

THE DIRT

NEWSLETTER

SPRING / SUMMER 2025



SUCCESS STORIES | UPDATES | HIGHLIGHTS | FUTURE PLANS

Changing Lives
SINCE 2005

**REAL MACHINES.
LEADER IN TRAINING.
WORKING GRADS.
ENDORSED BY INDUSTRY.**

PHOTO LOCATION: Treaty 6 territory, the traditional homeland of the Alexander and Michel First Nations, as well as the Métis Nation of Alberta's Districts 8 and 11

ONLINE: WWW.IHESCHOOL.COM | **TOLL FREE:** 1-866-399-3853

OUR STUDENT

A JOURNEY OF DETERMINATION AND GROWTH: JOEY'S JOURNEY

When Joey was released from prison, he didn't waste time. He found work in construction right away and knew he wanted to keep moving forward. For him, enrolling at IHE wasn't about starting over, it was about leveling up. He already had the drive. He just needed the right place to channel it.

Watch as Joey shares his inspiring story of overcoming challenges and embracing new opportunities at IHE. You'll hear about his path to enrolling in our program, the hands-on training that shaped him, and the unexpected victories he experienced along the way.

Thanks to Joey for sharing his story with us! We are proud and honoured to be part of it.

success stories

watch this!



STEVE

Steve went from the Navy to heavy equipment and hasn't looked back. He shares what it was like training at IHE and learning hands-on with real machines. .

also watch this!



ASHLEY

Meet Ashley from BC! Growing up in a construction family, she always had a passion for heavy equipment. But instead of just dreaming about it, she took action, choosing IHE's Heavy Equipment Operator Training to turn her passion into a career! Watch the full interview below.

and this!



FROM TRAINING TO JOB SITE:

CLICK HERE 

WORKFORCE-READY OPERATORS FOR YOUR PROJECTS

Our graduates are entering Canada's job sites equipped with practical skills and the confidence to operate safely from day one. They are contributing meaningfully to crews across Alberta and Western Canada while building long-term careers with respected industry leaders.

This month alone, newly trained Heavy Equipment Operators have secured positions with organizations such as Lafarge, BC mining operations, Okanagan-based construction companies, Enoch Civil Construction, and a Hydrovac waste management firm. Importantly, many of these placements reflect the growing participation of women and Indigenous operators—highlighting the value of inclusive training-to-employment pathways.

We celebrate the dedication of our graduates, the support of their families and communities, and the partnerships that make these successes possible. Together, we are proud to play a role in addressing the skilled labour shortage and supporting the workforce needs of our industry stakeholders.

SUCCESS
STORY

Graduated March, 2025

Recent graduate from our Operator Course program.

Tanner just wrapped up training and already had three job interviews lined up! One solid operator and an even better guy—can't wait to see where he ends up!

Become the next success story: iheschool.com

CONGRATULATIONS
NICK



 IHE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT
OPERATOR TRAINING

SUCCESS
STORY

Graduated January, 2025

Recent graduate from our Articulated Rock Truck course!

Malakhi wrapped up his training and has already secured a role with Suncor in Fort Hills. He's starting as a laborer but is ready to work his way into the driver's seat soon!

Become the next success story: iheschool.com

CONGRATULATIONS
MALAKHI



 IHE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT
OPERATOR TRAINING

SUCCESS
STORY

Graduated March, 2025

Recent graduate from our Operator Course program.

Tanner just wrapped up training and already had three job interviews lined up! One solid operator and an even better guy—can't wait to see where he ends up!

Become the next success story: iheschool.com

CONGRATULATIONS
KELVIN



 IHE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT
OPERATOR TRAINING

SUCCESS
STORY

Graduated January, 2025

Recent graduate from our Grader Course program!

Eric wrapped up the 3-week course and had already landed a job with PCL before graduation.

Become the next success story: iheschool.com

CONGRATULATIONS
ERIC



 IHE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT
OPERATOR TRAINING

SUCCESS
STORY

Graduated March, 2025

Recent graduate alert!

Meet Luke, smart, skilled, and seriously cool behind the controls. He crushed our operator training and landed a job with the City of Calgary... with two divisions competing to hire him!

