

President's Message

Congratulations! You made it through semester one and I made it through my first three months of presidency. So far it has been all right. At times things get a little overwhelming; however, our VTAM executive is always willing to assist. I would like to thank my fellow executive members for the energy and thoughts they bring to every meeting. I am also grateful for the willingness of many members to act as VTAM representatives in their respective schools. Agreeing to be the liaison between your school and VTAM is a very important step to developing stronger vocational education in the province. I encourage every member to keep in touch with your vocational representative and invite you to use Tec Talk to share successes and information from your school.

Have a great semester!

Together we can make a difference!
Wendy Schalk-Cooke
VTAM President 

House Gives Students Way to Build Skills



"Crew" from R.B. Russell will work on renovation project in north end
by Donna Lee

Construction students at R.B. Russell Vocational High School are building on their education by transforming an old, run-down house in the city's north end into an affordable abode a family can call home.

In partnership with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., 30 students in the Home Renovation program at R.B. Russell will spend four months renovating an abandoned two story house at 379 Alfred Avenue.

The "crew" will spend class time on-site, using the project as a real-life classroom. Completing the renovation will count as a credit for the construction students in R.B Russell's high school curriculum and it's post-diploma industry training program.

(continued on page 3)

Skilled Workers Needed

At the recent Apprenticeship Forum Conference The Honourable Jane Stewart, P.C., M.P., Minister of Human Resources Development Canada, explained that our future work force population is broken down into four areas.

- 1) Canadian youth
- 2) New immigrants
- 3) Aboriginal people
- 4) People with disabilities

One group of Canadians alone does not have a large enough population to fill the shortage we will face. However, together we may have the numbers to meet the needs of the future. This is why it is important for Canadians to address these future challenges as a whole.

Educational facilities can be part of the solution by offering harmonized programming that will meet the needs of all Canadians. As teachers we have students in our classrooms that represent every area. Therefore we must prepare for the diversity.

The role of educational institutions:

Canada must continue to develop a connection between the basic academic skills and the technical/vocational skills taught in our public high schools. To be successful in the skilled workforce students will need to be equipped with knowledge and skills. We must identify and encourage students who display creative, adaptable and skilled qualities. How many times have you had a student in your vocational area comment, "that is what we are doing in math". Often students are able to make the connection between their academic subjects and their vocational classes on their own. The vocational content is often the tool that assists students in understanding the academic content and vice versa.

It is important for all Canadians to understand the benefits of a harmonized (academic and application of skills) educational institution.

Educators must maintain their knowledge in their specialty area (academic or vocational) and at the same time display a professionalism

which will allow them to understand the knowledge and skills taught by their peers.

Educators must understand that one form of education is not more important than the other. As vocational teachers, we know that our job becomes easier when we have students who display high mathematic, science and reading skills.

We also know that the students who display a strong work ethic are most likely to succeed in their academic studies. The teacher who is able to make the connection between the skills required for the workforce and mathematics, sciences and reading is increasing the chances of success for youth in current and future programs and in the future economy.

Our youth must also be computer literate upon graduation. Every vocational classroom/program that combines the use of computer skills by learning current and/or

(continued on next page)

In this Issue...

President's Message	1
House Gives Students.....	1
Skilled Workers Needed	1
Production Art Wins Award	2 □
Skills Canada Manitoba	3
VTAM Award Interview.....	4
Teacher Ed and Certification Review	4

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TEC *Talk*

accessing new information is creating an adaptable individual for the future workforce.

Additional languages will also increase youth opportunities in the global economy. Our ESL students should not be looked upon as having a special challenge in our programs, but rather as being a step ahead by having a second language. Most of our schools are promoting both official languages. However, we need to encourage and offer as many language opportunities as possible to our youth.

