

# Trades Discovery

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Getting up early and working hard is the lifestyle of a tradesperson. But if you love what you're doing, this isn't a huge burden, according to Alex Fraser, a recent Kitsilano Secondary grad who will soon be pursuing a career as an electrician.

Troubleshooting, problem-solving, figuring out how to do things - this is what Alex enjoys in a job and explains why she is drawn to the trades.

While Alex was strong in her academics at high school graduating from the French immersion program in 2015, she also had the opportunity to explore hands-on work in several high school shop classes, and upon graduation, she enrolled in BCIT's 16-week Trades Discovery program.

Several spots in the Trades Discovery program are reserved for Vancouver School Board students, and Alex was able to apply through the Career Education department and get in soon after graduation.

The program introduces students to a wide variety of trades to help discover where their passion lies.

At the BCIT program, Alex was able to try her hand at carpentry, piping, welding, millwright work, sheet metal, electrical, auto mechanics, auto collision, heavy duty mechanics and even learned what it would be like to be a train conductor - she discovered trades she didn't know existed.

"I've learned about so many trades I'd never heard of before - there are so many specialized trades that you can do," she said. "There's so much potential to enjoy your work and do well as long as you put the effort into it."

The program also allowed her to complete her forklift training, workplace First Aid and WHMIS (hazardous material handling course). During the course, she interviewed some electricians and got a feel for what it's like as a full-time job, helping her make her career choice.

While Alex plans to study to become an electrician, she knows it will be possible to transition between trades and keep upgrading her skills.

"With so much changing technology and technological advances, there is always something new to learn - you don't want to fall into a routine," Alex said. "I love to learn new things."

Having completed the Trades Discovery program, Alex will have a jumpstart on getting into her program of choice at BCIT as the polytechnic saves seats for students from this program.

For more information about the Trades Discovery program, go to: <http://bit.ly/2sNc0r8>

