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STRENGTH THROUGH EDUCATION

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this ISSUE

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Message from Chris Waples *Director of Education*



2025 - Impact Summary

2025 was a historic and highly productive year for education and training at the UA Local 488 Education & Training Centre and the Alberta Pipe Trades College. Throughout the year, the College demonstrated leadership in expanding apprenticeship access, advancing instructor development, strengthening workforce partnerships, and representing UA members at the provincial and national level.

Mission Statement

The mission of the UA Local 488 Education and Training Department is to equip the UA Local 488 and their signatory contractors with educational resources for developing the skills of their apprentices and journeypersons.

By facilitating the training needs of the membership, we maximize a member's employability and prepare them for changes in the industry.

We are committed to making training opportunities available allowing members to acquire new skills and remain competitive in the industry.

In this way, we are determined to meet the needs of the piping industry and enhance employment opportunities for our members, while remaining fiscally responsible to the beneficiaries of the fund.

Education is Our Passion



facebook.com/AlbertaPipeTradesCollege



[@aptc_ua488](https://www.instagram.com/aptc_ua488)



local488.ca/training

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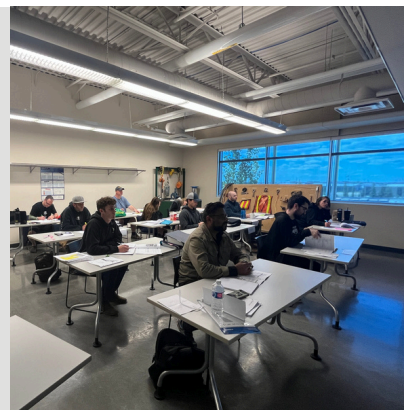
Message from Chris Waples *Director of Education*

Training Impact & Outreach

2025 was one of the busiest and most productive years in the College's history. More than 350 students attended apprenticeship and upgrading classes at the College facility alone. The Weld Test Facility operated at exceptionally high capacity, conducting 1,376 weld tests, including 328 CWB weld tests, with over 5,500 weld booths utilized throughout the year. A key contributor to this success is the College's tri-partite agreement between Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton Catholic Schools, The Educational Partnership Foundation (TEPF), and the Edmonton Pipe Trades Trust (EPT). Through this partnership, 20 high school students completed their entire second semester of studies full-time at the Alberta Pipe Trades College, earning high school credits while gaining hands-on exposure to the mechanical pipe trades. Students trained in a real post-secondary environment, learning technical skills, safety culture, and professional expectations while exploring careers in plumbing, pipefitting, steam fitting, and welding. This program has proven highly successful in introducing young people to the unionized skilled trades and bringing motivated students into the UA family to begin long-term careers in the pipe trades.

Another key pathway into the skilled trades is the College's 12-week Pre-Employment Welder Program, delivered in partnership with Tradewinds to Success. Through this intensive program, 12 students complete the full first-year welder apprenticeship curriculum at the Alberta Pipe Trades College, allowing them to challenge the first-period apprenticeship examination before entering the workforce as registered first-period welders. For the second consecutive year, the class achieved a 100% pass rate, a strong testament to both the quality of instruction and the commitment of the participants. Graduates of the program are now working for UA Local 488 signatory contractors, providing industry with job-ready, union-trained welders and reinforcing the College's role as a proven entry point into successful careers in the pipe trades.

Beyond formal training, the College hosted more than 30 days of high-school visits and career-fair events, introducing young Albertans to the opportunities available in the unionized skilled trades. The College also welcomed a delegation of 30 Caribbean representatives for a full-day visit focused on Alberta and Canadian apprenticeship systems, and how unions work collaboratively with government and industry to prepare individuals for professional skilled-trades careers. Building on this engagement, Chris Waples later presented at their Apprenticeship Summit in December 2025, further reinforcing the College's reputation as a leader in apprenticeship training and workforce development.



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Message from Chris Waples *Director of Education*



Leadership in Provincial Skilled Trades Governance

On March 14, 2025, Chris Waples accepted an appointment to the Alberta Board of Skilled Trades (ABST) by the Government of Alberta.

The Alberta Board of Skilled Trades is responsible for governing Alberta's skilled trades system, overseeing apprenticeship training, certification, and regulation to ensure alignment with labour-market demand and strong public-safety standards. Through this appointment, UA Local 488 now has direct representation in decisions related to apprenticeship and certification standards, trade scopes of practice, industry-driven governance, protection of the public interest, and advice to government on skilled-trades policy.