Our schools also need to program for immigrants, aboriginal and students with disabilities. The program need not change, but may require some adaptation, additional planning and teaching strategies that will enhance the learning of the regular students while encouraging and simplifying the learning for ESL, aboriginal and students with disabilities in our programs. We also need to identify the skills that accompany students when everyone is talking about a skilled trades shortage in the future. Do we know the contributing facts? What role will schools and vocational programs play as Canada prepares for the future shortage? At the recent Apprenticeship Forum Conference, held in Vancouver, the skilled trades shortage was one of the major topics of discussion.

The facts relating to the skilled trades shortage and our future economy:

- People are the country's greatest resource in today's global economy.
 - It is estimated that a large percentage of our population will begin to retire between 2008-2010.
 - 30,000 people enter apprenticeship training in Canada a year but only 17,000 complete apprenticeship training.
 - 80% of the Canadian youth plan to go to university, but less than 20% actually go.
 - By 2004, nearly 70% of jobs created in Canada will require some form of post-secondary education.
 - One in eight Canadians does not complete high school.
 - Government, industry, labour and education must all work together to create a secure future for our youth.
- Knowing the above facts we will need to . . .
- Prepare our population for the future global economy workforce.

- Determine the barriers apprentices encounter during apprenticeship training.
- Prepare our youth for post-secondary education.
- Continue to promote the opportunities and benefits of skilled trades.
- Continue to develop partnerships between government, industry and labour.

A large percentage of our population will begin to retire between 2008 and 2010. The number of retirees will continue to grow. In order to maintain a strong economy, Canada must prepare an equal amount of youth to enter the workforce as the baby boomers leave the workforce. This may be a challenge considering our current population. As indicated on the data collected from Census 2001, we can see that our youth make up 25.9% of our population. We can also see that the average age of our current working population (61.1% of our population) is 41.3.

These figures tell us that the number of people retiring will be greater than the number of youth entering the workforce.

They enter our classroom and use the present skills and knowledge to build future skills and knowledge.

We must also prepare our youth for a wider range of post-secondary education opportunities. Often high schools spend a great amount of time promoting universities. However studies show that while 80% of our high school students plan to go to university, only 20% actually go. To address 20% of our population who do not plan on attending university and to offer a variety of options to 60% of students who find university may not be feasible. Inviting colleges, apprenticeship programs and other career opportunities into your school will offer useful


(continued on page 3)

Production Art Wins Gutenberg Award

Students in the Production Art Program at Winnipeg Technical College have again received international recognition for their design, publishing and printing produced in the classroom.

Student entries were sent to the 2002 Gutenberg Awards held in Detroit, Michigan.

The competition received over 500 entries from both secondary and post-secondary Graphic Art & Technical programs throughout the United States and Canada.

Four Production Art printed projects were officially recognized for their merit. Two entries involved the activities of teams. 



Title of Piece

Falcon Brochure

Snippets Stationary

Package

Vocational Poster

Vocational Brochure

Category

Spot Colour

Lithography

Spot Colour

Lithography

Spot Colour

Lithography

Spot Colour

Lithography

Student

Bonita Wiens

Bonita Wiens

Group Work

Group Work

Award

Second Place

Certificate of Merit

Third Place

Fifth Place

future options and career information for the large percentage of the student body.

As vocational educators we must remember to work closely with the Apprenticeship Branch (if teaching an apprenticeship trade) to ensure students have an understanding of what will be expected of them when they enter apprenticeship. This may lessen the chance of students experiencing surprises, which may lead to frustration during their apprenticeship training.

We need to share information, such as learning styles and prior learning assessment results. Understanding the needs of an apprentice may create a sense of belonging in the workplace for the apprentice, which may address some of the anxiety apprentices may face.

Of course addressing the challenge of the future economy, meeting the needs and preparing all Canadian youth for the future skilled trades shortage requires a joint effort on behalf of all Canadians. Schools cannot possibly make changes to programming without support. Know what support is available to your school.

"Making sure that Canadians have the skills and knowledge required for today's economy and society is a national challenge. The Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments, labour, voluntary sector, educational institutions, and others all have roles to play." (Knowledge Matters, page 3) To understand the roles of other parties involved refer to the document "Knowledge Matters."

