

Carpentry: Tiny House – Part II

by Stu Rhodes

The revitalized Saanich Carpentry program is entering its third month as

this story goes to press, and the class's "tiny house" project is well underway. Not only is the project advancing as planned, but so too is the acquisition of applied skills by the students in the class. One of the hallmarks of this program is the transition-to-work component. Students spend three days a week learning how to put theory to practise as they construct an innovative tiny house at the Saanichton Individual Learning Centre campus, then spend two days working in industry with employer partners.

April 17 was a big day for the students and their teacher, Brandon Heyer, as they showcased their project to a small entourage of dignitaries from the Construction Foundation of BC. Colleen McConnell, CFBC Director of Public Relations and Brendon Campbell, Assistant Manager from Home Depot, were on hand to make a significant cash donation and pledge their commitment to the program.

The structure was looking amazing at the showcase, with all the exterior walls erected and most of the rafters installed. Students were beaming with pride and happy to tell their stories. It was clear by the smiles on their faces they were having fun at the same time they were learning. In fact, the first thing Randy Squire said when asked about the program was: "This program is a lot of fun." He really enjoys working for his employer sponsor too, who coincidentally shares the same first name. Randy Cunningham has been a regular and

reliable employer of Saanich Carpentry students for over 10 years. His contributions have helped many a student advance in the trade and complete their apprenticeships.

Colton Leslie is really loving the program too. He likes that he is learning how to do things sequentially and following important steps in the process. Colton enjoyed doing all the mock-ups of the different stages before executing on the actual structure. He particularly likes his worksite placement with GT Mann where he is getting to participate in a wide variety of tasks from concrete formwork to framing.

It was evident that all the students admire and respect their teacher. Brandon is providing more than just instruction; he is contributing that essential element of apprenticeship training: mentorship. He is also empowering his students by requiring them to take responsibility and by giving them ownership in the project. The class even had a hand in selecting and modifying the floor plan of the tiny house.

Wendy Walker, principal of ILC, was proudly present at the showcase as well. She shares the students' excitement and anticipation of seeing the final stages of the project come to fruition. When asked by an attendee how one might go about acquiring the tiny home, her curt, but cute response was: "Well I guess you'll just have to keep your eyes on the upcoming editions of *Seaside* to find out how you could be the new owner of our tiny house if you want to make it your home."

Photo by Nunn Other Photography