

6th ANNUAL INDUSTRY MEETING | Oct. 23, 2020

SUMMARY



NOVA SCOTIA
APPRENTICESHIP
AGENCY

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INTRODUCTION

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) hosted the 6th Annual Industry Meeting on October 23, 2020 using a virtual conference platform for the first time.

The NSAA Board facilitates an Industry Meeting each year in accordance with the Agency's Operating Charter, Section 5.1(1)(b). The purpose of this meeting is to support industry's participation in the apprenticeship and trades qualifications system.

Operating Charter

5.1 Powers and Duties of the Board

(1) The Board has the following powers and duties, in addition to any powers and duties set out in the Act or prescribed in the General Regulations: Communicating with, and Enhancing the Participation of Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications System Stakeholders

(a) the duty to consult with industry members in each of the trade sectors concerning matters within the scope of the Agency's mandate and objects;

(b) the duty to conduct an annual meeting with industry stakeholders for purposes of soliciting information and input for Agency planning and accountability;

The NSAA invites all partners in the apprenticeship journey to participate in the meeting and sends direct invitations to active employers, employer and industry associations, union organizations, equity groups and education and training institutions. The event is an opportunity to have meaningful discussions from diverse perspectives to improve the apprenticeship and trades training system in Nova Scotia.

This year's meeting objectives were to:

- recognize exceptional contributions;
- provide an update on the Agency's response to COVID-19;
- review results of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan;
- review key actions from the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan;
- raise awareness of mental health in the apprenticeship system and supports available; and
- discuss and understand the impact of COVID-19 on the industry.

WELCOME

NSAA Board Chair

Brad Smith, Chair of the Apprenticeship Board welcomed everyone to the 6th Annual Industry meeting and introduced two newly appointed Board members: Charmaine Roma and Ann Sylliboy. He provided an update on the accomplishments of the Board over the past year and acknowledged the NSAA responsiveness to operating in a COVID-19 environment. The Chair announced the 2020-2025 multi-year Strategic Plan and emphasized NSAA's commitment to diversity and inclusion.



Brad Smith, Chair, NSAA Board

A number of significant highlights of the Board activities were shared by the Board Chair, which included completion of NSAA's 1st five-year Strategic Plan (2015-2020); validation of the NSAA's 2nd five-year Strategic Plan (2020-2025) through industry consultation; successful work of new and active Trade Advisory Committees, development of pre-apprenticeship programs and progress of joint program reviews with the Nova Scotia Community College and the development of new trade regulations.



Donna MacGillivray, Chief Diversity Officer and Manager of Youth and Equity Programs, NSAA

Land Acknowledgement

Donna MacGillivray, NSAA Chief Diversity Officer and Manager of Youth and Equity Programs provided a Land Acknowledgement to recognize and appreciate the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq and remind us of the Treaties of Peace and Friendship that have been in place for generations. Donna stated that we should learn from one another and strive to understand one another's perspectives and experiences.

Deputy Minister, Labour and Advanced Education

Duff Montgomerie, Deputy Minister thanked the NSAA for continuing to engage industry and community partners throughout the pandemic. He also thanked the employers, industry partners, equity groups and training providers for their collaboration in the apprenticeship system. The Deputy acknowledged the work of the Agency with diversity and mental health in the skilled trades and congratulated the Apprenticeship Board for achieving great success during a very busy year.



Duff Montgomerie, Deputy Minister, LAE

APPRENTICESHIP AWARDS

APPRENTICESHIP AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

The Apprenticeship Award of Excellence recognizes exceptional individuals who have demonstrated ingenuity, engagement, and leadership in advancing the apprenticeship and trades qualifications system. This award is nomination-based and presented annually for outstanding achievement in supporting the strategic goals of the Agency:

- Changing the culture to be inclusive, connected and industry-led
- Increasing the success of apprentices and employers in the system
- Strengthening system delivery
- Making trade certification an economic driver



Apprenticeship Award of Excellence presented to Robyn Croft



Robyn Croft receiving her Award of Excellence from Brad Smith at CFB Shearwater



Robyn Croft (centre) with her colleagues at CFB Halifax and Shearwater – (left to right) Warrant Officer Trevor Smith, Commanding Officer Selena Aral, Major Charles Turcotte, Master Warrant Officer Justin Eastman

