

For Immediate Release

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KEY SUPPORT FOR TRADES TRAINING NOW AVAILABLE IN CRANBROOK

Industry Training Authority introduces local Apprenticeship Advisor to act as an on-the-ground resource for apprentices and employers

Cranbrook, BC – The [Industry Training Authority \(ITA\)](#) has introduced the Apprenticeship Advisor who will act as the on-the-ground resource for apprentices and employers in the Cranbrook area. Over 45 local apprentices, employers and industry representatives gathered at the Prestige Rocky Mountain Resort yesterday to meet **Marlin Ratch, ITA’s Apprenticeship Advisor for Cranbrook**, along with **Gary Herman, ITA CEO**.

Marlin Ratch, Cranbrook’s new Apprenticeship Advisor, brings over 18 years of experience in the coordination and direction of employment and training programs across BC. Ratch has a background in Red Seal Chef training, and was most recently the Director of the Employment and Training program for the Métis Nation of British Columbia, where he developed training and special programming depending on group needs.

“Now more than ever, British Columbia needs young talented tradespeople to help keep building B.C., and fill jobs in critical demand across the province. That is why it is great to see ITA-BC has introduced Marlin Ratch as the new apprenticeship advisor for Cranbrook,” said Bill Bennett, MLA for Kootenay East. “These advisors across the province are essential to help ensure students get the guidance and support they need to complete successfully their programs. I wish Marlin the very best in his new role and helping students in Cranbrook succeed.”

[Apprenticeship Advisors](#) serve as an extension of the ITA Customer Support team, with the primary focus of providing regional support to apprentices and sponsors, creating a positive impact on continuation and completion rates for apprenticeship. Key responsibilities include building knowledge of the BC apprenticeship system, advising apprentices and sponsors, boosting apprentice success, and supporting apprentice and sponsor connections. In addition to his new role, Marlin will focus on working with Aboriginal apprentices and developing initiatives to support Aboriginal Peoples throughout Cranbrook and the surrounding region.

The introduction of the Apprenticeship Advisor initiative was the result of an in-depth, province-wide consultation into apprenticeship supports in 2013 that included input from multiple stakeholders. It is also in direct response to the recently launched [B.C.’s Skills for Jobs Blueprint](#) as well as recommendations made in [The Industry Training Authority and Trades Training in BC: Recalibrating for High Performance](#) (the McDonald Report).

ITA now has 10 Apprenticeship Advisors located in Cranbrook, Dawson Creek, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Prince George, Terrace, Vancouver / Lower Mainland and Victoria regions. Three of the Apprenticeship Advisors, who are located in Cranbrook, Kamloops and Vancouver’s North Shore area, will also work on initiatives to support Aboriginal Peoples throughout the province.

ITA is **currently recruiting five additional Apprenticeship Advisors** to increase support to the following regions: Northeast Region (Prince George), Northwest Region (Prince Rupert) and three in the Lower Mainland to service Greater Vancouver, the Tri-Cities area and the Fraser Valley. These roles will be filled by the end of 2014.

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