As Vocational teachers we have a role to play in the future economy. A role we are familiar with. Minor adaptations to our programs will allow us to continue to be the "Hire" education, the education that works!

Wendy Cooke
President of VTAM

For a copy of "Knowledge Matters" contact:
Human Resource Development Canada
Fax: (819) 953-7260
Indicate catalogue number: SP-533-02-02

Available on internet at:
<http://www.innovationstrategy.gc.ca>
By phone:
Call 1-800-788-8282 

Skills Canada Manitoba Special Events Calender

April 10, 2003 - 6th Annual Skills Manitoba Competition, Secondary and Post Secondary students, Red River College. 39 skilled trade and technology occupations, 100% industry sponsored

April 10, 2003 - 3rd Annual Young Women's Conference, Grade 8 females, Radisson Hotel, 100 participants. Opportunities for females in skilled trade and technology occupations, training, networking and tour of skills contest sites with female mentors

April 14 - 18, 2003 - 1st Technology Days, Grade 8 students. Hands-on activities hosted at secondary vocational schools, industry tours

June 10 - 26, 2003 - World skills, St. Gallen Switzerland
Skills MB graduate - Aurora Dekker, Fashion Tech
Skills MB graduate - Adam Hughes, Mech CADD

May 26, 2004 - 7th annual Skills Manitoba Competition

May 28 & 29, 2004 - 10th CANADIAN SKILLS COMPETITION, "First" time hosted outside of the founding four provinces

Skills Manitoba is very proud to be hosting the 10th Canadian Skills Competition in Winnipeg in 2004. Skills staff, provincial and national technical committee members are on a critical path to secure resources to ensure that the 10th CSC is one to judge all others against. We are looking for more volunteers to assist with the tasks of hosting a provincial and national competition over one week. The competitions will be hosted at the Winnipeg Convention Centre and will require many volunteers to set up the contest sites, administer the contests, re-configure the contest sites for the national competition and tear down the sites. If you would like to play a part in making this very exciting event a huge success, please contact the Skills Manitoba office or any Skills Manitoba committee member.

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Building Skills (cont'd from page 1)

CMHC, a federal government agency that helps provide affordable housing, is providing the house and will cover the \$12,000 price tag associated with building supplies and permits for the project. In turn, it will sell the renovated house to an eligible low income home buyer.

CHMC representative Dennis Cleve said the partnership will enrich the builders as well as the building and it's surrounding neighborhood.

"The students get an opportunity to perfect their skills, the school gets a real-life classroom in the community, and the neighborhood gets revitalized," he said.


The house is the class's third partnership with CMHC. Since the Home Renovation program started in 1996, the Home Renovation class rebuilt and renovated 11 houses for other organizations, including a house and a duplex built from the ground up.

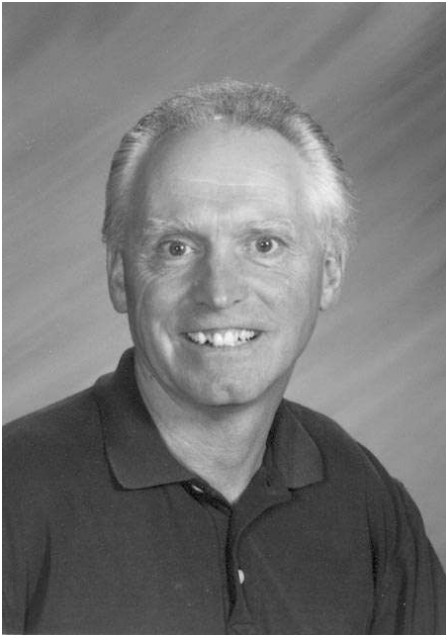
"I find it to be a lot of fun," said student Franklyn Bruce, 19, who was tearing up plywood floors near the kitchen with a hammer and a flatbar. "You're tearing down houses... but building them is a lot more fun."

All of the program's work over the years can be seen in occupied houses throughout the city's north end.

