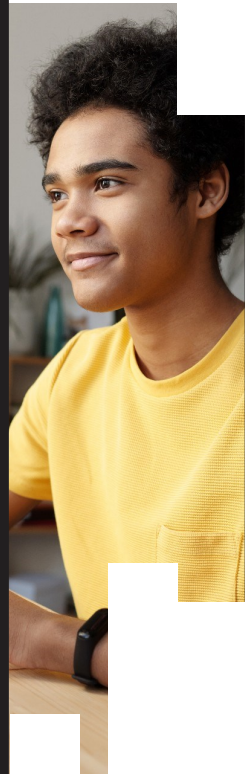
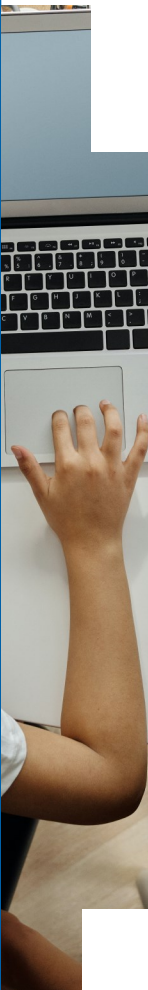


# SKILLS ONTARIO ANNUAL REPORT

September 2020 - August 2021



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

---

As CEO of Skills Ontario, it is an honour to work with students, educators, parents, volunteers, labour, industry professionals, and employers to help Ontario's future leaders reach their full potential.

The pandemic was unprecedented and brought forth many challenges for everybody. Skills Ontario had to cancel all our in-person events and decide how we would meet our mandate, deliver programs, and continue to be a strong and helpful resource. The Skills Ontario team pulled together to create opportunities to help teachers, school boards, and parents in this new virtual climate.



Skills Ontario made the quick pivot to remote delivery, focusing on creativity, innovation, and agility. We adapted our existing programs and developed new initiatives, as well. We are continuing to deliver programs remotely, while monitoring health and safety guidelines to see when we can return to in-person programming.

On behalf of Skills Ontario, thank you to the educators, volunteers, students, government representatives, labour groups, and partner organizations who work with us. Through our efforts, we are encouraging youth to make career choices that will provide them with fulfilling and happy lives.

Sincerely, Ian Howcroft

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

---



Skills Ontario continues to serve an essential role in filling the province's labour gap, and it is through our collective leadership, innovation, partnership, and teamwork that we deliver expanded, increasingly relevant, and engaging, transformational programs that continue to build our future skilled workforce.

Our mission is simple: support and inspire Ontarians as they recognize their potential and explore their career paths.

We work to give youth and their influencers the tools to discover and explore the skilled trades and technologies through experiential learning and mentorship.

We've all faced substantial and abrupt challenges these past two years. The pandemic has underscored how essential skilled professionals are: the people in these positions have assured that our supply lines remain open and they have played a crucial role in keeping our economy and essential services running.

Skills Ontario and its Board of Directors recognize skilled professionals, thank our supporters and advocates, and extend well wishes to all. We look forward to continuing the mission of enabling and delivering our ever important work.

Sincerely, Darryl Spector

# IN THIS REPORT

---

5	Continued Success In The Virtual World
6	Educational Presentations
7	Young Women's Initiatives
8	First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Initiatives
9	2021 Virtual Skills Ontario Competition
10	Discovery Days & Outreach Events
11	Persons with Exceptionalities Conference
12	Virtual Challenges & Workshops
13	Summer Family Movie Nights
14	Podcast & App
15	Junk Drawer Races
16	New Publications, Videos & Apparel
17	Partnerships & Thank You





# CONTINUED SUCCESS IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD

---

After the sudden shift to virtual learning, Skills Ontario further amplified its already wide-reaching online presence and developed its in-person programming to be available through the new virtual world, along with creating new initiatives.

**Over 5 million**  
impressions on social  
media in the past year.

**19,100+**  
people follow Skills  
Ontario on social media.

**296,900+**  
visits to our website  
in the past year.

On Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn, Skills Ontario engages thousands of followers daily to promote programs, events, challenges, opportunities, and more.



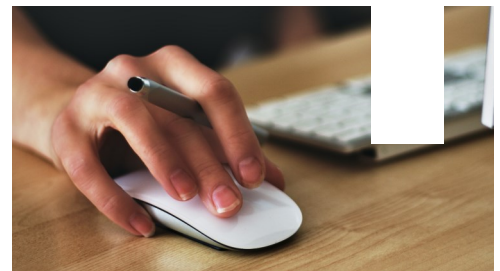
# EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

---

Skills Ontario reaches students through In-School Presentations, with Liaison Officers visiting schools throughout the school year.

When the pandemic drastically changed our circumstances, Skills Ontario adapted its In-School Presentation program to be delivered virtually. Our presentation educates students on the hundreds of career opportunities available in the construction, motive power, service, industrial, and technology sectors, focusing on apprenticeships, training programs, and more. This presentation is updated annually and is available in both English and French, as well as in a workshop format geared toward First Nations, Métis, and Inuit audiences.

