

The Year in Review: April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012



A N N U A L R E P O R T

Chair's Message



Bob Allen is President of ACCUMETAL Manufacturing Inc., Stratford, Ontario and has over 28 years of experience in the metal fabrication industry in both the corporate & private sectors. Bob joined the Board of Directors in March 2007 to bring an industry perspective to the Board and to support and develop programming. In December 2010, he took on the role of Treasurer and in June 2011 was appointed Chair.

My first year as Chair of the Technical Training Group (TTG) Board of Directors has been a rewarding one and I look forward to continued success in the second year of my two-year term. Without a doubt, it was an interesting learning experience and one that I was proud to undertake.

TTG's mission is to bring a variety of technical and skilled trades' training to the local community. As a small non-profit, we are up for the challenge and committed to delivering high quality training to meet the needs of industry. Our accomplishments - performance, partnerships and outcomes – are highlighted in the 2011-2012 Annual Report

The goal to transition from basic skills prep to pre-apprenticeship training was a challenging one but realized in September 2011. A mix of assets such as cost effective training, a history of apprenticeship delivery, success rates and perseverance translated into an approved 31-week pre-apprenticeship multiple trades training program and a very good return on investment for the participants and the Province of Ontario.

I extend many thanks to our team of contractors for their hard work and dedication. To my colleagues on the Board of Directors, I thank you for your support, expertise, front line insight, prudent decision making and focus. Together, we will keep TTG on its path to sustainable and profitable revenue growth.

We say GOODBYE to Director Deb Hotchkiss who served a three year term from 2008-2011. Deb's in-depth knowledge of the training and non-profit sectors will be missed.

The Board and I look forward to continuing our current training options in 2012-13 and introducing new training ventures as the need arises in the local economy.

Bob Allen
Chair, TTG

Supporting technical and skilled trades' training in Stratford & Area

The Technical Training Group (TTG) is a not-for-profit corporation with a 12-member volunteer Board of Directors, comprised of area stakeholders from industry, business, education, City of Stratford and the Four County Labor Market Planning Board.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2011-2012

Bob Allen, Chair

Owner/President
ACCUMETAL Mfg. Inc.

Kent Johnston, Past Chair

Owner/President
Kyjo Steel

George Brown, Vice Chair

Councillor
City of Stratford

Deb McNair, Secretary/Treasurer

Principal
St. Marys District Collegiate Vocational Institute

Maryann Cox

Creative Director
Factory 163

Cavell Fraser

Vice President, Human Resources
United Communities Credit Union

Chris Hall

Partner/Manager
Discovery Geo Energy Inc.

Deb Hotchkiss

Executive Director
Partners in Employment

Ted Lange

Senior Vice-President
Culliton Brothers Limited

Tim Martens

OYAP Project Leader
Huron Perth Catholic District School Board

Gemma Mendez-Smith

Executive Director
Four County Labour Market Planning Board

Jerry Myers

Sales Manager
Quality Components International
STEELCRAFT Inc.

BUSINESS MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Last year, the two main priorities for TTG were long term sustainability and relevance. In 2011-12 with global financial pressures leading to economic and market volatility at home and abroad, the priorities remain unchanged.

A few high points from 2011-12 deserve honorable mention. The welder apprenticeship program funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) continues to be TTG's foundation piece. The program is running smoothly and efficiently and each year registration numbers are filled which speaks to TTG's reputation as a high caliber training facility. To address concerns that welder apprenticeship graduates were not acquiring further qualifications, MTCU approved a preparation course for TTG graduates to challenge the Red Seal Certification exam. The first course was held in February 2012 with a group of Level 3 graduates participating in the training. On the for-profit side, the continued expansion of our custom welding training is a significant contributor to our bottom line. Growth in the area is expected for 2012-13 as our satisfied customers return for additional training.

I am very proud to say that one of TTG's targeted goals was realized in September 2011 with MTCU approval to deliver the Pre-Apprenticeship Multiple Trades Exposure program. Many thanks are extended to our community partners for supporting both our application for funding and program implementation. The turnaround time to get up and running by January 2012 was compressed. It was extremely satisfying to be able to reach out to our network and put the necessary steps in place to launch the program. Our partners absorbed this unexpected opportunity into their workload and enthusiastically worked with us to ensure the participant experience was a positive and successful one.

