

# Learning on a construction site

## Students in carpentry course help build a house

by Roxanna Thompson  
Northern News Services  
Liidlii Kue/Fort Simpson

From the floor to the shingles, participants in an Aurora College course are learning firsthand what it takes to build a house.

The college has been running the Introduction to Carpentry course in Fort Simpson since May 24.

The course has been offered in the village before, although not recently, but this is the first time participants have been involved in a major project, said Barb Tsetso, an

adult educator with the college.

Thanks to a partnership with the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation and O'Rourke Construction, the students have been assisting in the construction of a housing unit.

A number of other government departments and the local First Nations have also partnered on the course.

Ten students entered the course and began by studying the modules from the first-year carpentry apprenticeship. Instructor Paul Clarke said he's tried to show the participants there's more to carpentry than just "banging nails."

Students then started the hands-on component by building picnic tables for themselves and approximately 20 garbage bins for the Fort Simpson Housing Authority.

For the past five weeks the students, who have dropped down to six, have been work-

ing on the housing unit.

"They are getting to see everything," said Clarke.

The students have been involved in every stage of the build, starting with the pad and moving upwards through the floor, walls, roof and most recently insulation and vapour barrier.

Clarke said both he and Bill O'Rourke, the owner of O'Rourke Construction, the general contractor on the unit, point things out to the students and get them involved hands-on as much as possible.

"Overall I'm pleased with the results I've seen," said Clarke.

Sean O'Rourke with O'Rourke Construction said

he was a bit apprehensive before the build started, but the course has worked out well for everyone involved.

The students are getting hands-on experience and the company is getting extra labour,

he said.

O'Rourke said the company hopes to hire some of the students after the course is finished.

Troy Fantasque from Fort Liard said he's been enjoying the course.

Fantasque is one of the three students with previous carpentry experience.

Fantasque said he joined

the course to improve his skills. He said he's learned how to use different tools including band-saws and press drills.

Gilbert Antoine of Fort Simpson, who also has previous experience, said he's learned a lot from being able to work on the different aspects of building a house.

From the classroom modules, Antoine said he's learned to draw blueprints to ratio.

When the course finishes on Sept. 2, the students will receive a record of achievement.

They've also been getting wages while working.

### COFFEE Break

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### Thomas Simpson School Fort Simpson, NT 2011 Start up dates

August 26	Schools open for drop-in student registration.
August 29	8:45 am - First day of school. Course registration for senior high students.
	7:00 pm - Information meeting for parents and students entering Grade 10.
August 30	11:00 am - Feed the Fire ceremony.
	7:00 pm - Information meeting for parents and students entering Grade 7.
September 2	12 noon - Community Corn Boil feast.

**Come out and celebrate education  
in our community!**

For more information call 695-3320



**Participants and partners in the Aurora College Introduction to Carpentry Course** stand in front of the house they're assisting to build in Fort Simpson. The members include from left, back row: Brendan Welly and Sean O'Rourke of O'Rourke Construction, Cory Sibbeston, Nicolas de Pelham and Troy Fantasque; front row: Lance Hardisty, left, Gilbert Antoine, Bill O'Rourke, owner of O'Rourke Construction, and instructor Paul Clarke. Missing is Wally Antoine.

Roxanna Thompson/NNSL photo