





Message from the CEO

Ian Howcroft, CEO
Skills Ontario

As the CEO of Skills Ontario, it is my honor to work alongside students, educators, parents, volunteers, labour, industry professionals, and employers in “changing lives and inspiring leaders through skilled trades and technologies.”

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your dedication and contributions in helping Skills Ontario inspire youth to pursue careers that will lead to fulfilling and happy lives. For over 35 years, our organization has grown in tandem with the increasing demand for skilled tradespeople in the workforce and so has our mission. Thank you to all Skills Ontario staff who continue to provide high quality programs and events.

This year, our programs and events achieved remarkable milestones. The 2025 Skills Ontario Competition attracted over 40,000 attendees, including 2700+ competitors and more than 800 volunteers. Our Trades & Tech Summer Camps saw over 500 registrations and we reached around 135,000 students across the province through our in-school presentations.

The Trades & Tech Truck visited 15 communities as part of the LevelUp! Career Fairs and our Trades & Technology Days hosted

by the Young Women’s Initiatives are expanding into more areas of Ontario. Finally, we launched new events, including the Skilled Trade & Tech Summit for Indigenous youth, and in-person events for our Skilled Trades & Tech Umoja Series.

I would also like to recognize and thank our partners for their unwavering support for our programs and events. We could not achieve the success we have this year without the contributions of these key organizations.

Thank you all for your continued dedication and support.

Sincerely,

Ian Howcroft, Hons. B.A., LL.B.
CEO, Skills Ontario



Message from the Skills Ontario Chair

David Morley,
Skills Ontario Chair
of the Board of Directors

Skills Ontario is **empowering youth to discover, explore, and choose skilled trades and technologies**. We are the longest-running and most-successful organization of our kind having significant impact in big cities and small towns across Ontario.

Partnerships are central to what we do for students, apprentices and young people starting their journey from school to work.

The Government of Ontario is a central partner. Private sector companies and labour organizations invest. Almost all school boards and colleges across the province contribute to our programs or competitions.

Our team, along with teachers, guidance counsellors, parents and Skills Ontario alumni make extraordinary efforts so that Ontario's young people have the best opportunities through Skills Ontario.

Guided by our three-year strategic plan, and led by a determined and experienced Board and leadership team, Skills Ontario is having more impact than ever before.

From the Indigenous Summit to Trades & Tech Trucks, or in-school programs to summer camps, we are part of creating the next generation of talent in Ontario.

At a time when trades are in demand, technology is changing education and employment, and youth need support to discover their path and passion, Skills Ontario is making a difference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D Morley', written in a cursive style.

David Morley,
Chair of the Board of Directors,
Skills Ontario

Table of Contents

Impact & Reach
pg. 5

Educational Presentations
pg. 6

Young Women's Initiatives
pg. 7

First Nations, Métis, & Inuit Initiatives
pg. 8

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I) Initiatives
pg. 9

Qualifying Competition
pg. 10

Skills Ontario Competition
pg. 11

Career Exploration Showcase
pg. 12

Table of Contents

Junk Drawer Races
pg. 13

Skilled Trades Conference for Guidance Educators
pg.14

Provincial Entrepreneurship Showcase
pg. 15

Trades & Tech Summer Camps
pg. 16

Podcast & App
pg. 17

Learning Tools & Resources
pg. 18

Year In Review
pg. 20 - 22

Thank you to our Partners
pg. 24 - 28

Impact & Reach

Every year, Skills Ontario engages with followers across social media through Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, and X. We use these tools, along with our Skills Ontario Updates newsletter, to keep our supporters in the loop about our programs, events, opportunities, and more. You can subscribe to our newsletter at skillsontario.com/newsletters

Skills Ontario received 1,033,198 impressions across all our social media posts and accounts in 2024 - 2025!



