

George Brown College

Building Canada's Future with Opportunities in the Skilled Trades at George Brown College

As a leading provider of skilled trades training, George Brown College works with government and industry partners to develop a diverse future workforce of tradespeople.

With big challenges come great opportunities. The skilled trades labour shortage presents a big challenge for many areas of the Canadian economy, including in construction, where demand for new housing builds continues to grow. At George Brown College (GBC), we see this moment as an incredible opportunity to develop a diverse future workforce ready to step into rewarding careers and build a more resilient and sustainable Canada.

Ensuring everyone feels welcome in the skilled trades is integral to addressing the labour shortage. It also fosters a more innovative and dynamic workforce. GBC continues to provide paths into the construction trades specifically for women, with the Women Transitioning to Trades and Employment program (women currently make up less than five per cent of Ontario's construction workforce). We also provide scholarships, bursaries and awards to support underrepresented people in the trades, including Black and Indigenous students and learners from other equity-deserving groups.

GBC also attracts new talent to the field through industry partnerships, apprenticeships, educational programs and mentorship opportunities to close the growing skills gap as veteran tradespeople retire.

While the construction trades are top of mind for many amid a housing crisis, GBC offers skilled trades training and apprenticeships in other areas, including culinary arts, information technology, early childhood education, and hairstyling.

"George Brown College works hard to elevate the status of the skilled trades among young people and anyone looking to make a career change. The trades offer career paths with great earning potential and exciting growth opportunities," said Dev Baichan, Associate Dean of GBC's School of Apprenticeships and Skilled Trades.

"Attracting youth is a big focus. We also want working professionals looking to make a career shift to consider moving into the skilled trades. The average age of an apprentice in Ontario right now is 30."

And there are great opportunities for skilled tradespeople to advance their careers. GBC and two other colleges launched the Bachelor of Business Administration (Trades Management) program in 2022. It's designed for skilled tradespeople who want to take on leadership roles at their current workplaces or go into business for themselves.

Our Community Partnerships Office offers programs aimed at helping people transition into apprenticeships and skilled trades training at any age. Our Pre-Apprenticeship program is fully funded by the Ontario government and offered at no cost to students, and governments continue to invest in providing other incentives in skilled trades training.

Many skilled tradespeople will be at the forefront of constructing and maintaining a more sustainable built environment as we adapt to climate change. GBC students witness this firsthand as construction on our low-carbon mass-timber building, Limberlost Place, continues at Waterfront Campus.

"This is an exhilarating time for skilled trades training," Baichan said. "Governments are investing in the future of this sector, and the skills that tradespeople offer are desperately needed. There is so much opportunity for learning and advancement."

Learn more about skilled trades training at George Brown College at georgebrown.ca/trades



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