Become the next success story: iheschool.com

CONGRATULATIONS
LUKE



 IHE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT
OPERATOR TRAINING

SUCCESS
STORY

Graduated March, 2025

Recent IHE Graduate Tanner, just wrapped up training and already had three job interviews lined up!

One solid operator and an even better guy, can't wait to see where he ends up!

Become the next success story: iheschool.com

CONGRATULATIONS
TANNER



 IHE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT
OPERATOR TRAINING



MIKE HANSEN

chief executive officer

Dear Friends, Partners, and IHE Family,

This summer marks a major milestone - 20 years of IHE proudly training the next generation of heavy equipment operators. What began as a bold idea two decades ago has grown into what we believe is North America's largest and most trusted heavy equipment training organization. That's no small feat - and it's all thanks to you.

We are deeply grateful to the countless individuals who have fueled this journey: our students, our partners, our alumni, and most of all, our dedicated staff. It's your five-star interactions, your daily commitment to doing things right, and your passion for people that form the heart of this company. You are the reason lives change here.

And change they do.

There's no real way to capture in a few paragraphs what it means to see someone go from uncertainty to unstoppable - confidently climbing into the cab of a dozer, excavator, or haul truck, ready to contribute with skill and integrity. But that's what we do. Not just with iron, but with the right attitude, the right mindset, and the right approach to work and life. As we reflect on these past 20 years, we're also looking boldly to the next chapter - and trust us, it's going to knock your steel-toe boots off.

This fall, we're unveiling a fully retrofitted IHE semi-tractor trailer roadshow unit, built to bring the operator experience directly to schools, job fairs, community events, and partner-led outreach initiatives. We've already been invited by key stakeholders to join upcoming events aimed at connecting youth and career-seekers with training-to-employment pipelines. This is outreach with purpose - and it's just the beginning.

On a more personal note, this summer also marked my first Calgary Stampede as the newly Alberta-based CEO. I have to say - I was blown away. The energy, the professionalism, the connections made... it's clear that Calgary is the right place for our new headquarters. A massive thank you to our team for navigating the move from BC to Alberta with such resilience and care.

As for what's next? Let's just say the next 20 years at IHE are going to look a lot different than the last 20. But what will never change is our foundation: exceptional customer service, unwavering safety standards, and top-tier hands-on training.

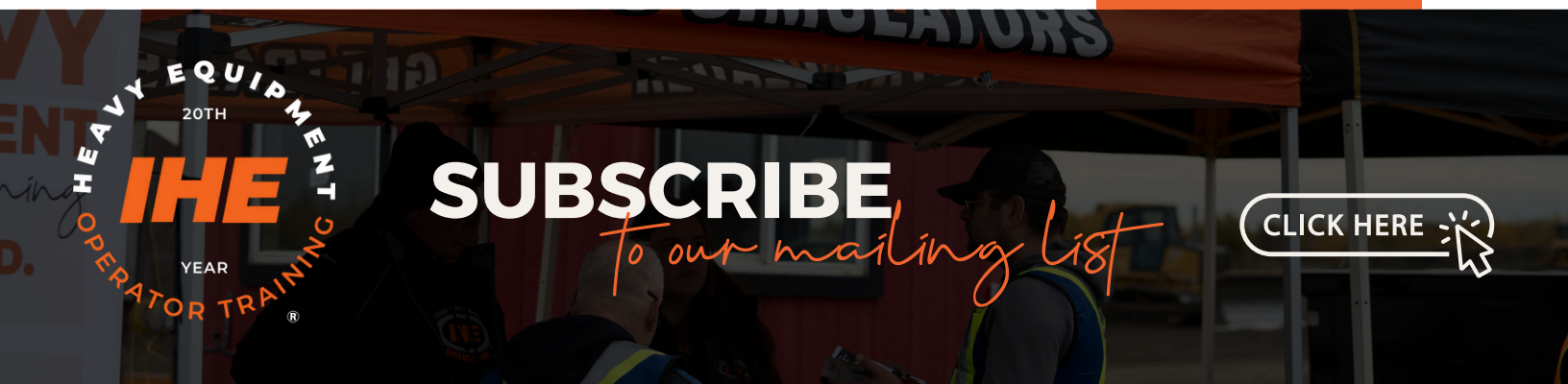
Stay tuned. You're going to want to be part of what's coming.