Educational Presentations

Skills Ontario engages students through our In-School Educational Presentations delivered by Program Facilitators who visit schools across the province throughout the school year. When the pandemic changed our circumstances, Skills Ontario adapted its presentations program to be delivered virtually. Our presentation educates students on the viable career opportunities available in the construction, motive power, service, and industrial sectors as well as technology field. Updated annually, the presentation is available in both English and French, First Nations, Metis, and Inuit audiences. Along with this student-focused presentation, Skills Ontario offers a presentation designed for parents and guardians. To learn more or book a presentation visit skillsontario.com/presentations



Educational Presentations Stats:

135,128 participants in the 2024 - 2025 school year

2,481 presentations done

1,489 schools visited

Young Women's Initiatives



Skills Ontario Young Women's Initiatives aim to empower young women to explore skilled careers. A wide range of events take place, including Skilled Trade & Tech Days in multiple regions across the province, Industry Events, and various events to celebrate International Day of the Girl and International Women's Day. The Young Women's Initiatives offers programming in both English and French, reinforcing our commitment to engaging with the Francophone Community. Visit skillsontario.com/ywi to learn more about this program.



Young Women's Initiatives Stats:

6,959 participants in the 2024 -2025 school year

40 events organized across Ontario

First Nations, Métis, & Inuit (FNMI) Initiatives

Skills Ontario First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Initiatives are created for Indigenous youth and unemployed/underemployed adults. These programs offer opportunities to explore careers in the skilled trades and technologies while staying connected to culture, community, and land. Programming includes, Skilled Trades Information Sessions, Skilled Trades & Technology Days, Summer Workshops, Student Challenges, and the Youth Conference. Each event features hands-on learning, cultural teachings, and spaces that honour Indigenous identity and ways of knowing. These initiatives go beyond career exploration—they support Indigenous youth in discovering their gifts, building confidence, and learning from mentors who share similar lived experiences. Learn more at skillsontario.com/fnmi.



FNMI Initiatives Stats:

2 new initiatives launched in 2024-25.

Over 2300 people participated in the new By the Fire Virtual Series.

Over 1300 participants in the new FNMI Youth Summit.

Over 8,000 youth participated in our FNMI Initiatives in 2024-25.



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I) Initiatives

At Skills Ontario, we are dedicated to fostering equal opportunities for all youth by actively removing barriers and providing inclusive career exploration programs. Many young people across Canada face systemic challenges—such as limited experience, a lack of relevant skills, and restricted access to professional networks . —that can prevent them from entering the skilled trades workforce. In response, Skills Ontario began developing specialized programming in 2021 to support those who face these barriers. Our initiatives are designed to create meaningful access points into the skilled trades and technologies for underrepresented communities.

Programs include:

- Skilled Trades & Tech Inclusivity Series
- RISE Series for newcomer Canadian youth
- Umoja Series supporting Black youth
- Urban Tech Workshops
- Tools for Success Workshops

Through these events, we continue to champion a diverse and resilient skilled trades workforce. To explore these programs or view past event recordings, visit: skillsontario.com/dei

10,127 individuals participated in our DE&I initiatives in 2024 - 2025!



Qualifying Competition

Prior to the provincial-level competition Skills Ontario hosts our Qualifying Competitions for four of our most in-demand secondary contests (Culinary, Carpentry Individual, TV Video (team of two), and Welding). Secondary students must first participate and win gold, silver, or bronze to determine who will advance to the provincial level competition.

The Qualifying competition happens simultaneously on the same day and time at the seven participating college locations across the province each April. Finalists from the Qualifying competition continue to the provincial level competition, including some wild card spaces for top scorers! The Qualifying Competition is only for these four contests, and only at the secondary level.

Qualifying Competition Stats:

7 participating college locations.
306 competitors.



Skills Ontario Competition

The largest skilled trades event in Canada, the Skills Ontario Competition, annually welcomes tens of thousands of visitors, exhibitors, and competitors each May. From animation to horticulture, welding to baking, this is the ultimate display of the future of skilled trades and technologies! The Skills Ontario Competition offers an experiential opportunity for competitors to demonstrate their skills, wowing educators, family, friends, and prospective employers. Free and open to the public, it's also a great way for spectators to learn more about these in demand and viable careers opportunities and to explore at their own pace!

The two-day competition offers over 75 skilled trades and technology-based contests, an interactive Career Exploration Showcase of 70+ partners, live demonstrations, hands on Elementary Workshops, plus a number of conferences including both English and French Young Women's Conferences, a First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Student Conference, the Provincial Entrepreneurial Showcase, and the Skilled Trades Conference for Guidance Educators.

