Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR

Name: Aaron MacDonell
Employer: North American Palladium Ltd.
Education: Technical Engineering Diploma, BSc Environmental Science

Aaron's favourite surroundings are the great outdoors. This makes his job as an Environmental Coordinator at a mine ideal because most of his time is spent outside. Aaron collects water samples, monitors the mine's portable water treatment plant and makes sure that waste oil and chemicals are properly disposed of. "I like the outdoors, so I wanted a job that allowed that," explains Aaron.

Aaron's Bachelor of Environmental Science degree allows him to comfortably stay on top of environmental concerns. His role is to make sure the mine complies with complex environmental laws and regulations while also ensuring that permits for the mine's operation are up to date. Aaron prepares environmental closure plans so that when the life of a mine ends, it is rehabilitated back to its natural state. All this hard work does come with perks. Good pay and a four-day work week allow Aaron to enjoy his favourite leisure activities such as golf and fishing.

Aaron looks forward to a long career in mining. He has set his sights on becoming a sustainability manager in the future, a more public role that could lead to working with First Nation communities in his region. "Environmental science is a very broad field so you need to specialize in something."

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

ELECTRICIAN

Name: Brian Melis
Employer: Dynatec Corp.
Education: Electrical Engineering Technologist

Brian's aptitude for hands-on skills like carpentry, mechanics, and electrical classes helped him to recognize early on that electrical engineering was a natural career choice for him. He currently works as an apprentice and next will get his journeyperson's papers.

One of the aspects Brian enjoys most about his career is the constant challenges he faces while learning to operate new equipment and technology. "I have been working on maintaining the automated process controls for the hoists. The systems are complex so it's a challenge to understand them."

In addition to enjoying the work, Brian greatly benefits from the community atmosphere in which he lives and works. "Your co-workers are also your friends, and that's what I love about my job here. I couldn't ask for better co-workers."

Brian emphasizes how safety in mining is taken very seriously. "If it is not safe, we don't do it. We think up a safe plan to deal with what we have to do." He also stresses that conditions underground have improved. "Today, the ventilation systems are much improved, so the air you breathe is cleaner."

Dynatec Corp. has allowed Brian to grow personally and professionally by providing both a stimulating workplace and the opportunity to live in a community he enjoys.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

METALLURGICAL ENGINEER

Name: Beatrice Pierre
Employer: Xstrata
Education: Bsc Biochemistry, BASc Chemical Engineering

Beatrice set her sights on science from the time she was young because she was intrigued by how things work. "If you are the kind of person who needs things to be tangible and hands-on, science is the way to go." While a career in mining was not top of mind while she studied biochemistry and chemical engineering in university, a recruiter from her eventual employer presented her with an opportunity she could not refuse.

Beatrice joined Falconbridge and went through a two-year Engineer in Training program. She was rotated through the company's mills, smelters and research facilities. Beatrice now works at a zinc plant where she is responsible for a precious metals circuit. This circuit is designed to capture gold and silver by-products that would otherwise be wasted. She spends a lot of time in the plant interacting with the operators, monitoring processes and tweaking formulas. "It's fun. It's a challenge. I never have a day where I go home and say, 'Gee that was boring'."

In mining, Beatrice can continue to expand her experience and scientific knowledge. It's also important for her to help provide goods that benefit society. "Without metals we wouldn't have batteries for hearing aids and pacemakers." As for misconceptions about the industry, Beatrice hopes to set the record straight: "Once you're in the industry, you know that the priorities are safety, the environment and production."

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

ASSAY LAB TECHNICIAN

Name: Frank Kwissiwa
Employer: Goldcorp, Musselwhite Mine
Education: Marathon High School

Frank Kwissiwa works as an assay lab technician at the Musselwhite goldmine, 480 km north of Thunder Bay. He plays a very important role within the mine since he prepares rock samples to test them for gold content. Information gained from assay results helps define the ore body - or the amount of gold in the ore - providing clues to geologists and mine planners where to drill and blast.

The quality of life is one of the best perks of the job. Musselwhite is a fly-in, fly-out operation located on the south shore of Opapimiskan Lake surrounded by pristine wilderness. The two weeks in, two weeks out rotation allows Frank to spend quality time with family and friends at his home. "Accommodations at the mine are excellent," Frank says. "They really treat us well." He has his own room in the mine's bunkhouse and can go fishing, sailing, or kayaking in the evenings. There's also a full size gymnasium, a weight room, saunas, pool tables and a TV lounge.

