

Morgan Morneau: Sheet Metal

by Stu Rhodes

.....
 "When I was in grade 10 I didn't get all the electives I'd selected and found myself stuck in a metal work class, much to my dismay. My parents both told me: 'Too bad. Suck it up princess.'"

Fast forward four years and what is Morgan Morneau doing now? She is a second-year sheet metal apprentice with Great White Cladding and Decking, one of B.C.'s leading structural and architectural sheet metal contractors.

It didn't take long before Morgan started to take a keen interest in the processes involved in working with various metal products. "I'm a hands-on learner. I learn best by doing," she said. She also told me learning needs to be relevant. She never really liked math and when she started metal work she certainly didn't like the drafting component. "But now I like them both. I use the math to help me do the calculations and I like the drafting because it allows me to accurately lay out projects and work pieces. I'm a very precise person and with math and drafting, there is usually only one right answer, and I like to get things perfect."

Morgan's employer, Daniel White of Great White Cladding and Decking, said: "I jumped at the chance to get Morgan on our team because I'm a big supporter of women in the trades." Her foreman, Rick Huggins, said: "Morgan's biggest strength is she does any job assigned without hesitation. She jumps right in and sticks with it until it's done. Her work ethic is above average and she stays focused on assigned tasks."

Morgan's parents, Darryl and Sandra, were both on board when she came home from Stelly's and told them she was interested in the Sheet Metal / Metal Fabrication Foundation program offered in partnership with Camosun College. They are thrilled with the transformation they see in their daughter. "As soon as she started at Camosun, you could see her heart was in it. Getting her up in the morning for high school was a chore, and she barely did enough work to get by. That all changed when she was at Camosun and now she's up at 5:30 every morning and out the door by six." As parents, they couldn't be more proud of Morgan's accomplishments. They want to encourage other parents to be particularly open minded, and careful not to let their own perspective limit their children's choices or opportunities, especially when it comes to exploring the trades or exploring non-traditional careers for women.

Morgan confided she's still not really a morning person, but she looks forward to going to work every day. "I've worked in both

residential and commercial and much prefer the commercial work so far. I really enjoy being part of the production team and the people I work with at Great White are awesome too.

"I guess I've always been a bit of a tomboy and took a bit of an interest in projects my dad was doing on cars, but now I feel like I have even more in common with him. He's

in auto body so our trades are different, but we both have to be inventive to create our products." Even though Morgan dons her Carhartts like the rest of the crew for work each day, she was quick to point out that she can still "glam it up" with a "full face" of makeup and stylish clothes after hours.

Morgan will be attending her next level of technical training this summer and already has her sights set on getting her Red Seal. She had a few simple pieces of advice for other students: "Try something new; you might learn to like it. Do what feels right. Be different."

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>.

*Photo by Nunn
Other Photography.*

