



# Giving youth a path to good jobs, careers in heavy construction



MHCA Photo



Jackie Jones is the MHCA WORKSAFELY™ Education and Diversity Programs Advisor



## Jackie Jones

Across Manitoba, there is a continuous demand for heavy construction workers, and COVID-19 has compounded the shortages of skilled and general labour, surveys show.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association is recognizing the need to be hands-on with educational partners to bring interested students into the industry. The MHCA has partnered with the Manitoba Construction Sector Council and the Seven Oaks School Division to offer a new Cooperative Vocational Introduction to Heavy Construction Program.

“One of the most important parts of my job is to promote the construction occupations to youths across the province of Manitoba,” says James Murphy, Community and Youth Liaison with the Manitoba Construction Sector Council.

Murphy, who some may recognize as a former Blue Bomber, has spoken to thousands of youth about considering the construction industry as a career. He finds there is one common denominator he has seen with the youth: they lack the understanding of the basic fundamentals of working in the construction industry.

“This program is the first of its kind in Manitoba and gives young people the ability to explore the many diverse opportunities that exist within the heavy construction industry, and allow the industry to highlight those who are succeeding in the field.”

The 10-month program will introduce youth to careers in heavy construction and will include: introduction to heavy equipment operation with simulator training; mechanical repair and welding of heavy equipment; blasting and drilling with simulators; safety

training; and, surveying. Industry experts will be invited to share their experience and respond to students’ inquiries.

The Seven Oaks School Division’s cooperative vocational programs boast an 85% success rate because the model balances learning with an extended work practicum.

Upon completion, students receive eight credits in the Mature Student Status High School Diploma.

“This program is industry driven and designed for each student to learn at their own pace while being monitored by certified instructors to ensure that they are learning as if they were on a job site,” Murphy says.

The pandemic has only heightened the demand for innovative learning opportunities. Across the country, students’ education has been severely disrupted due to COVID-19 and some are struggling. The Introduction to Heavy Construction program is a way to get these students back on track. The program uses virtual reality and simulator technology as a teaching strategy and connects students directly to the heavy construction employers and the workplace. Students are engaged in class and are able to apply new learning to practice in the workplace.

In the heavy construction industry, young adults definitely add to the diversity of the workforce. By reaching out to students, the industry is investing in the next generation of workers who have the technical and soft skills to move the construction industry forward.

“What excites me about the new Seven Oaks Introduction to Heavy Construction Program is being able help young people make informed career choices,” says Murphy.

“For me, that’s better than coaching pro athletes.”



James Murphy  
Community and Youth Liaison with the Manitoba Construction Sector Council



We take pride in running safe, efficient projects.



## Awards

We have received several Awards of Excellence from Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation for projects completed in the Grading, Major Structure and Minor Structure categories.

## Clients

Our clients include local municipalities and cities, the Manitoba Government, the City of Winnipeg. We also perform subcontracts for other heavy construction companies.

## Services

- Grading • Excavation • Demolition
- Horizontal Directional Drilling • Trucking • Sewer and Water • Equipment Rental • Hydrovac

### Mark Moon

President / Operations Manager  
mmoon@efmoon.ca

### Jack Meseyton, C.E.T., G.S.C.

Vice President  
jackmes@efmoon.ca

1200 Lorne Avenue East  
Portage La Prairie  
Manitoba R1N 4A2

Phone: (204) 857.7871  
Fax: (204) 857.3882  
info@efmoon.ca | www.efmoon.ca