Frank's job allows him to make a meaningful contribution to his company as well as have an active personal lifestyle —spending time with his daughter and pursuing his hobbies playing hockey, baseball, and camping.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

PROSPECTOR

Name: Jessica Bjorkman

Employer: Contract work; claim-staking for mining and exploration companies

Education: Introduction to Geology, Confederation College, Thunder Bay; and Wilderness First Aid

Jessica's love for the outdoors, exploration and adventure led her into a career as a prospector. She has never looked back: "It's too bad that people don't know about prospecting. People have this image of an old guy in the Yukon panning for gold." Rather than using pans, prospectors research promising grounds through computer databases and the Internet, and carry global positioning systems to pinpoint mineralization.

Braving the wilderness, hiking through the bush and flying over breathtaking landscapes can all be in a day's work for a prospector. "You definitely have to have the personality to put up with harsh conditions and just keep it going. You can't be a quitter."

It also takes time and hard work to build a good reputation in this field. Jessica finds that networking is the best way to sell her services to prospective mining and exploration companies. Now that she is well known, the work is steady and the pay is good. Contract prospecting and claim staking jobs can range from a few days to two or three weeks.

When not working on contracts, Jessica stakes her own claims for exclusive mineral rights. She also hopes to launch an adventure tourism business. At 25, Jessica has carved an exciting career for herself that fits well with her strengths and interests.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

MILLWRIGHT/MECHANIC

Name: Kevin Burchill
Employer: Omya Canada Inc.
Education: Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanics

Kevin Burchill has always known he was destined to be a tradesperson. His passion for working with mechanical gadgets at a young age eventually led him to a successful career within the mining industry as a heavy duty equipment mechanic and millwright. Today, he works on diesel machines found in oversized equipment. In fact, some of this equipment is as tall as a three-story building! His additional training as a millwright has become a strong asset, as it not only increases his salary, but also provides him with a further technical knowledge to repair mechanical gearing, transmissions, gearboxes, and other mechanical devices. "I've always understood the value of a good tradesperson," he says. "Mechanical ability is absolutely a talent. It's always been a passion of mine."

Kevin has enjoyed a diverse and successful career within the mining industry. He has traveled to Canada's Far North to work at a gold mine in Yellowknife and has also spent several years in the high Artic at radar sites constructed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) northern air defense.

Kevin recognizes that, to be a good tradesperson, you not only need talent and technical expertise, but also physical stamina to work long days. However, the financial rewards are significant for young tradespeople, especially if they are willing to work in remote locations.

Kevin now chooses to work 40 hours a week, make a great salary, and enjoy a good quality of life with his family.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

DEVELOPMENT MINER

Name: Lincoln McClinchey
Employer: Newmont Mining Corp.
Education: Civil Engineering Technician

It never occurred to Lincoln to become a miner, even though he grew up in one of Ontario's great mining communities. Instead, he earned a diploma as a civil engineering technician and applied for jobs in his field. It was a challenge to find steady, well-paying work. That's when he decided to apply to be a surveyor's helper at the Macassa Mine. Although he was offered an underground labourer's job instead, he has remained in the trade ever since. Lincoln admits that he was apprehensive about his work at first: "There was a misconception that the guys who went into mines were those without education. I discovered that it's just not true."

Now working as a development miner, Lincoln operates mobile drilling equipment, called jumbos, and load-haul-dump machines. He also extends ventilation ducting, compressed air and water services as the drift, or tunnel, advances. "The work is physically challenging but you have a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day."

As for his initial hesitations about the job, Lincoln says that he works with a great bunch of guys and makes a good living for his wife and five-year-old son, both of which are priorities for him. Having worked in four mines over the past ten years has also broadened Lincoln's experience making him very marketable in the industry.

CAREER PROFILE

DIAMOND DRILLER

Explore for more

Name: Mike Brisson
Employer: Boart Longyear Inc.
Education: Surface Common Core

Can you imagine drilling a hole through solid rock that is four times the height of the CN tower? As a diamond driller, that is the challenge that Mike Brisson faces every day. Using special drills made of bits of industrial diamonds, Mike is able to cut through layers of rock to obtain core samples of the mineral wealth deep underground. Mining and exploration companies analyze these core samples before investing hundreds of millions of dollars to develop a mine.

