

## RESCON VP will work with labour minister to attract youth to trades

RESCON VP Andrew Pariser is one of three youth advisors who have been appointed to work with Labour, Training and Skills Development Minister Monte McNaughton on initiatives to attract more youth, including under-represented groups, to skilled trades careers.

The appointment was announced Aug. 27 at an event at the Children's Museum in London, Ont., where McNaughton and Education Minister Stephen Lecce revealed the province is investing \$43 million in expanded youth training programs to give young people exposure to more employment options.

As a youth advisor, Pariser will engage with young people, educators, business, parents and other key partners, as well as McNaughton on how to reduce stigma and make the trades a viable first choice for young people.

Pariser and the others will advise on increasing awareness of the skilled trades among elementary school students, starting in grade one, with a focus on grades seven and eight, and on making it easier for high school students to learn about the options in the trades and to begin an apprenticeship pathway while continuing to earn secondary school credits.

This is the second appointment for Pariser in recent weeks. Earlier, he was appointed as a director on the board of directors of Skills Ontario.

Pariser has been the VP of RESCON since 2014, specializing in training and apprenticeship, health and safety, and labour relations. He is chair of both the health and safety committee and training and apprenticeship committee and sits on three program advisory committees at Durham, Humber, and George Brown colleges.

Previously, he was appointed to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development Planning and Partnership Table as well the Highly Skilled Workforce Committee which focused on the future of work in Ontario.

Andrew's passion for all issues related to apprenticeship and skilled trades began during his eight years with the Ontario Ministry of

Labour in the mediator services division, where he interacted with all sectors of the Ontario economy, including industrial, services, automotive, and construction. This passion continued with his appointment to the International Foundation of Employee Benefits Plan's Apprentice, Training and Education Board (2017-2018) and Canadian Board (2018-2021).



The other appointed youth advisors are Jennifer Green, director of competitions and young women's initiatives at Skills Ontario, and Adam Melnick, director of government and community relations for the Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers, Local 95 Ontario.

The \$43 million announced by the government, meanwhile, will be used to expand youth training programs to promote the skilled trades.

The government's investments include:

- \$5 million, an increase of \$3.5 million, to Skills Ontario so it can increase awareness of the trades among elementary and secondary students.
- \$17 million, an increase of \$2.3 million, in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program to send representatives to schools to provide high school students with the opportunity to learn about work in the skilled trades, and/or train as apprentices while completing their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.
- \$21 million in Ontario's Pre-Apprenticeship Training program, giving students and graduates exposure to a variety of good jobs in the skilled trades.

RESCON president Richard Lyall applauded the funding announcement.

"Today's announcement will encourage young people to look toward good, well-paid careers in the trades, providing the skilled workers Ontario needs to build homes across the province."