

SPOTLIGHT ON 2024

ANNUAL REPORT

ECAO

ELECTRICAL
CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION OF
ONTARIO



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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Chris Cimek

Chair - E. S. Fox Limited



Ken Crawford

Past Chair - C&M Electric



Tim Birnie

First Vice-Chair - Birnie Electric Limited



Anthony Tofano

Second Vice-Chair
TJI Multi-Trade Contractors Limited



Doug Dinniwell

Treasurer - Western Mechanical Electrical
Millwright Services Limited



Roch Picknell

ETBA Chair - Wired Synergy Inc.

ECAO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DIRECTOR NAME	COMPANY	ECA CHAPTER
Mark Lloyd	T. Lloyd Electric Limited	ECA Hamilton-Niagara
Danielle Gray	Industrial Electrical Contractors Brockville Limited	ECA Quinte/St.Lawrence
Gary Rossol	Al Gordon Electric Limited	ECA London
Mike Leone	Procon Constructors Inc.	ECA Hamilton-Niagara
Mike Rose	Rogol Electric Company Limited	Greater Toronto ECA
Dave Scott	Plan Group	Greater Toronto ECA
Rick Ball	White Pine Electric Limited	ECA Thunder Bay
Carlo Maola	DMW Electrical Instrumentation Inc.	ECA Sarnia
Bob Brennan	Bradley-Kelly Construction Ltd.	ECA Ottawa
Johncarlo Salvatore	Mid-South Contractors Limited	Windsor ECA
Jason Jackson	Tri-Electric Solutions Limited	ECA Central Ontario
Martin Girardi	S & T Group	ECA Sudbury (Northern)
Dan Lancia	Holaco Installations	ECA Line
Tom Beros	Net Electric	ECAO Communications Committee

Directors-at-Large

DIRECTOR NAME	POSITION	COMPANY	ECA CHAPTER
Chris Cimek	Chair	E. S. Fox Limited	ECA Niagara
Tim Birnie	First- Vice-Chair	Birnie Electric Limited	Greater Toronto ECA
Anthony Tofano	Second Vice-Chair	TJJ Multi-Trade Contractors Limited	ECA Sarnia
Roch Picknell	ETBA Chair	Wired Synergy Inc.	ECA Ottawa
Ken Crawford	Past- Chair	C&M Electric	ECA Ottawa
Doug Dinniwel	Treasurer	Western Mechanical Electrical Millwright Services Limited	Greater Toronto ECA

Retired Board and ETBA Members

DIRECTOR NAME	COMPANY
Terry Moore	Trade-Mark Industrial Inc.
John Barr	WSN Construction Inc.

ECAO PRESIDENT'S REPORT



CHRIS CIMEK

Industry excellence. That is the phrase that comes to mind as I reflect on 2024. The Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) continues to be your partner in leading the way in our industry.

Whether advising Government, providing valued perspective to industry panels and events, guiding organizational improvements, strengthening industry relationships or any of the other numerous endeavours to advance the interests of our members and contribute to the advancement of our organization, this past year clearly demonstrated ECAO's commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.

Advising Government

We are proud to sit on a number of advisory committees with direct or indirect influence on Government policy, among them the Provincial Electrical Trade Committee, the COR Stakeholder Committee, numerous Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) advisory committees, the Ontario Construction Secretariat (OCS), Provincial Labour Management Health and Safety Committee (Section 21), and the Construction Legislative

Review Committee. In addition, we met with Ministers and staff from several Ministries during the year including Labour, Transportation, Energy, the Treasury Board, Infrastructure, and the Premier's Office. We will continue to make these key relationships a priority.

Industry Panels and Events

This past year, ECAO hosted, provided keynote addresses and contributed as panel members in what, for us, may have been record numbers. Our Low Voltage and Systems Integration Symposium held in June, the day prior to our Annual General Meeting, attracted over 125 attendees! One measure of the Symposium's success is the number of times it has been replicated, even if only in part, at the request of our members and industry partners. Future Forward – Inclusion and Leadership Forum, an event held by ECAO's Future Leaders Advisory and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committees, also attracted a large number of first-time attendees and received positive feedback.