Diamond drilling is very specialized, requiring a high degree of expertise and precision. Mike received his training through a course offered by his employer. He has worked extensively throughout northern Ontario, the Arctic and northern Saskatchewan in his quest for diamonds, uranium and other important resources.

With the mining industry booming, diamond drilling companies are very busy. These specialized companies, located around the globe, operate year-round, 24/7. Mike works 12-hour day or night shifts on a five-day schedule. On weekends though, he takes full advantage of nearby lakes to boat and fish.

A diamond driller is compensated well for hard work. "There's good money to be made in it," says Mike. Those who succeed in this career are reasonably strong, mechanically inclined and recognize the importance of working safely.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

VIRTUAL REALITY MODELER

Name: Matthew Haywood
Employer: MIRARCO
Education: BA, Anthropology; BSc Computer Science

Imagine yourself driving through a maze of underground tunnels, hundreds of metres below the surface, on a load-haul-dump machine (LHD). Now imagine doing all this in the comfort of an office on your desktop computer! This is an example of Matthew's career as a virtual reality modeler. In this position, he is responsible for assisting a mining operation to improve its underground safety by creating realistic mining simulations to improve the visibility of the LHD machines.

Matthew is self-motivated and likes to work independently. In high school, he struggled to find the right career path. "I knew that higher education was the way to go, so I went on to study at university," he says. He now recognizes the value of post-secondary education. In his position, he is required to stay on top of the latest computer applications at all the time. When he started working as a virtual reality modeler, he learned a 3-D creation program called Blender that is used for computer graphics and animation. To apply advanced simulation, he has also had to learn to code in Python. His education in math, anthropology and computer science has helped him to understand the theory behind the applications to apply it to the mining environment most effectively.

Matthew has a job that many people envy. "It's fun," says Matthew. "I grew up playing video games and the other guys always bug me, saying 'you get to play video games all day now.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

MINING ENGINEER

Name: Maria Jaworski
Education: 4th Year Mining Engineering Student McGill University

You could say that engineering runs in the family for Maria Jaworski. Both of her older sisters, Stephanie and Patricia, are graduates of engineering programs at McGill.

Visits to her oldest sister, Stephanie, in the mining engineering program at the university encouraged Maria to apply in her last year of CEGEP. Seeing the way the program was set up, the small number of students, individual attention from professors and the high probability of employment after graduation, helped Maria make the choice.

Through her four co-op terms in the program, Maria had the opportunity to work in a variety of diverse roles throughout the mining industry including: research, underground mining, reclamation and mining consulting.

"In one of my positions I was one of only three females on site and the only one to go underground,"says Maria. "I never felt uncomfortable or intimidated. I worked directly with the mine engineer, doing basic surveys and mine design work. I learned a lot and had fun doing it."

Due to the current boom in the mining industry, Maria expects to be employed full time right away, possibly working in the Alberta oil sands. "The mining industry gives an individual so many opportunities to further their skills as an engineer, with the wide variety of work available,"says Maria.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANIC

Name: Marc Larochelle
Employer: Toromont CAT
Education: Heavy Equipment Mechanic Technician

Marc's passion for mechanics began as a young boy when he and his friends took apart and reassembled dirt bikes, snowmobiles, cars and trucks. So, the decision to become a heavy equipment mechanic came easily. "It was the only trade I wanted to pursue," he explains. Taking advantage of a co-op program in high school, Marc worked for three years at a transmission shop. He then obtained his heavy equipment mechanics diploma.

Marc has acquired experience working on "pretty much everything" at the mine including engines, hydraulic systems and electrical systems. And, there is never a dull moment in his line of work. "One day," he says, "I'll be working on an excavator undercarriage, and the next day, on a load-haul-dump (LHD) machine underground." Transporting LHDs underground is an impressive process requiring lots of skill. Since the machines are too large to fit down the mineshaft, they are sliced and then welded back together once underground.

The decision to become a specialized mechanic in mining has paid off handsomely for Marc who takes great pride in his work. In addition to financial rewards, he continues to gain experience in his trade through on-the-job training, courses and daily interaction with fellow mechanics. For someone who enjoys this work as much as he does, "there's always overtime and you can work as much as you want," concludes Marc.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

MINING ENGINEER

Name: Melissa Nowicki
Employer: Goldcorp Inc.
Education: BA.Sc Mineral Engineering

As a mining engineer, Melissa performs one of the most important roles at the mine. She is responsible for ensuring the safety of miners in the excavation and production of minerals. In her four year internship as a mining engineer at Goldcorp Inc., she has been able to work in a variety of different areas within the engineering department that has enabled her to learn and appreciate the various aspects of mining operations. This broad knowledge base is extremely valuable as she continues to pursue a career in the mining industry.

