



## APRIL SUCCESS

This past February three young men from Huu-ay-aht First Nation joined the Nuu-chah-nulth BladeRunners in Port Alberni. Brian Peters, James Nookemus, and Craig Charleson from Anacla, and found temporary accommodations in Port Alberni in order to complete the 4 week construction pre-employment program.

In the program they obtained their Health and Safety Training, Level One First Aid and Workplace Hearing Tests as well as resume and job placement support.

Through out the program each one of them maintained a strong attendance record and high level of participation. At the end of the program, due to employment market conditions in the Alberni area, there were no immediate positions available for these three men. Despite this setback, they remained optimistic and willingly agreed to expand their options for securing construction related employment beyond Port Alberni.

By means of brainstorming, and collective problem solving with the Port Alberni and Ucluelet coordinators; Rob and April and the three BladeRunners Brian, Craig and James, an employment opportunity in Tofino was found. One of the major challenges for employment in the Tofino area is finding a place

to live that is available and affordable. The Ucluelet coordinator found a promising possibility in Opitsat, a 10 minute boat ride from Tofino.

On March 14th the Port Alberni coordinator, Brian and James traveled to Tofino to visit the job site and meet Anthony



**Shoreline BladeRunners**

Wreggitt the site superintendent of Vic Van Isle Construction Inc. Anthony shared details about the 15 million dollar residential waterfront development known as "The Shore". After meeting with Anthony, accommodations via water taxi were secured in Opitsat and the logistics for obtaining sustainable employment were completed. Back in Port Alberni, the three BladeRunners were supplied with workplace safety boots, rain gear, and work tools by Nuu-chah-nulth BladeRunners.

On March the 25th BladeRunners Brian, Craig, and James began their construction employment with Vic Van Isle as labourers with a starting wage of \$18.00 per hour. They are now participating in the construction of a large building project from the beginning stages to completion and will reap the benefits of learning new skills. This experience in itself provides these three BladeRunners with a strong foundation for a successful career in the Construction Industry.

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# THE KUTIIS PROGRAM IN PORT ALBERNI

The Kutiis Program arrived in Port Alberni in January to kick off the second year of education and training through the Nuu-chah-nulth Employability and Job Training Program (NETP). The Kutiis Program assists First Nations people to prepare for job readiness, as well as for access to trades and other academic programs. Students ranging in age from young adult to middle age are taken through several processes for self-understanding, improved interpersonal relationships, conflict, stress and anger management, as well as resumé and cover letter writing, and job search techniques.

The Kutiis Program is unique because of the cultural content offered and the way that culture is linked to the current thinking and expectations of native and non-native employers. With the addition of Daniel Blackstone, cultural content really came to the forefront. Through circle, drumming and songs, and his remarkable wisdom, Daniel continually anchored the Kutiis Program to culture. Such concepts as mission (purpose), vision, values and appropriate behaviours were linked with preparation for a whale hunt so that students could readily see how the knowledge that they already hold is valuable in today's workplace.

Using contemporary management and planning methods linked with growing culture and self-awareness, students prepared a plan around their personal direction in life whether their choice included seeking employment or preparing for a trade or career. Each student's plan included a personal mission statement and defined the goals that each will need to reach to fulfil his/her purpose. Completed in visual graphic format, students could readily see the necessary steps to success.

Students were required to work through the preparation of a personal budget, making money management one of the hottest topics. As guest speakers, Cynthia Blackstone and Mena Rai from the Royal Bank provided additional information about banking, credit card management and buying a home. Because of the clarity of Cynthia and Mena's presentation in combination with the requirement to complete two finance workbooks, many questions were asked and answered. As a result, many of the students' fears about managing money were replaced with knowledge and increased confidence.

Students received graduation and participation certificates from the Kutiis Program.

*Students missing:  
Star Williams, Natasba Billy,  
and Matt Charles.*





**Circle, drumming and songs were all methods used to anchor the Kutiis Program to culture.**

Jacqueline Watts, a 2007 Kutiis graduate, did a remarkable job as Administrative Assistant to the Program. Her organizational skills and ability to mobilize people and information made Fridays the most significant day of the week. Jacqueline invited speakers and other cultural teachers to tie information that students worked through over the week into cultural events and historical stories. Continuous connections to culture were highlighted in such a way that students could visibly see that working in a non-native setting did not mean an expectation that one would have to forfeit culture. In fact, many students voiced that they feel a stronger connection as a result of their Kutiis experience. On March 14, seven students received their graduation certificates while four others received certificates of participation. Thank you to everyone who came to honour, support and encourage the graduates.

