



## **2023 ONTARIO WOODWORKING TEACHERS DAY**

### **Georgian College**

The Wood Manufacturing Council presented a Woodworking Teachers Professional Development Day on March 27, 2023 at Georgian College. Of the 40 participants, over twenty-five tech educators and School Board reps took part in the day, which focused on networking and education. Three school boards participated, including Simcoe County District School Board, Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board and Trillium Lakelands District School Board. The participants were greeted by Rebecca Sabourin: Dean, Engineering and Environmental Technologies, Skilled Trades at Georgian, who warmly welcomed all involved. The participants then went on a tour of the woodshop, where they got to do a little woodworking project, under the guidance of Georgian instructors and students.

The group received a thorough overview of the educational opportunities available to their students. Presentations on the wood programs at their institutions were provided by Lynn MacKinlay (Georgian), Elizabeth Sully (Humber) Joni Jean and Trevor Hibbs (Conestoga), as well as Joren Dettmer (UBC) and Brad MacDonald (Mowhawk).

Mike Baker, CEO, Wood Manufacturing Cluster of Ontario (WMCO) spoke on behalf of the Ontario wood sector and provided a great overview of industry trends, issues, needs and programs. Wes Smith, a former Faculty member at Georgian, and Will Carlisle, a Georgian student, also shared their unique perspectives. The formal program finished with a presentation by Robert Aucoin, Ottawa Carleton District School Board (retired), who spoke about the WMC's WoodLINKS program and demonstrated how the Google classroom version can assist and support high school woodshop teachers.

The day ended with a plant tour at Springwater Woodcraft in Minesing ON. Simon Lloyd provided participants with an overview of the company and a tour of their facilities. Established in 1992, Springwater Woodcraft is a family owned and operated company whose line includes 125 plus unique hand-crafted items, including benches, bookshelves, media units etc. Their products are made solely with pine, harvested from sustainably managed forests in North America. Their finishes are all non-toxic and water-based.

Overall, the Woodworking teachers PD Day provided a significant opportunity for industry and post-secondary Educators to promote careers in the sector, and outline the educational pathways to those careers. Special thanks to Lynn MacKinlay and the Georgian team for hosting this insightful event.