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training (AIT) entrance exam, “Unleashing the Power Within” workshop delivered by Eagle Healing, First Aid certification, financial management, legal rights, and Indigenous supports available to Trade Winds clients.

This foundational training also includes four weeks of math and science review in preparation for writing the Alberta Apprentice Trades Entrance exam.

Clients who pass the exam and have good attendance are provided with personal protection equipment and admitted to pre-apprenticeship training. Additional tutoring is offered to those who fail the exam.

---

## Part 2: Pre-Apprenticeship Training (2 - 12 weeks)

### Option 1: Industrial and Commercial Program

Training is provided by the various Union Training Trusts in Edmonton and Calgary.

### Optional 2: Residential Construction Program

Participants build a tiny home, designed by Trade Winds, at the Trade Winds shop in Edmonton.



## Career Skills Development

Assistance with finding union and non-union employment, resume development, interview techniques, employer expectations, job referrals, and sessions with employers are integrated throughout Foundational and Pre-Apprenticeship training components.

← A Trade Winds class in session before COVID-19.

# Trade Winds Industrial & Commercial Pre-apprenticeship Program

Trade Winds partners with many of the Union Training Trusts to offer training to Trade Winds clients in a variety of trades.

Training partners provide clients with their first glimpse into the world of the trades, including expectations, safety certification, safe practices, trade theory, and more. This knowledge provides an advantage for the “green” client looking to get into the trade.

The length of the training varies from 2 weeks to 12 weeks long:

- **Construction Craft Labourer:** 2 weeks in Edmonton or Calgary
- **Ironworker:** 6 weeks in Edmonton or Calgary
- **Carpenter:** 6 weeks in Calgary

- **Plumber, Steamfitter/Pipefitter, Welder:** 9 weeks in Edmonton or Calgary
- **Industrial Mechanic (millwright):** 8 weeks in Edmonton only
- **Boilermaker:** 11 weeks (9 weeks in the Pipe trades program and an additional 2 weeks in Boilermaker training) in Edmonton or Calgary
- **Electrician:** 8-12 weeks in Edmonton only

At graduation, clients are provided with the basic tools required for the trade and access to work in industrial and commercial worksites through the associated trade union.



Millwrights  
Local 1460



The Alberta Regional Council of Carpenters and Allied Workers  
Local 1325 (Edmonton) & Local 2103 (Calgary)

## Union Training Partners

One of the foundational elements offered by Trade Winds is the partnerships with many of the prominent Union Training Trust Funds in Alberta.



Electrical Industry  
Training Centres  
of Alberta



Boilermakers  
Lodge 146  
(Edmonton  
& Calgary)



Alberta  
Laborers'  
Training  
Trust Fund



Ironworkers' Local 720  
(Edmonton) and  
Local 725 (Calgary)