Also, thank you to all those who assisted with the Kutiis Program this year to make it such a success:

***Cultural Teaching:*** Linda Watts, Denis St. Claire (culture and history), George Watts & Robert Dennis (songs), Tat Tatoosh, Life Skills

***Cultural Arts & Crafts Teaching:*** Karen Lucas - dream catchers, Norma Taylor & Tanya - cedar donation, Julia Lucas - cedar donation

***Practical Knowledge:*** Judy Rumney for Colours Workshop, Cynthia Blackstone & Mena Rai from RBC for money management, Dave Mahar & Rob Fioraso for continuing education

**“It isn’t what happens to you that defines your character. It’s what you do with what happens to you.”**

**~ Becky Mcrary**



## PROFILE - BARRY WATTS

By Judy Rumney

When the time was right, Barry Watts jumped at the opportunity to increase his skills and knowledge by going back to school. That was last summer and now Barry has completed his first giant step into the world of the tradesperson.

Barry is a member of the Tseshah First Nation and is the son of Gail Gus and John H. Watts. Barry grew up in Port Alberni, and went to high school at ADSS. Like many of his fellow classmates, Barry quit school in Grade 10 to work. Until September 2007, Barry did a wide variety of short jobs.

His work was primarily in the forestry industry. He cut brush and built trails, surveyed the cut sites, and assisted in an archeological project. He says that a lot of his jobs were project jobs, although he did work at the Tseshah Market for a while. It was his last job, however, that showed him what he really wanted to do.

Barry worked as an entry-level construction assistant, otherwise known as a craft labourer. He said that the “cardinal rule is to show up 15-30 minutes before work begins.” His work ethic and his essential skills were obvious to his employer. He was able to stay on the team that built the Tseshah Administration/Multiplex Building overlooking the Somass River. This is the same building that just won the Canadian Wood Councils’ most prestigious award for best institutional building. The building proved to be inspirational to Barry, and he realized that he wished to develop the skills required to build such a beautiful building. The entry-level work was heavy and dirty. He did not want to remain at entry level, moving supplies and sweeping up.

“I have always wanted to get into this type of work. There was always something in the way,” he says. When NETP announced they would be funding trades training, Barry finally believed that the time in his life had come when everything had come together - the right training program, the right institution, the right financial assistance available, and just being laid off after finishing the Administrative Building.



**“Barry has completed his first giant step into the world of the tradesperson.”**

Barry says that he knows it is difficult to start something new. “You have to start somewhere. Next year, after another six weeks of training, I will be earning more money. When I am done, I will be earning \$29-30 per hour.” His instructor at NIC, Tom Klatt, presented the students with some very sobering statistics. “95 per cent of those who get the first year of training, never continue on.” Barry says that he wants to be in the five per cent who do.

Now that classes are over, Barry is waiting to start on projects within the community. He is hoping to team up with his cousin, Terry, who has his Red Seal Ticket. While working with his cousin, he will be working toward his second year apprenticeship. When asked what he would like to say to people who are considering additional training, Barry does not hesitate with his answer. “Go back to school because there are more advantages - you can do whatever you want!”

## PROFILE - JACQUELINE WATTS



### Jacqueline Watts was empowered by the Kutiis Program

Jacqueline Watts attended and graduated from the Kutiis Program in Port Alberni in spring 2007. She did this only four months into her recovery from her addiction.

Jacqueline believes that the Kutiis Program assisted her to rebuild her self esteem and set realistic goals. By going through Kutiis, she was able to access programs through VAST, which, in turn, empowered her with enough credits to graduate from Grade 12. She has remained “clean” for 17 months, and currently has many doors open to her.

Jacqueline has just taken ownership of a beautiful “new” home on the Tseshah Reserve. She has also just completed a contract with the Nuuchahnulth Employment Training Program as the program assistant to this year’s Port Alberni Kutiis Program. It has been

reported that this year’s participants regarded Jacquie as a mentor, and were impressed with her progress of the last year. The advice she gives to anyone considering attending Kutiis is to “stick through it and grab as much as you can from it”.

One day, Jacqueline hopes to return to school and become a cultural teacher, following in her mother’s footsteps.

NETP congratulates Jacqueline on her many successes and wishes her many more.

*“You have to think about big things while you’re doing small things so that the small things go in the right direction.”*

*~ Alvin Toffler*



# WHAT IS A CONSTRUCTION CRAFT LABOURER?

## ALSO KNOWN AS:

- ▶ ASPHALT SPREADER
- ▶ BRICKLAYER HELPER
- ▶ CARPENTER HELPER
- ▶ CONCRETE MIXER HELPER
- ▶ CONSTRUCTION HELPER
- ▶ CONSTRUCTION LABOURER
- ▶ DEMOLITION WORKER
- ▶ DRYWALL SANDER
- ▶ FLAGMAN/WOMAN
- ▶ GLAZIER HELPER
- ▶ LABOURER
- ▶ CONCRETE PAVING
- ▶ LABOURER
- ▶ EXCAVATION
- ▶ PIPELINE MANDREL OPERATOR
- ▶ PLUMBER HELPER
- ▶ ROOFER HELPER
- ▶ STABBER
- ▶ PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION



Do you like working outdoors? Are you strong and physically fit? Are you safety conscious? Do you work well with others? Are you looking for on-the-job variety? Could you work with hand and power tools? Then, you could become a construction craft labourer!

