



STATE OF THE UNION

IUPAT is moving with the times

GLASS CANADA

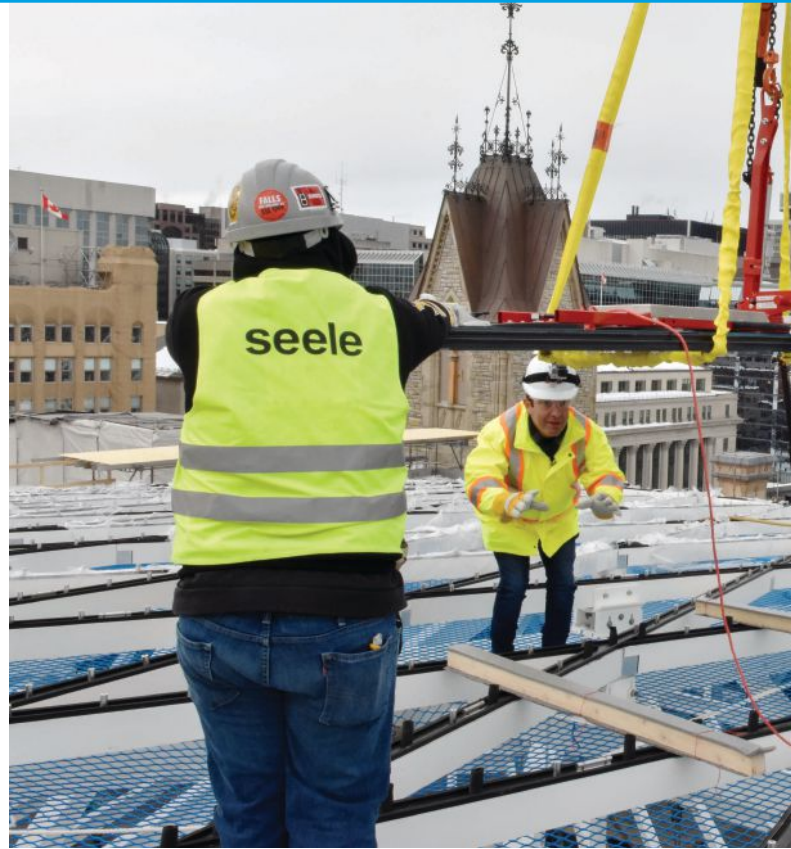
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STATE OF THE UNION



IUPAT wants to be the source of a new generation

by RICH PORAYKO

Last October, the PC government of Ontario announced it will wind down the Ontario College of Trades, set all journeyman-to-apprentice ratios to one-to-one and put a moratorium on adding new compulsory trade classifications or reclassifying existing classifications. It has also promised an unspecified “replacement model for the regulation of the skilled trades and apprenticeship system” by early 2019. It’s just one example in a rapidly changing landscape riddled with tariffs, labour shortages, collective bargaining agreement negotiations and a federal election this October. How is the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades evolving to stay competitive in today’s divisive business climate?

“Chartered on December 8, 1954, IUPAT has been representing Canadian glaziers for 65 years,” says Jason McColl, a business representative for IUPAT Local 1795 in Ontario. According to McColl, IUPAT has just under 10,000 members across the country. There are different district councils and IUPAT collective bargaining agreements that represent the glaziers depending on the region you’re working in.

“We are on job sites every day asking if there are any problems or concerns,” says McColl. “We enforce our collective bargaining agreement to ensure our members are getting fair wages, health and welfare and pension contributions.” McColl says IUPAT involves members by conducting monthly meetings and participates in annual events such as the Community Day of Action, giving back through providing a communities with a free day of painting, glazing and drywall finishing.

“We’re definitely growing by membership and market share,” says McColl. “But the reality in all trades in construction is that we’re losing 80,000 tradespeople in the next five to seven years. We are coming to a bit of a difficult situation where we’re amping up our organizing and our recruiting campaigns.”

Immigrant, indigenous and female workers are IUPAT’s three big targets. “We use programs such as Hammerheads, which introduces youth to various construction trades, Helmets to Hardhats, which provides career transitions to members of the Canadian Forces, or Sticks to Hardhats, which helps retrain former NHL players.”

