

Skills/Compétences Canada Spokespeople and Special Guests

Please visit the Media Registration desk (located at the entrance of Convention Hall C4) or contact Michèle Rogerson, micheler@skillscanada.com, 613-266-4771 to arrange for an interview or photo opportunity.

Select spokespeople are available to take part in French interviews.



John Oates

President, Skills/Compétences Canada

John Oates has had a long history with the Skills Movement in Canada. He was the President of Skills Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador since 2004, the same year he joined Skills/Compétences Canada's Board of Directors. While on the national Board, John has served in the positions of Director, Secretary, and Vice-President.

John is a longtime supporter of skilled trade and technology careers in Canada. He recently retired from the College of the North Atlantic, where for nearly 40 years he was a vocal advocate for increasing trade and technology training opportunities in his home province and across the country. In addition to his work with Skills/Compétences Canada (SCC), John has extensive experience with Board governance and strategic planning. He currently sits on the Boards of Directors of the Public Service Credit Union, League Data, Together By Design and the Anna Templeton Centre for Craft, Art and Design.

John has been SCC's Board of Directors' President since 2014, leading the organization into the future. He will dedicate the next year advocating the important role that skilled tradespeople and technologists play in making Canada a leader worldwide.



Shaun Thorson

Chief Executive Officer, Skills/Compétences Canada

Shaun Thorson is a tireless champion of skilled trade and technology careers for Canadian youth. CEO since 2006, Shaun held various positions within the Skills/Compétences Canada (SCC) organization at the provincial and national levels for the past 25 years.

Shaun recognizes the vital role of a strong and vibrant skilled trade and technology workforce in maintaining Canada's global economic leadership, and he fosters thought-provoking engagement with industry leaders to ensure best practices and positioning. In addition to hosting the annual Skills Canada National Competition, SCC is a member of WorldSkills. Within this international body Shaun has chaired the Sustainability Initiatives, Quality Assurance Management Council, the WorldSkills Americas Technical Committee and acted as Canada's WorldSkills Technical Delegate from 2006 - 2013 and in 2017.

Shaun is the Board Chair of the CWB Welding Foundation and he Chairs the WorldSkills, CEO-National Skills Organization Council.



Sherry Holmes

Contractor, Part-Time Designer, and weekend DIYer!

Sherry Holmes grew up watching, working and playing with her dad, Celebrity TV Host & Contractor, Mike Holmes. As early as 16-years-old she began working behind-the-scenes of Mike's breakout series, **Holmes on Homes®**. In 2008, after a Crew member fell ill, Sherry decided to strap on her own tool belt and travelled to New Orleans to help build a hurricane- and flood-resistant home for a victim of Hurricane Katrina, in **Holmes in New Orleans**.

Since then she has been a permanent member of Mike's Crew, first on **Holmes Inspection** and then on **Holmes Makes It Right**, and more recently **Holmes: Next Generation**, airing on DIY & HGTV in 2018, where she teams up with her brother, Mike Jr. (and learning a few tricks from her famous father) where they rescue homeowners from dysfunctional homes, shady contractors and do-it-yourself projects gone wrong.

As a big supporter for youth who want to get into the trades, Sherry continues the family support to Skills Canada and World Skills. She also mentors young women through Conestoga College's **Jill of All Trades**, and acts as an Ambassador for **Habitat for Humanity's Annual Women Build Event**, a program that calls on women to help build stronger, safer communities.

On and off the jobsite, Sherry continues to change the face of Canada's skilled trades workforce, demonstrating that women can bring an entirely new dimension to the construction industry that makes it fundamentally stronger from the ground up. Like her proud father, everything she teaches and believes in is based on quality, integrity and trust.

TWITTER: @SHERRYL_HOLMES

FACEBOOK: @SHERRYHOLMES

INSTAGRAM: @HOLMESSHERRY



Marjorie Davison

Chief Executive Officer, Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency

Marjorie Davison completed her education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (B.A.) and Dalhousie University (M.A.) and is the CEO of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency. She has worked with the Province of Nova Scotia since 1989 in various roles including more recently the Executive Director, Corporate Policy and Services for the NS Department of Labour and Advanced Education and the previous Director of Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development. In her current role at NSAA, Marjorie is an active member of the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship and the Atlantic Apprenticeship Council and is committed to increasing the participation of youth, women and diverse groups in apprenticeship, through support of organizations such as Techsploration, Skills Canada Nova Scotia and industry associations. Marjorie has a particular interest in youth mental health, making learning more accessible and inclusive, and encouraging greater industry and employer involvement in education and training.



Marina Turbide

Skills/Compétences Canada Alumni and silver medalist, Job Search, at the 2018 Skills Canada National Competition (Edmonton, AB)

Marina Turbide has competed in several Skills Canada competitions. In 2017 she won a gold medal at the provincial competition in Nova Scotia and a bronze medal in Job Search at the Skills Canada National Competition (Winnipeg, MB). She participated at SCNC the following year where she placed second. Marina's competition participation helped her develop her marketing skills, and helped her to realize that she enjoyed being in positions that called for leadership. She also improved her interview skills and obtained a rewarding job as a lifeguard and swimming instructor. Marina is currently a student at the Sobey's School of Business at Saint Mary's University of Halifax. She is planning a work term assignment in a professional business environment to gain more experience in this field. She also intends to continue her marketing studies to prepare for work in advertising.



Ryan Leedham

Skills/Compétences Canada **Alumni and silver medalist, Aircraft Maintenance, WorldSkills São Paulo 2015**

Ryan Leedham first became involved with Skills Canada at the 2014 Skills Canada Nova Scotia provincial competition held at the NSCC Aviation Institute, where he was finishing the second year of his aircraft maintenance program. Ryan went on to compete at the 2014 Skills Canada National Competition (Toronto, ON), where he qualified to compete at WorldSkills São Paulo 2015, in Brazil. He was honoured to take home a silver medal after a 4-day competition among competitors from 15 nations.

Since competing, Ryan has remained involved with Skills Canada as a member of the Nova Scotia Provincial Technical Committee as well as the chair of the National Technical Committee for Aerospace Technology. He has also been involved in training other Nova Scotia competitors for the Skills Canada National Competition. Ryan is currently an Aircraft Maintenance Engineer for CFFI Ventures Inc. in Halifax, where he maintains a fleet of business aircraft.

Industry Partners, Sponsors and Suppliers

Industry representatives working with Skills/ Compétences Canada to make the NSTTW possible are on hand to discuss skilled trades opportunities, needs and issues related to their sectors.