Robyn Croft is the recipient of the Apprenticeship Award of Excellence. Robyn is a certified Automotive Service Technician, working at the Transport Electrical Mechanical Engineering division at the Department of National Defense, Shearwater. In her quest to provide for her family and while on maternity leave, Robyn was led to Women Unlimited, who exposed her to many trades and technology programs. Robyn chose NSCC's Automotive Service and Repair program, where she excelled in the program and graduated with honours. After graduating, she worked for a dealership before accepting a position with DND. There she makes a good salary with benefits and is exposed to a variety of vehicles. Robyn obtained her Certificate of Qualification bearing the Red Seal in May 2019. Working with apprentices is a favourite part of her job, as she also continues to learn from the apprentices. Robyn is also a role model for Techsploration and works tirelessly to encourage others to consider the skilled trades as a quality career option. Robyn was nominated by Doreen Parsons, CEO of Women Unlimited.

Congratulations Robyn!

MILESTONE AWARDS

The **Platinum Milestone Award** recognizes employers who have actively participated in the Apprenticeship System and successfully supported more than 21 apprentices since 2007 to achieve trade certification. This year there were two recipients of the Award:

Steele Collision Centre, Portland Street, Dartmouth – trained and supported **25 apprentices**

Linair Electric Limited, Jennifer Drive, Truro – trained and supported **21 apprentices**

Apprenticeship Milestone Awards 2019-20

The **Gold Milestone Award** recognizes employers who have actively participated in the Apprenticeship System and successfully supported 15-20 apprentices since 2007 to achieve trade certification. This year there were two recipients of the Award:

Iron Dog Mechanical Services Inc.

Nova Enterprises Ltd.

The **Silver Milestone Award** recognizes employers who have actively participated in the Apprenticeship System and successfully supported 11-15 apprentices since 2007 to achieve trade certification. This year there were five recipients of the Award:

C.E. Fisher Electric Ltd.

Dayspring Electric Ltd.

Silvers Garage (2008) Ltd.

Cherubini Metal Works Ltd.

MacDow Mechanical Limited

The **Bronze Milestone Award** recognizes employers who have actively participated in the Apprenticeship System and successfully supported 5-10 apprentices since 2007 to achieve trade certification. This year there were twenty recipients of the Award:

3053867 Nova Scotia Limited

Banfield Electric & Contracting Limited

CMS Steel Pro Inc.

Harry Rhyno Refrigeration Co. Ltd.

KMS Industries Inc.

O'Regans Hillcrest Volkswagen

Parks Canada Agency

Presidential Ventilation Systems Ltd.

Scotia Diesel Services Ltd.

TAYCAR Electric Limited

ALM Energy Services Inc.

Black Diamond Builders Ltd.

H.E. Armstrong Mechanical Ltd.

Hawkins Truck Mart Ltd.

Maritime Motor Coach Service Centre

Paramount Construction Ltd.

PowerTel Utilities Contractors Ltd.

Rondeau's Refrigeration Services Inc.

Scott Blois Automotive

Tri Mac Toyota Ltd.