Along with this student-focused presentation, Skills Ontario also developed a virtual presentation for parents/guardians to learn more about careers in the skilled trades and technologies and the pathways into these fields.



**83,000+**

participants viewed our  
virtual presentations.

**82%**

of elementary students indicated having a  
more positive impression of skilled trade and  
technology careers after viewing a  
presentation.

# YOUNG WOMEN'S INITIATIVES

---

Skills Ontario's Young Women's Initiatives saw another successful year alongside its Collaborating Organizations, hosting virtual Career Exploration Events, the International Day of The Girl virtual activity series, the International Women's Day Conference, and the Young Women's Conference, which we also hosted entirely in French as part of our commitment to delivering programming to the Francophone community.

Skills Ontario also smashed a Guinness World Records Achievement for "Longest Online Video Chain of People Passing and Using a Screwdriver." While this event was focused on women in skilled careers, all were welcome to participate.

Skills Ontario also partnered with Girl Guides of Canada to deliver a virtual workshop for young women in August. Every participant earned a badge for their involvement.



**7,000+**

attended the 2021 Young Women's Conference.

**3,000+**

young women participated in a Career Exploration Event this past year.

**100%**

of students felt that the International Women's Day Conference provided valuable information.



# FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT INITIATIVES

---

Skills Ontario delivers programming to Indigenous youth through its First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) Initiatives. With Trades & Tech Days, Indigenous College Recruiter Information Sessions, and the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Conference.

These programs are for Indigenous youth to learn about the skilled trades and technologies and to hear from community members who work in these fields.

Through a continued commitment to acknowledge and respect Indigenous peoples and their history, all of Skills Ontario's events begin with a land acknowledgement and recognition of Indigenous peoples and their connection to this land.

**1,270**

attended the 2021 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Conference.

**75%**

of Indigenous students noted they are more interested in pursuing a skilled career after participating in a Skills Ontario program.

**1,000+**

Indigenous students participated in Skills Ontario programming this past year.





# 2021 VIRTUAL SKILLS ONTARIO COMPETITION

The 2021 Virtual Skills Ontario Competition was a great success with 12,000 participants logged in on the day of the event, and 51,500 visits to partner's Exhibitor Booths. Over 500 competitors in skilled trade and technology contests in fields such as welding, photography, bricklaying, hair-styling, and more participated between April 22nd to May 7th, with the public competition viewing and Career Exploration Showcase on May 12th, and the provincial Closing Ceremony on May 13th.

Skills Ontario is thrilled to celebrate all competitors, including those who represented Team Ontario at the 2021 Skills Canada Virtual National Competition, which virtually hosted participants from across the country to compete.

At Skills Canada's Closing Ceremony on June 15th, Team Ontario achieved 29 medals: nine gold medals, eleven silver medals, and nine bronze medals.



**12,000**

participants attended  
the virtual Competition.

**#8**

on Twitter's trending in Canada  
list for Competition hashtag  
(#VSOC2021).

# DISCOVERY DAYS & OUTREACH EVENTS

---

Among Skills Ontario's new initiatives is a Discovery Day program, which creates a virtual career exploration experience for attendees. Participants can attend conferences, visit exhibitor booths, and collect virtual items to fill their digital swag bag.

**2,000+**

total participants attended a Discovery Day this past year.

**40+**

partners hosted virtual exhibitor booths.

**45**

new outreach events were held this past year.

Skills Ontario has held Discovery Days for New Canadians, as well as region-focused events for residents in Cornwall, Prescott-Russell, Far Northwestern Ontario, and more.





# PERSONS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES CONFERENCE

---

Skills Ontario held its first ever Persons with Exceptionalities Conference in March 2021. This event was for youth in grades 7-10, parents, guardians, support staff and educators. ASL interpretation was provided and participation was free.

Attendees joined to hear inspirational success stories from mentors, learn about available resources and support services, and discover exciting and rewarding career options in skilled trades and technologies.



**5**

speakers presented and shared resources at the Persons with Exceptionalities Conference.

**2,000+**

participants viewed the Persons With Exceptionalities Conference.



# VIRTUAL CHALLENGES & WORKSHOPS

In March 2020, Skills Ontario developed a virtual challenge series. Up until June 2021, Skills Ontario regularly launched challenges related to the skilled trades and technologies that Ontarians could do at home.

Prior to the pandemic, Skills Ontario held week-long day-camps across Ontario. Skills Ontario continued the initiative virtually, leading participants through fun activities and virtual tours.

Participants created their own camp schedules throughout the summer and March break sessions based on activities that piqued their interest. After school sessions were also added to allow participants to continue learning all year round!



**400+**

participants in the  
virtual challenge series.