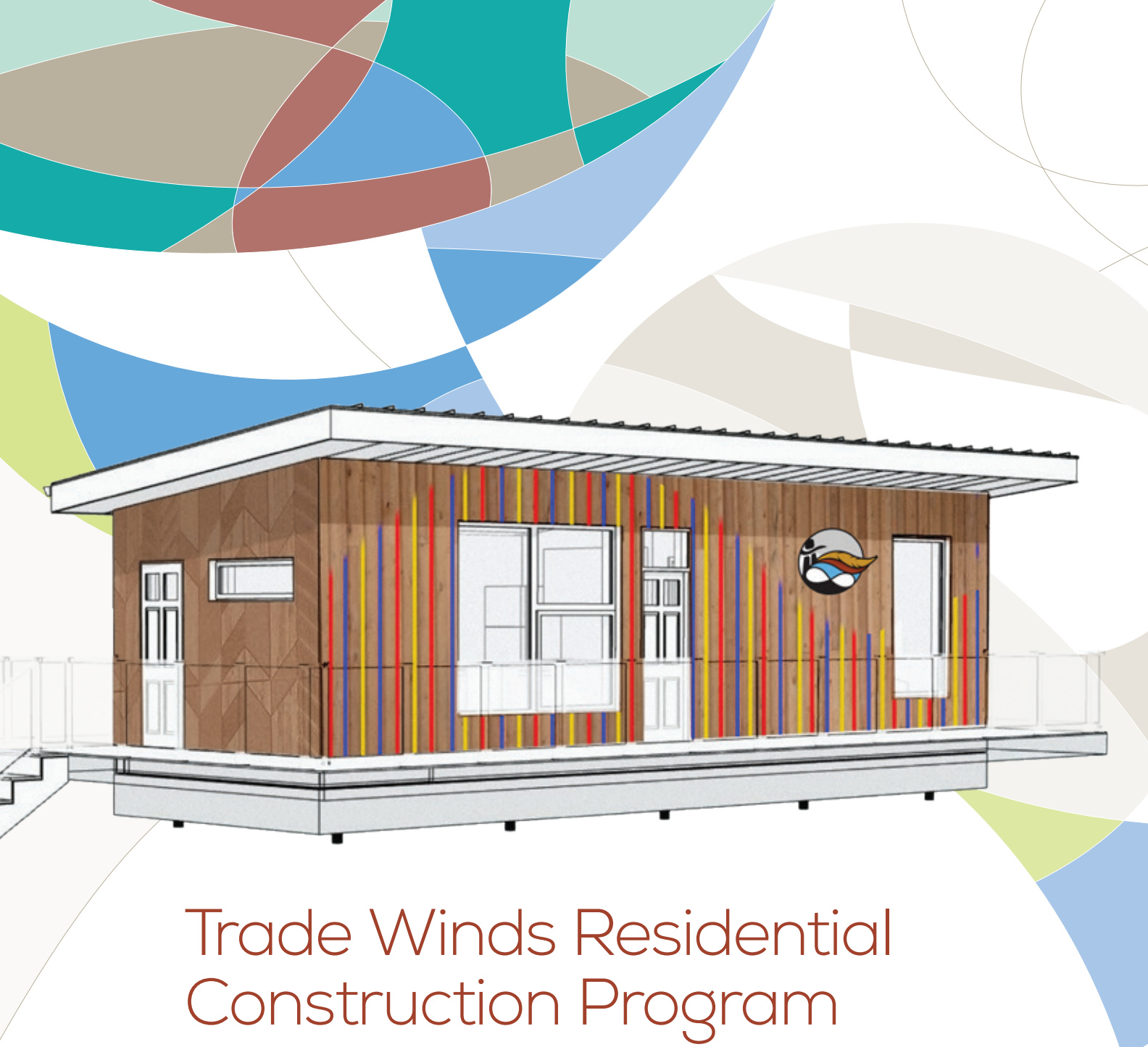
Alberta Pipe  
Trades College

# 2020 Fiscal Year Update – Commercial & Industrial Training Programs

Our commercial and industrial pre-apprenticeship training programs were profoundly impacted by COVID-19. The entire first quarter saw no new classes start as partnered training centres were closed, and Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training offices were not open for trades entrance exams. Even as classes started up again in the second quarter, multiple programs saw delays or interruptions as new government restrictions were introduced. This made scheduling and planning very difficult.

The number of participants per class was drastically reduced this fiscal year to ensure social distancing rules could be followed. With staff and clients adhering to public health measures, Trade Winds did not have any outbreaks of COVID-19. Our academic preparation/math and science refresher course was adapted to be accessible online to accommodate clients who needed to self-isolate. We also invested in Chromebooks that clients could borrow when attending classes virtually. When classes were temporarily moved online, the percentage of clients borrowing Chromebooks ranged from 20% to 100% per class. The clients' internet quality also plays a large part in how effective the online lessons are; many clients do not have a good internet connection, especially when other family members are also attending virtual lessons. It should be noted that most clients prefer in-person lessons to learn effectively.





# Trade Winds Residential Construction Program

In 2021, Trade Winds introduced a new program in Edmonton at the Trade Winds shop aimed at providing training for future employment in the residential construction field.

Clients take the entry-level Construction Basics course through the Alberta Laborers' Training Trust Fund, Fall Protection certification and 10 weeks of hands-on training building a tiny home.