Being a woman and working underground, she has received a lot of support from other members of her team. "They really take you under their wing. The people here are really nice. It's a young workforce, and there are lots of people to go fishing with on the weekends. It's a great place to be working."

Her starting salary allows Melissa to enjoy a high quality of life that many new graduates do not experience until later in their careers. In addition, Melissa is able to learn and progress in a stimulating and dynamic environment that allows her to work with other young people and be involved in a variety of exciting projects.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

Name: Patricia Jaworski
Employer: Suncor Energy Inc.
Education: B. Eng in Mechanical Engineering

Patricia Jaworski ended up in mining engineering via a roundabout route. In her fourth year in the mechanical engineering program at McGill University, she recognized that she had little practical work experience to help her land an engineering job after graduation. Until then, her summers were largely taken up training and playing rugby for the Quebec provincial team and the national developmental team.

That's when she decided to be the test case for the "Minor in Mining Engineering" at McGill, which was a proposal at the time. Based on her older sister Stephanie's experience in the mining engineering program, she knew that the additional courses and co-op work terms would make her more marketable to potential employers. Patricia found exactly what she wanted, and it only extended her schooling by one academic semester.

Patricia completed two co-op work terms, one at Brunswick Mines, NB, and another at the Canadian Salt Company in Windsor, ON. Immediately upon graduation, she went to work for Suncor in the Engineer-in-Training (EIT) program in Fort McMurray, AB.

"The EIT rotation program allows engineers to experience three or four different positions within the company and then returns them to their home base," explains Patricia. "In my case, my home department is Reliability Engineering, working with mine equipment from a mechanical perspective."

As for her work environment, Patricia enjoys the fast pace, where she is always on her toes. "The workforce is very young and we are well paid. I love the people I work with. As a woman, I am definitely in the minority, but it is not something I notice; I am treated as an equal."

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

MINING ENGINEER

Name: Stephanie Jaworski
Employer: Imperial Oil
Education: B.Eng. - Mining Engineering

Stephanie chose the McGill mining engineering co-op program as she was strong in science and considers herself to be a pragmatic, practical person. "It was a small co-op program that offered the chance to alternate academic semesters with work terms where we earned money in real jobs in the mining industry," says Stephanie. "Those co-op jobs definitely helped me and my classmates secure permanent employment after completing the program."

After graduation, Stephanie immediately went to work for Imperial Oil in Toronto, Ontario, in their fuel distribution group. She worked there for two-and-a-half years before transferring to Montreal, Quebec into a field position.

Stephanie currently works as a Field Technical Services Representative, supporting Imperial Oil's lubricants product line, covering the region from Kingston, Ontario through Quebec and into the Maritimes. She visits customers on-site and helps them keep their machinery running efficiently and cost-effectively. Approximately 30% of her clients are mining customers.

In her job, Stephanie travels extensively throughout the Eastern portion of Canada, spending about 2/3 of her time on the road. "Although I am not working directly in the mining industry, I have immediate credibility when I go to a mine site and they learn that I am a mining engineering grad," explains Stephanie. "That's the great thing about mining. There are a wide variety of jobs available and you don't necessarily have to work at a mine. There are so many interesting opportunities."

When Stephanie is not on the road visiting clients, she works from her home on a 40-acre farm in Williamstown, Ontario.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

GEOLOGIST

Name: Shastri Ramnath
Employer: FNX Mining Company Inc.
Education: BSc Geology, MSc Geology

Shastri always loved math and sciences, but when she first experienced geology, she discovered her real passion. "As a geologist, we look for clues, put together an interpretation of what happened and, based on that interpretation, we decide where we want to look. Geology is a lot like detective work!"

Shastri enjoys traveling, and when she found an opportunity to further her education at Rhodes University in South Africa, she jumped at the chance. "They had a great mineral exploration program with field trips to Namibia, Zimbabwe and throughout South Africa, so it was great," she says. Careers in Exploration Geology now offer opportunities to see the world. In fact, just recently, her employer sent her to Guinea, West Africa to supervise a drilling program.

