

About Saugeen Sparks Training Centre

Established in the fall of 2023, the Centre is committed to empowering youth and adults with the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to pursue meaningful careers in the skilled trades. Through hands-on learning, industry partnerships and career focused programming, the Centre fosters employability and long-term success across Grey, Bruce and Huron Counties.

A fifteen-member Board of Directors plays a crucial role in guiding the organization's Mission, ensuring strategic direction while fostering strong community partnerships. Their leadership helps shape policies and initiatives that advance accessibility, inclusion and workforce development in the skilled trades.

The Centre embodies the spirit of inclusivity and community representation, ensuring that the individuals shaping its Vision reflect the diversity of the region it serves. The Board itself reflects this commitment, bringing together a diverse group of leaders including women and representatives from our neighbouring Indigenous Communities whose perspectives strengthen the Centre's outreach and impact.

By supporting the typically underrepresented groups in the skilled trades, the Centre fosters opportunities for women, Indigenous peoples and newcomers to Canada, groups that play a significant role in shaping our local communities.

The richness of our region is reflected in both the Centre's leadership and the students it trains, creating a space where diverse perspectives and experiences drive innovation and progress in the skilled trades. Through its commitment to accessibility and collaboration, the Centre strengthens connections across communities, reinforcing its role as a catalyst for empowerment and growth.

Since its inception in late fall 2023, the Centre's training programs have seen:

- 458 enrolments in Night School programming and specialized programs, including Support Ontario Youth (SOY) Boot Camps as well as Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB) and Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario (PBCTC) specialized workshops, where students showcase their skills to regional employers and trade unions.
- The delivery of 19 skills programs to date, collaborating with Support Ontario Youth on 7 programs (including two in welding, two in electrical, two in plumbing and one Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) program).
- The successes of two consecutive specialized welding programs delivered in the summer of 2024. The one-week Mind Over Metal Workshop offered in partnership with the Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB) and the four-week Tomorrow's Trades program, delivered in collaboration with the Provincial

Building and Construction Trades Council, collectively resulted in a 100% pass rate and 86 certifications awarded to 36 students. These accomplishments were formally recognized on the CWB's website, underscoring the Centre's growing impact on skilled trades.

- More recently, the summer 2025 Tomorrow's Trades welding program concluded on August 8th 2025 and the trend of excellence continued. Across all three consecutive specialized welding programs, a total of 54 students from across the region have now achieved a remarkable 100% pass rate, collectively earning 137 welding certifications.
- Advancement in gender diversity in trades careers with 29% of enrolments being women.
- Strong partnerships with neighbouring First Nations communities have led to 28% of enrolments identifying as Indigenous.
- the strengthening of employment pathways for new residents to Canada from India, Africa, the Philippines and Ukraine.
- the delivery of training free of charge, ensuring accessibility to skills-based training programs.

Through these initiatives, the Centre continues to strengthen both the region's and Ontario's skilled trades workforces and provides students with high-quality hands-on training leading to employment opportunities.