Up to four homes are constructed from start to finish where clients are exposed to carpentry, plumbing, electrical, flooring, insulation, painting, and drywall trades.

Trade Winds journeyman carpenter, electrician and plumbing instructors oversee the build, and work to match program graduates with employers with apprenticeship opportunities.

Clients can receive up to 400 hours of carpentry experience, 40 hours of electrical experience and 40 hours of plumbing experience that may be credited as apprenticeship hours once indentured in a respective trade.

# Client Support

Trade Winds provides support to clients delivered by Indigenous staff who have experienced similar life challenges.

Support is provided to individuals that face barrier/life complications that may affect their success in the program. Action plans are developed with the appropriate resources in place to address the clients' specific needs and to support them to program completion and beyond.

All clients experience the support of Trade Winds first-hand during the foundational weeks of the program. Clients participate in a Healing Circle lead by Eagle Healing and are informed of various ways to understand and cope with the many obstacles Indigenous life often entails.

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## Career Skills Development

Clients are provided with knowledge, workshops, and employment awareness to achieve success in their future employment in the trades. Resume development, cover letter editing, interview skills, job maintenance, and dealing with job loss sessions are integrated throughout the Foundational and Pre-apprenticeship phases of the program.



## Employer Engagement

Our Apprenticeship Retention Officers meet with employers to demonstrate how working with Trade Winds is a win-win situation. Increasingly, construction employers face a potential shortage of skilled labour and recognize that forming relationships with Indigenous organizations makes good business sense. By working effectively with Trade Winds, employers can directly access a young, rapidly growing, skilled, and readily available pre-apprenticeship workforce. Our Apprenticeship Retention Officers bridge our clients to employment opportunities.

## Once a Trade Winds Client, Always a Trade Winds Client

Trade Winds staff follow up with graduates three times following training and annually thereafter. We continue to help with the clients' apprenticeship journey long after the program ends.





# Somerville Indigenous Trades Apprenticeship Award Recipients

In partnership with Trade Winds to Success, Robert B. Somerville Co. has established the Somerville Indigenous Trades Apprenticeship Award to demonstrate its dedication to improving the ability of Indigenous employment candidates to pursue a meaningful and sustainable career in the pipeline construction industry.

The scholarships are allocated to two individuals who are First Nation, Métis or Inuit and have completed their pre-apprenticeship training through Trade Winds to Success. Two awards of \$500 will be allocated once per year.

## Curtis Kematch Electrical Program Graduate 2020

"Trade Winds helped me connect with my spirituality and growth in the four aspects. This whole rounded approach to teaching and entering a trade helped me immensely; I realized the battle to keep balance and recognize my internal conflicts and healthy ways to gain teachings from them. I will forever be grateful to the Trade Winds program, the instructors, the counselors, all the beautiful souls involved in the program. Everyone and everything about the program breeds and promotes success. If a client believes in themselves, all goals are possible.

"I came here with the clothes on my back with nothing but hope of a dream in my head and heart. I gave my best and my all to the program and I know if every client does the same, their dreams will become a reality. I can say this with true confidence as I have been working as an apprentice since my graduation in my dream trade (electrical). The hard work and learning never ends and I am grateful to Trade Winds for believing in me and preparing me for my career."

## Dakota Bear Electrical Program Graduate 2019

"This program has opened the door for not just me but many other individuals in need of help and guidance, people who come from troubled backgrounds, or have just had a hard start in life. It allows them to seek a better path and allows individuals to get their foot in the door to open a way for them to have success in their life. It was reassuring and hard at first, adjusting to going back to a school-based program and the fundamental courses to achieve the trade that you wanted to pursue, but there are amazing staff guiding you, preparing you the whole way, cheering you on and making your days go by more smoothly."

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**"I will forever be grateful to the Trade Winds program, the instructors, the counselors, all the beautiful souls involved in the program. Everyone and everything about the program breeds and promotes success."**

– Curtis Kematch

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## 2021 Awards Application Deadline is August 31

If you are a Trade Winds graduate who is indentured and an active apprentice, you may apply for an award. Please see the Trade Winds website or Facebook page for more information.