A career as a geologist is dynamic, challenging, and rewarding. Besides the excellent salary, there is a wonderful opportunity to do something new everyday, work with computers, and have fun on the job. "If you like camping and getting out in the bush, it's great. I get to drive quads and snowmobiles and fly in bush planes and helicopters. If they paid me minimum wage, I'd still want to do this job."

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

SALES/MANAGEMENT

Name: Sandro Spadafora
Employer: Rezplast Manufacturing Ltd.
Education: Business Administration

Being sociable, out-going, patient, and detail-oriented, Sandro found the perfect fit as a salesperson of mining products. Sandro has been driven by the need to find a challenging and exciting career. "I'm not the kind of guy to sit behind a desk and not do anything, or sit and stare at a piece of paper," he says. Indeed, Sandro is rarely tied to his desk, as he is required to travel all over North America to visit his clients, or pitch the companies' newest products. "I enjoy the day-to-day and one-on-one interaction with people, and sales is perfect for that," he says.

Keeping up with the latest technology is a challenge for Sandro, as advancements are constantly being made to improve product lines. He has learned from experience that clients expect him to have a clear understanding of their business and to be very honest and knowledgeable about product lines. This seems to be a recipe for success, as his career has quickly advanced. Today, he is General Manager and Vice President of his company and he's not done yet! "I see myself growing the company- not just sticking local, but growing international," he says.

Sandro has a growing appreciation of the mining industry as his career has progressed. "When you take a close look at the extent of the mining industry from start to finish, it's really quite amazing. Mining makes the world go round," he says.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

WELDER

Name: Tom Carlyle
Employer: Sandvick Mining and Construction Canada Inc.
Education: Welder

Tom has always enjoyed exploring ways to build and connect mechanical equipment. "As soon as I could get my hands on mechanical stuff to play with, I was building things" he admits. His four-month co-op placement at a local welding shop was a dream come true for him in Grade 12. In fact, he enjoyed it so much that, at age 17, he completed all his welding position tests within four months. With these welding tickets in hand, he was able to enter the workforce immediately after school. "Welding is really more of a hands-on trade," he says. "You can attend school, but you really learn the trade by doing it and perfecting it through practice."

His passion for his trade, coupled with his wide range of experience, has helped Tom advance in his profession. Early in his career, he was involved in the remarkable construction of a new mine in the north, which he says resembled a "Lego-type assembly." At 36, he now supervises nine welders and is responsible for shop maintenance as well as on-site field maintenance. At times, he is required to also do emergency repairs underground.

Tom is very dedicated to his trade and takes great pride in the quality of his work. As a supervisor, he is also very serious about ensuring the safety of his workers at all times. Tom works hard and constantly strives to know all he can about his trade to continually develop his skills.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

CONTRACT MINER

Name: Tyrone Dasti
Employer: The Redpath Group, North Bay
Education: Forestry Technology

As a contract miner, Tyrone is in constant search for the earth's hidden treasures. Starting out as a lead hand and moving up to a shift boss, Tyrone has quickly advanced his career during the ten years that he has worked in the sector. He now travels overseas to exotic locations like Indonesia. "If you work hard and enjoy what you do - and I really enjoy what I do - there are a lot of opportunities in the mining industry. It's not a stagnant job where you feel you're doing the same thing over and over. There's a lot of variety and you're learning all the time."

Canadian miners are among the most respected in the world and are often hired by mine operators in regions like Asia, Africa and Latin America. During his career, Tyrone has enjoyed several overseas assignments that have strengthened his professional knowledge of different mines and mining methods. He has also been fortunate to explore fascinating countries and cultures as he travels across the world.

Tyrone stays on top of technical advances within the mining process because, as he knows firsthand, the days of the pick and shovel are long gone. Currently, he participates in various training programs provided by his employer, and intends to pursue further education in subjects such as computers, math, physics and geography.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

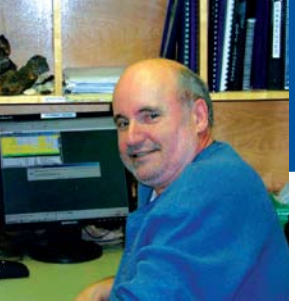
UNDERGROUND MINER

Name: Francis Bellerose
Employer: IAMGOLD
Education: Vocational School Diploma in Mining

Francis Bellerose is a stope miner, also called an underground miner. He studied at the Centre de formation professionnelle in Val-d'Or during a period of eight months to obtain his Vocational School Diploma in mining. However, his training did not end there. During his employment at IAMGOLD, he completed a 120-day field training course under the supervision of a more experienced miner. "The course is an introduction to the groundwork, but it is in the mines that we learn the basics of the trade," he states.