Historic Government Investments in Union Training

On April 25, 2025, the Alberta Pipe Trades College proudly hosted Rajan Sawhney, Minister of Advanced Education, for the announcement of a \$15-million provincial funding program dedicated to Alberta union training providers over the next three years.

Building on this momentum, the Edmonton Pipe Trades Trust (EPT) finalized a historic funding agreement with the Government of Alberta at the end of August 2025. This agreement will fund 48 additional apprenticeship classes across the plumber, steamfitter-pipefitter, and welder trades over the next 2.5 school years, significantly expanding training capacity at our college facility. This milestone represents the first agreement in Alberta's apprenticeship history to fund apprenticeship training delivered at a UA training center.



National & Provincial Workforce Leadership

On January 29, 2025, College leadership attended the Tradewinds to Success and Government of Canada press conference as a board member to formally accept significant UTIP funding on behalf of the TWTS board, supporting pathways into the skilled trades for underrepresented groups.

From September 8–11, 2025, Chris moderated a panel at the Building Trades of Alberta Conference entitled Building Our Future: The Next Generation of Skilled Tradespeople, highlighting apprenticeship access, workforce development, and industry collaboration.

On September 26, 2025, Chris attended the Alberta Trades Hall of Fame ceremony at Red Deer Polytechnic, presenting the CCDA Darryl Cruickshank Red Seal Industry Award to Ben Smith in recognition of outstanding contribution to the skilled trades.

On December 10, 2025, Chris represented UA Local 488 at a Rigging, Hoisting and Lifting Mini-Summit hosted by the University of Calgary, contributing to discussions on safety, standards, and best practices.



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Message from Chris Waples *Director of Education*

Instructor Development & Training Excellence

Investing in instructors remained a priority throughout 2025 to ensure apprentices receive training that reflects best practices, emerging technology, and real-world jobsite conditions.

- UA Mental Health Training – Level One attended in February, with Level Two hosted at the Alberta Pipe Trades College in April
- Trimble Total Robotic Station instructor training enhanced technology-based instructional capacity
- Three instructors attended the UA Instructor Training Program (August 9–15) at Washtenaw Community College
- Two instructors completed the Becoming Master Instructor (BMI) certification through NAIT
- Three instructors attended a NAUSC Cold Cutting Course from November 11–13 to support specialized training delivery

Skills Competitions & Apprentice Representation

UA Local 488 apprentices and staff represented the Local with professionalism and pride throughout the year.

From April 22–26, 2025, five outstanding apprentices represented UA Local 488 at the Western Regional Apprenticeship Competition hosted at Camosun College:

- Eli Quinn – Plumber
- Tristen Santiago – Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Mechanic (RACM)
- Nash Klassen – Welder
- Dylan Boyd – Steamfitter-Pipefitter
- William Taggart – Sprinkler Fitter

“UA Local 488 congratulates Eli Quinn, Tristen Santiago, Nash Klassen, Dylan Boyd, and William Taggart on an outstanding performance at the Western Regional Apprenticeship Competition. Their skill, professionalism, and pride in their trades reflect the very best of our membership and the strength of union training.”

— Rod McKay

Business Manager / Financial Secretary, UA Local 488

Each competitor demonstrated exceptional technical ability, work ethic, and professionalism. While none advanced to the UA National Competition this year, their showing was excellent, and they represented UA Local 488 with distinction.

In May, UA Local 488 staff were also heavily involved in the Skills Alberta Provincial Competition at the Edmonton Expo Centre, followed by national representation at the Skills Canada National Competition in Regina.

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Message from Chris Waples *Director of Education*

Looking Ahead

The achievements of 2025 highlight the College's growing influence, credibility, and leadership in apprenticeship training—locally, provincially, and nationally. Strategic investments, strong partnerships, instructor development, and apprentice excellence continue to position UA Local 488 at the forefront of workforce training in Alberta.

Looking to 2026, the volume of work ahead for the College and its staff will be substantial. In response to increased training demand, the College added four full-time instructors and one new administrative assistant in 2025, strengthening both instructional and operational capacity. As training delivery continues to expand under the Government of Alberta partnership agreement, the College will be hiring additional instructors in 2026 to support increased apprenticeship intakes, additional classes, and the continued delivery of high-quality training. The work ahead is significant—but it reflects the trust placed in the College and the vital role it plays in preparing the next generation of skilled tradespeople for Alberta.

