

GREEN BUILDING + ARCHITECTURE

SUMMER 2020

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Architetti



**COLLEGE OF
CARPENTERS**
AND ALLIED TRADES

Women spearheading
next generation of green
carpentry workers

**WOMEN
IN GREEN**

Celebrating women's contribution
to the green building industry

GREENBUILDING +ARCHITECTURE

Volume 9, Number 2 – Summer 2020

www.gbplusamag.com

PUBLISHER: Giulio Marinescu

416-250-0664

gbamedia@bellnet.ca

2109-256 Doris Ave. Toronto, ON M2N 6X8

MANAGING EDITOR: Greg McMillan

editor@gbssmag.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Tony Lomuto

Graphic Designs Unlimited

LTONY@sympatico.ca

Photo credits:

Hawthorn Films, Zaha Hadid Architects,
Automobili Pininfarina,
Modern House bureau,
Cover Architectural Collaborative,
Justin Nicholas, Yann Richard,
Stefano Boeri Architetti

Contributors:

Greg McMillan, Andrew Peel,
Richard Farrell, Olena Kysla,
Stefano Boeri Architetti,
Zaha Hadid Architects

Submit articles, event, news to
Giulio Marinescu
gbamedia@bellnet.ca

Canada Post Publication Mail
Agreement number 42332013

Undeliverable mail return to:
2109-256 Doris Ave.
Toronto, ON M2N 6X8

Printed in Canada by: CoFax Printing

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Subscription Rates

Canada: 1 year \$24, 2 years \$40, single copy \$6

United States: 1 year: \$32

International: \$36

Plus applicable taxes



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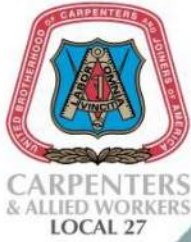
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From left to right: Laura Butchers, Alexandra Kelloway and Kathryn Trickett

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Women spearheading next generation of green carpentry workers

Thanks to a proactive training regimen, the College of Carpenters and Allied Trades (CCAT) is leading the way when it comes to the next generation of sustainable green jobs.

And not only is CCAT spearheading a wave to help fill a demand in green construction, but the 'real-world learning' training institution in Ontario is also playing a key role in the advancement of women – as instructors, staff and students.

"It's our responsibility to help people better their lives," says Cristina Selva, CCAT's executive director. "And bettering lives means more than jobs. It means be-

ing afforded an opportunity to start working toward a career."

Mike Yorke, the president of the Carpenters District Council of Ontario, couldn't agree more, saying CCAT courses are developed in response to a demand by contractors wanting to bring their crews up to speed in the burgeoning green field.

"Together, with CCAT, we are providing the industry with the skilled workers they need," says Yorke. "With Cristina, who has broken industry gender norms herself, CCAT has helped enable other women to excel and play key roles as instructors and staff there."

"There are numerous specific training programs that meet the requirements of a developing green industry for green jobs," he adds. "Many of the time-tested and typical skills of carpenters are easily adaptable to the challenges of new technology and in other cases these skills are a solid base to build upon."

Selva oversees a staff of 25 people at the Vaughan facility, with many women instructors and staff. Of the full-and-part-time instructors at CCAT, five are women, teaching classes ranging from basic carpentry to health and safety. And those women come with experience in the industry.

Selva says that having more female instructors is vital to promoting the trades to women and to fostering greater understanding and respect for women on the job.

“Having strong female role models acting as instructors and mentors can make the difference in having more young women decide to enter and to stay with the trade,” Selva says.

She points out that male instructors also play a vital role in mentoring female students, but there are some challenges women face that a female instructor might better understand.

And with the traditional male labour pool drying up, CCAT has been building a case for more women in the trades for well over a decade.

There are numerous instances of how CCAT has developed specific training programs to fit the requirements of a developing green construction industry, with many of the time-tested and typical skills of carpenters being adapted to the challenges of new technology, Yorke says.

According to Yorke, some examples, on a local CCAT level, include:

- 1) Training for installation of solar panels on the major solar farms in Ontario. “These projects used components remarkably similar to much of our scaffolding equipment, so using this innovative approach both companies and workers had the transferrable skills to out-compete even non-union in this extremely new and competitive sector.”
- 2) Mass timber. “A new innovation on an ancient building material. It’s still novel in the GTA, but there are a raft of projects, and products that did not exist 30 years ago. With our skills development for our young workers we give confidence to construction industry that we can provide workers to ensure their projects are completed in the safest manner, on time and on budget.”
- 3) The building envelope. “When building to the tolerances of green building standards/LEED, training is key so our building envelope program (offered at the Carpenters International Training Centre (ITC) in Las Vegas) delivers the skills that the industry demands to our next generation workers.
- 4) Cladding systems training. “Again, high standards in a rapidly evolving sector due to energy costs and needs for greater insulation values.”
- 5) Roofing systems. “Again, another rapidly evolving sector, where we collaborate daily with our contractors on training and recruitment.”

Working closely with the Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC), and its Workforce 2030 initiative, which is fast-tracking the workforce to build a low-carbon Ontario, the CDC is helping ensure there is enough talent to meet demand.

“We’ve seen tremendous support from across the green building industry for the Workforce 2030 coalition,” says Jeff Ranson, regional director for the CaGBC in the GTA. “The Carpenters District Council of Ontario is a foundational partner and we are growing the tent to include more education providers like CCAT.



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"We know timber is enjoying a resurgence because it is lightweight and quick to build with," Ranson adds. "Manufacturing components for tall timber is also a job-generator and a value-add opportunity for an abundant renewable resource, especially here in Ontario."

He says CaGBC is currently developing a Workforce 2030 working group on tall timber to look at what skills industry needs to grow the market for tall timber and how to build the workforce.

Yorke says Canada needs a green economic recovery, "one that has the kinds of infrastructure investments that create crucial services for communities across Canada – in housing, healthcare, transit and education."

Post COVID, green jobs can drive the economy – which will be needing a catalyst. And, working with broad community groups we can ensure that we have an inclusive recovery as well, as sectors such as tourism, hospitality and retail may be slow to rebound.

"At the same time we have the opportunity to build out our 'social infrastructure,' through training investments and partnerships. This approach is really win-win, delivering what communities need to combat climate change and providing good jobs and careers for our next generation of workers."

Selva agreed, pointing out the value of training partnerships with groups that are win-win for the carpenters' union, youth and the community as a whole.

"We have spent the last two weekends out on the streets of Toronto doing youth outreach in communities where the youth unemployment is high," says Selva. "We have been in the Jane and Finch area, Weston, Regent Park, in Scarborough along Kingston Road and along Eglinton Avenue around the Golden Mile commercial district."

"It's all in an effort to have youth made aware of the great job opportunities through the carpenters' union. For example, CCAT instructor Alex Kelloway was also out helping get that message out to youth. That's the kind of people we have working for us – committed to their students and working to build a stronger community."

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Local 27 member Amanda Howell on the Buttcon mass timber jobsite in Toronto's East end

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Chiniqua Nelson- second term apprentice carpenter, currently assisting with COVID 19 screening at the CCAT



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