

Skills Ontario names new CEO

WATERLOO, ON January 12, 2018 -- Ray Lavender, President of the Board of Directors for Skills Ontario, today announced the selection of Ian Howcroft as CEO, effective January 29, 2018.

Howcroft replaces outgoing Skills Ontario CEO Gail Smyth, who had retired this past August.

Howcroft is no stranger to Skills Ontario, having served on the Board of Directors from 1999 to 2015, including a term as Board President from 2004 to 2006.

“Ian’s history with Skills Ontario, and the extensive industry and government experience he brings, makes him a natural fit to lead Skills Ontario,” says Lavender.

Howcroft has worked at Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) in various roles since 1988. Most recently, he headed CME’s Provincial Operations and Corporate Counsel as Senior Vice President, and led several strategic initiatives to improve and support the health and safety, diversity, and workforce training in the manufacturing and industrial sectors. Playing a key role in developing CME’s successful business development program, Howcroft also assisted manufacturers in implementing advanced technologies to increase productivity and grow their businesses.

Howcroft has vast experience working in advocacy, government relations, and public policy for the manufacturing and industrial sectors, and a strong interest in building skill development initiatives across the province. He’s also a member of a number of boards and steering committees undertaking issues ranging from apprenticeship, skill development, health and safety, and labour market information, and through these initiatives, Howcroft has established strong working relationships with government and industry leaders.

“I’m very honoured to take on the position of CEO of Skills Ontario and to be able to offer my knowledge and appreciation of skilled trades and technologies, health and safety, and working with government and industry in this important role,” says Howcroft. “I look forward to working with the Skills Ontario Board of Directors, staff, stakeholders, and of course Ontario youth, to strengthen and support the next generation of skilled trade and technology professionals in Ontario.”

About Skills Ontario

Skills Ontario is building Ontario’s skilled trades and technologies workforce. We enable and empower all youth, including women and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth, to consider a career in the skilled trades and technologies. Engagement with students, teachers, parents, volunteers, employers and mentors ensure our programs connect education, experience, and employment. We deliver in-school presentations across Ontario, host Canada’s largest skills competition, run summer camps for skills development and connect students to employers. We are focused on growth sectors such as construction and infrastructure, technology innovation, and hospitality services.

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Ian Howcroft

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