

# Sebastian Hill: Electrician

by Stu Rhodes

**We all** take for granted many of the amenities we are able

to enjoy as a direct result of the good work tradespeople do on a daily basis. At this time of year in particular, we can be grateful for things like a roof over our heads, running water, and well-lit living spaces. Of the latter, imagine Christmas without lights! Even with power at the pole outside our house, our homes would be in darkness for the majority of the day as we approach the winter solstice if not for the work of electricians.

Recent Stelly's grad Sebastian Hill is an electrical apprentice taking up the craft and helping to keep our homes and institutions functioning. Sebastian was a very strong academic student with exceptional skills in the woodshop during his time at Stelly's. He first became aware of viable trade training options when his wood work teacher tried to convince him to pursue the Joinery/Cabinetmaking trade. With his trade curiosity piqued, he researched other various trades and zeroed in on the electrical trade as potential career pathway.

To help him decide if electrical would be the right choice, he applied for, and subsequently participated in, a work placement with the Department of National Defence during the summer between grade 11 and 12. This convinced Sebastian to apply for the Electrical Foundation program offered in partnership with Camosun College where he earned credits toward graduation as well as his trade certification.

Sebastian's mother, Catherine Oates-Hill, is particularly proud of his accomplishments at Camosun as he excelled in the self-paced version of the program, pulling down some of the highest grades ever achieved, and scooping three different awards at their annual awards ceremony. Sebastian is also a recipient of the \$1,000 Youth Work In Trades Award from the

Ministry of Education. His mother went on to say how much she appreciated an educational program that provided so much relevance.

Today Sebastian is working for electrical contractors Black & McDonald where he appreciates how much he gets to learn on a daily basis. "It's really nice to get paid for learning," said Sebastian. "When I first started, we were pulling a lot of heavy cables through conduit, so I got my exercise, and I continue to enjoy the physical aspect of the work. Now I'm getting to do much more technical tasks as well." He recently completed a 600-volt electrical panel on one of his sites!

His supervisor, Jason Fraser, had many complimentary things to say about Sebastian. "He's a natural for this trade. He thinks ahead. He takes direction well. He has a great attitude. He never says no to staying a little late to finish a project; he's willing to put in the extra effort." And in wrapping it up he said: "This is helping him stand out from the crowd and be recognized as an up and comer in our organization!" Jason and his company think it's fantastic that they can snap students up straight out of high school having already completed the Electrical Foundation program.

Sebastian has already enrolled for his Level Two technical training next March. He encourages other high school students to consider trade training programs but adds they should "check the pulse" by sampling the nature of the work and the culture of the workplace by participating in a work experience placement as he did to make sure it's a "good fit."

If early observations are any indication of Sebastian's future successes, we anticipate he may become one of Black and McDonald's youngest lead hands!

Light it up Sebastian!

Contact Stu Rhodes 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.

250 415-9211. View the promotional YouTube video, "Jump Start Your Career" at <http://www.youtube.com/user/saanichcareers>.



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