None of the accomplishments outlined in this update would be possible without the dedication, professionalism, and commitment of the administrative and instructional teams at the College. From managing complex scheduling, student services, compliance, and daily operations to delivering high-quality, hands-on training in classrooms, shops, and labs, our staff consistently demonstrate a deep commitment to serving the members of UA Local 488. This includes the many behind-the-scenes staff whose work often goes unseen but is essential to keeping the college running smoothly, supporting apprentices, instructors, and contractors alike. UA Local 488 is proud of the professionalism of our college staff and sincerely thanks them for their continued dedication to our members and the long-term strength of our union.

INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT



AMAN WOLDEGIORGIS

I started my plumbing career in 2009 in Edmonton, Alberta. At first, it was just a way to pay off student loans, but it quickly grew into a long-term career in the piping trades.

In 2015, I joined the UA Local 488 and have never looked back. The union has provided me with incredible opportunities for work, training, growth, and professional

development. Over the past 15 years, I've had the opportunity to work on a wide range of projects — residential, commercial, and industrial — including major hospital builds throughout western and northern Canada.

Throughout my time in the field, I discovered that I had a natural ability to work with apprentices. I enjoyed teaching in a way that was comfortable and safe, and that passion eventually led me to pursue instructing. With encouragement from coworkers, friends and family, I began my teaching career in January of 2024.

I am currently an instructor for:

- 2nd, 3rd and 4th Period Plumber Apprenticeship
- NAUSC Controlled Bolting
- NAUSC/CSA Medical Gas
- AWWA Cross Connection

I often use personal examples in my lessons, sharing both my successes and my mistakes, to help students connect theory to real-world practice. The most rewarding part of teaching for me is seeing that moment when a concept finally clicks for a student who has been struggling. Beyond technical skills, I hope my students take away a strong sense of workplace ethics and union values.

I'm proud to play a role in training the next generation of tradespeople and look forward to contributing to the continued success of our program and our union.

APPRENTICESHIP REGISTRATION 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

Apprenticeship registration for the 2026–2027 school year will open in mid-May 2026.

Apprentices scheduled to attend technical training beginning September 2026 are advised that tuition has been set at \$1,200.00, as stipulated by the Government of Alberta.

Further details regarding registration dates, intake schedules, and instructions will be communicated closer to the opening of registration. Apprentices are encouraged to monitor college communications and plan accordingly.

LIVE COURSE CALENDAR AVAILABLE ONLINE

Members are reminded that a live, up-to-date calendar of all course offerings at the Alberta Pipe Trades College is available on the UA Local 488 website.

The calendar includes current and upcoming technical training schedules and is updated regularly.

View the training calendar here:

local488.ca/training

Members are encouraged to bookmark the page and check back often for updates.



CLASSES AT ALBERTA PIPE TRADES COLLEGE

At Alberta Pipe Trades College, we offer a wide range of courses designed to support every stage of your career in the pipe trades.

Our apprenticeship training programs provide the technical knowledge and hands-on skills required to succeed and advance in your trade. In addition, we offer a variety of supplemental and specialty courses that allow members to expand their skill sets, increase earning potential, and stay current with industry standards.

These include courses such as NAUSC, as well as other professional development and certification programs focused on safety, technical upgrades, and career advancement. For those just starting out, our Pre-Apprenticeship programs provide a strong foundation and a clear pathway into the trades.

Whether you are beginning your journey, progressing through apprenticeship, or looking to enhance your qualifications, Alberta Pipe Trades College has training options to support your goals.

[Click here to view our full 2025-2026 Course Calendar to explore upcoming classes and registration details.](#)





PATHWAYS ALLIANCE SPONSORED PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

This program is FREE for UA Local 488 members families.

UA Local 488 is pleased to announce a Pathways Alliance-sponsored pre-apprenticeship program for family members of Local 488 members. This program is designed to introduce participants to careers in the pipe trades and provide a strong foundation for those considering an apprenticeship pathway.

Two cohorts will be offered in 2026:

- April 6 – June 26, 2026
- August 31 – November 20, 2026

Additional details, including registration information and eligibility requirements, will be shared with all members by mid-January.

Members with questions are encouraged to contact Chris Waples at 780-722-7142.