## WHAT THE WORK IS LIKE

Construction craft labourers prepare and clean up construction sites, move materials and equipment, and perform demolition and excavation activities. They work on municipal sewer and water mains, roads, dams, bridges, tunnels, railways and other construction projects. They are employed by a variety of contractors and road builders in the construction industry.

Construction craft labourers work in all four construction sectors: new home building and renovation, heavy industrial, institutional and commercial, and civil engineering. To learn more about the construction sectors, check out [www.careersinconstruction.ca](http://www.careersinconstruction.ca).

## APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeship is one way of starting out in the construction industry. It involves both classroom studies

and on-the-job training under the supervision of a certified construction professional, called a journey person. As an apprentice, you earn while you learn and are paid by the hour while working on the job site. Wages start at about 50% of a journey person's hourly rate and increase during your apprenticeship, until you reach the full rate.

## ENTERING AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Requirements for construction craft labourer apprenticeship programs vary across Canada. In most provinces and territories, you must be at least 16 years old and have a Grade 9 education, or equivalent, to enter a construction craft labourer apprenticeship program. Some provinces and territories offer secondary school apprenticeship programs that allow high school students to work towards a career as a construction craft labourer. For more information, check out the Apprenticeship section at [www.careersinconstruction.ca](http://www.careersinconstruction.ca)

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## MULTI-SENSORY LEARNING GYM

The Multi-Sensory Learning Gym is one component offered at the a-m'aa-sip Learning Place. Working with the gym allows for learning to take place while having fun. By using this gym, one is working on hand-eye coordination, improving concentration, building muscles, and improving eye movement.

The gym also improves fine gross motor skills, which contributes to the improvement of writing skills, working with tools, running, jumping and catching.

The gym helps improve tasks such as reading, writing, and math. These exercises are designed to increase the students' ability to work with systems and organizing information. The gym teaches people how to function well alone, as well as in a group. The gym offers the use of equipment such as balancing boards, koosh balls, and rebounders.



*Maintaining dynamic equilibrium while standing on the Balance Board trains coordination of the two hemispheres. This coordination enhances any other bilateral training that is performed on the Balance Boards including movements using both sides of the body and vision exercises requiring the equal cooperation of both eyes.* (ESI Educational Sensory Integration, Inc. Learning Manual, E. Reycraft, 2002).

Using the gym provides a different way of learning that will be beneficial to the participant, not just with his or her academics, but in his or her everyday lives, as well. One of our participants said, "The gym helps me out a lot when I play sports with my friends and my reading."

Upon entrance to a-m'aa-sip Learning Place, one's full potential for learning is quickly brought to the forefront with simply a bit of time spent in the gym.

Just a few of the multi-sensory experiences and equipment to be had at the a-m'aa-sip Learning Place.



# JOY'S STORY

When I was 16, I started my first job as a part time gas jockey. My plan was to have an easy summer job and make a bit of money. I didn't really have any expectations beyond this.

However, my job wasn't as easy as it appeared to be. I had to learn how to pump gas, handle money, be helpful and courteous to customers, and be knowledgeable about not only the services that our gas station offered, but other services available in our town. It always seemed that when the good weather turned and a big rain storm came in, that was when lots of people came in to gas up their cars. I began to understand what is meant by that saying, "When it rains, it pours!"

It didn't take long for me to want to learn other things on the job. I learned how to fix and change flat tires, clean out air filters, change oil and oil filters, and change fuses. It was fun to be able to help customers more and more with the new skills and knowledge that I gained. My boss seemed pretty happy with me, too, because I was willing to learn new things.

This was my first summer job and I've had many different types of jobs since then. I will always remember the feeling of importance and independence I felt from making my own money, while I learned new things.

That's what always makes work fun, as well as rewarding, in whatever job I do. I really enjoy being friendly and it's nice to be able to be helpful, too.

## WHAT ESSENTIAL SKILLS DID I USE?

Reading Test.....	Yes
Document Use.....	Yes
Numeracy.....	Yes
Writing.....	Yes
Oral Communication.....	Yes
Working with Others.....	Yes
Continuous Learning.....	Yes
Thinking Skills.....	Yes
Computer Use.....	Yes



Essential Skills help us carry out a wide variety of tasks and apply them to all types of situations; home, school, work and beyond.

These skills help us work with increased knowledge, efficiency and safety! These are the skills that we must develop and use every single day.

**I needed to use all nine Essential Skills to do a good job!**



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