Closing Ceremony takes place on the third day, where competitors, educators, stakeholders, partners and more, come together in an exciting presentation of awards and prizes. Many of those who win gold gain the opportunity to represent our province at the Skills Canada National Competition as a part of Team Ontario! Every other year, competitors at the National Competition in select contests have the chance to earn a place on Team Canada to compete at the international WorldSkills event.

2,726 competitors competed at the 2025 Skills Ontario Competition!



Career Exploration Showcase

The Career Exploration Showcase is a two-day event held annually alongside the Skills Ontario Competition. Spanning a massive area over 20,000 square feet within the Toronto Congress Centre, it featured hands-on and interactive exhibitor booths that offered attendees the unique chance to participate in hands-on skilled trade activities at every booth, explore a variety of career pathways in the skilled trades and technologies and connect with representatives from Ontario's business, education, government, and of course, Skilled Trades and Technologies sectors about career opportunities.

In 2025, over 40,000 + visitors attended the Career Exploration Showcase and had the opportunity to explore a record 77 interactive showcase exhibitor booths. The impact of this pivotal experience cannot be understated with tens of thousands of youth being afforded an unparalleled opportunity to dive headfirst into the dynamic world of the skilled trades and technologies. This event was an invaluable resource to students, educators, parents/guardians, and career seekers looking to discover and explore new possibilities in the skilled trades and technologies.

Over 70+ exhibitors featured at the Career Exploration Showcase in 2025!



Junk Drawer Races

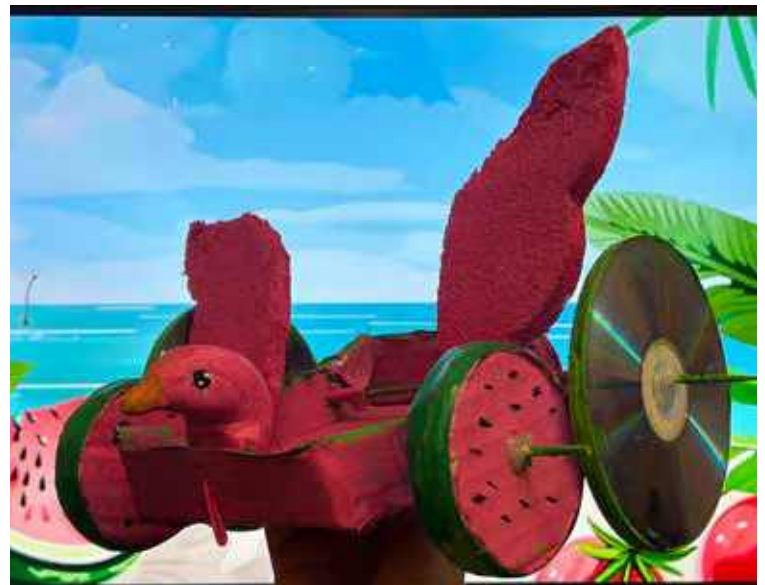
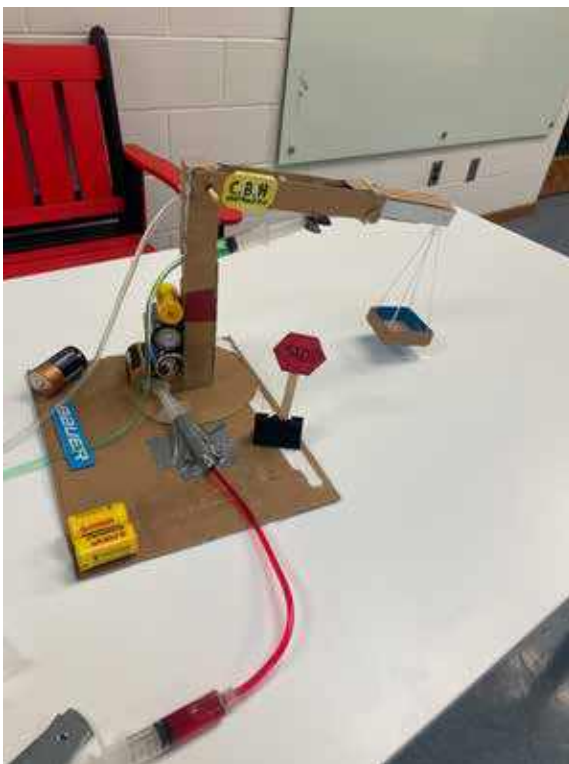
Since 2021, Skills Ontario has been hosting the Junk Drawer Races, a competition program where students can compete in curriculum-based, skill-developing contests related to the skilled trades and technologies. For the 2025-2026 school year, the Junk Drawer Races Program will offer challenges to students in Grades 2 through 8, continuing to be inclusive for all students to participate from across the province as it can be completed from a classroom or at home for virtual classrooms, and submissions are completely virtual.