Outside of ECAO-run events, ECAO members or representatives contributed a great deal to industry happenings including those hosted by the National Construction Labour

Relations Association, Ontario Construction Secretariat, Asociación de Constructores de Obras Eléctricas de Occidente, National Electrical Trade Council, National Electrical Contractors' Association, Unión Nacional de Constructores Electromecánicos and numerous local associations.

Industry Relationships

Our multi-faceted, valued partnerships within the electrical and communications construction and maintenance industry take many forms. ECAO actively supports the events and political lobbying of industry partners. We provide expertise through speakers and panel members. Our representatives preside over and participate on impactful committees, councils, and organizations. We regularly interact with areas within Ontario, across Canada and internationally. And we continue to develop our relationships with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, a true global labour partner. We work hard to develop and nurture partnerships because we recognize the criticality of a unified local, national and international voice on matters that impact our members.

Organizational Improvements

Early in 2024, ECAO embarked on a strategic planning journey that continues today. The team accomplished a great deal under the previous strategic plan, and I am excited to build on the progress made and dive into our new, progressive strategies. In tandem with our strategy work, ECAO has shifted roles and responsibilities within our team where we saw opportunities for greater efficiency and creativity. We're looking to the year ahead with renewed energy and ambition.

Industry Excellence

I believe this best summarizes ECAO's efforts in 2024. Industry excellence. Rest assured that our team will continue to strive for that same lofty goal in the year ahead, and beyond. Together with our members and partners, we continue to lead during this time of unprecedented evolution, and it is my great honour to play a part in this compelling story.



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



R. GRAEME AITKEN

Gratitude. I'd like to start there.

I'd like to begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to our members; our partners in industry; our union partners, the IBEW; the committed, wise folks from across our industry that bring their smarts and experience to make ECAO's committees forward-looking, relevant and impactful; and to the skilled and dedicated ECAO team who make me incredibly proud every day.

And now, a brief look at the past year.

When I look back at 2024, I am awed and humbled at the unparalleled successes we've seen across our industry. By all metrics – hours worked, industry collaboration provincially, federally and internationally, educational offerings, and much more – our industry had an unprecedented year. Our WSIB Program of Excellence delivery saw additional - and significant - rebates to our member companies, totalling over \$800,000 over the four years we have provided this program!

We shared a plethora of learning and networking opportunities throughout 2024, including:

- The Low Voltage Systems Integration Symposium
- Understanding the impact of Artificial Intelligence on our members and industry
- ECAO's annual industry conference and its first-class speakers
- Programs on leadership, and health and safety excellence
- Our Future Forward: Leadership and Inclusion forum, presented by ECAO's Future Leaders' Advisory Council and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

ECAO continued to benefit this year from our membership with NECA through our participation in meetings, events including the National Convention in San Diego and panels. Our members accessed virtual and self-directed education programs, sixteen ECAO representatives received training to enable them to instruct the Field Leadership Essentials course, and we saw increased collaboration with our American counterparts. We were also well represented at ELECTRI, NECA's research and development organization.

Where do we go from here? We continue our upward trajectory, of course.

We know that 2025 will be another busy, rewarding and challenging year. In late March, we'll welcome the return of Dr. Awad Hanna for a few days of in-depth industry-specific learning for his first visit in 2025. Leading up to that date and potentially continuing beyond it, your ETBA will be engaged in negotiations for the renewal of our Principal Agreement.

We invite you to save the date of June 5th for our Annual General Meeting, being held in Niagara Falls. It will be a full day of learning, connecting and, as always, socializing, and will be followed by our Presidents' Gala. In our continuing efforts to create a valuable and informative Annual Industry Conference, 2025 will see us in Chicago in concert with the NECA National Conference.

