

Training Time

Education, Training & Gold Seal Committee offering more courses than ever

BY HEATHER HUDSON

They say the key to success is the willingness to be a lifelong learner.

If you're in the heavy construction industry in Manitoba, success may come easily: learning opportunities are everywhere with the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association (MHCA).

The association's Education, Training & Gold Seal Committee's mandate is to develop skilled labourers and heavy equipment operator training programs for delivery to industry and stakeholders. As well, it manages and promotes the Gold Seal Accreditation Program as well as promotes advanced occupational skills and training for the heavy construction industry. This includes MHCA's annual Heavy Construction EXPO.

Current Chair, Nicole Chabot, says that in an effort to offer a diversity of training, the committee is collaborating with the Manitoba Construction Sector Council, Red River

College and others to help determine what to offer to an industry rife with change.

"We do our best to listen to our members when assembling education programs at EXPO and year-round training modules. The success of the courses we provide are due in large part to the industry owners who see great value in superior education and training for their employees. We were thrilled to be able to provide over 70 dynamic courses at this year's EXPO for entry-level and seasoned workers, supervisors, project managers and owners," she says.

Chabot comes to her position at the helm of the committee after many years in the industry. She's the third generation of the family-owned-and-operated L. Chabot Enterprises Ltd., a heavy construction company that makes sand, gravel and limestone products and also runs a heavy equipment and trucking fleet out of Winnipeg.

She got involved with MHCA three years ago as a volunteer because she found the work interesting and wanted to be a part of the changes that were happening. She joined the board in 2010 and became chair of the WORKSAFELY™ Committee before moving into her current position in January.

"My background has been in safety so it was comfortable for me and a good fit with MHCA. As a Gold Seal Certified Safety Professional, I like to be challenged to expand my area of knowledge," Chabot says. "Being able to work on initiatives which bring positive changes to the industry is something I think adds tremendous value at the end of the day."

She's inspired by the way MHCA is leading the industry in education and is thrilled to help keep up the momentum of top-notch training.

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The Education, Training & Gold Seal Committee promotes advanced occupational skills and safety training for the heavy construction industry



Photo courtesy of L. Chabot Enterprises Ltd.

Nicole Chabot, Chair, Education, Training & Gold Seal Committee

specifically tailored to the industry. Nobody else is doing it and it's valuable to so many different players. We're evolving the education programming in a way that is extremely relevant. We're able to react to industry demand in such a direct and impactful way," she says.

In addition to EXPO, MHCA runs training sessions year-round in various locations across the province. Chabot says there is talk of holding a northern EXPO to address the needs of those companies that can't fit the annual event held in November into their schedules or can't make the trip to Winnipeg, but it has yet to be confirmed.

Though Chabot says there are "great people involved on the committee this year, with new faces and new ideas," they also look to membership to provide thoughts on the kind of training needed.

"We're always trying to keep the content for training fresh and current and we can't do that without members," she notes. "We very much appreciate it when people share their viewpoints to help us form the basis of what goes into the new programs."

Chabot says it's important that MHCA members recognize the direction training is going: and that's up.

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"We're looking at bringing in modules for EXPO which will help increase the skill level of the supervisor. Instead of 'how to do an inspection,' it would be focusing more on ideas such as 'effective communication with your crew.' We'd be looking at more in-depth, higher level content," she explains.

The committee is also looking at challenges like changing workforce factors, human resources and courses on how to manage and

interact effectively with personnel.

But it all comes to back to members.

"We are driven by what we hear from members. The more they participate and offer information and feedback about what they want to see, the more they'll get exactly what they want," Chabot says.

For more information about upcoming training, please visit our website at www.mhca.mb.ca. 