



Stu Rhodes

Career Counsellor and Apprenticeship Coordinator
Stelly's Secondary School

School District 63 (Saanich, Vancouver Island)

<http://cpw.sd63.bc.ca/career/>

6230 Students

The Saanich School District 63 has a long history of Career Education. Over the years, Stu Rhodes and his team have helped develop several programs in the career area that include dual credit and specific trade training programs, Work Experience placements, Co-ops, and SSA courses. "We have over 15 different trade programs and we are currently partnered with seven different technical training providers," Stu says.

SD 63 has a wealth of Post Secondary partners that include: Camosun College, Vancouver Island University, BCIT, Thompson River University, Vancouver Community College, Green Belt Veterinary Services and Quadrant Marine Institute. There are also valuable community partnerships with the Pauquachin First Nation, Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Coastal Salish Employment and Training Society, Blade Runners, and businesses that employ trades apprentices.

Funding for career programs come from many sources. Stu says the district maximizes Ministry of Education funding by using DL or CE schools to help generate funding outside the regular registration (1701) time frames. The district benefits from ACE IT funding from the ITA; SSA grants from the Career Education Society; and tool grants from Skills Canada. Resources are accessed for Aboriginal students from VNFC (Victoria Native Friendship Centre), Blade Runners, and CSETS (Coast Salish Employment Training Society). The district has also benefited from financial support from local building supply centres like Slegg Lumber and was awarded \$11,000 from two Ashoka Changemakers competitions.

Stu says that the career programs are marketed in a variety of ways: word of mouth (telephone and cold calls), brochures, promotional YouTube videos, open houses, career fairs, Skills Canada competitions, YES-2-It activities, local news paper articles, and occasional TV spots. Stu also writes a 'trade profile' story every other month for a community magazine.

Stu says this about the accomplishments of career programs in his district: "Developing and espousing our 'three-prong vision for a trade bound student': #1 the student will graduate, #2, the student will successfully complete level one technical training (in his/her chosen trade), #3 the student will become indentured as a bona fide Secondary School Apprentice (in his/her chose trade) to a community based employer."

Stu's advice for new career coordinators is this: "Think big. Don't take no for an answer. Find a way, or make it! Have a vision, but don't be afraid to let other people own it; remember, 'diplomacy is the art of letting other people have *your* own way!'"