With excitement,

Mike Hansen

Mike Hansen

Chief Executive Officer
IHE Operator School



SUBSCRIBE

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CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF CHANGING LIVES WITH HEAVY EQUIPMENT TRAINING



Conrad Lefebvre - IHE Founder

BUSINESS
THE OKANAGAN SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2005

C2

Demand for equipment operators

MacNaull

Continued from page C1

There's nothing like hands-on experience. And that's what students of two new heavy equipment schools are finding out. Interior Heavy Equipment School is training students on full-size excavators, graders and bulldozers at a large site in Lake Country. HEO International puts pupils on excavators on the Westside. "You have to have that practical experience on full-size equipment if you want to land a good job right away," says school owner and teacher Conrad Lefebvre. "I have contacts with 32 companies right now and all of them are looking for operators. There's huge demand. Most of it is in the Alberta oil patch, but there's also lots of work in road building, home construction, for utilities and leading up to the 2010 Olympics." The Alberta oil patch has the best pay at about \$65,000 a year for a heavy equipment operator. The education at heavy equipment schools doesn't come cheap. Because of the big, expensive machinery and swath of land needed, the cost of a four-and-a-half week excavator course is \$8,000 at Interior. A five-and-a-half week excavator, grader, bulldozer course is \$9,700. UBN charges \$5,500 for its five-week excavator course.



Press Release



▼ A MOMENT WITH...

Conrad Lefebvre, of the Industrial Heavy Equipment School

I started the school...this spring because I saw the demand in the industry. I've been involved in the industry for 25 years. There isn't a primary contractor in B.C. who isn't looking for heavy equipment operators.

We train students...to excavate for water and sewer projects, load trucks, road building, all the aspects of an excavator plus we also train for dozers and graders.

There is a demand for heavy equipment operators...but here in Kelowna they require a little bit more experience because the contractors have been burned in the past because schools have put out unqualified operators. The local guys prefer to have their employees spend some time in the trenches in the physical end of it to have a full understanding of what's going on.

The real big demand...is in the oil patches (in Alberta). I have a contractor from the oil patch who needs 20 operators within the next month. Yesterday there was 54 openings for operators in the Calgary Herald and in the Edmonton Journal there are 23 companies looking for heavy equipment operators.

I was a contractor...and owned my own firm and I did a lot of excavator work. For me there wasn't much of a switch in gears (to teaching students) because a lot of times I was in a supervisory capacity so I was having to train people.

The emphasis isn't only on how...to operate the machine, the emphasis is on what to do with the machine. Lots of people can learn how to operate something but that doesn't mean they know what to do with the machine. There are other skills involved: How to move the material and how to load the trucks. What to do with the machine is what we emphasize.

I really enjoy it...I did my homework on it and I find it fulfilling because I have quite a passion for the industry. There are students that just don't have the aptitude for it and you have to really pay attention to them and assess them every day.

With the teaching...you don't have the high stress demand of meeting deadlines and stuff so that stress is taken away. But you still have to keep your wits about you to make sure you do a good job with the students. The only way I'm going to succeed is if they succeed.



HEAVY EQUIPMENT INSTRUCTOR Conrad Lefebvre talks with student Kathy Louis at the Industrial Heavy Equipment school near Winfield.

My website address...is www.iheschool.com

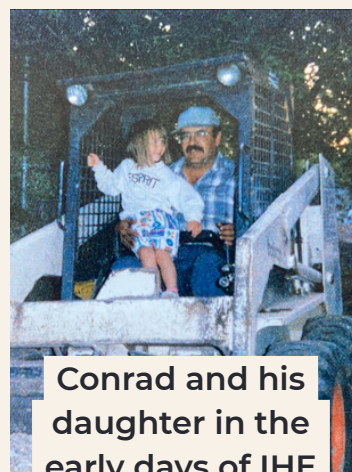
If you have an interesting business that could be featured in the Capital News, e-mail Kevin Parnell at kparnell@kelownapost.com



All-female class from Little Red River Cree Nation featured on CBC news.



