

# OTR-Podcast-2024Oct25

Fri, Oct 25, 2024 5:09PM 7:17

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

trade sector, university investment, employment guarantee, stereotypes, student opinions, skilled trades, manual labor, apprenticeships, job market, unionized sectors, financial benefits, high school guidance, gender bias, tuition fees, quiet quitting

## SPEAKERS

Claire Dufourd, Patrick Rooney, Streeter 1, Streeter 3, Streeter 2, Olga Bergmans, Streeter 4

---



00:00

Music.



Claire Dufourd 00:07

Welcome back to On The record podcast, I'm Claire Dufourd.



Olga Bergmans 00:10

And I'm Olga Bergmans. I hope Reading Week was restful, and everyone is back in class.



Claire Dufourd 00:15

Today, we're diving into a topic that maybe doesn't get talked about enough at TMU, the trade sector.



Olga Bergmans 00:22

Well, maybe it's something that I have heard more people talking about. The question is, is university a worthy investment of your time and money, or is it worth considering going into a trade instead?



Claire Dufourd 00:33

And more importantly, which path will guarantee you employment after graduation in a city where finding a job is becoming an increasing challenge. Are the trades a better choice? Have

where finding a job is becoming an increasing challenge. Are the trades a better choice? Have the stereotypes about working as a plumber or a hairdresser or anyone in the trades changed it enough

**O** Olga Bergmans 00:50

to answer this question. Our team asked students on campus directly what they thought about this idea. Let's hear what they have to say.

**S** Streeter 1 00:58

Well, I did actually go to school to be in trade first, but I am a woman, and did not want to be a woman in trade, so decided to change it up. And now I'm I'm at university.

**S** Streeter 2 01:09

Yeah, I definitely would. I think many students here have the privilege of being gifted in other ways that they're pursuing right now, but I don't see anything wrong whatsoever with going into a trade, because society, of course, like, runs off it and needs that.

**S** Streeter 3 01:28

Yeah. So I mean, personally for me, no, because I do not think that my manual dexterity is high enough. However, I do think that the trades is going to be super profitable, especially because we don't have as many people going into them now. So it's definitely a smart setup, if you've got the skills for

**S** Streeter 4 01:42

it. I have considered going into trades before, just because I feel like there's a big push for like to replace the older people. For me personally, the reason I didn't go into trades is more because I'm scared of heights and I don't like doing like heavy work where my back hurts and stuff. So yeah, I came to university because I'm more a creative person. I like sitting relaxing for I guess, physically, but mentally, I like working my mind.

**C** Claire Dufourd 02:12

And there you have it. Thank you for stepping up to the mic, TMU.

**O** Olga Bergmans 02:15

It sounds like the trade sector looks more interesting to a lot of people, but to truly understand its growing popularity, let's get into it. What defines a trade?

**C** Claire Dufourd 02:26  
Great question. According to the Ontario based website build ON, the skilled trades refer to professional occupations that involve working with your hands and require specialized training,

**O** Olga Bergmans 02:36  
which means that the trades encompass way more than just traditional construction jobs that most people think about when this term is brought up.

**C** Claire Dufourd 02:44  
But who better to talk about the trades than a tradesman himself? So we reached out to Patrick Rooney, an electrician and professor of skilled trades at George Brown College.

**O** Olga Bergmans 02:54  
He had a lot to say regarding the current state of the job market for apprenticeships, ongoing stereotypes of the trades and the difference between unionized and non unionized sectors.

**P** Patrick Rooney 03:06  
For many, many years, the trades were treated as the last option. If you could not go into college or go forward into university, your last desperate act of vocation was in the trades. And again over the years, that has slowly been willed away, but the high school system and the those, the school counselors and all that, still treat the trades as your, your your last ditch option. Yeah, you're you're not smart enough to go to college or university, so your only alternative is a trade. And again, I anybody that I speak to, you have more defined pathways in the future. You've got remarkably more opportunities in the skilled trades than you did, say, in finance or any other like Office Administration or anything to that effect, because a lot of them are being replaced by AI, or they're being reduced by sending it off to third third parties, and in other countries to do that remotely. So again, the need for people in the office with higher credentials is is also waning, which also goes in in lockstep with their wages. Give you an example, like I've seen them as low as pre internships, programs going as low as \$2,500 for eight weeks of training. And then go up to something like our program, where you're the order of it's a one year, two semester program where you're into almost in order of \$6,000 for tuition.

**O** Olga Bergmans 04:47  
All right, thank you for that. It seems like the trade sector is becoming more and more appealing to a lot of people.

 Claire Dufourd 04:53

Right? And the trades encompass way more than just this type of manual labor, if construction. Or other physically exerting jobs don't quite seem like the right fit to you. There are way more options out there.

 Olga Bergmans 05:06

A prime example of other apprenticeships would be becoming a hair stylist, which is also a course offered at George Brown College.

 Claire Dufourd 05:13

Let's hear what a hairstylist in Toronto thinks about the whole trades versus University dilemma.

 05:18

So, I use that chair as like my space, and it's like I said, I kind of pay rent for that chair. So that's it's kind of like I live there every day, like, you know, like how you would live in them, in an apartment, or whatever. And I come in and I pay rent for that chair. So let's say my rent is 1500 a month. I'll pay that a month, but then I can come in and do like, 1000 clients that month, and whatever I make off those clients, it's all to me. It won't go to my boss. I don't have to split anything because I'm renting the chair. I buy my own product. I provide my own hair colors.

 Olga Bergmans 05:53

Thank you for your insight.

 Claire Dufourd 05:56

University definitely isn't the only option. So why are high schools not talking about them more. I know when I went to high school, the trades were rarely discussed during guidance counselor sessions.

 Olga Bergmans 06:07

That's interesting. In my own experience, it felt like the trade sector was never really recommended for women and instead pushed on men. These experiences are great proof that the trades can be open to anyone. We even posted a poll in front of the on the record newsroom, and it seemed that the votes of people who've considered the trades was almost 50/50,.

 Claire Dufourd 06:26

And let's not forget about the financial side of things. Not only are starting wages for most trades considerably higher than many jobs you may get out of a university, the tuition fees for training and the trades are considerably lower as well.

 Olga Bergmans 06:40

I for one, think I could be a great hairdresser. Claire, if you need a fresh new do, you know who to go to!

 Claire Dufourd 06:46

Thank you again. So much to everyone who shared their thoughts regarding this topic. Don't forget to tune in next week when we will cover students quiet quitting in higher education.

 Olga Bergmans 06:56

And if you have any burning questions or matters for us to cover, email us at [ontherecordnews.ca](mailto:ontherecordnews.ca). I'm Olga Bergmans.

 Claire Dufourd 07:04

And I'm Claire dufourd. We'll catch you next week.