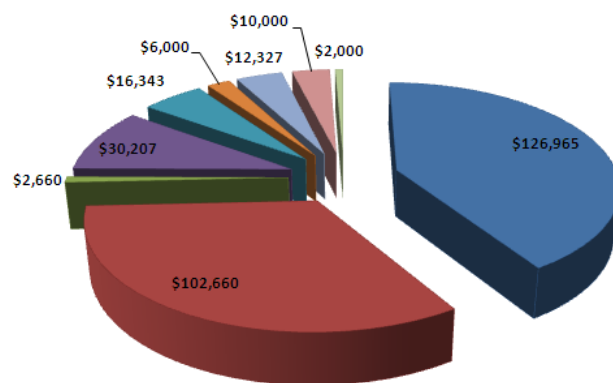
Another high point was TTG's partnership with Off the Wall to deliver a 6-week Introduction to Theatre Production Arts training program in July and August 2011. The pilot summer course filled a training void in the arts community as there is no educational facility in Canada offering these skills. It also highlights TTG's versatility and commitment to supporting relevant training endeavours in the local community.

Most importantly, I extend my thanks to fellow contractors and the volunteer directors for their support and commitment. With their continued support, I look forward to moving the organization forward over the coming year.

Shawn Bontaine
Business Manager

TTG BUSINESS MODEL

- Offers technical and skilled trades' training using the technical facilities at Stratford Northwestern & St. Michael Catholic Secondary Schools.
- Operates during evening hours, Saturdays and during summer months.
- Is a flexible training model in terms of location and scheduling.
- Has multiple revenue streams – per diem seat plans, fee-based cost recovery and/or private sector competitive market rates.



Total Revenue \$309,162



Report on Training

WELDER APPRENTICESHIP Ontario

TTG is a Training Delivery Agent (TDA) for the Welder/Metal Fabricator trades common core year 1 and Welder trade apprenticeship year 2 and 3. Training takes place during evening hours Monday to Thursday, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m., September to June, at Stratford Northwestern Secondary School technical facilities (TTG Site 1). Up to 48 welder apprentices train between the three levels for a total of 720 training hours per year [Level 1–300 hrs; Level 2–180 hrs; Level 3–240 hrs].

In **June 2011**, a combined total of 35 trainees graduated from the three levels of welder training with **thirteen [13]** graduating from Level 3 and completing their apprenticeship training. These graduates become eligible to challenge their Interprovincial Red Seal Welder Certificate of Qualifications through the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities. In **September 2011**, a total of **43** welder apprentices from across Southwestern Ontario enrolled in the three [3] levels of training as follows: Level 1 – 18; Level 2 – 14 and Level 3 – 11. Many Level 1 and 2 graduates from the previous year enrolled to continue the training process.

CANADIAN WELDING BUREAU (CWB) TEST CENTRE

The TTG welding facility is an accredited test centre for the Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB). Employers/employees can receive specialized training to meet company specific CWB needs. Level 3 graduates of the three-year apprenticeship program have the option to move on to the next level - trade certification by an approved testing agency such as the Canadian Welding Bureau. CWB prep and certification took place in August, November and March with all individuals successful in receiving their tickets.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND SAFETY AUTHORITY (TSSA)

TEST CENTRE

TSSA 6G pipe certification was done for the first time this past year in addition to TSSA plate tests.

RED SEAL CHALLENGE

The Red Seal Program is recognized as the interprovincial standard of excellence in the skilled trades. TTG was awarded funding to run a 40-hour Red Seal preparation course for former welder apprentice graduates who have not challenged the exam or were not successful in their attempt. This is a scaled down version of the one currently offered on the custom welding side. TTG is pleased to report that all but one individual from the above group challenged the Red Seal exam and successfully obtained Red Seal status.

OUR THANKS to Stratford & area employers who engage in apprenticeship training and sponsor our apprentices.