APPRENTICE SCHOLARSHIP FOR LOCAL 488 MEMBERS

Members of Local 488 may be qualify for an Apprentice Scholarship upon completing a level of their apprenticeship program.

Apprentice Scholarship Eligibility Requirements:

To qualify for the Apprentice Scholarship, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Member of Local 488 in good standing
- Must have 1200 Local Union 488 Contractor Contributed hours (We will request your worked hours from Local 488 once application and required documents have been submitted and reviewed

Apprentice Scholarship Required Documents for complete application:

- Application Forms

Void Cheque or Direct Deposit Information Form

School Tuition Invoice

Completion Letter from TradeSecrets account

School Marks from TradeSecrets account

Stamped Blue Book by the Apprenticeship Board OR most updated

AIT ID card from TradeSecrets account

Apprentices who challenge and have passed a level of their apprenticeship program will also be eligible for the Apprentice Scholarship. The same documents are required for submission.

[Click here to fill out the online application form](#)

for any questions or concerns regarding the Apprentice Scholarship, please contact **(780) 482-9529**

In addition to the Local 488 Apprentice Scholarship, apprentices may also be eligible to apply for student loans grants and scholarships through the Government of Alberta to help cover tuition and other education-related expenses.

[View more information by clicking here.](#)

INCREASED APPRENTICE SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT

Edmonton Pipe Trades Education Trust Fund is pleased to announce an increase to the Apprentice Scholarship, effective September 1, 2025. The scholarship amount has been raised to a total of \$1000.00 to better support our apprentices as they advance in their training and education.

Please note the following eligibility guidelines:

- Apprentices who complete or successfully challenge a level of their apprenticeship on or after September 1, 2025, will be eligible to receive the \$1,000.00 scholarship.
- Apprentices who completed or challenged a level of their apprenticeship prior to September 1, 2025, will remain eligible for the previous scholarship amount of \$725.00.



SAFETY COURSE BENEFIT FOR LOCAL 488 MEMBERS

Members of Local 488 may be eligible to receive benefits for safety courses

Safety Course Benefit Eligibility Requirements:

To qualify for the Safety Course Benefit, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Member of Local 488 in good standing
- Out of work (or working less than 60 days with a contractor at the time of completing the safety course)
- Current safety training certificates must be expiring within 6 months
- Have made contributions to the EPT Educational Fund in the last 2 years

Safety Courses Eligible for Coverage:

- Confined Space Entry Monitor - Benefit Coverage: \$140.00
- Common Safety Orientation (CSO) - Benefit Coverage: \$90.00
- Fall Protection - Benefit Coverage: \$140.00
- Mobile Elevated Work Platform - Benefit Coverage: \$150.00
- 3M 6000 Half Mask Fit Test & North 7700 Half Mask Fit Test - Benefit Coverage: \$60.00
- First Aid - Benefit Coverage: Total course cost (excluding books/course materials)
- Fire Watch (APPRENTICES ONLY) - Benefit Coverage: \$180.00

Documents Required to Complete Your Application:

Please ensure all documents are submitted together to avoid delays in processing.

1. Completed Application Forms
2. Void Cheque or Direct Deposit Information Form (from your online banking)
3. Official Invoice for Each Safety Training Course Completed
4. Copy of Each Safety Training Certificate



[Click here to fill out the online application form](#)

For In-Person Safety Training Courses, please contact:

Touchback Safety (780) 455-5573 OR ACTI (587) 340-3849

- Members must provide their UA number to receive the special member discount when booking with Touchback Safety or ACTI
- Members are required to pay the full cost of each safety training course up front.

"WORK READY WORK FORCE"

Required Certificates for Dispatch:

Most job sites only accept safety training certificates that are certified by Energy Safety Canada.

Each safety certificate must be valid for a minimum of 60 days prior to dispatch. If a certificate expires after 60 or more days on the job, the contractor is responsible for the renewal cost.

- Construction Safety Training System (CSTS 2020)
ACSA Online Course

- Confined Space Entry Monitor
Energy Safety Canada Online Course

- Common Safety Orientation (CSO)
Energy Safety Canada Online Course

- Fall Protection
In-Person Course

- Mobile Elevated Work Platform
In-Person Course

- 3M 6000 Half Mask Fit Test & North 7700 Half Mask Fit Test
In-Person Mask Fit Testing

1st and 2nd Year Apprentices may be required by their employer to complete Firewatch/Spark Watch training.

Employers may also request additional safety courses depending on job site requirements.

