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## Spotlight on Skills

Follow your dreams!



Name/Nom: **Kristi Pugliese**  
Trade: **Automotive Technician**  
City: **Garson, ON**

Hello ! My name is Kristi Pugliese, and I am an apprentice Automotive Technician.

I work at Simon Auto Centre in Sudbury where I diagnose and repair all mechanical and electronic systems found throughout vehicles. Simon Auto Centre is a family owned business offering automotive repair as well as body work and paint jobs.

What I like most about my job is that I get to work on different types of vehicles and I learn new things every day. As anyone who drives knows, many things can go wrong with the functioning of a vehicle and the challenge of repairing it gives me great satisfaction. My co-workers are helpful and treat me with the respect I deserve as a woman in a trades career.

In June 2005, I graduated from École Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, where I took a great interest in the Coop/OYAP program. Coop/OYAP is an excellent way to explore different jobs before graduating from high school while making your career choice for the future. It helps open your mind to diverse possibilities.

During a placement at Cambrian College for mechanics, I had been asked to participate in the Ontario Technological Skills Competition in Waterloo. These competitions are organized by Skills Competences Canada Ontario to give high school and college students the opportunity to challenge one another in their subject of interest. I enjoyed the experience of competing against both male and female, high school and college levels. The competition made me realize that this trade was an ongoing process of learning and I also learned a few tricks of the trade. I was fascinated to see the different types of competitions taking place, from baking, small motor repairs to welding. I was lucky to be asked to participate again this past May. In my second year of Coop/OYAP (Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. My coop teacher helped me to find a career that I have come to love and a placement at Simon Auto Centre.

Through the Apprenticeship program, an Automotive Technician must complete a minimum of 4,000 hours which also includes three, eight week blocks of class time.

Unfortunately, the schooling section of this program is not offered in Sudbury so I have chosen to attend Algonquin College in



## Alumni Association

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Ottawa. The advantage to doing an apprenticeship is that you can earn an income while you work towards certification. Your income is usually minimum wage with the potential to earn a much higher wage after you are licensed.

Working as a mechanic is not just a job for me; it is a passion. The satisfaction I get from proving to myself and others that I can do the job as well as a man and that no one is going to stop me from doing what I want in life is very rewarding.

As women in trades, we have the courage and strength to succeed and create opportunities for other women to follow.