Francis is part of a mining team which initiates the process of extracting the rock and the ore from the earth. Stope miners work underground using sophisticated machines and equipment in order to ensure the ground is secure to drill the rock which contains the minerals and metals sought in preparation for blasting. Other members of the team are in charge of blasting and moving the rock. "To do this type of work, you need good physical endurance, resourcefulness and the ability to work alone for long periods of time. And you definitely cannot be claustrophobic," says Francis.

Francis enjoys his work because he likes to keep moving and to be physically active. According to Francis, "The 10-hour work shift is over quickly. There is always something to do and I am never bored." He also realizes that if there ever came a time when he could no longer do this job, there are other opportunities in the mines for work that is less physically demanding. Because of the diverse employment options it offers, Francis foresees a career in the mining industry.



Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR/GROUP LEADER

Name: Denis Parent
Employer: ArcelorMittal
Education: Secondary School

"I was born in Thetford Mines," says Denis Parent. "On rainy days, we could hear the noise from the trucks in the mines." It is therefore not surprising that Mr. Parent, a training instructor and group leader at ArcelorMittal, has made a career in the mining industry. He has been in his current position for two years now, but has worked in the industry for 36 years. He first started as a day labourer and has held different positions throughout his career. It is in 1988 that he began to operate loading equipment.

Loading equipment operators hold key positions in mine production. They are responsible for loading the waste or the mill-feed material in accordance with the controller's specifications and truck load restrictions. Operators use three different types of scoops (excavation machines) and two different types of loaders at the mine. Each operator is responsible for taking great care of this complex and expensive equipment. In order to ensure the safety of everyone at the mine and to contribute to efficient production, operators receive extensive training.

Denis is responsible in his current position for providing this training. His work consists of developing training programs, training operators and teaming up with the training facilitators who are responsible for the field training. The objective is to ensure thorough and safe training for everyone. Denis loves his work mostly because he likes having contact with people. Each new employee who starts training represents a new challenge for him, one that he undertakes with passion.

Denis believes there are a lot of opportunities in the mining industry. "In the past," says Denis, "all a person needed to become a miner was to be tall and strong. Today, things have changed." He emphasizes that, thanks to the new technologies being introduced, the mining industry is now becoming more interesting for young people. "There is also an increasing number of women in the industry who excel as loading equipment operators," states Denis.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

TRAINING COORDINATOR

Name: Guy Bergeron
Employer: ArcelorMittal
Education: College diploma in Natural Sciences

Guy Bergeron has held the position of Training Coordinator at ArcelorMittal for six years now. His work consists of planning and coordinating employee training at the pellet plant. Safety being a priority issue, a large portion of the training activities are centered around safety in the workplace. His responsibilities also include providing training related to new technologies and orientation services for new employees. His duties include conducting training needs analysis, following-up on the employees' training records, planning training schedules and coordinating training with the Union. Guy also acts as a consultant to management.

Guy started his career at ArcelorMittal as a laboratory technician and held several positions before accepting his present job. His employer helped him advance within the company by offering him professional retraining at different moments in his career. He has greatly appreciated the opportunities for professional development that were provided to him.

Indeed, Guy believes that the mining industry offers a great many opportunities. The large variety of jobs available and the career development possibilities make this sector a very attractive one. "Individuals who have both the potential and the interest can look forward to an exceptional career in this industry," says Guy.

"Most people do not know much about the mining industry," declares Guy. "People in the industry do not only work in mines." Human relations are an important part of this industry and it is precisely what Guy loves about his work. "I like having contact with people. I like sharing my knowledge and my values."

What does the future hold in store for Guy? He is currently looking forward to accepting a new challenge within the company, thereby benefiting from yet another opportunity to advance his career.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS MANAGER

Name: Andy Baribeau
Employer: Goldcorp – Opinaca Mines
Education: Professional diploma in office systems

Andy loves the challenge of bringing people together so that they can work together toward common objectives. His main responsibility as Community Affairs Manager is to establish and maintain relationships between his employer, Cree communities and Jamesiens (the regional population that is not Aboriginal). His responsibilities also involve working and negotiating with different levels of government through all phases of a mining project. Ensuring that these groups communicate and collaborate is critical to the success of all mining projects in his company.