# otatoskêw mitoni kâ-nahî

## Employers of Excellence

Each year, Trade Winds recognizes a few of the many employers of excellence that have worked with us during the fiscal year. These employers are committed to the hiring, indenturing, and supporting of Indigenous clients in trades occupations.

Trade Winds recognized the following employers in 2019, and each one has continued to employ former graduates as well as hire additional new graduates in 2020.

### K B Industrial Mechanics Ltd. – Millwrights

K B Industrial Mechanics Ltd. is Western Canada's largest 100% Canadian, Union Millwright-only contractors. KBIM has been family-owned and operated since the company formed in 1976. Over the years, as the company grew, they always ensured that it was on the front edge of technology both in researching new and innovative equipment, and ongoing training of personnel, as well as mentoring the next generation of millwrights. While being highly inventive with tools and precision, they are able to provide state-of-the-art specialized machines to work better, faster, more accurately, and safer.



"The main reason we hire through Trade Winds is motivation. Trade Winds clients are motivated and that makes for good employees. I would most definitely recommend TWTS graduates to any other contractor."

– Stan Buller, KBIM

"We recognize the value that Trade Winds brings to the construction industry, creating a foundation of practical work skills, initial training and retention support for Indigenous peoples."



– Rebecca Kragnes, Bird Construction

### Bird Construction – Carpenters

As a leading general contractor in Canada with offices coast to coast, Bird Construction has been providing construction services to a long list of new and repeat clients for over 95 years.



### Harris Rebar – Calgary Ironworkers

Harris Rebar is North America's leading fabricator, installer, and distributor of concrete reinforcing steel and related products. Harris Rebar is owned by Nucor, North America's largest producer of rebar and steel products, and is driven to be the safest, most profitable, and most customer-focused rebar. As a leader in detailing fabrication and installation of reinforcing steel, it's not just rebar you're getting, it's construction expertise accumulated over many years of experience.



"Trade Winds supplies prepared workers with the right attitude. They have the right attitude from day one."

– Dave Rosewarn, Harris Rebar

# Employers of Excellence 2020

## Canadian Power Pac

Electricians and Solar System Installers

A family-owned business founded in 1977, Canadian Power Pac remains among the largest commercial, institutional, and light industrial electrical and solar contractors in the province of Alberta. Canadian Power Pac specializes in education, health, scientific, transit, retail, and service facilities which are headed by experienced professionals and backed by a highly skilled and loyal workforce. Canadian Power Pac hired eight Trade Winds graduates in 2020 and have asked for more.



## GCS Energy Services Ltd.

GCS Energy Services Ltd. is a full-service contractor, safely executing projects across Western Canada since 1994. With over 20 years of industry experience, they are prepared to deliver exemplary work; safely, on-time, and on budget. Their spectrum of services includes structural and mechanical, electrical, concrete, civil industrial, aggregate supply and custom crushing, light and heavy hauling, and equipment sales and rentals. They offer substantial construction experience, financial strength, integrity, and commitment to their projects that is supported by a foundation of quality work and an award-winning safety program. GCS Energy Services has a consistent track record of coming through for clients, no matter the size or complexity of the project.



## ATCO

ATCO is a diversified global corporation with investment in the essential services of structures and logistics (workforce and residential housing, innovative modular facilities, construction, site support services, workforce lodging services, facility operations and maintenance, defense operations services, and disaster and emergency management services); utilities (electricity, natural gas transmission and distribution, and international electricity operations); energy infrastructure (electricity and natural gas retail sales); transportation (ports and transportation logistics); and commercial real estate.

# What Our Clients are Saying About Trade Winds

## Laverne Gauchier

Pipe Trades Plumber Program Graduate,  
March 2017

"I am so incredibly grateful to Trade Winds for providing me with the opportunity to change my career path for the better. I now have a career I am passionate about, where I can grow and develop. I feel secure knowing I can provide for my family, which has always been my priority.

"To anyone who is thinking of making that call, I am here to tell you to go for it. Take the chance. I have no doubt it will change your life and provide you with opportunities you didn't know were possible."