ACCUMETAL Manufacturing
AW Millwrights
Bri-Eck Machine & Tool Inc.
Caris Welding & Fabrication
Forestdale Metal Products Inc.
Hutchison Precision Inc.
Integrated Mechanical Services Inc.
Iron Bridge Fabrication Inc.
Krantz Machine and Weld Inc.
Kyjo Steel Inc.
Nuhn Industries Ltd.
O'Hara Machine & Tool Inc.
Rho-Can Machine & Tool Co. Ltd.
Shelly Machine & Marine Inc.
Stratford Metal Products Ltd.
Sun Signs
Tigercat Industries Inc.
Walsh Bros Welding
Weld Tech

FUTURE PLANS FOR WELDER TRAINING

Pressure Systems Welder – 456P
Training Delivery Agent status

WELDING FACULTY

MARK ROTH, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

AJ Detzler-Cox, Certified Welder/Red Seal
Certificate of Qualifications
Sandy Ingram, Certified Welder/Red Seal
Certificate of Qualifications
Malcolm MacDonald, Pipe Welder/Pipe
Fitter
Dale McGavin, Certified Welder/Red Seal
Certificate of Qualifications
Mike Merner, Custom Metal Fabricator
Mike Wille, ASME Certified Welder/Fitter
Jason Wagg, C.E.T., Welding Technologist,
Certified Welder/Red Seal Certificate of
Qualifications

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP MULTIPLE TRADES Ontario

TTG received approval from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to deliver a 31-week Pre-Apprenticeship Multiple Trades Exposure program in late September 2011. An important element of the program is giving participants the option to explore a number of trades within a cluster of trades. TTG's approved program includes exposure to general carpenter (primary), electrician and plumber (secondary) trades. Additional program elements include safety training, employment preparation, job search skills and a work placement.

The strong base of employer support was instrumental to TTG's selection as a deliverer of this program. Many employers commented that this training was needed in the local area and that it would provide graduates with the entry-level skills they require to be a productive employee within a short period of time. The work placement component is an added bonus because it ensures that the potential apprentice has a basic set of relevant skills, has made a commitment of personal time and shown the desire to pursue a trade after experiencing it first-hand.

Information sessions to market the program were held in locations across Huron and Perth in October and November. Interested individuals submitted applications and interviews were conducted mid-December. Ted Lange, Culliton Brothers Ltd. and Ross Dale, Stratford & Area Builders Association participated on the interview/selection team. Interviewers were very impressed by the caliber of applicants making the final selections very difficult. 12 participants were selected to enter the program.

Following selection, participants were assessed by Conestoga College for Academic Readiness for Apprenticeship Training for General Carpenter (primary trade). Based on results, individualized schedules were drawn up for participants to develop skills as appropriate to ensure successful completion of the program. A third party partnership with Partners in Employment will provide job search services such as resume writing and interviewing skills. This training will take place prior to the end of in-class training.

Training started January 2012 during evening hours Monday to Thursday, 6:30 – 9:30 p.m., at St. Michael's tech facilities [TTG Site 2]. Total number of instruction hours for carpentry is 120 hours, electrical and plumbing 60 hours each. By mid to late June participants will be ready to put their skills to the test in an 8-week work placement with area employers. The Employer Liaison, Conestoga Career Centre staff will assist with placements. TTG extends its thanks to its partners for assisting with this pilot project.



Interview Team: Ross Dale (SABA) and Ted Lange (Culliton Bros.)



Mary Anne Sullivan and Murray Stinson, Conestoga College

This Pre-apprenticeship Course is RIGHT for me. (Excerpts from participant essays)

It offers a lot of potential and a career could be just a few years down the road.

The skills that I will acquire through this course are very practical and will be of use in a variety of both personal and professional endeavours.

I am excited about what it can offer me in the long term.

With its coverage of three different trades, the course will direct me to the one I am best suited for.

This course will give me a little edge on the competition.

I have always enjoyed working with my hands.

I wanted to demonstrate to my children that at my age with hard work and determination a new career is possible.

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP FACULTY

SHAWN BONTAINE, PROJECT MANAGER

VIRGINIA LAMBDIN, INTAKE COORDINATOR

Keith Donnelly, Licensed Construction & Maintenance Electrician

Mark Flanagan, Licensed Carpenter

Kirk Scammell, Licensed Plumber



REPORT ON INITIATIVES

LIBRO INVESTMENT IGNITES SOLAR LEARNING



Through its Community Builder Grant, Libro Financial Group awarded TTG a \$10,000 grant for Project Green. The focus of TTG's renewal energy project was to give Stratford Northwestern and St. Michael Catholic secondary students an opportunity to build leadership and career skills by participating in two solar energy projects.

