


RED SEAL PROGRAMS

EAST PRESTON EMPOWERMENT ACADEMY



The East Preston Empowerment Academy has always provided people with the skills needed to enter in a Trade of their choosing. EPEA has one of the best Red Seal Programs for any Black individuals who wants to enter the world of construction or a similar trade. These programs are all in part with EPEA's collaboration with many trade organizations from around the province such as Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education, Black Educators Association, and Literacy Nova Scotia. This even includes a Joint Registration Agreement with NSAA (Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency), that allows people to register in programs. One of these many programs is the "Pathway to Skill Trade" program. EPEA puts its participants through a plethora of different classes that instructs its participants in the construction industry and all the safety protocols that comes with it. These safety protocol training include the basics such as First Aid & CPR, along with Certified Fall Arrest and Protection to learn how to handle an accident from someone who has fallen from a dangerous height. Participants will even be educated on Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems so that they are prepared for any situation. They offer classes in how to work construction equipment, carpentry, electrician workshops, masonry, concrete finishing, automotive technological training, etc. and other classes to help people explore their passion and to see what path suits them best. Along with the education and skills that we provide for our participants, we also distribute Exams for them to take in order to receive their certification to fully enter into the construction industry. Even during the shift to remote learning, instructors have been able to provide people

with training packets and laptops in order to take virtual classes and to share their work with their tutors online.

EPEA has also created a “Women in Trades Program”, to offer more opportunities for women to find jobs in trades they are interested in. This eight-week program took a handful of young women who are interested in joining the trade work force. On February 11th, 2021, EPEA did an introductory presentation partnered with an official from the Women in Trades Department of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency. They presented on the topic of apprenticeship and getting Red Seal Certified. Women Unlimited also presented on the topic, Women in Non-traditional Trades: Challenges and Opportunities. From here this is where the program began and classes could begin. These classes offer training to become an Automotive Service Technician, Bricklayer, Carpenter, Concrete Finisher, Construction Electrician, Industrial Mechanic (Millwright), Plumber, Oil Heat System worker, Sheet Metal Worker, Painter, Cosmetologist, Culinary Artist, etc. Like other trade programs the EPEA offers mentoring and job shadowing with professionals as the courses continue on through the eight-week program. It is important that women feel included within any work place or trade they choose to join and that they are properly prepared when they join.

These programs have resulted in great success over the years. Employer would look at participants work portfolio and even hire them while they are still in the program. Also, all the participants engage in job shadowing to make sure that they get the first-hand experience of what it is like to work in the field when they are ready to be hired. The East Preston Empowerment Academy will continue to carry out its tradition of creating a strong educational environment that helps people enter the trade work community and continues to help BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) individuals achieve the jobs needed to support their community and their families.