With a Primary Challenge (for grades 1-3), a Junior Challenge (for grades 4-6), and an Intermediate Challenge (for grades 7-8), youth are given the opportunity to try a hands-on approach in their exploration of skilled trades and technologies. The Junk Drawer Races Program also promotes sustainability of re-using common items found at home or in the classroom, along with recyclables, with minimal purchases required.

With emphasis on topics tied to curriculum such as flight technology, design, systems in action, and more, youth can participate in teams to build and race their structure in an attempt to advance from the regional level to the province-wide championship level. For details on this program, visit: www.skillsontario.com/junk-drawer-races.

2024-2025 Junk Drawer Races Stats:

5 challenges held.
2,176 students participated this year.



Skilled Trades Conference for Guidance Educators

This one-day enlightening conference provided career educators the opportunity to delve further and deepen their knowledge regarding the pathways that lead to a successful career in the skilled trades. Conference attendees can feel empowered, equipped, and ready to return to the classroom and share the day's materials with their students who may be considering a skilled trade career!

The conference featured a panel led by industry experts, a keynote speaker, and thought-provoking workshops. Attendees also had a chance to network throughout the day with their like-minded peers who are there representing many school boards across Ontario!

In 2024-2025, nearly 450 educators attended the conference and 98% of attendees reported they were satisfied with the planning and content of the event.

Some positive feedback from the event includes, "I've already started to talk to my grade 8's about OYAP and apprenticeship pathways since I left the conference" and "I loved all the opportunities to connect at the event. It was interactive with the audience, and I appreciated that!"



Provincial Entrepreneurship Showcase

In its second year, Skills Ontario proudly hosted the Provincial Entrepreneurship Showcase as part of the 2025 Skills Ontario Competition. This exciting event took place virtually and in-person provided aspiring student entrepreneurs with a platform to share their innovative ideas, showcase their business plans, and gain valuable feedback while engaging with industry-experienced mentors.

The showcase featured networking opportunities, a keynote speaker, and interactions with business owners from diverse occupational backgrounds. Some select participants were even invited to pitch their business ideas from the stage to a live audience, providing them an opportunity to practice their presenting skills as they continue their entrepreneurial journey!



This year's event was a success with over 1,000 students participating either virtually or in-person and 95% of students reporting that they were satisfied with this year's event and would like to see it continue in 2026!

When asked about their experience at the event, one participant shared "The experience was so professional and exceeded all of our expectations".



Trades & Tech Summer Camps

Skills Ontario facilitates week-long day-camps across Ontario in the summer to encourage the exploration of skilled trade and tech careers through hands-on workshops and activities.

This year, 30 camp sessions were held, in partnership with numerous colleges and industry partners, to reach more than 500 youth throughout the province. For more information, visit skillsontario.com/camp!

Trades & Tech Summer Camps Stats:

517 camp registrations.
495 camp participants this summer.



Trades & Tech Truck

The Trades & Tech Truck and Trailers are mobile hubs of fun and experiential learning!

Equipped with state-of-the-art simulators and interactive activities, it offers students and adults an exciting opportunity to explore skilled trades and technologies in a unique, hands-on environment.

All activities offered by this program:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| - Virtual Paint Simulator | - Welding Simulator | - Walk A Trade VR Oculus Experience |
| - Electrical Wall Device | - Tool Exploration-- Milwaukee Tools | - VR Oculus Activities, including: |
| - Electrical Wiring Station | - Try on a Trade (Personal Protective Equipment) | - Forklift Operating |
| - Pneumatics | - Fire Alarm System | - Residential Electrician |
| - Tire & Brake Station | - 3D Printer | - Powerline Technician |
| - Heavy Machinery Simulator | - Cake Decorator | - Welding |
| - Hybrid Planetary Gearset | - Hairstyling | - Tool |
| - Automotive Wiring Station | - Rigging Trainer | |
| | - Ohm's Law Trainer | |

Trades & Tech Truck Stats:

61,009 participants explored the Trades & Tech Truck.
1,123 schools visited in 2024 - 2025.



