

Celebrating Apprenticeship Recognition Month

November marks **Apprenticeship Recognition Month** across British Columbia, a time to celebrate youth apprentices, industry mentors, and employers shaping our skilled workforce.

Central Okanagan Public Schools' Youth Apprenticeship Program is proud to highlight several graduates of our Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) Program now working with Emil Anderson Construction. Most of this year's HEO students have already stepped into roles in the heavy construction industry, reflecting the strength of the program, the support of our industry partners, and the readiness of our students for real-world careers. *Tanner Arstall (GESS), Keishawn Powar (MBSS) and Wylder Wigeland (KSS)*. Each completed the program through Thompson Rivers University, earning both the Road Builder & Heavy Construction Foundation and Heavy Equipment Operator Level 1 Technical Training credentials while still in high school.

This success showcases the strong alignment between classroom learning, hands-on training, and direct industry experience. As Wylder Wigeland, a KSS graduate now working full-time with Emil Anderson Construction, shares:

"The HEO Program opened the door for me. It gave me the training, confidence, and connections I needed to start my career right after graduation. Working for Emil Anderson has been an incredible experience—the team is supportive, and every day I'm learning something new on site."

- Wylder Wigeland (KSS)





From Classroom to Careers

Tanner Arstall (GESS) and Keishawn Powar (MBSS) also successfully transitioned from high school into full-time apprenticeships with Emil Anderson Construction. Both students used the HEO program as a launchpad into the heavy construction industry—earning certifications, building skills, and stepping directly into meaningful careers right after graduation.

"The HEO Program gave me a head start in my career," Tanner shares. "I was able to learn the skills and get certified while finishing high school, and now I'm working on real construction projects every day. Emil Anderson has been great—they've given me opportunities to grow and develop my skills on the job."

- Tanner Arstall (GESS)



"Doing the HEO program was honestly life-changing for me. I got real seat time, learned from people who actually work in the industry, and it helped me realize this is what I want to do. Landing a job with Emil Anderson right after high school was huge—it honestly feels like I'm fast-tracking my whole future."

- Keishawn Powar (MBSS)



Career Educators Strengthening HEO and Apprenticeship Opportunities

Career-Life Education teachers **Tim Frechette (GESS)**, **Rochelle Youngberg (GESS)**, **Ashley Bedwell (MBSS)**, **John McParland (MBSS)** and Career Centre Manager **Suzie Laratta (KSS)** strengthening our partnership and championing students in the Heavy Equipment Operator and Youth Apprenticeship Programs.

Their commitment ensures students are informed, supported, and prepared to take their next steps—whether that's exploring trades, entering youth apprenticeship, or moving directly into career pathways.



Celebrating a Program Built Together

Stan Maluk, Business Development Manager with Emil Anderson Construction, and Chris Ovelson, Youth Apprenticeship Consultant for Central Okanagan Public Schools—played key roles in developing and launching the Heavy Equipment Operator Program in Kelowna. Their collaboration has laid the foundation for meaningful, career-launching opportunities for students.

Central Okanagan Public Schools Proudly Acknowledges Our Partners for Their Leadership and Support in Advancing Youth Apprenticeship Opportunities