

# Zach Marley

by Stu Rhodes

When Zach Marley was in ninth grade he already knew he wanted to explore some sort of trade. He enrolled in "intro to carpentry" in grade 10 and worked a summer in construction until he became enamoured with the heavy equipment he saw working at various sites. A subsequent field trip to Camosun College, where Zach had a chance to visit

the heavy-duty equipment shop, clinched the deal!

Zach enjoys everything from fixing small engines to running heavy equipment like the gigantic drill rigs he's recently been operating for Construction Drilling Incorporated (CDI). Zach was required to complete all his compulsory grade 12 courses during his grade 11 year to be eligible to participate in the 10-month heavy-duty mechanic program at Camosun during 12th grade.

His entrepreneurial side evolved while at Camosun too: he started his own vehicle service business. Armed with a truckload of tools, and knowledge and experience gained from his technical training, Zach started doing call-outs to perform routine service and maintenance for customers.

Upon completing the 10-month Camosun program Zach started working as an apprentice heavy-duty mechanic for Shane Smith Construction, where he not only got experience pulling wrenches: he got to learn how to operate heavy equipment like bulldozers and excavators. Zach says it's hard to say now which he prefers, wrenching or operating. Zach's current employer, Gary Henshaw of CDI, agrees that the skill sets go hand-in-hand. "Understanding how the many systems in large machinery work really helps me to be in tune with what's going on with the machine when it isn't operating perfectly," says Zach. "Lots of times I can fix small problems myself right on site. Some other times I can communicate directly with CDI's head mechanic and describe symptoms, allowing him to make an accurate diagnosis and arrive equipped to do the repair," Zach adds.

Henshaw agrees that this sort of professional communication between operators and mechanics saves downtime and saves money. Moreover, a keen young person like Zach has already developed an intuitive sense of how machinery should work. "To start with, Zach is a great kid. That he comes with experience and skills from his technical training is a bonus," says Henshaw. He adds: "We have a shortage of capable young people like Zach. We need more programs like this."



Zach's mom has a message for other parents: "Trades are the way of the future. They keep young people engaged and excited about learning. Students graduate leaps and bounds ahead of same-aged peers then jump into adult life, landing with both feet firmly planted on the ground – a seamless transition."

"Taking up a trade in high school is probably the best life decision I've made to date. Not only did it prepare me for work, it helped me grow up and mature as an individual," says Zach.

*For more information on how to get involved as a student apprentice, or as an employer sponsor in this, or any other career program in Saanich School District, contact Garry Arsenault, 250-658-6679; Roger Pires, 250-655-2715; Wendy Walker, 250-514-0259; or Stu Rhodes, 250-415-9211. Visit <http://www.youtube.com/user/saanichcareers> to view the promotional video Jump Start Your Career. ✨*