

David Mitton: A Success Story
Facilitating Effective School to Work Transitions
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In December 2006, David Mitton was a student at Timmins High & Vocational School in Timmins completing his grade 12 year. By the end of the first semester he would have 3 remaining credits for his graduation diploma. He was also more interested in being in an alternative school setting than remaining in his current situation. He had seen an ad in the local newspaper for an electrical pre-apprenticeship program at the local campus of Northern College. Unfortunately this program began in February 2007 and David still had 3 credits remaining towards his OSSD.

At the same time the School College Work Initiative was recruiting students for a pilot program for second semester, entitled College Accelerated Program. This program was designed for students intent on a college program who were within 3 credits of their receiving their OSSD. The program would effectively “jump start” students into a college program and allow them to earn dual credits towards both their secondary school diploma and a college program.

Through extensive consultation between the SCWI program coordinator, the Guidance head at Timmins High and Vocational School and the Northern College Apprenticeship Development Officer, it was determined that David fit the profile for the new pilot program and that he would be admitted into the program. The decision was not taken lightly and the implications were carefully explained to David. The pre-apprenticeship program would run from February 2007 to November 2007 and David would be required to complete the full pre-apprenticeship program which included both academic and placement opportunities. In addition, it would mean that David would commit to a 10 month program with no summer break. On the whole, this was a serious commitment for a young man who had not yet quite completed his secondary school program.

Over the course of the next 10 months, David worked diligently to master the academic requirements that he faced. Additional supports were put in place when he faced challenges with the academic components. Guidance and encouragement were provided when he faltered and felt that the workload was overwhelming. Working together, the Northern College personnel and the SCWI personnel monitored his progress and attendance. David will attest to the fact that he faced several challenges throughout the program but that, with the supports provided to him, he mastered all challenges placed before him. Through the process, in addition to completing the school portion of the program, David maintained a part-time job, working over 20 hrs each week.

In June 2007, David completed the equivalent of over 600 hours of academic and apprenticeship learning, enough to merit the attainment of the final three credits needed for his OSSD and David graduated with his peers from secondary school. Throughout the summer and the fall, David focused on his electrical apprenticeship skills and in November 2007 he received his Level 1 designation for Electrician: Construction and Maintenance.

David's accomplishment is an example of what is possible when student needs are the primary focus for educational decisions.

Job Connect Connection

David was referred to Job Connect by Northern College's Apprenticeship, Workforce Development and Training Division in September 2007 after successfully completing a 40 week Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship program. Job Connect had provided an Orientation to Apprenticeship Workshop to David's class during his training and also explained the Apprenticeship Scholarship Signing Bonus initiative. Since David had left the school system before achieving his diploma and then upgraded his education through this pre-apprenticeship training, David was the perfect candidate for the AS/SB initiative. Job Connect assisted David to find a suitable employer to hire/ train him and arranged his apprenticeship registration with MTCU's apprenticeship branch. He was hired as an electrical apprentice with Timmins Electric Motor Repairs on Sept. 24/2007 and is now registered as a construction/maintenance electrical apprentice.

David and his employer will receive funding from the Apprenticeship Scholarship/Signing bonus program; David has already received a \$1000 scholarship while his employer has received an initial \$1000.00 signing bonus and will receive an additional \$1000.00 in 6 months if David is still employed with his company. In addition to the AS/SB, Job Connect has arranged a 25 week training incentive of up to \$4,000 to Timmins Electric Motor Repairs and will be providing employment support and a training support allowance of up to \$400.00 to David for tools, work attire etc.

David's situation represents a shining example of how effective partnerships between education and training providers can facilitate a successful transition to work.