## Ryan Portelance

Millwright Program Graduate,  
now a Boilermaker, August 2019

"I have been blessed with the opportunity to be a part of Trade Winds. They have given me the necessary tools to attain a good mark on the AIT entrance exam. The teacher was very knowledgeable, and all the staff were very professional and approachable.

"The struggles are always there but to overcome them made me stronger. When one door closes, another one opens. I truly believe that Trade Winds changed my career path in the right direction. With the Indigenous approach and a safe place to learn, it was truly a beneficial experience. It was a sense of family and a connection that can offer the graduates assistance with job search. I owe a debt of gratitude to Trade Winds as they truly changed my life."

## Destiny Desjarlais

Carpenter Program Graduate, December 2019

"I made great friends in my class that accepted me, and a lifelong relationship. I was a part of a group where I belonged to something when I attended Trade Winds.

"The training I received fully prepared me and equipped me with the knowledge and skills I need in the trades. From the academic prep portion, to passing the AIT exam, to the two months of hands-on shop training, being supplied your own tool belt and tools, and, of course, the three weeks of job search where I gained valuable life skills to obtain that full-time employment. Trade Winds has shaped me into the healthy, stable, employed person I am today. I wouldn't be where I am today without Trade Winds, and I am grateful for each staff member who helped me along the way and getting me through my bad days. They go above and beyond to help make sure your goals in life are achievable. I am proud of myself for never giving up and overcoming every obstacle in my way. In the beginning, I didn't think I'd make it this far, but it always seems impossible ... until you get it done."

## Kimberlee Young

Millwright Program Graduate, August 2018

"Trade Winds took the time to make sure I understood the math and science I needed to be successful. Once I got the news that I passed the exam, they sent me off to the union training centre, Millwrights Local 1460, where I learned the basics that would help me succeed on the job site. Local 1460 helped me understand the types of specialty tools I'd be using, and the patience I would need as a first-year apprentice. I learned that the combination of precision, work, and patience I thought I had was going to be tested. After a few bouts of frustration and feelings of defeat, I persevered and succeeded in getting the top mark in my class!

"The top mark got me a great job and an even better boss. I have been working for the same company for over two years now. K.B. Industrial Mechanics has taken me under its wing and helped me grow as a person, a woman, an Aboriginal, and as an Industrial Mechanic."

**“I pushed through, and the staff and my classmates became my biggest supports. I really loved the open arms that the Trade Winds family environment provided. Going to Trade Winds opened doors for me and helped me with a whole new view of life and opportunities. Success happens to Trade Winds graduates.”**

– Adrienne Quewezance

## **Adrienne Quewezance**

**Construction Craft Worker Program Graduate,  
March 2020**

“The staff and my classmates kept uplifting us by having daily cultural activities and life-skills counselling. It helped my self-esteem being with other Indigenous people, knowing we all had a past. Staff encouraged us to stick together, and we did. Before the program, I wasn’t in any contact with the outside world for over two years. I had anxiety and had to struggle with going back to jail every day. I pushed through, and the staff and my classmates became my biggest supports. I really loved the open arms that the Trade Winds family environment provided. Going to Trade Winds opened doors for me and helped me with a whole new view of life and opportunities. Success happens to Trade Winds graduates. I encourage others who have been in my shoes or similar struggles to apply because I know they will do well because of Trade Winds to Success’ dedication to helping others get the training and jobs. Trade Winds help me in a lot of other aspects as well, from academics and healthy relationships to what to expect out in the work force and motivation. I got really good guidance for my path.”

## **Dana Rousseau**

**Carpenter Program Graduate, July 2017**

“What was most rewarding to me was getting a chance to practise some carpentry hands-on as this helped me decide to continue in the trade and pursue a career in carpentry. Because I had completed the pre-apprenticeship program, employers knew that I had a little training under my belt and was serious about learning the trade. I was able to find an employer willing to take a chance on me and I am now a third-year carpenter apprentice. The Trade Program helped me get to where I am today.”

## **Jerica McDonald**

**Carpenter Program Graduate,  
June 2018**

“My experience with Trade Winds was and is amazing. The program itself I enjoyed, and the staff were very helpful and resourceful. I have learned a lot and it has also helped me grow as an individual.

