Cash for OC trades

Okanagan College will receive $171,428 to purchase new trades training equipment to support students entering in-demand occupations critical to the economy.

"With an estimated one million job openings by 2022, there is unprecedented opportunity ahead," said Premier Christy Clark. "This investment in trades training tools at Okanagan College means students will get experience with the latest equipment, and be ready sooner for good-paying careers."

Examples of new equipment include a scissor lift, a pavement breaker, two electric jack hammers, and electric masonry table saws for construction craft students as well as an engine lift for heavy mechanic students.

"Our region will have approximately 98,300 job openings by 2022 and we want Okanagan residents to be first in line for these in-demand careers," said Norm Letnick, Kelowna-Lake Country MLA.

See DATA page A33

Data provides background

Continued from A32

Government made these funding decisions based on consultations with educational institutions and the Industry Training Authority, as well as the most-recent labour-market data.

"Okanagan College has a history of providing our community with the programs it needs to grow," said Okanagan College president Jim Hamilton.

"This funding for trades training tools means Okanagan College can continue to connect students with training that answers their aspirations and meets industry needs."

The $171,428 for trades training equipment in 2014-15 is part of B.C.'s Skills for Jobs Blueprint commitment of $185 million over three years for trades training infrastructure and equipment at public post-secondary institutions. Funding for equipment builds on the announcement in July 2014 of 203 additional critical trades training seats and the $33-million trades training complex at Okanagan College.

"Many of the top 60 in-demand fields requiring post-secondary training are in the trades," said Andrew Wilkinson, Advanced Education Minister. "With training in the trades, Okanagan College students are preparing for a lifetime of career opportunities throughout B.C."

The 18 eligible trades training programs, in the top 60 list of in-demand occupations, delivered by B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions are:

- Carpenters
- Chefs/cooks/bakers
- Concrete finishers
- Construction craft workers
- Crane operators
- Electricians
- Gas fitters
- Heavy equipment operators
- Heavy mechanical trades
- Insulators
- Iron workers
- Machinists
- Millwrights
- Plumbers