There is no typical day for Andy. On any given week he might be organizing a pre-consultation group with residents of a town, facilitating business focus groups or negotiating an impact benefit agreement. His work takes him all over northern Québec and he spends three-quarters of his time working away from the office.

The mining industry is an exciting place to work now because it is in the process of positive change. "The new leaders are now more aware of the impact of their actions and they must manage the resources accordingly. They must consider how their actions will affect workers, the environment and the communities. The industry is and must continue reinventing itself for the better," says Andy.

In addition to his professional skills, Andy brings a personal advantage to his job. His father is Québécois and his mother is Cree. He has an intimate understanding of each group's needs, which is helpful in his work. Bringing communities together is an objective that is close to his heart.

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

GEOMATICS SPECIALIST

Name: Jiro Shirota
Employer: Caracle Creek International Consulting Inc
Education: Graphical Information Systems Specialist Program

Jiro is a geomatics specialist. He designs, maintains and manipulates geographic data, using specialized software to create maps and 3D models. Jiro manages a simple database which shows the registration status of various mining claims. His company obtains this information from provincial governments' websites. Jiro uses the database to make sure clients' mining claims are still current and haven't expired.

Jiro also helps out with new claims. As he explains, "When a new project comes up the first thing geologists require is a set of map data that provides base information such as roads, lakes and topography. I develop a procedure, which helps generate this dataset quickly no matter where the project is located. We have projects all over the world."

Jiro works primarily with a team of geologists; they collect information in the field, which Jiro uses back at the office. Jiro enjoys his work."I feel satisfied when my map products help people make important decisions."

He also likes the mining industry, since in his view, it involves a certain level of imagination."We're dealing with things that are buried underground. No matter how much data you collect, you need a geologist with a good imagination to interpret the data. Software certainly makes it easier to visualize your data, but at the end of the day, you realize that the most powerful tool you have is not your computer but your own brain. And, using that part of the brain is fun."

Explore for more

CAREER PROFILE

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNICIAN

Name: David Beamer
Employer: The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation
Education: Wildlife Habitat Restoration Ecology

David notes that, "My job is sort of new for this industry; there aren't a lot of people doing it. So there's a lot of opportunity for people who want to rebuild the ecosystem and help the environment."

David coordinates rehabilitation projects on abandoned aggregate properties in Ontario. He also coordinates research with universities and other consultants to improve environmental rehabilitation in the aggregate sector. In David's job, there is no typical day. "Usually, I'll be visiting sites that have potential for rehabilitation. I am a part of creating a design that may result in the land becoming a site for forest, prairies or wetlands. I may potentially be conversing with other members of academia and the aggregate sector about the work."

David enjoys his work because there is a huge potential for positive environmental impact and an opportunity to create benefits and gains. Because the mining industry has a lot of resources, he is able to be on the cutting edge of ecological research, techniques, and processes. "There's a lot of cooperation too, so when we make gains everyone shares the knowledge. And there's a lot of interest in the industry to do things environmentally better, so it's a great time for me."

David believes that the mining industry is well-suited for people who are passionate about the environment, realize resources are required, and want to help the industry become greener.

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CAREER PROFILE

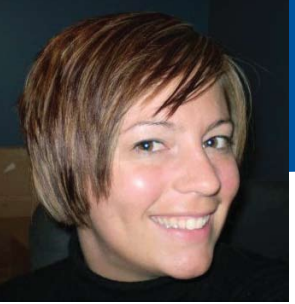
GEOLOGICAL MODELER

Name: Michelle Stone
Employer: Caracle Creek International Consulting, Inc.
Education: PhD, Registered Professional Geoscientist

Michelle Stone has been doing geological modeling for 10 years. The purpose of her work is to help companies predict where to find additional or better quality ore and to estimate the quantity of mineral resources at a particular site.

Michelle comments that, "I am never bored, because every project is different." To do her job, she might visit a mine site (which could be in Canada or in another country) or conduct a field visit to a promising area. Back at the office, she analyzes exploration or mining data using three-dimensional software. She creates solid shapes to represent the geology of an area and the places where minerals and metals can be found. Then she estimates the amount and grade of the mineral resource. As part of her work, Michelle communicates her findings in the technical reports that she writes.

