

First Port Connect spotlights careers in marine industries



The first-ever Port Connect links marine industry with future employees.

Close to 200 students and employment seekers attended Port Connect in November to survey possible job opportunities with companies that conduct their business on the waterfront.

The Port of Nanaimo, in partnership with GT Hiring Solutions and Work BC Employment Services Centre, coordinated the event, designed to link students and people of all ages with contacts in the marine industry for possible employment.

There were 17 participating exhibitors, including Seaspan, BC Ferries, DP World, Tetra Tech, WCMRC, Search & Rescue, Island Ferries, Herold Engineering, Helijet, Western Stevedoring, Canadian Coast Guard, Pacific Pilotage Authority, Gowland Towing, Western Maritime Institute, Vancouver Pile Driving, GT Hiring Solutions, and the Port of Nanaimo.

“We wanted to try and link together marine industry employers and possible employees, as there are tremendous opportunities for jobs that pay well,” says Port Chair Michelle Corfield. “We could see that people were excited to meet and

discuss what the future could hold, so from that perspective, we look at it as our ‘mission accomplished.’”

Exhibitors and attendees alike were pleased with the event. One exhibitor said “I saw more than 100 people and a lot of great candidates – one individual I met will be picked up for sure – a few of us want him.”

Said another: “You have assembled so many partners in one room that showcase how the Port gets its business done. It was excellent that we were all together at the same time and can spend time with each other.”

There were even some referrals between exhibitors. John Lucas of Seaspan said “One candidate I met was missing a couple of credentials, so we told them to go see an individual at another booth for training; work for that company at the booth next to them, and then, you can qualify for work with us.”

Attendees appreciated the opportunity to meet potential employers. “I had no idea that

these companies had local contacts right here in Nanaimo,” they said. “I know so much more about how the Port operates.” Another added: “You’ve provided so many key contacts with so many companies. This would take me weeks to research and to secure an appointment with these key contacts.”

“The program we put together for Port Connect was slightly different in that we assembled key port partners within companies so candidates could engage in a conversation. It was not like an interview, but more of an informal conversational setting, a networking style, which provided a way for both sides to ask questions they might not ask in a more formal setting,” said Port Co-CEO Ian Marr.

Peter McGee, a Job Developer with GT Hiring Solutions, said “We are beyond pleased with the turnout and result. While not technically a hiring fair, this provided an opportunity for job seekers and professionals to connect with the local marine sector in a unique way.

The Board and Staff of the Port of Nanaimo wish all Port users and Port partners a safe Holiday Season.

We look forward to another prosperous year working with you in 2019.