What we are most excited about, and what we feel will be of tremendous benefit to our member contractors, is the launch of ECAO's broader and more comprehensive education program. While still in the planning and building phase, we will offer a wide range of educational programming to assist your

employees in obtaining the skills necessary to help grow your businesses. Our goal is to provide a mix of in-person training throughout the Province, webinars, self-directed learning programs with knowledge verification, and video instruction. To provide you with the necessary information you'll need to take advantage of the offerings and plan for your employees' training, we'll encapsulate our learning and education program into a comprehensive educational calendar and index. Watch for all the details in the early part of the year.

It takes a village – and I'm thankful for ours.

I'd like to return to the theme of gratitude and turn the focus inward for a moment. As I said, the ECAO team makes me proud every day, and 2024 was a tremendous year of professional and personal development for this small, mighty group. Across the team, our people interacted across multiple channels with members and industry partners every day, sharing their

knowledge and experience to benefit these key stakeholders. And it's not due to our President Chris – or even me! – that ECAO's many events go off without a hitch. It's the hard-working, driven team standing beside us that brings those days home every time. It's their energy and courage to push until every detail is ironed out that ensures ECAO delivers rich and relevant education, effective networking opportunities – and some fun.

At ECAO, we invest in ways to be a better Association through investments in our people – investments that help them better serve our members. As individuals, their growth and accomplishments over 2024 have resulted in a stronger team that is focused on delivering exceptional value to our members and partners. I'm grateful for each one of them and so proud of the sum of their parts.

Here's to 2025 – another opportunity, with your support and partnership, to surprise ourselves with unparalleled success.



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YOUR ECAO



From Left to Right

Row 1: Vincent Duong (Senior Office Coordinator), Patryk Wrobel (Labour Relations Analyst), Jodi Travers (Labour Relations Manager), April De Vuono (Receptionist), Cristina Najera (Health & Safety Administrator), Nathan Parsons (Certi-Fire VR Curriculum Developer), Vaishnavi Bala (Certi-Fire Administrator), Kamakshi Ahluwalia (Marketing & Communications Manager)

Row 2: Tom MacKay (Health & Safety Director), Graeme Aitken (Executive Director), Lou Stranges (Accounting)

LABOUR RELATIONS REPORT



JODI TRAVERS

2024 was a year of significant labour relations activity. At a time when the broader North American labour landscape experienced challenges, we were able to achieve a tentative Joint Proposal - a critical step in the upcoming round of bargaining.

The year began with a focused bargaining planning session and continued with dedicated ETBA meetings to discuss the Joint Proposal and other provincial issues. We provided negotiations training to the ECA Bargaining Teams and ETBA representatives, updated our comparison documents and created new comparisons to assist ETBA and ECA representatives during bargaining.

This year saw a slight increase in hours worked compared to 2023 and 2022, which can be largely attributed to specific large-scale projects. For instance, Windsor experienced a tripling of hours due to the Gordie Howe Bridge and NextStar facility projects. Various mining projects in Northern Ontario have contributed to nearly a 300% increase in hours. On the other hand, Sarnia, which saw a significant spike in hours

during 2021 and 2022 related to the AST2 project, has since returned to its average levels.

When compared to WSIB hours for electrical work exclusively, ECAO's member hours represented approximately 18% to 20% of the total hours worked in Ontario since 2016. Several factors contributed to this low percentage, including increasing competitiveness and growth of non-union firms, labour shortages, and the various reasons why contractors may choose not to bid on certain projects.

