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CAF-FCA welcomes new Board Chair

At its Annual General Meeting on June 10, the CAF-FCA welcomed *Brian Bickley* as Chair of the Board of Directors. With more than 30 years experience in industry, Brian holds certificates in industrial instrumentation, watch-making and adult continuing education, and has served as Chair for the Alberta Apprenticeship and Training Board since 2004.

Our sincere thanks go to outgoing Chair *Dan Mott* for his leadership and many contributions to CAF-FCA's work. We look forward to Dan's continued support and involvement with the Board of Directors.

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Apprenticeship training is an employer's competitive advantage

Earlier this year, CAF-FCA partnered with members of the apprenticeship community across Canada to host six regional events for employers in the construction, manufacturing, transportation, and service industries. Constructive dialogues with employers about the business case for apprenticeship training took place in each location, validating the key finding of CAF-FCA's Returning on Training Investment study: for every \$1 of direct costs spent on apprenticeship training, an employer receives, on average, a benefit of up to \$1.38.

A report on these employer engagement forums - *Strategies to Increase Employer Participation in Apprenticeship Training in Canada* - has now been released.



Employers who participated in the events offered a number of compelling reasons why they support apprenticeship training:

- Effective recruitment strategies
- Two way skills development
- Increased productivity through training apprentices in the company's systems and processes
- Improved safety leading to fewer accidents and reduced compensation costs
- Improved company reputation

Participants also offered concrete strategies for improving employer participation in apprenticeship:

- Educating employers about mentoring
- Informing employers that apprenticeship training is industry driven
- Providing incentives to employers
- Encouraging employers to participate in talking to their peers
- Building appreciation for skilled labour

The report is available in PDF format at: <http://www.caf-fca.org/english/documents.asp>.

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Apprenticeship Basics

On Wednesday, October 22, CAF-FCA and The Alliance of Sector Councils hosted a one-day event for key stakeholders in apprenticeship training. Developed in response to an identified need by sector councils to learn more about apprenticeship as the main route to certification in most skilled trades and about the 13 jurisdictional systems, *Apprenticeship 101* welcomed guest speakers Doug Muir (Inter-Provincial Alliance of Board Chairs), Emily Arrowsmith (CAF-FCA) and Joe Black (Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship) for an informative day that offered many opportunities for discussion and networking.

Interested in hosting an Apprenticeship 101 event for your community?

Please contact:

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Business \$ense

CAF-FCA took an important first step towards enhancing the business case for apprenticeship with the publication of its original study of the return on training investment for employers: *Apprenticeship – Building a Skilled Workforce for a Strong Bottom Line*. The study identified a positive return for apprenticeship training at a national level.

Subsequent discussions with the apprenticeship community made it clear that we need more data relative to specific trades, size of business, and regional differences. A draft report on the second phase of research, which included 16 trades, is in the works. The final report is slated for release in 2009.

For more information:

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On the horizon

National Survey on Barriers

Assessing and Completing Apprenticeship Training in Canada, Perceptions of Barriers highlighted nine barriers to apprenticeship training in Canada:

- Negative attitudes to apprenticeship and a poor image of the trades
- A lack of information and awareness of apprenticeship
- Difficulties with unwelcoming workplaces
- Costs of apprenticeship to individuals, employers, and unions
- Concerns over the impacts of economic factors on work and apprenticeship continuation
- Concerns about the lack of resources to support apprenticeship
- Concerns about apprentices' basic and essential skill
- Shortcomings of workplace-based and technical training
- Concerns about regulations governing apprenticeship



The follow-up survey relates to the barriers identified in the 2004 research and key questions will include:

- Do these barriers still exist?
- What has been done by various stakeholders to address these barriers?
- What still needs to be done?

An email notice has been sent out, inviting our subscribers to complete the survey. For more information, or if you have not received an email and would like to complete the survey, please contact:

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Finding an Employer Sponsor: 7+ months is too long!

Finding an employer sponsor can be among the greatest challenges in beginning an apprenticeship. CAF-FCA's recent surveys of more than 2,200 students enrolled with publicly and privately-funded training providers found that 37% of first-year apprentices had taken four to 24 months to find their employer sponsor, with an average search time of seven months. Longer search times increase the costs for becoming an apprentice and discourage those who are interested in this career path, creating barriers to both the development of a skilled labour force and individual success in the labour market.



The project will involve these key activities:

- A review of the results of the National Apprenticeship Survey (NAS) to identify industries with the longest time-to-finding an employer sponsor.
- An environmental scan of the industries identified from the NAS review to determine to what extent the lengthy time-to-finding an employer sponsor may be connected to general economic conditions and/or sector-specific challenges.
- Focus groups with apprentices to provide information on the strategies used by apprenticeship candidates who found their sponsor quickly versus those who took longer than average. The focus groups will also identify candidates to be profiled as "success stories".

The focus groups will be held in Halifax on January 26, in Montreal on January 27 (in French), in Toronto on January 28 and in Vancouver on January 29; with two groups in each location starting at 5:30 and 7:30 pm. There will also be two on-line focus groups conducted with rural and/or Northern apprentices.

We are currently looking for apprentices who might be interested in participating in the focus groups, especially those who may have struggled to find an employer sponsor. Please send any contacts to Jonathan Karpfen at Ipsos Reid (jonathan.karpfen@ipsos-reid.com). This information will be used for recruiting purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential.

For more information:

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Career Awareness

November was Career Awareness month and CAF-FCA was involved in a number of activities including:

- meetings with Canadian employers to discuss the business case for training
- Human Capital: Your Competitive Advantage Conference on November 13 in Grimsby, Ontario
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Conference on November 18 in Windsor, Ontario

Stay tuned for the launch of our apprenticeship webcast contest in January 2009. Check out www.caf-fca.org.org for more on the upcoming contest and for up-to-the-minute information on apprenticeship training and careers in the skilled trades.

And please check out our feature articles on apprenticeship training in two new national magazines launched this fall for youth and educators - *Career Options the High School Edition* and *Canadian School Counsellor*.

For information about CAF-FCA, or to provide feedback or suggestions for this newsletter:

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