"I really enjoy the dynamic nature of exploration and mining. I'm constantly learning and I have the opportunity to travel. I also get to help advance mining and exploration projects through my analysis and integration of multiple sets of data." People with an eye for detail, who love travelling, will do well as modelers, according to Michelle.



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CAREER PROFILE

HEALTH AND SAFETY COORDINATOR

Name: Shannon Truax
Employer: Dufferin Aggregates
Education: Environmental Engineering Technology

Shannon likes the fast-paced environment of her job. As she says, "I like how no two days are the same--I am constantly presented with new challenges that keep me learning!"

Shannon has five sites for which she takes care of the human resources (HR) and safety concerns. For example, on one site she might provide safety talks, on another, explain safe working procedures and on a third, how to recruit new employees. "Most of my days are spent at one or more of my sites. I go for site tours and visit with frontline supervisors and hourly employees. I think it is beneficial to get out there and see what is going on at the sites, to provide the support that they need."

As well, Shannon monitors any safety incidents or problems and tracks them to see if there are any trends. In addition to working with employees, she also works closely with Dufferin's external contractors to ensure they are working safely on company sites.

As for a career in the industry, Shannon believes that the mining industry is well-suited for people who like a fast-paced, constantly changing environment. Even though most of the principles will always remain the same, new programs and procedures are often emerging. Shannon's employer has provided her with the training she needs to do well in her job, even as the requirements change.

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CAREER PROFILE

GEOLOGICAL TECHNICIAN

Name: Nathan Lintner
Employer: Caracle Creek International Consulting, Inc.
Education: BSc in Geology (in progress)

For six weeks in his job as a geological technician, Nathan Lintner took a helicopter to work every day. As he says, "I really like the fact that I rarely do the same thing for an extended period of time. I get to experience a vast portfolio of jobs and get to see a lot of country. I have travelled to BC, Saskatchewan, Nunavut and northern Ontario, as well as seeing places in between while on lay over."

On a typical day in the office, Nathan will assist geologists in preparing a National Instrument (NI) 43-101 report. The NI is a strict guideline for how public Canadian companies can disclose scientific and technical information about mineral projects to potential investors. He helps compile the report or also creates figures and maps using a graphical information system (GIS) program. Scanning and printing maps is also a big part of Nathan's job.

If he's in the field, a typical day will start with equipment preparation. Once in the field, Nathan aids the geologist in taking samples, mapping, or just prospecting. He completes data entry at the end of the day during sampling projects, and organizes and packages the samples.

Nathan believes that people who want to be geological technicians should be outgoing and have good physical endurance, with a love of the outdoors.

Nathan is undecided about his future plans, but he plans to stay in the mining sector and is leaning towards exploration geologist or geological consultant. "I enjoy the good wages in the industry and the close knit mining community."

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CAREER PROFILE

MINERALS PROCESSING OPERATOR TECHNICIAN

Name: Dawn Hamilton
Employer: Iron Ore Company of Canada
Education: Mining and Mineral Processing Program; College of the North Atlantic

Dawn Hamilton has been working in the mining industry for almost six years. She started as a process technician, then worked as a haul-truck operator and now works in the chemical laboratory as a sampler analyst performing quality control.

Dawn works with a team leader, chemist and three analysts. It's a close team environment, everyone has to communicate closely with each other since the work of one team member has an impact on the work of others.

"We have many different stations where we perform tasks," says Dawn. "At the "quicks" bench, we dry, split and weigh ore samples, and then use automation to get a chemical read out on the samples. "Inside quicks" is another part of the lab where we measure for magnetic content, for iron, silica and carbon. The third station is where we test the iron pellets. Each station has an important role in the overall process. For example, the results on an hourly basis are used by the Pelletizing and Concentrating Team leaders to make adjustments to the quality output, resulting in a final product that is within conformance of customer requirements."

"I'm learning something new every day and I've benefited from training and mentoring at every stage of my career progression. I had a mentor for several weeks when I first became an analyst".

Dawn believes that to do well as a processing operator technician, a person needs strong inter-personal and communications skills and be disciplined and safety conscious not only in terms of his or her own safety, but that of others, too.

In Dawn's view, the opportunities and options in mining are endless. She also notes that, "Some women believe that it's difficult working with men at a mine. But the fact is, it's an inclusive, respectful environment."