IUPAT’s Red Seal apprenticeship programs are 8,000 hours. Typically, that’s four years



Except in Quebec, using a certified journeyman glazier is not mandatory on Canadian jobsites. IUPAT is making efforts to show contractors it can be a helpful partner in resolving their labour issues.

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at 2,000 hours per year and includes three levels of trade school: beginner, intermediate and advanced. “We offer a curriculum equal to the college level at our Ontario Industrial Finishing Skills Centre, which is being renamed the Finishing Trades Institute,” says McColl. “The government provides a \$1,000 grant for your first term of school, another \$1,000 for your intermediate, and then once you’ve completed the advanced module and successfully challenged the Certificate of Qualification examination you get a \$2,000 grant. The \$167 fee to write to the C-of-Q exam is reimbursed as well.”

According to McColl, IUPAT members contribute one dollar from every hour worked to the Apprenticeship Education Fund. So when apprentices go to school not only are they getting their Employment Insurance but they are also getting a cheque when they first arrive to help alleviate some of the bills and stresses of not working for eight weeks.

Pension is another big benefit of IUPAT. “It sells itself and separates the non-union from the union,” says McColl. “Any new apprentice coming in has to work 4,000 hours before they’re vested into that program. Our pension contributions are \$6 per hour, which is \$4 to your Canadian Pension and \$2 to your American pension. When an IUPAT glazier retires, odds are that they most likely own real estate as well as collect CPP, a Canadian and an American pension. You’re not going to drive Lamborghinis or Ferraris, but you’re setting yourself up to maintain a happy, middle class lifestyle when you retire.”

McColl says the biggest selling point for using a union glazing contractor is their safety record. According to Ontario Construction Secretariat reports, union glaziers are 28 per cent safer than

non-union. “We want our members home at the end of the day, where the non-union company just cares about the bottom line.”

“We have contract negotiations coming up in May 2019,” says McColl. “We have already started negotiating and definitely have a good open relationship with all of our contractors as well as with the association.”

“If you came into our plant, you would see how quality starts right from the get-go. Right before you enter,” says Peter Neudorf Jr., director of field operations for union contractor, Ferguson-Neudorf Glass. “People are pre-trained and certified on machinery. They are responsible for their department, so they sign off on every single frame that’s built and comes out. There are no scratches, gouges or defects and it comes out as a perfect window; shrink wrapped into a frame and signed off to send to the project.”

Neudorf has worked in the glass industry for over 40 years and has volunteered on numerous committees for the betterment of the glazing industry including Red Seal Canada and National Occupational Analysis (Glazing Industry). In addition, he has served as chair of the Provincial Advisory Committee for Glazing Contractors. Neudorf currently sits on the board of directors for the Architectural Glass and Metal Contractors Association of Ontario as well as being the chair of the AGMCA for the Finishing Contractors Association. Most recently, Peter has become a founding member and board member of the North American Contractor Certification Program. He has also recently joined the International Glazier Certification Board of the Green Advantage Certification Organization.

“The union has the Finishing Trades Institute training centre where our men become full-fledged journeymen.” Neudorf says

training doesn't end there. "There are all these certifications that the men have to have and need to be renewed every one to three years. The union handles the training and pays for it."

"Our training centre will train non-union, but a lot of non-union contractors don't have certifications or training, says Neudorf. "They don't pay the wages that we pay. And obviously if you have all the things in place, it costs money, so your price has to go up. It is one of the reasons non-union can outbid union."

Neudorf says it is always an issue. "Union is going to be higher. Unfortunately the cheaper price gets the job. But the consultants and architects out there are getting tired of non-certified people and crappy workmanship. Consultants and architects send us letters saying thank you for certifying workers and contractors."

"We need to always be learning," says Neudorf. "We need to be bettering ourselves. The architectural and engineering worlds are changing and the things that they're drawing up are incredible. But you have to have workers trained in order to do these things. Everybody has to be on the same page and this is where myself and

several other contractors feel this is spectacular. Let's get the training done. Let's take ourselves seriously. Let's corner the market on good workmanship and quality."