EDMONTON PIPE TRADES EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND

APTC HOODIES FOR SALE

Show your support and stay warm with our official APTC hoodies, available in the following colors:

- Black
- Grey
- Red
- Navy Blue
-

Sizes are available from Small to 2XL, while supplies last.

Visit us at the College –
Second Floor Reception

Price: \$60.00 per hoodie

Don't miss out—stop by
the college to pick yours
up today!



ALBERTA PIPE TRADES COLLEGE COMPUTER LAB

Alberta Pipe Trades College would like to remind Local 488 members that our computer lab is available for your use at the college.

The computer lab is open Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and is designed to support members who need access to a computer to complete required training, online orientation, course work, or other union-related learning activities.

Whether you need a quiet space to focus, reliable internet access, or assistance navigating online training platforms, our computer lab is here to help. College staff are available during operating hours to provide guidance and support as needed.

We encourage all members to take advantage of this resource to stay up to date with training requirements and ensure a smooth and successful learning experience.





UA Local 488 Weld Test & Training Centre

The UA Local 488 Weld Test & Training Centre is a facility dedicated to practical welding instruction and certification. Designed to meet the growing demand for skilled tradespeople in the construction and energy sectors, the Centre emphasizes precision, safety, and hands-on learning.

Welders train under the supervision of experienced Welding Examiners, gaining valuable arc time in a fully equipped environment featuring:

- 38 welding booths
- 30 Miller multi-process inverters
- 8 advanced wire feeders for RMD/STT processes

Training includes work with carbon steel, low alloy steel, stainless steel, and nickel alloys, utilizing processes such as SMAW, GTAW, GMAW, and FCAW. Whether you're a first-year apprentice or a seasoned B Pressure Journeyman seeking certification upgrades, the Centre offers tailored instruction to support all skill levels.

Weld Testing & Certification

The Centre provides certification aligned with industry standards, including:

- ASME Boiler & Pressure Vessel Code (Section IX)
- Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB)

Welders can demonstrate their skills in a supervised testing environment and earn performance qualifications recognized across Alberta.

Access & Availability

- UA Local 488 Members: \$5.00/day
- UA Travel Card Members: \$20.00/day

Hours of Operation:

Monday to Friday, 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM (Closed on statutory holidays)

Note: Welder Qualification Testing is prioritized over practice time. During peak periods, practice booths are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Testing Schedule

- ASME BPVC Section IX:
- Monday to Friday, 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM
- No appointment required
- CWB Certification:
- Wednesdays, 7:30 AM – 1:00 PM
- Appointment required 2–3 days in advance



UA LOCAL 488 TO HOST 2026 WESTERN REGIONAL APPRENTICE COMPETITION

UA Local 488, in partnership with the Alberta Pipe Trades College, is proud to announce that we will be the host of the 2026 Western Regional Apprenticeship Competition, taking place April 27 – May 1, 2026, in Edmonton.

This prestigious competition will showcase top apprentices from across Western Canada in the following trades: Plumber, Steamfitter-Pipefitter, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Mechanic (RACM), Welder, Sprinkler Systems Installer.

UA Local 324 Victoria, UA Local 516 Vancouver, UA Local 170 Vancouver, UA Local 496 Calgary, UA Local 179 Saskatchewan, UA Local 254 Winnipeg and UA Local 488 Edmonton will all be represented with apprentices.

This annual regional competition will determine the apprentices who will represent Western Canada at the 2026 National Apprenticeship Competition, to be held in June 2026 in Winnipeg and hosted by UA Local 254.

Members interested in participating as a competitor or as a volunteer are encouraged to contact Chris Waples at 780-722-7142 for more information.



SAVE THE DATE

2026 UA WESTERN REGIONAL APPRENTICE COMPETITION



April 27 to
May 1, 2026



Alberta Pipe
Trades College



Hosted by





CAREER OPPORTUNITY

The Alberta Pipe Trades College is currently seeking a Pipe Trades Instructor to join our instructional team in 2026.

As the College continues to grow its training capacity through an expanding partnership with the Government of Alberta, APTC is aggressively expanding its instructional staff to meet increasing demand for apprenticeship and workforce training.

Additional career opportunities for UA Local 488 members are expected to be posted by spring 2026.

Members interested in transitioning into instruction are encouraged to monitor the website for upcoming postings.

[Click here to view the current instructor job posting.](#)