

**NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2020**

TRADES AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Highlights

Well, where did summer go? Already the leaves are starting to turn colour and there is a noticeable change in the air. Days are slowly getting shorter and the cool evening breezes are ushering in the fall term.

It has been a challenging yet enlightening summer for students and faculty. Strict adherence to new safety protocols, limited face-to-face contact and alternate instructional deliveries, at the time, seemed like insurmountable obstacles and barriers to educational goals but when met head-on by determined learners and dedicated instructors, proved to be just a bump in the road. July saw the successful completion of our Electrical Foundation (Campbell River campus) and Professional Cook Level 1 (Port Alberni campus) programs.

For Chef Al Irving in Port Alberni, he should be especially proud of his aspiring protégés. Due to COVID, the Industry Training Authority of BC (ITA) has issued waivers to many students who would normally be required to write exams and the Professional Cook program was no exception. When given the option, many students would be happy to forego the exam and continue to the next level, Chef's students declared that they did not want to pass up the opportunity to write their Certificate of Qualification exam -which they completed August 24th.

At the Comox Valley campus, instructor Erik Hardin guided his students through Level 4 of their Carpentry Apprenticeship program. Being Level 4, there was no waiver for the Interprovincial Red Seal exam. With the class separated into two small groups, students wrote on the morning of August 28th. Every student met with success and the overall class average was no less than 85%.

In Campbell River, instructor Byron Beaupre delivered Heavy Mechanical Level 2 to a class of 14. For shop activities, students were divided into groups of two and, according to Byron, this was their time to shine. Engines that had not been in working order for some time were used as shop projects and students took ownership of disassembling, measuring, cleaning, painting and getting them back together (no extra pieces!). The pride they felt when those engines ran was remarkable. What a boost for students who, perhaps under other circumstances, may not have had such an opportunity. There's that bump in the road again – they never gave it a second thought. Beaupre says, "It was incredible for myself to be able to guide and encourage these students and give them confidence and a sense of achievement. I had a fantastic group of students. They were mature, respectful and I enjoyed instructing this class and level very much."

Where do we start when it comes to our Professional Cook Level 2 program at the Campbell River campus? Students saw their way through the more complex techniques employed by Chef Xavier Bauby as expected from a group at this level from the beginning of June to September 4th. The talent in the kitchen was tangible, and cake week tested the commitment of even the most steadfast of dieters. Many dreams of a beach body were blatantly abandoned on some lonely treadmill left to gather dust in a garage or make-shift home gym.



There was much excited chatter from the group when they also finished their Certificate of Qualification exam on September 4th. Each student left the campus encouraging each other and making plans for Professional Cook Level 3.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS

In the lineup, we have a full cohort of Electrical Foundation, Carpentry Apprentice Level 3 and Heavy Mechanical Level 4 ready to go September 8th. Professional Cook Level 1 and the Culinary Diploma program with instructor Sunshine Layton will also be starting up on the 8th. Chef Alan Irving will have a full Professional Cook Level 2 program in Port Alberni by September 21st. This unique opportunity has been met with much enthusiasm by culinary students in the Alberni Valley. Travelling is not required for them to obtain the next level of their training and they are excited.

We will be in full swing as we head into October with full Automotive cohorts in both Port Alberni and Campbell River campuses, along with Heavy Mechanical Foundation, Welding Apprenticeship and Foundation, Electrical Apprenticeship Levels 2, 3 and 4, and another Heavy Mechanical Level 2. The Comox Valley campus also has a full agenda with Plumber Apprenticeship Level 2, Carpentry Apprenticeship Level 2 and another full Carpentry Apprenticeship Level 4.



Word has gotten out and the re-vamped Furniture Design and Joinery Certificate program in Port Alberni is sitting pretty at 14 students with room for only two more! Instructor Stephen McIntosh has put a great deal of time and hard work into re-designing this cohort in response to student feedback for their completion outcomes and expectations. Resource material has been completely stripped down and built back up to give students the best possible experience at North Island College. Past Joinery students have produced some amazing pieces and we cannot wait to see the works of this year's students.

