

Trades Preparation Program a hit with Aboriginal students

The 29-week full-time program culminates in a month-long work placement with Syncrude and is designed to give Aboriginal students ... the necessary skills and competencies to proceed on an apprenticeship path with Syncrude or into further formal education.

A new program at Keyano College in Fort McMurray is helping create opportunities for successful trades employment.

Jesse Byrne made it into the Syncrude Aboriginal Trades Preparation (SATP) Program and now hopes to make much of the opportunity.

“I enrolled in the Syncrude Aboriginal Trades Preparation Program so I could gain the experience needed to become a journeyman heavy equipment technician and start a successful career,” says Jesse. “I want to use what I learn in this program to excel in any future career or endeavour I pursue.”

That is exactly what the SATP Program was designed to do when it was launched in 2009 with a Syncrude investment of almost \$2 million.

Launching a program to run simultaneously in four communities throughout Wood Buffalo (Fort McMurray, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, and Janvier) involved the coordination of staff, sponsors, instructional technologies, work placements and transportation.

However, program manager Janet Lowndes says one of the greatest challenges was the coordination of the selection process.

“Imagine selecting only 40 trainees from 240 excited and interested applicants,” she says. “What has become obvious already in 2009 is that the 40 students feel a sense of pride and determination,” says Janet.

“The greatest reward possible is to see students succeed. Success comes in many forms. Obviously a student experiences success when they are selected for employment as an indentured tradesperson, but success can also be seen when a student’s self-confidence, enthusiasm and industry awareness increase.”

Syncrude president and CEO Scott Sullivan describes the workforce needs in the oil sands as tremendous.

“We will require leading-edge training programs, like the ones offered at Keyano,” he says. “These are key to giving people the skills they need to take part in a high-tech industry.”

Janet says the program gives students the opportunity to upgrade their education, explore trades occupations, improve their employability and work readiness skills, learn more about the safety culture and gain work experience at the Syncrude work site.

For more information, visit www.keyano.ca/programs. ♦

Logging Companies

Dick & Jody Hale Logging

Box 8 Worsley, Alberta, T0H 3W0
Phone: (780) 685-3953
Fax: (780) 685-2528

Plumbing & Heating Supplies



bartle & gibson
Plumbing | Heating | Electrical
Everything you need in
plumbing, heating,
& electrical supplies.
13475 Fort Road, Edmonton AB
Ph 780-472-2850 Fax 780-476-6686