



Instructor Kate Stewart with a recent graduate, now manufacturing toolboxes

Tradeworks Training Society

Since 1990, Tradeworks has been providing skills training and employment programs to Vancouver Downtown Eastside residents who want to change their lives. At the core of Tradeworks' operating philosophy is the concept that when you teach people to fish, they will be able to feed themselves.

Through Tradeworks' programs, over 1,000 youth, Aboriginals, and women have graduated from introductory courses in carpentry, framing, and related trade skills. These programs also address social and life skills needs, to help people successfully find and hold jobs.

Federally funded, Tradeworks' Job Shop program assists long-term unemployed individuals in the transition back to working life, all based on each individual's needs, qualifications and interests. The program lasts up to twelve weeks and provides participants with job search tools, developing and strengthening their employability skills, as well as individual and group counselling.

At the corner of Main and Hastings, Tradeworks' Pathways Information Centre welcomes local residents, providing them basic employment-related information and referrals to community services as part of a larger inter-agency strategy. Tradeworks' youth leadership program provides opportunities for at-risk youth to learn and supervise recreational activities at community centres and schools, thereby developing skills that enhance their employability.

[Click here](#) to read *A Social Economy Showcase – BC Stories* in its entirety.