***Congratulations and thank you for supporting your apprentices
and the apprenticeship system!***

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

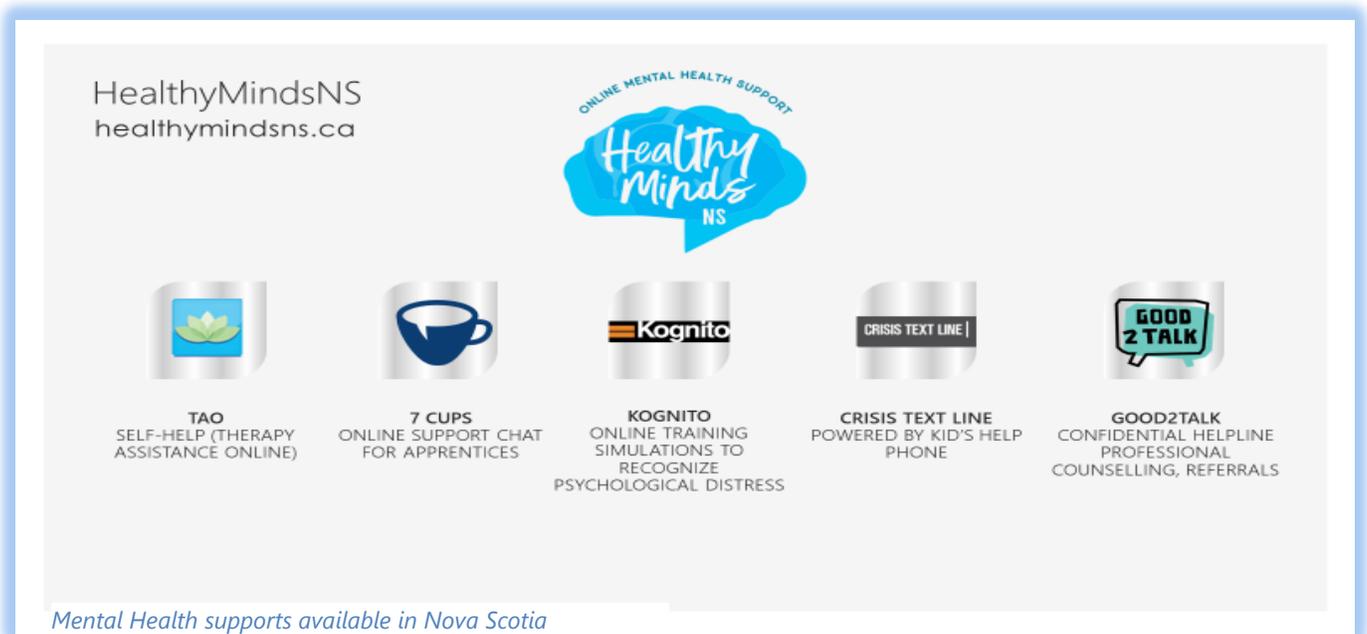
MENTAL HEALTH AND PTSD IN THE SKILLED TRADES

Keynote Speaker Andy Stevens is the business owner of Eclipse Property Solutions in the United Kingdom. His company has won several awards for its outstanding craftsmanship and end product. He currently presents a weekly live show for *OnTheTools*, which has 4 million subscribers. He is a strong advocate for mental health, especially in the construction industry.



Andy Stevens, Keynote Speaker

Andy Stevens shared his personal challenges with mental health concerns and the issues that are present in the construction [all trades] today. He stressed the importance of seeking help and of noticing when a co-worker seems troubled or has behavioural changes and may need someone to listen or to offer assistance. "Construction is a great industry...a lot has changed but there is an awful lot more to be done. ...listen, mental health is the same as physical health, it's just inside not outside. You can't see it. But I find by talking more and being brutally honest...people realize you are not on your own, because you do feel on your own [when struggling]. ...Everyone suffers from mental health [issues], just some more than others."

An infographic titled "HealthyMindsNS" with the website "healthymindsns.ca". It features a central logo for "Healthy Minds NS" with the text "ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT" above it. Below the logo are five icons representing different support services: 1. TAO (Therapy Assistance Online) with a flower icon. 2. 7 CUPS (Online Support Chat for Apprentices) with a blue cup icon. 3. Kognito (Online Training Simulations to Recognize Psychological Distress) with a Kognito logo icon. 4. Crisis Text Line (Powered by Kid's Help Phone) with a "CRISIS TEXT LINE" icon. 5. GOOD2TALK (Confidential Helpline Professional Counselling, Referrals) with a "GOOD 2 TALK" icon. At the bottom of the infographic, it says "Mental Health supports available in Nova Scotia".

HealthyMindsNS
healthymindsns.ca

ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
Healthy Minds NS

TAO
SELF-HELP (THERAPY ASSISTANCE ONLINE)

7 CUPS
ONLINE SUPPORT CHAT FOR APPRENTICES

KOGNITO
ONLINE TRAINING SIMULATIONS TO RECOGNIZE PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

CRISIS TEXT LINE
POWERED BY KID'S HELP PHONE

GOOD2TALK
CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING, REFERRALS

Mental Health supports available in Nova Scotia

THE APPRENTICESHIP JOURNEY IN 2020

Marjorie Davison, the Chief Executive Officer of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency presented on the Agency's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, entitled "Open for Business and Safety First!". Her presentation included sharing the results of the Annual Report for 2019-2020 including youth programs, skilled trades in public education, partnerships and initiatives with equity groups and national and Atlantic Trade Harmonization Projects. Marjorie also presented the results of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and the key actions from the Strategic Plan 2020-2025.



