BC Construction Association Launches *Building Builders* Mentorship Program
Connecting the community to improve talent retention and career development

June 22, 2022 – Victoria, BC - Encouraging Canadians to explore career opportunities and develop connections with employers in the skilled trades is a key priority for Canada's Skilled Trades Awareness and Readiness (STAR) Program. Receiving training and connecting with experienced tradespeople and industry leaders for guidance can be a valuable a benefit to workers who are considering a career in the construction industry. To help deliver these important services, the Ministry of Employment and Social Development Canada will provide $3.6 M to the British Columbia Construction Association (BCCA).

To reduce skilled workforce shortages, the Building Builders program will connect under and un-employed workers, labourers and unregistered apprentices working in BC's construction industry with established credentialed tradespeople, executives, and industry leaders who have been working in construction in BC for a minimum of ten years. These mentorships will provide career guidance for workers and a talent acquisition opportunity for employers who are seeking new workers during the ongoing labour shortage.

The program objectives are to:
- attract non-traditional workers to the industry
- retain existing workers who are not yet on a solid career path and potentially not supported in apprenticeship by their current employer
- lower the average age of apprenticeship initiation (currently 27)
- improve apprenticeship registration and completion rates
- Place mentees in employment with mentor companies

"Mentorship is a tradition in the construction industry, where apprentices learn their craft under the experienced guidance of an accredited journeyperson," says Chris Atchison, President of the BCCA. "Building Builders amplifies the role of mentorship well beyond the apprentice/journey relationship, giving job seekers and those workers who are under employed in their current construction job a way to connect to employers and mentors who might otherwise be out of reach."

There is currently no established mentorship program for BC's construction industry. Mentees will receive one-to-one coaching, job leads, and work experience. Program staff will provide connection, support, opportunities, and guidance for both the mentor and the mentee throughout the program.

In BC there are 27,630 anticipated job openings in construction by 2027 due to expansion and retirement; many of those jobs need to be filled from outside the industry by new entrants without established connections, and through much better retention of current workers. Building Builders seeks to establish a greater sense of community that will result in more institutionalized support for newcomers to the industry.

The Building Builders program will open to applications from mentors and mentees in August 2022. The program is funded to run for approximately two years and will seek to support 300 mentees through a 12-month mentorship period. Mentees will receive Site Ready safety training, and mentees and mentor companies will receive culture training through the Builders Code.

For further information on the STAR program visit https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/02/skilled-trades-awareness-and-readiness-program.html

About the British Columbia Construction Association
The British Columbia Construction Association (BCCA) works with four Regional Construction Associations (NRCA, SICA, VICA and VRCA) to serve more than 10,000 employers in the province's industrial, commercial, institutional (ICI) construction industry. BCCA advocates on behalf of all employers to ensure British Columbia's construction sector remains productive and resilient.

For more information about BCCA, please visit: http://bccassn.com/

To subscribe for Building Builders program updates, please visit https://buildingbuilders.ca

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