

SUN NEW HOMES & CONDOS

Build a bright future in the new home industry



HUGH HERON
**ON-SITE
INSIGHT**

When you mention careers in the new home industry, construction-related jobs come to mind immediately.

Certainly, we builders rely on professionals in the trades to bring our communities and homes to life. Cement truck drivers, framers, roofers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, millwrights, drywallers, window and fixture installers... for men and women who enjoy working with their hands in an industry where every day is different, we have something for everyone.

Did you know that Ontario

has over 150 recognized trades? In the construction industry alone, you will find a vast array of choices, from cement mason and cement finisher to sheet metal worker and terrazzo, tile and marble setter. There are three kinds of apprenticeship hoisting engineer trades: mobile crane operator 1 and 2, and tower crane operator. Check out www.collegeoftrades.ca and take a look at the choices you have. It's amazing.

A career in the trades offers a good living and the potential for future advancement. In my case, I started with a job in

shipbuilding in Scotland when I was only 15 years old. I saw firsthand at that young age what a team can accomplish, and I loved it. Construction was a natural for me, and after working in the field in Scotland, I moved to Canada in 1967 and started into the industry here. Since then, I have worked with amazing people including those in Heathwood Homes.

If you are considering a career in the trades, there is plenty of help out there to get you started. On the Building Industry and Land Association (BILD) website (www.bildgta.ca), where a page called "Careers in Construction" directs you to a variety of education and training opportunities.

By the way, this goes for women as well as men. I am proud to say that several years ago, I had a crew that included the first female framing carpenter in the GTA! The Canadian Association of Women in Construc-

tion (www.cawic.ca) offers bursaries, mentorship and a Career Centre where companies can post available positions.

Jobs in the trades require intelligence and common sense as well as physical effort, and with all of the power equipment we have today, you don't have to be built like The Hulk to do your part. Often, students know early on that they are interested in the trades and can take advantage of high school co-op programs, college courses, apprenticeships and certification programs. I find it refreshing that the attitude toward young people entering the trades in North America is catching up to Europe.

Another fantastic thing about new home construction is that the concept of teamwork goes beyond the work itself. I'm speaking of a different kind of diversity — the kind that brings together people from a variety of cultures and ethnic back-

grounds to create a whole that is much more than the sum of its parts. Yes, multiculturalism is alive and well in the GTA's construction industry. I love going to work and out to our sites, meeting people and witnessing the buzz of activity that keeps everything moving forward. Remember that unlike decades ago, new home construction today goes on year round because of new technologies and products such as additives in concrete.

The new home building industry benefits our economy in a number of ways other than providing jobs. Taxes paid to all levels of government during home construction lead to property and other taxes paid year round by homeowners and industry workers. It's very much like the ripples that result from dropping a pebble in a pond; as each person earns pay cheques, that money gets spent on homes, cars, grocer-

ies, entertainment and everything else that makes our lives hum along.

Whatever the economy, we always need good people. Even with the advanced machinery, computers, techniques and products that come along, this industry works because of the people who make it work. Give it some thought, and if you decide new home building is the place you'd like to be, go into your career with gusto!

- Hugh Heron is Principal and Partner in the Heron Group of Heathwood Homes and Chair of The Mikey Network, as well as a former Member of the Board of Directors of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and a Past President of the Toronto Home Builders' Association and the Ontario Home Builders' Association.