



# CONTINUING EDUCATION



## 'Dire shortage' of technology education teachers

Program helps skilled tradespeople become teachers

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As a carpenter apprentice, M-C MacPhee credits "incredible mentors" with teaching her everything they knew about their trade while also sharing their passion for the craft. When she eventually became a mentor to high school students exploring the trades, she knew she'd one day become a teacher.

"I volunteered at a lot of mentoring events for girls and students from diverse backgrounds through organizations like Skills Ontario," she says. "I loved helping and encouraging them and seeing their eyes totally widen when they realized carpentry was just the coolest work."

MacPhee first considered the trade when she worked in landscaping while completing an undergraduate degree in communications and women's studies. "People often asked if I could build a fence or a shed for them," she says. "I didn't know how but vowed that I would learn." After graduating university, she completed a two-year building and renovation program with a focus on green building and became an apprentice while working with a company doing renovations.

When she eventually decided to teach, MacPhee was thrilled to discover a bachelor of education in technological education at York University. She earned her teaching certificate and is now a construction technology teacher in Toronto. "I'm committed to helping people see the value of the trades," says MacPhee, whose interest in helping the new generation come up with ideas to be more responsible with waste also motivated her to teach.

Many skilled tradespeople are ideally suited to teach, says Chloë Brushwood Rose, associate dean for academic programs in York's



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M-C MacPhee completed a bachelor of education in technological education certificate at York University. It has signed agreements with seven Ontario colleges, opening the door for graduates in technology-related fields to become teachers.

faculty of education. "One of the great things about the trades are the models of education, which are incredibly progressive. They're hands on, they're applied and they focus on mentorship...The trades are emblematic of the types of pedagogy we're always saying are the best models."

Deciding to teach can be a "natural progression" for skilled tradespeople, many of whom discover early on they like mentoring others. "For many, it's not about leaving

the trades to become a teacher - it's about a new way of working in their industry and in the technological sector in which they have expertise," Brushwood Rose says. "A lot see it as an evolution of their career."

In 2015, York and Brock universities each received a provincial government grant to enhance their respective BEd in technological education programs. At that time, a survey of school boards found 50% of technological education teachers were eligible to retire within five

to 10 years. "Even with those people working, there's a dire shortage," Brushwood Rose says.

She expects demand for technological education teachers will increase under Ontario's new Apprenticeship Strategy, which will develop recommendations on how to ensure students from kindergarten through Grade 12 are prepared for, exposed to and aware of career opportunities in the skilled trades.

College students with advanced diplomas in programs ranging from

animation to industrial design as well as work experience can apply to York's consecutive BEd in technological education program. It's also open to other candidates - all of whom must complete 60 credits over four terms to earn a professional teaching degree. York typically attracts applicants from communications technology, construction, hospitality, hairdressing and esthetics. It's working to recruit candidates from transportation, health care and green industries.

Successful graduates are qualified to teach one of the following technological subjects in Grades 9 to 12:

Communications technology

Computer technology

Construction technology

Green industries

Hairstyling and esthetics

Health care

Hospitality and tourism

Manufacturing technology

Technological design

Transportation technology