Conrad Lefebvre - IHE Founder



Conrad and his daughter in the early days of IHE



SCHEDULE YOUR OWN EVENT ON SITE

In April, we were happy to host Finning at our Innisfail Training Site! They brought in team members from across Canada and the U.S. for specialized training, and we're proud to support their commitment to excellence. It's great to see our facility being used to support industry-wide growth and development.

WHERE INDUSTRY MEETS INNOVATION

- Showcase your equipment. Engage top talent. Shape the future of heavy equipment training - on site with us.

DEMO. DISCOVER. HIRE.

- Access our training grounds to put your machines and future operators to the test in real-world conditions.

YOUR EQUIPMENT. OUR TRAINING ACRES. SHARED SUCCESS.

- Partner with us to launch new technologies, host exclusive industry events, and access a job-ready operator talent pool—many of whom are already living across British Columbia, Alberta, and the North, ready to step onto your worksites.



SPOTTED IN BC - NEW BILLBOARDS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN WEST KELOWNA, BC AND CHASE, BC



EDMONTON *Team*



INNISFAIL *Team*



WINFIELD *Team*



CALGARY *Team*





IHE INSTRUCTOR ADVANCES IN CAT GLOBAL OPERATOR CHALLENGE PROVING OUR STUDENTS TRAIN WITH THE BEST

We are proud to congratulate Sebastian, one of IHE's expert instructors, on his recent win at the local round of the CAT Global Operator Challenge. He now advances to the North Carolina Regional Finals this fall, competing against top operators from across North America for a coveted spot on the global stage at ConExpo 2026 in Las Vegas.

This achievement is more than a personal milestone - it's a reflection of the world-class talent we have leading our classrooms and training fields every day. Our students are learning directly from operators who are recognized as among the very best in the industry.

Sebastian's technical precision, calm leadership, and passion for heavy equipment operation set a standard for excellence. His success highlights the depth of expertise that sets IHE apart in preparing the next generation of skilled operators.

IHE doesn't just teach heavy equipment - we shape the future of it. Let's cheer Sebastian on as he continues his journey to the top!



IHE'S NEW HEADQUARTERS IN CALGARY: A NEW CHAPTER, A DYNAMITE TEAM



We're proud to announce that as of July 2025, IHE Heavy Equipment Operator School has officially completed the relocation of our corporate headquarters from Winfield, BC to Calgary, Alberta. What began as a bold move in June 2024 has now fully taken shape - and we're stepping confidently into our next phase of growth and innovation.

Relocating a corporate head office comes with no shortage of challenges - not least of which is finding the right team mix of accountability, energy, independence, and drive in a brand-new city. It takes time, grit, and no small amount of trust. Today, we're thrilled to say: we've built something special. The team we've assembled in Calgary is absolute dynamite - each member bringing a unique strength to the table, and collectively driving a culture of excellence, cooperation, and forward momentum. Together, we're continuing the work we've been proud to do for over 20 years: delivering exceptional customer service and world-class heavy equipment training, but we've also now laid the groundwork for strategic and targeted growth, based on new services and offerings in more markets.

As part of our expansion prep, we quickly outgrew our original Calgary space, renovations next door are almost complete adding a fully equipped boardroom, new offices, and a new state-of-the-art immersive learning centre featuring virtual simulation technologies - stay tuned for other exciting offerings!

Visit us daily, across from Chinook Centre, just east of the LRT station, at:

119, 6227 2nd Street SE, Calgary, AB

We welcome all vendors, guests, prospective students, and visitors Monday to Friday, between 8 AM to 5 PM, or visit us online anytime at [iheschool.com](https://www.iheschool.com).

To our staff, students, industry partners, and community—thank you for your continued support. We're just getting started. The best is yet to come.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT IHE

ATTENTION: Industry Leaders, Employers & Workforce Development Partners

Are you seeking reliable, professional, and customized support in heavy equipment training, competency validation, or workforce development?

IHE Remote Mobile division, led by our trusted Senior Client Partner Specialist, **Halima Akhtari**, and known for her exceptional customer service and relentless commitment to meeting client needs, has earned a reputation for getting results for partners, no matter the challenge.

From major contractors to government agencies, training institutions to Indigenous communities, we're here to help you build the workforce you need - locally, efficiently and effectively.