You get what you pay for. "You want to pay a cheaper price?" asks Neudorf. "You want to pay for unqualified workmanship? You get shit. You get leaks and glass falling out of the building. We pride ourselves in installing it safely and correctly and not having to come back and forever be patching holes."

Baby boomers are retiring and the glass industry needs up-and-coming people to take over. "IUPAT advertises and has programs to get people interested in the glazing trade," says Neudorf. "The training centre sends students over and I give them a tour of our facility. They love it and I enjoy doing it because these are the kids that are coming up and we're looking for kids that are interested. It's going to happen. It has to happen, because there's going to be so much work out there."

Ferguson-Neudorf Glass is also certified by the North American Contractor Certification (NACC). "I plan to send a lot of my people to have that extra certification so that when it comes down the pipe, we're

the qualified choice," says Neudorf. "Being NACC certified, our plant is very much in tune with qualifications of everybody being responsible for putting out a good product. Our quality control is by far above the norm."

"The Architectural Glass and Metal Contractors Association was established in 1979 to provide a strong and unified voice for unionized glazing contractors primarily working in Ontario's ICI sector," says AGMCA executive director, Noel Marsella. "We are designated by the Ministry of Labour as the official employer bargaining agency. Our volunteer board of directors works hard for the betterment of our entire industry and we continue to bring any and all of our members' concerns to the forefront."

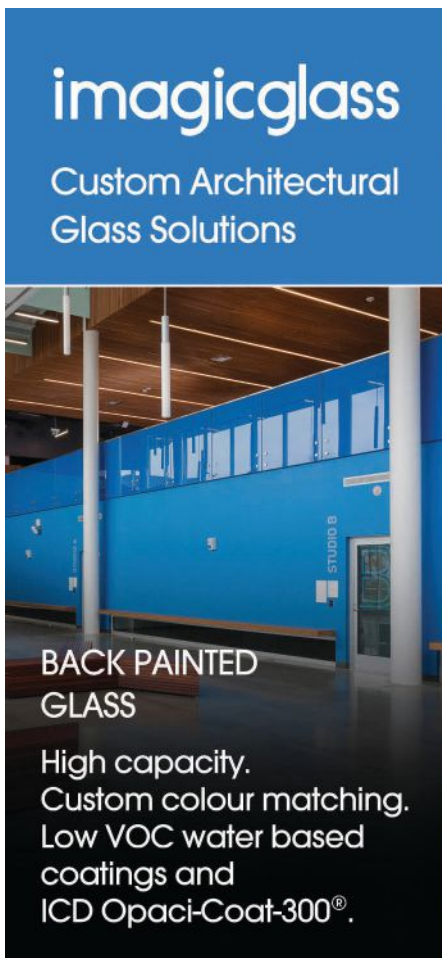
AGMCA has a long-standing interest in trades training. "Our association was the main catalyst behind Ontario's Glazing and Metal Mechanic Apprenticeship program," says Marsella. "To this day, AGMCA believes that apprenticeship training is vital to the health of our industry. Our members have invested heavily in our world-class training facility and the programs it delivers. Our members demand a strong, well-trained, centralized workforce that can meet our needs."

"It is the union's mandate to provide us with this manpower," says Marsella. "We have what we consider to be a strong working relationship with the IUPAT, as led by Bruno Mandic. We strive to work together to maintain and indeed increase our market share. Under Bruno's leadership, the union seems to understand that what is good for our employers is ultimately good for the union and the members."

"We need a reliable partner who is willing to listen to the concerns of our members, not brush them off, and Bruno seems genuinely interested in solutions, not roadblocks," says Marsella. Having spent 35 years as a glazing contractor, Marsella says he prefers a no-nonsense approach, in order to remain relevant. "We need to interact with the union in an open and constructive manner, without fear of repercussion, and we look forward to further strengthening our relationship with the IUPAT under Bruno's leadership."

"Unions had their place 60 to 100 years ago to keep dishonest and abusive employers in line," says Jim Brady, general manager of an Alberta-based non-union glazing contractor. "IUPAT has little to no relevance in Alberta. As far as I know, there are four companies that are certified in Alberta."

The comments of Brady, who is a



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