We deliver educational programs and activities for youth to get them excited about careers in technology or skilled trades' occupations. The focus of Project Green is simple: help our students be on the leading edge with green collar skills. This is a first step to launching our graduates into a new career in a field with a high level of future demand.

Bob Allen, TTG Chair

PROJECT GREEN

Stratford Northwestern received \$5,000 for its Solar Learning Centre Project "Empowering Our Future". Information plaques surrounding two 6-kilowatt ground-mounted solar panels (one stationary and one tracking) in the courtyard show the construction of the solar panels, student involvement and explanations as to how solar panels operate and generate energy. Another plaque shows the sun and the different angles where the solar panels will absorb the most energy. A mini solar panel was also built to run a fountain in the courtyard pond. Now that the project is completed, guided tours to students and local groups will increase understanding about how the system works.

St. Michael Catholic received \$5,000 for its solar energy project "Lighting up the Minds of Tomorrow". The funds were invested in new teaching tools (dedicated computer, Solar 101 software and curriculum). The solar software communicates with an off-grid roof mount system (Solar Photovoltaic panels) installed above the technology wing. With the set-up in place, students are learning about solar photovoltaic electric systems through special projects such as data collecting and data analysis.

The \$10,000 Libro Community Builder Grant investment adds to an \$18,000 investment by TTG and its partners in 2010-11 to prepare our students to move on to opportunities presented in the green industry and in new post-secondary programs being developed.

The green economy is a rapidly growing sector affecting a wide array of industries and occupations. The introduction of Ontario's Green Energy Act (GEA), 2009, has served as a catalyst for building a stronger, more sustainable economy. In its first three years, the GEA is expected to create 50,000 clean energy jobs across the province. As the province transitions to a greener economy, one of the most critical issues facing "green" industries is the shortage of skilled labour.

Volume 6 Issue 1 May 2011

Workforce Focus, Four County Labour Market Planning Board.



Photo Credits: Irene Miller Photographic Art

PROJECT GREEN

VIRGINIA LAMBDIN, PROJECT COORDINATOR

Rob Collings, Stratford Northwestern Lead
Keith Donnelly, St. Michael Catholic Lead

ARTS & CULTURE INVESTMENT SETS THE STAGE



Off the Wall's (OTW) Introduction to Theatre Production Arts was well-timed. A large number of artists, designers, props makers, set builders and trades people are reaching retirement. Without intervention, the arts community will have difficulty recruiting the specialized production arts skills it needs. OTW's 6-week intensive learning program was designed to train the next generation of artists for employment in the theatre industry.

OTW struck a strategic alliance with the Technical Training Group (TTG) to bring this project to Stratford and area. Both partners were actively involved in planning and developing the project with TTG contributing expertise in administration and skilled trades programming to the partnership.

The pilot program ran July 18 to August 26, 2011 with an enrolment of 11. Students received practical training and hands-on experience under the mentorship of seasoned professionals -- seven of the most-renowned production artists in Canadian theatre. From basic drawing to artistic welding, masks making and fabric painting, students mastered one course at a time, working towards setting the scene and in doing so experiencing the full stage production process. Their success was demonstrated by the props they created individually and the set they constructed as a team.

At program end, the Firebird set created by the students was open for viewing by the public. The set was well received by the public during Open House, at Culture Days and during visits from high school classes. Approximately 650 community members, including high school classes, viewed the set.

Students registered in the course received a certificate of completion based on evaluations made by their team of instructors. The certificate meant they successfully completed each instructional unit and developed a portfolio of props they created.

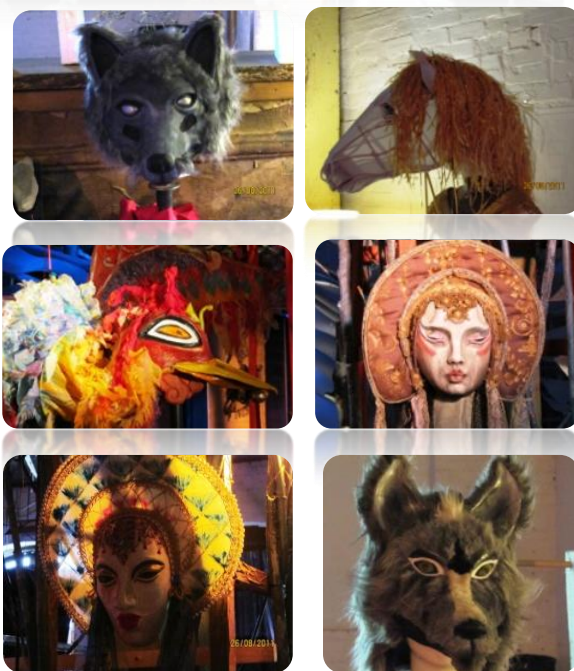
The Technical Training Group was pleased to partner with Off the Wall. The Theatre Production Arts course was our first foray into a cross-sectoral partnership and the collaboration was a successful one. The pilot program rated as 'fantastic' by the students will be offered in summer 2012-13.