- ◆ Operator Competency Testing & Validation
- ◆ Custom On-Site Training & Safety Supervision
- ◆ Competency-Based Frameworks & Pre-Hire Assessments
- ◆ Job Fairs & Talent Alignment Strategies (entry & experienced HEOs)

Let's build solutions that match the scale of your goals and needs!

✉ Reach out T-O-D-A-Y to Halima at **bd@iheschool.com** or call/text **403-888-6883** to start the conversation and discover the quickest solution.

LET'S TAKE YOUR WORKFORCE TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

CLICK HERE 

20th Year Anniversary Promo

We're offering up to \$2,000 off per person for group-booked students and/or employee training, for sessions booked between **August 18 and September 15!**



HALIMA

Senior Client Partner Specialist

Email: **bd@iheschool.com**
or call/text **403-888-6883**



CHRISTINE

chief operating officer

Before We Go

The first half of 2025 was about building the launchpad—now we're ready for liftoff.

After months of restructuring and realignment, we have the right people in the right seats, led by a dedicated CFO and a strong Campus Director. Our leadership is empowered, our execution aligned, and our long-range strategic plan is in motion.

I'm proud of our team—those who stayed steady, stepped up, and now lead with pride and purpose. The sense of belonging here at IHE is real, and it's what makes the climb worth it.

As we move forward, we're bringing back an important tradition: engaging directly with industry leaders to refine our programs. If you're an employer, contractor, or sector leader, I invite you to connect with me at chansen@iheschool.com—your insight will help shape what's next.

I'm also grateful for the guidance of my business coach, Chuck Bean, this last year, and the unwavering partnership of Mike, our CEO. Their vision and honesty have pushed me to grow as a leader and as a person. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we're entering a phase where execution meets purpose—creating lasting results, stronger partnerships, and shared success for all.

Here's to the next 20 years—working even harder to earn your trust, your business, and your respect. Stay tuned for more anniversary stories, including an update from our very first student and first HEO instructor at IHE. If you're not already on our mailing list, subscribe today so you don't miss moments like this. And watch for our refreshed mission and values announcement coming next month.

If there's a way we can raise the bar, serve you better, or meet your needs more fully, I'm all ears—because we're ready to put good ideas into action! Hit me up for a coffee or a teams meet and greet.

Last but not least, let's remember what this is really about: PEOPLE. Every day, our instructors, staff, and alumni are changing lives and strengthening communities. This past week alone, IHE trainers were live on Calgary & BC job sites, signing off (coaching/assessing) over 65+ HEO operators working with them and our industry employer partners!! I also reviewed a training completion report from Edmonton with a multi-year strategic funding partner, where nearly half the graduates already placed in jobs were Indigenous and female operators—proof of the meaningful change that partnerships like these can create. Moments like these take me back to my early days in 2011 when the sky was the limit, I felt, and there was much work to be done, and grounds me why we ALL do this work today! (PASSION). To all our IHE alumni across Canada, on behalf of our entire staff, we are proud of you. Keep representing the profession with pride, and don't forget to return to our classrooms as guest speakers to inspire the next generation of Heavy Equipment Operators.

Christine Hansen
Chief Operating Officer
Interior Heavy Equipment Operator School

Christine Hansen

Chief Operating Officer
IHE Operator School

INTRODUCING SAFETY TICKET HUB

**Your One-Stop Shop
for Safety Tickets**



We're excited to announce the launch of our brand-new online platform: www.safetytickethub.com.

Whether you're a current student, one of our proud alumni, or a valued industry partner, Safety Ticket Hub is designed to be your go-to resource for safety training and certification.

- ✔ **For students:** Gain the certifications you need to get job-ready and stand out to employers.
- ✔ **For alumni:** Stay current with industry standards and keep your tickets up to date.
- ✔ **For businesses & partners:** Streamline staff training and ensure your team meets workplace safety requirements quickly and efficiently.

With a wide range of online safety courses available, Safety Ticket Hub makes it simple, fast, and convenient to get the tickets you need—anytime, anywhere.

Visit www.safetytickethub.com today and make it your one-stop shop for safety tickets.



A NEW RESOURCE

Online Safety Tickets



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