



Cambrian College

SkyTech

CAMBRIAN COLLEGE's SkyTech – the Skills Technology Institute – is a training supplier for Northern Ontario industry that is based at Cambrian College and led by a consortium of representatives from industry, education, and government.

SkyTech – A solution to a need

Industry partners expressed a need for trades programs that would meet the growing and changing demands of today's complex mining, forestry, manufacturing, and heavy equipment sectors, to name a few; that would address the skills needs resulting from a rapidly retiring workforce; and that would provide employees with the opportunity to upgrade their skills, as needed.

SkyTech provides such training in a variety of unique, flexible and responsive ways. By training new trades people and also by providing lifelong learning opportunities for existing trades people, SkyTech is doing its part to ensure a safe, up-to-date, technologically-advanced, and skilled workforce.

A Partnership

The SkyTech Board consists of representatives from education, industry, and government. Stakeholders include:

- Vale Inco
- Xstrata Nickel
- Domtar Inc.
- Mine Mill/Canadian Auto Workers
- Ontario Power Generation
- Ontario Public Service Employee Union, Local 655
- United Steelworkers of America
- Cambrian College
- Toromont CAT Industries Limited

Lifelong learning

SkyTech provides responsive, up-to-date, on-demand training for client companies. SkyTech is a recognized training provider for the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) and for the Heating Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute (HRAI). SkyTech trainers will visit the workplace, upon request, to assess the need for training and to make recommendations.

SkyTech will then design new programs, based on demand and in response to changing technology, to bring employees up to date. Training can be provided on campus in a classroom setting, through electronic delivery via Cambrian College's eDome, or at the client's workplace.

Industry support

In order to ensure that Cambrian students get the best hands-on training possible, it is necessary to have state-of-the-art tools and equipment in the College's shops and labs. The cost of this type of equipment means that the College must look to industry partners to ensure that all labs are adequately equipped. The generous equipment donations received from SkyTech partners ensure our graduates are able to make a smooth transition into the workforce and are already trained on the actual equipment that they will be using in the workplace.

New postsecondary programs

Forecasts of retirement statistics indicate that the skilled-labour workforce is rapidly retiring and is not being replenished with newly-trained apprentices and journeypersons. Industry partners indicated that the traditional model of apprenticeship training – where new apprentices are hired virtually unskilled and then must leave work for eight weeks at a time for in-school training – is no longer satisfying the needs of employers. Employers want and need to hire apprentices who are already experienced and who have completed their in-school training. In response, Cambrian College and SkyTech developed the Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship program. At the end of two or three years, those students who were eligible to participate in the optional co-op and who have successfully completed two, 16-week, paid co-op placements will have the opportunity to graduate with a College diploma and will have completed all three levels of apprenticeship in-school training as well as some of the other requirements for apprenticeship training. This means that employers are provided with a pool of highly-skilled, trained, and educated apprentices from which to choose...apprentices who do not have to leave for in-school training.

SkyTech is truly an example of a successful partnership, a partnership where industry, education and government work together for the betterment of the community as a whole.

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