Marjorie Davison, CEO, NSAA

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015–2020 Results

1



82% of Apprentices Satisfied w/ Instruction

- 77% of apprentices satisfied with workplace training
- 72% of apprentices satisfied with technical training

2



74% Pass Rate Apprentices on Certification Exams

- 58% Pass rate for Trade Qualifiers on certification exams
- 4224 Certificates issued

3



1015 New Employers ↑ 59%

- 1293 Employer START grants distributed
- 203 Employer Awards distributed
- 93% of employers say apprentices make a positive contribution to their workplace

4



91% Compliance

- 13,695 Certificates renewed
- 3,944 Inspections completed

Strategic Plan Directions 2020-2025 Key Actions from our Action Plan

1



Attract Skilled Trades Talent

- Women in Trades
- Youth Programs/Partnerships
- Equity Programs/Partnerships
- Renewed Diversity and Inclusion Framework

2



Support the Journey to Certification

- AMS
- New Service Delivery Model
- Learning Commons
- Refreshed Website

3



Foster a Culture of Workplace Learning

- Orientation Modules
- Respectful Workplace/Classroom
- Mentoring Endorsement
- Atlantic Trades Business Seal

4



Advance the Value of Certification

- Social Procurement
- Awareness Raising
- Marketing Campaign
- Forestry Sector Apprenticeship Initiative



A JOURNEY OF HEALING: MENTAL HEALTH AND APPRENTICESHIP

Emily Arrowsmith is a Researcher and Project Manager for the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum and was the moderator on the panel. Emily has worked in collaboration with apprenticeship partners and stakeholders from across Canada over her years at the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, implementing over 50 national apprenticeship research projects.

Emily Arrowsmith (top left)
Catherine (Kaz) Martin (bottom left)
Ryan Gould (bottom right)
Wanda MacDonald (top right)



Kaz Martin is from a small indigenous town in the Northwest Territories and is a registered apprentice in Nova Scotia. Kaz spoke about the stress of going to school, being a single-parent and working as an apprentice. She emphasized the importance of having a lot of support from family and friends in her community. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, she has faced both cut-backs at work and then working up to 6 days a week – all while trying to find balance for herself and her daughter. Maintaining positive mental health has been a struggle, and Kaz suggested that it helps to do things that make you happy like talking to your children, walking your dog, and spending time outside.

Ryan Gould is from Membertou, Nova Scotia. He works with the Mi'kmaw Economics Benefits Office and is a proud business owner of Rusty Pipes in Cape Breton. Ryan talked about how having a trade, a job, gave him a purpose in life – “a reason to get up”. He has encountered the ups and downs of working in the trades, the “feast or famine” of the work situation and says, “when you don’t have work, be patient [work will come]. Don’t give up, keep looking for the next opportunity.” Even when going through tough times, having a job and going to work each day, meeting up with co-workers, gave him something to hang on to – this was good for his mental health. Ryan uses his experiences to mentor others in the skilled trades by supporting and encouraging them.

Wanda McDonald is the Manager of Counselling and Wellness at the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) and is working in collaboration with the NSAA to support students and apprentices with awareness of the importance of mental health and wellness. Recognizing that everyone feels stress, (students, apprentices, employers) and that not all stress is bad, Wanda also indicated one of the important ways to manage stress is by developing positive coping mechanisms (talking, listening, exercise) and having a solid support system in place (parents, friends, co-workers). Wanda also provided resources available at NSCC for apprentices and students and highlighted resources made available by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education in Nova Scotia through [Healthyminds.ca](https://www.healthyminds.ca).

STRATEGIC AND INCLUSIVE INVESTMENTS

Community Benefits

Trent Soholt is the Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council (NSCSC) which is a not-for-profit organization that partners with industry stakeholders to provide human resource solutions and labour market information for Nova Scotia's industrial, commercial, and institutional construction sector.

Trent presented information on Community Benefit Agreements (CBA) as a part of the public procurement process and explained that, 'a CBA is a formal agreement between a client and a community to create positive impacts in a community that outlast a project'. Examples of community impacts that outlast a project are impacts on the local supply chain, inclusion of diverse and marginalized groups, use of the local labour market and increases to the local tax base. CBAs enable small, medium and social enterprises to be successful. Trent stressed that building CBA language into the project tendering process is very new for Nova Scotia and many jurisdictions in Canada.



Trent Soholt, Executive Director, NSCSC

Social Procurement with a Diversity Lens

Danielle Hartley is the President and Owner of DHP Inc. which works closely with many indigenous communities and organizations in Canada.



Danielle Hartley, Indigenous and Community Relations Specialist, DHP Inc.