Once again, NIC is partnering with the Homalco First Nation for the delivery of the Coastal Forest Worker Certificate program in Campbell River. The program is scheduled to run October 2020 to February 2021 under the guidance of lead instructor Coleen MacLean. While it will be a unique delivery of blended instruction combined with field trips and face-to-face demonstrations, we anticipate a full cohort of 12 successful students.

We are looking forward to our Fall term. 2020 has been so very different from any other year yet as we make our way in this new “norm” we are becoming more innovative, more resourceful and more responsive to any



given situation as it happens. We are meeting each new challenge head-on with an ability to adapt and the determination to give our students the education they deserve.

STUDENT SERVICES AND REGISTRAR

Educational Advising in the face of COVID-19

Submitted by Sarah Deagle

It seems trite to say that COVID-19 has turned our experience of the world on end. When asked, we often lament the losses, like pulling in our “bubble”, limiting our travel or wearing a mask in public. Yet NIC’s educational advising team has experienced some “wins” in this unprecedented time. Students have been able to book appointments online for almost 1 ½ years, which was excellent preparation for the last six months since the campuses have been closed. Advisors, including Recruiter-Advisors, quickly started meeting with students over the phone or via video appointment. There have been fewer no-shows for appointments, the joy in seeing students’ faces if only on a screen, as well as greater ease in sharing computer screens with the student or viewing what they are seeing on their own computer. As advising has a strong pedagogical component, this has also been good preparation for students who will be immersed in technology this fall term. From June 12 to September 7, NIC advisors would have met with 1,500 students in this new format. There surely is grief in what was lost with face-to-face appointments, but it is safe to report that plexiglass and PPE still seem less attractive and far in the future now that we have a solid, non-campus-based alternative worked out.

Student Services

Submitted by Felicity Blaiklock

Full digital supports for our students are being provided via videoconferencing, telephone and email, with limited access for payments in person by appointment only. Assessment Services and the Department of Accessible Learning Services (DALs) have also been providing limited in-person assessments in addition to online and phone support.

The Counselling department has had some staff changes, with Catherine O’Toole filling the position vacated by Elena Richmond in Campbell River, and Karen Mason onboarding in Port Alberni.

The Sexualized Violence Education Team (SVET) continues to meet regularly to discuss ways to provide education to the campus community on our revised Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response policy, in addition to efforts to educate the community on consent-based, healthy relationships and sexualized violence, including the supports available for all those impacted by sexualized violence. The committee has completed the following tasks to date:

- Development of pre-recorded videos for Virtual Orientation that focus on the Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response policy, consent, and healthy relationships;
- The webpage review sub-committee have created an outline for a revised webpage, which will be sent to Marketing and Communications after the larger committee approves the design at next meeting;
- Several members of the SVET team will be attending investigator training (virtually) in the fall.

Student Life @ Home activities are ongoing and include:

- NIC Student Life Facebook group with ongoing posts to engage and inform students; membership of this group has grown substantially since its creation;
- Weekly newsletters;
- Monthly virtual hangout sessions will begin on September 22 and will be led by student staff;
- Continued outreach to students referred to Early Assist, or identified through other channels as possibly struggling;
- Launch of the 2020-21 Student Life Engagement and Programming Plan, including a variety of events and activities to engage students, and to encourage critical thinking. Highlights include our newly create Brave Spaces sessions, the first of which is being held on October 2 (focused on racism), in addition to our Mental Health Awareness week, which will be held the week of October 5;
- Student Leadership Team program has been modified for the 2020-21 term due to COVID-19, so students will continue to build upon their leadership skills remotely.

NIC's first **Virtual Orientation** launched earlier this summer and has been a great success, thanks to the efforts of the Orientation Working Group, as well as all other folks who contributed. A variety of pre-recorded and live sessions were offered to students throughout the summer focusing a variety of important and relevant topics.

Highlights:

- 150 students attended live webinars throughout August; topics included: learning digitally, Student Life and employment opportunities, supports and services, and checklist to success;
- Introduction of NIC's first orientation session specifically for parents and supporters;
- Launch of Virtual Orientation webpage, including all pre-recorded sessions;
- Two final live virtual sessions were held on September 8 with 350 students in attendance!