



DURHAM COLLEGE

Durham College receives approval for new Tower Crane Operator (339B) apprenticeship program

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Durham College (DC) has received approval from the [Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities](#) to launch a new Tower Crane Operator (339B) apprenticeship program. With the new program, DC will become the only college in Ontario to offer the Tower Crane Operator apprenticeship.

Developed by the college in direct response to requests by industry leaders, the program will help stem the shortage of qualified tower crane operators that is challenging builders in Ontario and across Canada.

"As an industry advocate, the [Residential Construction Council of Ontario \(RESCON\)](#) is proud to support Durham College's new Tower Crane Operator program. The skilled trades - including crane operators - need the kind of grassroots support that this will provide. Educating eager young minds to help the residential construction industry ultimately will add supply to a region that faces a housing crisis. We need the skilled, knowledgeable tower crane operators that the Durham program will produce," says RESCON president Richard Lyall.

The Tower Crane Operator apprenticeship program is expected to launch in January 2021 and will be offered at the college's Whitby campus where two tower cranes will be mounted permanently, one a luffer and the other a hammerhead, to support the program. DC currently offers [Mobile Crane Operator](#) (339A and C) training to approximately 56 apprentices each year. The college also offers a one-year post-secondary certificate, [Crane Operation, Rigging and Construction Techniques](#), to approximately 40 students per year, many of whom go on to become registered apprentices.

"The addition of the Tower Crane Operator apprenticeship program to DC's School of Skilled Trades, Apprenticeship & Renewable Technology is a natural extension of both our current crane operation programs and the college's ongoing commitment to supporting and growing the skilled trades and the industries that depend on them," says DC president Don Lovisa.

Buildforce Canada projects a growth in demand for tower crane operators of 7 per cent between 2013 and 2020. This increase coupled with the number of operators retiring combined with an average of 32 operators currently completing their apprenticeship each year indicates the industry will face a shortage of approximately 548 operators by 2020.

"In the more than 15 years that DC has been offering crane operation training, our programs, faculty and, most importantly, our students and graduates have developed strong relationships and outstanding reputations with industry," says professor and program coordinator Kevin Keays, who has been an in-demand operator himself for 35 years. "With this program, DC will be able to produce qualified operators to help keep the region and province building and growing."