Danielle presented on 'Economic Reconciliation'. Considering that Indigenous Peoples make up 4.9% of Canada's population and that the median age of Indigenous Peoples (2016) is 29.1 as compared to the non-Indigenous population which is 41.3 (2016), the young Indigenous population will be key to Canada's future economic growth. Community engagement with Indigenous communities means reaching out and involving communities long before any project starts. A mantra for working with Indigenous communities is "Early. Often. On-going". Successful community involvement means being receptive to community participation, apprehensions, values, and goals.

INDUSTRY SECTOR SESSIONS

Participants selected one of four sessions, organized by trade sector in Nova Scotia: Construction, Industrial/Manufacturing, Motive Power and Service. Each group was asked to discuss the following two questions:

- What is your response to the presentations you have heard today?
- What has been the impact of COVID-19 on your industry?

*Heather Cruickshanks, Board Member facilitated the discussion with the **Construction Sector**.*

Presentations: Although some participants in this session indicated that they had not had any experience in encountering mental illness on-the-job, others in this session were familiar with this issue and/or had experience dealing with mental illness. All agreed that it is important to create a safe environment where those struggling can ask for help. Suggestions were made that employers and workers and on-site health and safety officers pay attention to changes in behaviour and listen more to those who say they are 'having a bad day'. Presentations like this one help employers and workers learn about resources available in Nova Scotia.



Construction Sector

COVID-19 impacts: Participants acknowledged that after the initial shut-down brought on by COVID-19, the construction industry has been "red-hot" ever since. The industry has been impacted by the difficulty in obtaining supplies, tools and equipment and long wait-times for materials on order.

*Chip Dickison, Board Member facilitated the discussion with the **Industrial/Manufacturing Sector**.*



Industrial/Manufacturing Sector

Presentations: Mental Health issues have been an important topic across Canada for the past few years and have become more of an issue due to the impact of COVID-19. The statistics on apprentice suicide rates in the UK, quoted by the guest speaker Andy Stevens, were shocking and eye opening. Participants agreed that individuals who show changes in behaviour and submit requests for leave from work are often showing early signs of mental health issues such as anxiety and stress. Requests to accommodate and support mental health are becoming more plentiful. All agreed that having a job and

working toward the security of certification can provide stability and a sense of purpose which may turn things around for those dealing with anxiety and uncertainty about the future. There was also a discussion about having a peer support network and if such a network might provide a more comfortable environment for anyone struggling to ask for help.

COVID-19 impacts: The general consensus of the participants was that most agreed the labour market information presented was an accurate reflection of industry in Nova Scotia. There was a discussion that according to the Federal Government perspective, during the initial days of COVID-19, the

Industrial/Manufacturing sector did not experience a steep contraction/decline in employment; business resumed after a month. However, apprentices were the last to resume work as essential workers were a priority. As soon as public health measures were implemented, work carried on as usual. Shops have reopened but many with a fraction of the staff previously employed pre-COVID-19.

*Tim Manuel, Board Member facilitated the discussion with the **Motive Power Sector**.*

Presentations: It was recognized by participants in this break-out group that we are very fortunate in Nova Scotia in regard to the COVID-19 outbreak. These are challenging days and we are dealing with a variety of concerns that we are not used to dealing with. Many people are experiencing high levels of anxiety. As an essential service, people in the automotive industry have been working throughout the pandemic. Participants agreed that regular and ongoing communication is key to supporting the mental health of employees. HealthyMindsNS was recognized as a great tool for supporting those with mental health issues. It is important to share this resource with employees, with apprentices, with the various groups we are connected with. Regularly sharing information about mental health supports during Toolbox Talks was supported by this group. It is important for employees to know that the employers care and support seeking help for mental health issues.



Motive Power Sector

COVID-19 impacts: Although initially there were layoffs, people have been returning to work in this industry. Considered an essential service, many businesses stayed open but scaled back on the number of employees working. In some businesses, apprentices had to be terminated but there is hope that they can be re-hired. Apprentices should be encouraged to participate in school online although many are anxious about this form of schooling. We have heard that there is a lot of uneasiness around this new way of learning and employers should encourage their apprentices to give online learning a chance. Throughout the pandemic, communication from the NSAA and the NSCC has been great.