Trades & Tech Talk Podcast

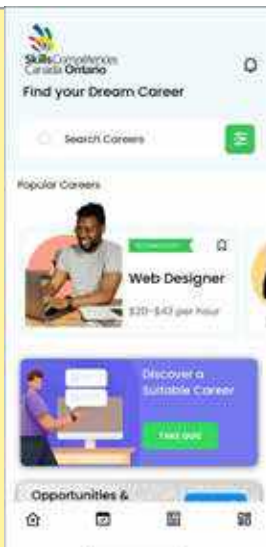
Hear from skilled trade and tech professionals, apprentices, college reps, educators, and Skills Ontario staff about in-demand skilled trade and technology careers. You can find all episodes of this podcast at skillsontario.com/the-skills-ontario-podcast.

Skills Ontario App

The Skills Ontario App brings career exploration to your fingertips!

App users can take the career aptitude quiz, resources, news, links to opportunities, and more. This fully bilingual app is available for free download on the Apple, Android, and Google Play stores. Visit skillsontario.com/app.

Over 53,000+ downloads since the app was launched!

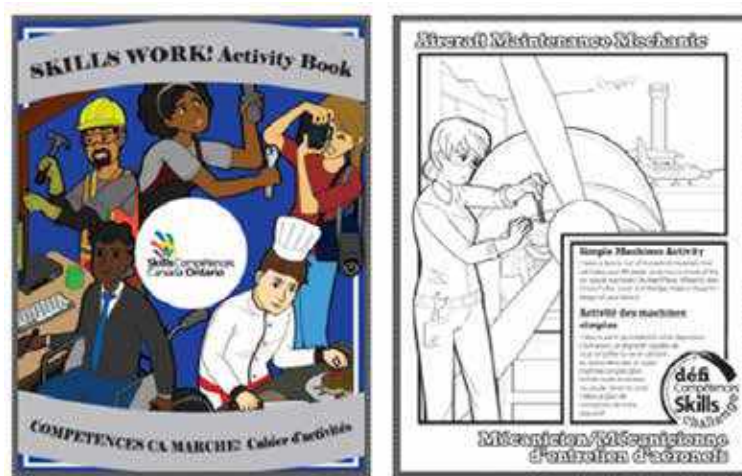


Learning Tools & Resources

Skills Ontario offers a variety of digital and printing resources to assist educators and students looking for information on careers in the skilled trades and technologies.

Skills Ontario Publications

Our publications, including a colouring book, career guide, and booklet on women in skilled trades, are available for order and can be found across the province at Skills Ontario events. To order publications, visit skillsontario.com/publications.



Skills Ontario Videos

These inspiring and informative videos for students bring another level of learning, including tours of skilled trade and tech workplaces, words of advice from skilled professionals, and more. You can watch these videos on our website at skillsontario.com/videos.



Viewers spent 2,756 hours watching Skills Ontario videos this year!