“The most rewarding thing out of this program is that I am pursuing my career; something that I always wanted to do and that’s to be a carpenter. If I had to take the schooling again, I would. It is such a positive environment to learn. I have talked highly of Trade Winds and told others that if they are ever interested in going into a trade and want schooling, I recommend Trade Winds. This experience was definitely a stepping stone for me.”

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**“I am so incredibly grateful to Trade Winds for providing me with the opportunity to change my career path for the better. I now have a career I am passionate about, where I can grow and develop. I feel secure knowing I can provide for my family, which has always been my priority.”**

– Laverne Gauchier

## **Mason Calliou**

**Carpenter, Lubicon Lake Tiny Home project,  
August 2019**

“This program has changed my life; it gave me the ability to gain steady employment.”

# Community Workforce Development 2015 – 2020

The Trade Winds Community Workforce Development program began in 2015, and offered academic assessments and interviews, academic preparation to write the AIT entrance exam, safety tickets, basic construction skills and operation of small tools, and hands-on training by building a tiny home. Since 2015, the Tiny Home Project has been delivered in 20 First Nation and two Métis communities in Alberta. To date, 18 tiny homes have been built, providing each Nation with an opportunity to develop their own skilled workforce.

In 2021, we will close the Tiny Home Project and open the doors to the Construction Workforce Development Residential Construction Program. This includes the same training elements but will now be offered at our Edmonton shop location.

"It has been a pleasure working with our Indigenous communities. A travelling lifestyle is full of surprises and that was half the fun. Travelling on Treaty 6, 7 and 8 territories, seeing the boreal forest, lake lands, mountains, and prairies took me away from a regular office setting.

"The knowledge and experience I have gained meeting and getting to know our Indigenous communities is priceless. What an adventure it has been to lead the Community Workforce Development program, and I look forward to the continued success of our participants in our new Residential Construction program. My motivation comes from knowing that I am part of a team who is training our Indigenous people to participate in the Alberta workforce.

"To the Community Workforce Development staff, your dedication and the cost to your personal lives had not gone unnoticed. Thank you, TEAM!"

– Mary Collins,  
Manager – Construction Workforce Development





“In my time with Community Workforce Development, there was never a shortage of unexpected changes and situations requiring improvisation. Long days of travelling, eating at new places, sleeping in many different types of places, and working out of extremely varied classroom settings, the one thing was that no matter what negatives might come along, I had the support and guidance of my CWD team.”

– Mike Nay, Academic Prep Instructor

“My first build with CWD was in John D’Or Prairie, a remote community with limited access. The build was affected by COVID-19 outbreaks, lack of daylight (less than 6 hours/day), and the cold (-44°C at times). To avoid frostbite and hypothermia, students had limited time outside. With the lockdowns, there were no IN/OUT privileges, so all supplies had to be taken in at the beginning including groceries. Weekend travel and sightseeing were discouraged by roadblocks and being away from home for 10 weeks without seeing my family was hard.

“As a Trade Winds Instructor, I was well received in the community and had great support from the Nation and the college in John D’Or Prairie, I was provided on-site accommodation and a network of people to assist in making the project a success.”

– Gary Dureski, Journeyman Carpenter Instructor



# Little Red River Cree Nation – John D’Or Prairie

Little Red River Cree Nation at John D’Or Prairie is located about 1.5 hours east of High Level in Northern Alberta, and is composed of three Woodland Cree communities: Fox Lake (where most of the population resides and has no year-round road access), John D’Or Prairie (Administrative Center), and Garden River, which is within Wood Buffalo National Park. Historical sites include Little Red River which was a traditional meeting place that became a Hudson Bay outpost and is now a pilgrimage site.

Negotiations between the Little Red River Cree Nation leadership and Trade Winds to Success began in December 2019. Originally, the Little Red River Cree Nation leadership wanted two programs in their communities of John D’Or Prairie and Fox Lake, with both programs being all-women groups. Plans were in place for recruitment and then the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Due to so many unknowns about the pandemic, it was mutually agreed that both program dates be cancelled.

