

## **Job Talks series launched with 50 videos highlighting careers within construction**

Angela Gismondi January 21, 2020



A new video series profiling individuals in construction careers aims to raise awareness about the opportunities and benefits the industry can offer to young people.

The Job Talks Construction official video launch, featuring 50 two-minute, unscripted videos, took place Jan. 16 at the Toronto Region Board of Trade in Toronto. The project took about two years to complete, said Richard Lyall, president of the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), part of the coalition which commissioned the series.

“These videos can be used to address myths about careers in the skilled trades and are a resource for parents, teachers and guidance counsellors looking to inform young people and jobseekers about fulfilling careers in the trades,” Lyall told the room full of delegates at the launch. “The bottom line is most people in the room know construction jobs are good jobs but we need to do more to ensure young people and their influencers know that.”

The series profiles the variety of career options available in construction including insulation installers, welders, HVAC technicians, project managers, framers, concrete and drain specialists, crane operators, stone masons, health and safety managers, carpenters and bricklayers just to

name a few, explained Dr. Jon Callegher, executive director, Job Talks, a work-related media and research company that promotes careers in the skilled trades.

While many young people today often feel tired, stressed, worried about job security, are in debt and feel lost, construction workers typically do not.



ANGELA GISMONDI — Dr. Jon Callegher, executive director of Job Talks, spoke about the job satisfaction among construction workers at the Job Talks Construction video series launch hosted by the Residential Construction Council of Ontario Jan. 16 in Toronto.

“Something they all have in common that is different from the rest of working Canadians is construction workers feel alive at work every day, they have work-life balance, they have skills security, they can get paid while working and they make a measurable difference in this world,” Callegher said.

The construction industry has a marketing problem, said Callegher.

“When the general population thinks of a construction worker you think of a man in a pit toiling away in extreme heat or extreme cold, maybe his clothes are ripped and he’s a bit gruff,” explained Callegher. “This marketing problem you can probably sum it up in two words: construction industry jobs are dirty and dangerous. We do hear this perpetuated by two very influential groups in society — parents and educators.”

Parents, especially immigrant parents, often want their kids to go to university and become a doctor, lawyer or business person said Callegher.

“They are not aware of the potential pathways the opportunities and fulfilling types of careers and fulfilling life that can be sustained through a career in the skilled trades,” said Callegher adding the research shows parents just want to protect their children.

“I tell them when they become a doctor, lawyer or business person and you push them — maybe against their will — they are going to make a good living, but I guarantee you they will be time poor. I also think the reason you want your kids to have a good living is because you want them to take care of you when you’re older. Have you thought about the construction trades where you can have a great salary and work-life balance and have kids that are happy and fulfilled and are actually there and available for you in your older age?”

In addition, a small number of guidance counsellors and educators are recommending careers in the trades to students. The trades need to be promoted as a pillar, not the third pillar, in post-secondary education along with university and college, Callegher pointed out.

“That comes down to how our leaders and administrators in the school system talk about post-secondary education,” he said. “Just be conscious of saying ‘university, college, trades.’ Talk about higher education not in terms of a hierarchy.”

While society values academic intelligence, Callegher said individuals in construction often possess balanced intelligence.

“People with balanced intelligence use their body and brain, they are practical versus theoretical, they have a strong attention to detail, health and safety conscious and have situational awareness,” said Callegher.

“The people who build our infrastructure have a different kind of intelligence and we need to recognize that balanced intelligence and the value that kind of intelligence brings to our society visibly every day.”

Other partners involved in the video series include the **Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO)**; the Heavy Construction Association of Toronto; the Toronto Area Road Builders Association; the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association; the Ontario Skilled Trades Alliance; the Ontario Residential Council of Construction Associations; and the Ontario Construction Careers Alliance.

For more information visit <https://www.jobtalksconstruction.ca>.