*Charmaine Roma, Board Member facilitated the discussion with the **Service Sector**.*



Service Sector

Presentations: The Service Sector tends to be a very social, people-oriented sector and connectivity is key between peers and with employers and clients. People working in this sector are generally those who just naturally check in and seek connection with others. Participants mentioned that using Kognito, part of the HealthyMindsNS suite of services, is a very useful tool for practicing how to check in with others so that one does not come across as confrontational. This tool is scenario-based and offers suggestions for ways to communicate. It is important to notice that mental health issues are not always obvious so there is a need to 'read between the lines.' This is also very important when working with apprentices as many have expressed great anxiety about learning online and not in a classroom or workplace. They need to be encouraged to try this new format and supported when they feel anxious about it. NSAA is very supportive of apprentices offering support by talking to employers about apprentices who may need support or accommodations and facilitating special exam sittings.

COVID-19 impacts: The impact of COVID-19 on Cooks and Hairstylists has been loss of employment. As restaurants and salons closed, many lost their jobs. When these establishments re-opened, many could not return to work due to lack of childcare. Many individuals are finding work elsewhere so there is concern that when restaurants come back to full capacity, there will not be enough people to work in the restaurant industry. In recent years there has been an increasing demand for Cooks and Bakers in the province. We have grown used to many skilled immigrants taking jobs in the service industry and as immigration has been suspended this will create an even greater need for people to work in the service industry. There was consensus, in this breakout session, that Nova Scotia is not training enough apprentices to work in the Service Sector. "When we return to 'business as usual' we expect we will have a hard time finding enough people [to work]."

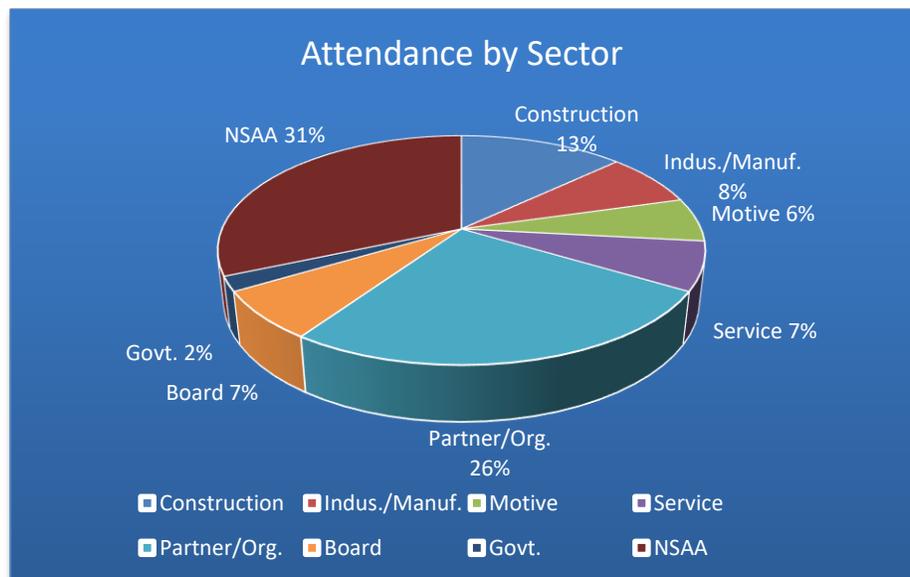
EVALUATION RESULTS

Held online for the first time, the 6th Annual Industry Meeting took place on October 23, 2020 and was deemed a tremendous success. Despite the challenges the current crisis posed for organizers and attendees alike, there were 146 participants from across Nova Scotia registered for the event using the virtual conference platform. Feedback from participants came from an evaluation survey with 24 responses and a focus group held shortly after the event.

Regarding the virtual experience comments included: "Very well orchestrated and executed; the use of this format was excellent, saved so much time, and costs. I highly recommend it for future events as well."

Feedback on the content was also excellent with many commenting on how the insights given by speakers will help them in their conversations with apprentices, particularly regarding mental health. As one participant said: "The importance of building connections with apprentices and to open the dialog around mental health issues is my biggest take away of the event."

The session by Andy Stevens certainly resonated with attendees with one commenting that "presentations like his should be shown to new apprentices as well as to experienced apprentices. We can surely adopt some of the support methods (formal and informal) he talked about to ensure that our apprentices do not 'fall through the cracks' if they are struggling with mental health challenges."





Thank You to our Partners!

For the investment you are making and for helping us to achieve our mandate to create an industry-led, industry-driven apprenticeship system.



NOVA SCOTIA
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