The idea of having students rebuild run-down houses in the north end came from Garth Minish, a building construction instructor at R.B. Russell.

Minish came up with the program in 1993, after working with former U.S. President Jimmy Carter on a Habitat for Humanity project in Winnipeg.

"You drive along the north end and you see hundreds of houses that should be fixed up and have people living in them," he said. 



Vocational Teachers' Association Award

Last year, the VTAM Executive introduced an award to salute members who have made outstanding contributions to raise awareness of the value of vocational education and the career choices in trades and technologies among students, parents, educators, and government. Specific criteria were announced in the TecTalk and nominations from Teachers, Administrators, Superintendents and the Dept. of Education were invited.

The VTAM Executive is pleased to announce the recipient of the first Vocational Teachers' Association Award—Mr. Glen Palmer.

Following, is a brief interview with Glen.

Q: You have received a first-of-its-kind award for your outstanding contribution to voc-ed over a span of many years. What motivates you to offer this kind of support?

A: Going back to my industry days, I can remember my area supervisor for Imperial Oil say "It's easy to sell something you believe in." Well, I believe in Vocational Education as a very important part of the educational system in Manitoba. Studies have shown, only a small percentage of graduating students continue on to post-secondary education. Many of our students would not be in school or graduate if it wasn't for vocational programming. Some

students find it hard to succeed in school but Vocational Education gives them the opportunity to see the relevance of other studies. It also gives our graduates a saleable skill at the end of their high school career.

Q: What information do you feel voc teachers need to be aware of, especially those who are entering the profession?


A: We, as educators, must remember that we are the role models for our students. How we talk, dress and conduct ourselves has a direct impression on our youth. Often vocational teachers have a closer relationship with students because of the one-on-one teaching and the increased time we spend with them. They will often emulate the actions of someone they think is "cool." It is important to remember that some of these students today may be industry leaders of tomorrow. Just think back to when you were sixteen, did you ever think you would be, or want to be, a high school teacher?

Q: Some teachers question the value of VTAM. They feel MTS is sufficient to look after them. How would you respond to this point of view?

A: The Manitoba Teachers' Society does a fine job of supplying us with the necessary legal support, counseling service, retirement advice, etc. for the entire Manitoba teaching compliment of thousands. VTAM on the other hand concentrates its energy on issues and concerns that directly affect Vocational Technical teachers. VTAM is committed to raising the image of and promoting Vocational Education and improving programming by ensuring only qualified people become vocational teachers and urging teachers to stay current in their trade areas. Funding is an issue VTAM has been dealing with on a continuing basis.

There are a small handful of volunteers who work very hard to make all these things happen and they need to know that they have your support. Join and support VTAM and if you have the time participate.

Thank you for putting your trust in me for the last fourteen years. I've enjoyed being a member of the executive in the positions of Membership Chair, President and Past

President. I am honoured to receive this award and will continue to put my efforts into the betterment of Vocational Education and its teachers. 

Teacher Education and Certification Review

Manitoba Education and Youth Minister, the Honourable Ron Lemieux, has taken an important step to review Teacher Education and Certification in the province. He requested the formation of the TECC committee which will report directly to the Minister on matters regarding teacher education and teacher certification.

The Teacher Education and Certification Committee is made up of representatives from the following groups:

- Department of Education and Youth
- Manitoba Association of School Trustees (MAST)
- Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS)
- Council of Deans & Directors of Education in Manitoba (CODDEM)
- Manitoba Association of Parent Councils (MAPC)
- Manitoba Teachers Society (MTS)
- Citizen Member (one only)

The Manitoba Teachers' Society was asked to nominate five individuals to be appointed by the Minister. I am honoured to have been chosen as a teacher representative on this committee. I promise to do my best to help influence education in Manitoba in the most positive way.

I invite you to share your views, concerns and ideas with me. Your comments will help increase my knowledge and improve my understanding of the educational system in this province and abroad.

You can contact me at chasim@wtc.mb.ca. Together we can make a difference!

Sincerely,
Chantal Simard
VTAM Past President