The impact of the course can be measured by the success of its graduates. Some have considered a new career path in production arts. At least three students were recommended by their instructors to be interviewed by the Stratford Shakespearean Festival Head of Props for an apprenticeship position for 2012. A fourth student was given credit for the course in her theatre design program at a University in Maryland.

Michele Boniface, OTW Chair



Photo Credit above: Irene Miller Photographic Art



THEATRE PRODUCTION ARTS PROGRAM SUSAN STARKWEATHER, PROGRAM MANAGER

Eric Ball, Prop Maker (puppetry, special effects, lighting)
Ryan Flanagan, Scenic Carpenter (set construction)
Frank Holte, Artistic Welder (main set pieces)
Carolyn Horley, Prop Maker (faux food, set decoration)
John Pennoyer, Designer
Heather Ruthig, Props Maker (masks, set decoration)
Joanna Yu, Assistant Designer

FOR PROFIT TRAINING

Custom Welding packages for individual or company specific training continues to grow with companies reporting high satisfaction with the training. Contracts with EllisDon Construction, Hydro One, Electro Motive Diesel and General Dynamics were completed over 2011-2012. Respective employees upgraded their welding skills for company specific workplace requirements or participated in Red Seal preparation courses.

WELDER APPRENTICE AWARDS

SKILLS CANADA-ONTARIO 2011 PROVINCIAL COMPETITIONS THE KEN HALWACHS LEVEL 3 WELDER AWARD 2011

Congratulations to Ben McCarthy. As a Level 3 Welder apprentice, **Ben** competed in the Provincial competitions at RIM Park, Waterloo, May 2011. He brought home a **GOLD MEDAL** win. Ben had a strong showing in the Canadian competitions in Quebec City placing 5th. As a Level 3 welder Apprentice, Ben was also awarded the **Halwachs Award** for demonstrating excellence in technical skills, professionalism, leadership and teamwork.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING

STEP SUMMER CAMPS

Half day camps ran from July 4 - 8, 2011, at St. Anne's, Clinton and St. Michael, Stratford. The camps give exposure to the woodworking, electrical, transportation and aerospace, transportation, design and construction trades. Projects included ladder golf games (combined wood & welding projects), pit crew races and tile change, Co2 Cars and Rocket design and build. Much appreciation is extended to Camp Coordinator, Tim Martens and St. Michael Instructors: Keith Donnelly, Bart Drennan, Mark Flanagan, Jason Steinmann and Steve Manzo for making this another great camp experience. Supporters include: Four County Labour Market Planning Board, Huron Manufacturing Association, Foundation for Education Perth Huron and Huron Perth CDSB OYAP.

FUNTECH

On November 19, 2011, 150 students, ages 7-12, participated in the full day event exposing youth to technical design/woodworking, manufacturing, construction and welding technology, transportation, culinary arts and cosmetology. Projects included wooden 'Shut the Box' game, aluminum photo frame, metal garden art, homemade ravioli, pizza bread, apple turnovers, cinnamon rolls and facials, hair up-dos and manicures. Many thanks go out to FunTECH Coordinator, Anita Edwards and Northwestern Tech Teachers: Keith Edwards, Rob Collings, Steve Faber, Don Scheerer, Paul Finkelstein, Dean Elieff, Cathie Riddell and Paula Hurst-Foster. Supporters include: Stratford and Area Builders Association (SABA), Contract Framing Group, Foundation for Education Perth Huron and Avon-Maitland DSB OYAP.



L to R: Ken Halwachs, Ben McCarthy, Jerry Myers (Steelcraft), Bob Allen (TTG Chair)
Photo Credit: Irene Miller Photographic Art



Photo Credit: Chet Greason, St. Marys JA