2024 - 2025

Year in Review



Presentations Metrics



Young Women's Initiatives Metrics



First Nations, Métis, & Inuit Initiatives Metrics



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Metrics



2024 - 2025

Year in Review

Trades & Tech Truck Metrics

61,009

Participants

1,123

Schools Engaged

15

LevelUp! Events
Attended

Trades & Tech Summer Camps Metrics

517

Registrations

495

Participants

30

Camps

Skilled Trades Conference for Guidance Educators Metrics

450

Participants

9

Event Sponsors

98%

Event
Satisfaction Rate

Provincial Entrepreneurship Showcase Metrics

1,000

Participants

95%

Event Satisfaction
Rate

2024 - 2025

Year in Review



Junk Drawer Races Metrics

2,176

Participants

5

Challenges

Skills Ontario Qualifying Competition Metrics

306

Participants

7

College
Locations

Skills Ontario Competition Metrics

2,726

Competitors

900

Elementary Workshop
Participants

75+

Skilled Trade &
Technology Contests

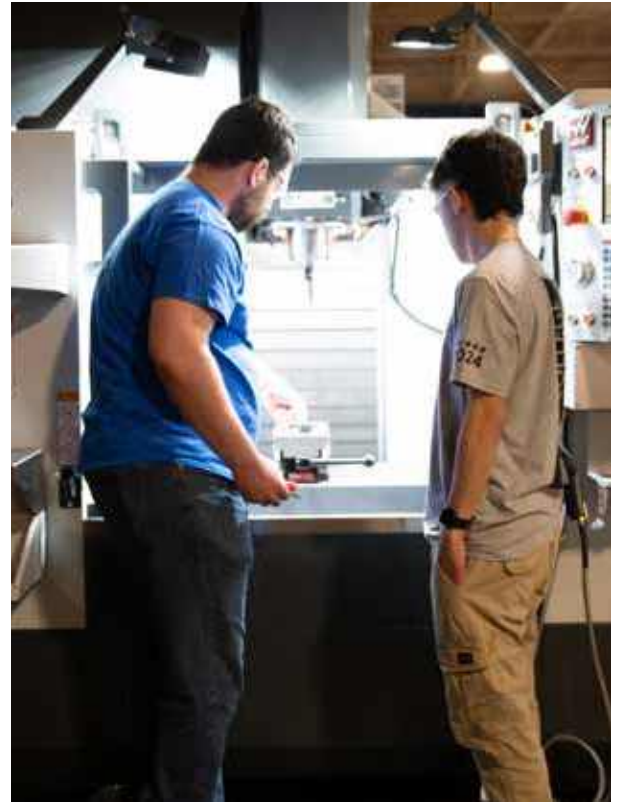
Career Exploration Showcase Metrics

77

Exhibitors

156

Partners



Skills Ontario Partners and Sponsors

Skills Ontario appreciates our corporate and government partners and suppliers who provide better opportunities for everyone in Ontario. It is through their generosity, vision, and commitment that we are able to touch the lives of so many Ontario youth each and every year. Thank you to our partners for the 2024 - 2025 year.



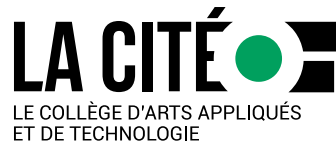
This Employment Ontario program is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

Partenaires de Compétences Ontario





Sheridan



Partenaires de Compétences Ontario





FORCES
JOBS + EMPLOIS

iDESIGN 365
Design | Engineer | Educate



OBOA
ONTARIO BUILDING OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION



SoundEVENTS
LIGHTING | STAGING | AUDIO | VISUAL
855-535-3939 info@soundevents.ca

HAHN RENTALS
YOUR SPECIAL EVENT PROFESSIONALS

Skills Ontario Collaborating Organization



AGNICO EAGLE

POMERLEAU



TD Insurance



MERIT ONTARIO



TRADES FOR TOMORROW



YOUTH BOOST
POWERED BY MAGNET



elexicon
ENERGY

VOLVO



ArcelorMittal



Bombardier



OCTE | ONTARIO COUNCIL FOR TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

CBRE



WOMEN IN TRADES, TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING



ST. CLAIR COLLEGE
GENESIS
ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE



WiN | WOMEN IN NUCLEAR
CANADA



W.I.S.T
Women In Steel Toes

Women
IN HVAC + R
CANADA



Ontario
Building & Construction
Tradeswomen

MOXY The Voice of Women in Infrastructure

Skills Ontario Collaborating Organization

Agospace

Anglo-Franco Communications

Artline Salon

Bay of Quinte Economic Development Group

Henlex Inc.

Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association

Innovative Trailer Design Industries Inc.

Inuuqatigiit Centre

Indigenous Friendship Centre Sault Ste. Marie

Kingston Economic Development

Ontario Council for Technology Education (OCTE)

Ontario Educational Championship Team

Ontario General Contractors Association

BWXT Canada Ltd.

Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario

County of Renfrew

Ontario Horticultural Trades Foundation

Procor Limited.

Progressive Contractors Association of Canada

Resolute Forest Products

Samuel, Son & Co.

Social Development Council of Cornwall & Area

Sudbury & Manitoulin Workforce Planning

Toronto Congress Centre (TCC)

Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)

Volvo

Unearth Education

Creation Camp

CWB Welding Foundation

Electrical Power Systems Construction Association (EPSCA)

Enterprise Holdings





*Changing lives and inspiring
leaders through skilled trades
and technologies.*