In July 2020, negotiations resumed and Trade Winds staff went to John D’Or Prairie to conduct the Trade Winds to Success Adult Assessment Test and Assessment Interviews. Twenty-two women were assessed and interviewed, and 14 of those women were chosen to start the program. Of the 14 chosen, 12 started the program.





**Chief Sewepagaham provided the following introduction to this all-women program:**

"Homefires (Womanhood) – if it was not for women, men wouldn't be here! Do not ever disrespect women, do not ever hit a woman. Women are fire! If we lose the fire, we lose our home, we do not have a home to go to. As men, we do not know how hard it is to be a woman, we as men do not know what strength is, we as men do not know what it is like to give life.

"Homefires show us men how to make a house properly, show us men how to work hard, show us men how to walk this earth right! As men we do not understand what true power is, we do not understand what strength is, we have never seen it.

"Homefires – we will never see the challenges you face on a daily basis; we will never truly understand what it is like to be a Homefire in today's society!

"Our original teaching is wakhotowin, a relationship not only with yourself but everything around you. I hope by the time you finish this program you will also build relationships and rebuild our communities, again! Build them the way they were supposed to be built, to look at each other as human beings."

– Chief Conrad Sewepagaham



## Tiny Home Build

The Trade Winds Foundations program began in August 2020, but was shut down on August 24<sup>th</sup> due to COVID-19. Academic preparation was offered through online instruction by the Trade Winds instructor and, on August 31, 2020, in-person instruction resumed. On September 3, 2020, a second outbreak was declared, and the community was on lockdown. The Trade Winds training was suspended until further notice.

The program resumed on October 26, 2020, offering three weeks of academic preparation followed by two weeks of the Alberta Laborers Training Trust Fund basic construction and safe use of tools. The Tiny Home build began on December 7, 2020 with the drilling of screw piles as a foundation.



By December 17, 2020, the subfloor was completed.



By mid-January, the ladies were putting on the roof trusses.

When cold temperatures prevented the group from working outside, the ladies worked on a T-wall project, building a partial wall to learn drywalling, taping, filling, and painting.



An arctic front started to settle in by the end of January and into February 2021. Some of the lowest temperatures and wind chills brought the temperature down to minus 50 degrees celsius. When the group was unable to head outside to work, the Trade Winds Journeyman Carpenter Instructor provided inside projects so that the ladies could keep on learning.

The build portion ended on February 26, 2021. Due to many factors, the 630 sq. ft. house was built to the lock stage. A completion ceremony was held for 10 women graduates.

The Trade Winds team would like to express that it was a pleasure working with Marylou Grande, Director of Community Services with Little Red River Cree Nation.

Thank you to Little Red River Cree Nation for their in-kind contribution of accommodations for all Trade Winds staff involved with the program. We would also like to acknowledge the staff at Kayas College for their kind assistance and provision of the classroom and shop space.

This program was successful only because everyone involved from Little Red River Cree Nation, the participants, and the Trade Winds staff had the perseverance to overcome many barriers and support the program to the end.



## Little Red River Cree Nation – John D’Or Prairie Graduates



“Trade Winds, you are my inspiration, my stepping stone to success and I am honoured to receive all your help to paving a good road for myself, my Nation and all the Indigenous trades people to come.”

– Alison Blesse



“Being a part of the Trade Winds to Success Pre-apprenticeship Tiny Home program has been an entirely new experience for me and I would not change it for the world. I have always been interested in the trades but have not had the opportunity until now, and I am very thankful to have been given this amazing opportunity. The amount of support and hands-on training during the pandemic and battling the cold winter weather has been encouraging and a challenge to overcome. Being Indigenous and women, this is where our resiliency comes from.”

– Dana Nanooch



“TWTS gave me the experience of a carpenter and a chance to think of a career. After completing the pre-apprenticeship program, I know what and where I want to complete my education. I am one happy lady to have been a part of Trade Winds to Success (John D’Or Prairie) all-women program! If I could do it again, YES in a heartbeat! The best part was the instructors and actually building the tiny home.”

– Robin Auger

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