

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR  
INDIGENOUS CLIENTS,**

we work together to develop outcomes and objectives for each training initiative, incorporate important community-specific culture and tradition, and employ the right instructors who have experience working with Indigenous learners.



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CULTURALLY  
RELEVANT,  
SKILLS BASED  
TRAINING.



## Pre-employment training: a natural place to start

**EDEN VALLEY FIRST NATIONS** is nestled near the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, 30 kilometres west of Longview, Alberta. It's a magnificent, albeit remote setting. Back in the glory days of the local energy sector, oil and gas royalties afforded this community a comfortable, carefree lifestyle. But times have changed in step with the economy. Today's youth struggle to find direction — and employment.

“ Not everything we teach is about the technical hands-on skills. In giving our students the opportunity to learn through these types of programs, we've definitely built some confidence and created hope.”

Lauren Bishop  
Indigenous Client Development Manager, SAIT

“There are a lot of barriers to employment on the Nation,” said Debbie Dixon, manager of Service Canada's Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) program for Eden Valley First Nations. A lack of employable skills is a big problem, but that's just part of the challenge experienced by First Nation's youth. Without things like a driver's licence, transportation or childcare, many young people simply don't have the option to leave home, for **pre-employment training** or to find work.

Since making their way to the city isn't practical for many, Dixon approached SAIT's Corporate Training Solutions department to bring in pre-employment type training that would address a local industry need. The result was a customized, **14-week on-site Home Renovation program** that introduced eager participants to the trades of carpentry, electrical and plumbing.

The **students received hands-on instruction in**

**pre-trade fundamentals** like how to take measurements and how to use the various power tools. They then applied and practiced their newfound skills while completing multiple projects within the community.

With side-by-side guidance from the SAIT instructor, and direction from a hired contractor, the students helped work on a variety of community projects in need of attention. They built access ramps for residents with mobility challenges, and new garbage bins for many of the households. They also rebuilt all the bleachers in the local rodeo arena.

Near the end of the program the contractor started work on a new-build duplex. Instead of bringing in outside help, he committed to engaging all 14 of the freshly trained students.

“It was awesome,” said Dixon. “The students helped frame it right from the ground up: the floor, the

walls, the roof. They helped with all the electrical and plumbing. They put the siding on. It's such a beautiful building. There's so much pride with what they accomplished.”

This kind of **customized training program brings tangible benefits to the community at large**, but it also points participants to a world of opportunity out there in the larger community. There's a pocket of confidence, optimism and curiosity here among the young participants, and that can truly be **life changing**.

**So what's next?** The Eden Valley First Nation has plans to finish work on its multi-purpose complex in the near future. Construction on this building started and stalled a few times over the years. The intent now is to hire a contractor, and the Eden Valley pre-trades students, to get this sizable project completed.

AT SAIT WE PROMISE TO GIVE OUR STUDENTS AND OUR INDUSTRY PARTNERS OUR VERY BEST.