**3,300+**

participants joined  
our workshops.

**98%**

of workshop participants  
rated the virtual camp as  
'Awesome' or 'Really Good.'

*"These are fantastic  
workshops. Please consider  
doing these virtually every  
summer." - Participant*



# SUMMER FAMILY MOVIE NIGHTS

---

The new Summer Family Movie Nights program provided a series of free events, all dedicated to a skilled sector: construction, industrial, motive power, service, and technology. Each participating family was provided with a digital movie voucher and an activity kit dedicated to the sector theme of their choice.

Families chose when to redeem the movie voucher within a weekend rental window and do the hands-on activity together at any time. Kits were sent directly to households and included an educational guideline on the specific sector they selected.



**1,800+**  
families participated  
in the program.



# PODCAST & APP

---



Skills Ontario launched the Trades & Tech Talk Podcast in April 2020. This was a new initiative, as Skills Ontario had never produced a podcast before.

In the Trades & Tech Talk podcast, Dan, Bill, and Madeline talk about 140+ careers in the skilled trades and technologies and how important, in demand and rewarding these careers are. Various guests include professionals who work in the skilled trades and tech apprenticeship representatives, college reps, educators, Skills Ontario staff, and many more.

Over the summer of 2021, Skills Ontario also developed a new app. Set to launch in fall, the app provides users with an aptitude career quiz, links to opportunities, and more. Those interested can stay up to date on the launch through [Skills Ontario's website](#).



**2,200+**  
people have listened  
to the podcast.



# JUNK DRAWER RACES

---

The Paper Glider Competition program, launched in October 2020, asked students to work in teams to design and build a glider plane. The students were required to test their paper glider plane to see how far it could fly.

This fall, Skills Ontario is expanding the program to include tailored activities for specific grades in a series called Junk Drawer Races. The Paper Glider Competition is still available for grades 6-7, but new programs for grades 2-12 include a Gravity Powered Robot Walker Race, a Cardboard Car Race, and more.

**200+**

students participated in the  
2020-21 Paper Glider Plane  
Competition.



# NEW PUBLICATIONS, VIDEOS & APPAREL

---

Skills Ontario revamped resources this year to assist educators and students looking for information on careers in the skilled trades and technologies. Four publications in total, including a brochure, a colouring book, a career guide, and a booklet on women in skilled careers, will be offered to students across the province.

We also have started the production over 60 new videos to act as inspiring and informative resources for students, including tours of skilled trade and tech workplaces, words of advice from skilled professionals, and more.

Skills Ontario also created and launched [a new line of apparel](#) to champion inclusivity in the trades. With slogans in English and French, such as “THIS IS WHAT A TRADESPERSON LOOKS LIKE”, Skills Ontario continues to share the message that there is no right way for a tradesperson to look; these careers welcome all.

**100,000+**  
publications will be sent  
out to schools across Ontario.

**21**  
new apparel designs were  
created and offered.





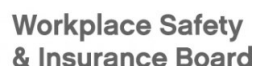
# PARTNERSHIPS & THANK YOU

---

skills Ontario appreciates our corporate and government partners and suppliers who provide better opportunities for everyone in Ontario. It is through their generosity, vision, and commitment that we are able to touch the lives of so many Ontario youth each and every year.



*This program is funded by the Government of Ontario.*



# PARTNERSHIPS & THANK YOU

---

skills Ontario appreciates our corporate and government partners and suppliers who provide better opportunities for everyone in Ontario. It is through their generosity, vision, and commitment that we are able to touch the lives of so many Ontario youth each and every year.



# PARTNERSHIPS & THANK YOU

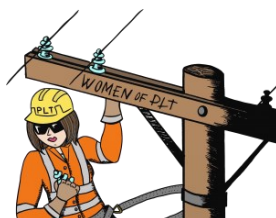
---

skills Ontario appreciates our corporate and government partners and suppliers who provide better opportunities for everyone in Ontario. It is through their generosity, vision, and commitment that we are able to touch the lives of so many Ontario youth each and every year.



# PARTNERSHIPS & THANK YOU

skills Ontario appreciates our corporate and government partners and suppliers who provide better opportunities for everyone in Ontario. It is through their generosity, vision, and commitment that we are able to touch the lives of so many Ontario youth each and every year.





# PARTNERSHIPS & THANK YOU

skills Ontario appreciates our corporate and government partners and suppliers who provide better opportunities for everyone in Ontario. It is through their generosity, vision, and commitment that we are able to touch the lives of so many Ontario youth each and every year.



# PARTNERSHIPS & THANK YOU

---

Skills Ontario is proud to **inspire, encourage, and empower Ontarians** to explore the career opportunities in the skilled trades and technologies. Thank you to our partners, advocates, and participants for their support of Skills Ontario. We look forward to developing our existing programs and delivering new initiatives in 2022.



Visit [skillsontario.com](https://skillsontario.com) and  
follow us on social media!