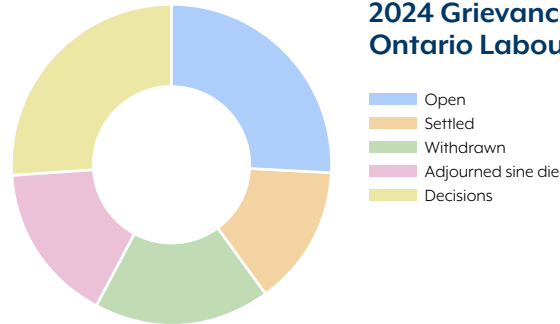
To realize an increase in market share in the coming year and beyond, ECAO knows our contractors need to be more competitive, to be able to rely on a growing and qualified workforce, and to know about the availability - or not - of stabilization funds in a timely fashion. And they need consistency throughout the province. Current conditions - different rules in each local area, no deadlines for applying for stabilization funds or market recovery terms, and not being able to get qualified workers from all union halls - are not favourable to ensuring competitiveness in the electrical, line and low voltage markets. We need to work with our labour partners to grow our industry, and this begins with an examination of where we currently stand.

Education remains a cornerstone of ECAO's labour relations strategy. Throughout 2024, seven issues of 'You Ought to Know' were published covering topics like WSIB data analysis, the benefits of the Joint Proposal, strike costs, wage comparisons, and take-home pay calculations.

Additionally, we hosted several webinars on labour relations including a detailed overview of the Principal Agreement, employee communication during collective bargaining, and workplace investigations.

The Ontario Construction Secretariat finalized development of their new Labour Relations Foundations course, which is specifically geared to construction in Ontario and is accredited with the Gold Seal Program and McMaster University. Contractors from all trades are welcome to engage in the program, and we encourage our members to send anyone in a supervisory role. Union representatives from all trades are also in attendance in the course, resulting in opportunities for engaging and productive conversations.

As we move into 2025, bargaining is a top priority. We are optimistic about the

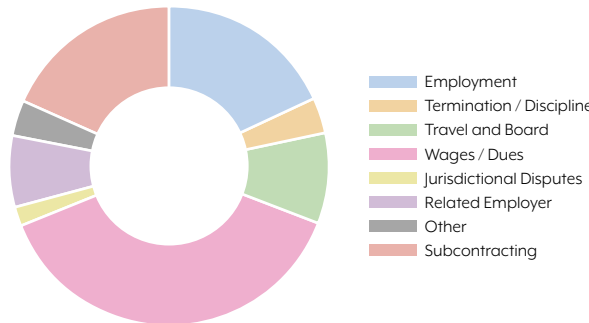


2024 Grievances filed at the Ontario Labour Relations Board*

Grievance Status Breakdown

50 grievances filed in 2024

- 13 open
- 13 decisions
- 9 withdrawn
- 8 adjourned sine die
- 7 settled



Grievance Trend Breakdown

Wages/dues: 21	Employment: 10
Subcontracting: 10	Travel: 5
Related ER: 4	Termination: 2
Other: 2 (harassment)	JDs: 1

*As of January 9, 2025

potential for meaningful changes to the Principal Agreement that will enhance the competitiveness of ECAO contractors and increase job security for IBEW members.

Our overarching goals as we negotiate the 2025 to 2027 agreement are to bolster the competitiveness of our contractors, increase client value, and ultimately enhance job security and opportunities for IBEW members. We believe that the IBEW shares our commitment to improvements

beyond wage increases and are confident that consensus on these goals will benefit both our industry and its workforce.

The ECAO team looks forward to another busy and productive year ahead. We'll continue to share opportunities for learning throughout 2025 and, as always, be a source of relevant, current industry information at a time of great change and growth in Ontario's contracting industry.

ANALYST'S CORNER



PATRYK WROBEL

Last year, the ECAO launched a free, user-friendly, web-based project database exclusively for ECAO member contractors. This tool was designed to:

1. Gain a comprehensive understanding of the provincial market.
2. Assess the competitiveness of our contractors.
3. Aggregate and anonymize data to share with our labour partners.

We sincerely thank our members who have contributed valuable project information to this portal. Your participation directly supports our ongoing bargaining efforts.

As our provincial agreement is set to expire on April 30, 2025, our information gathering efforts will continue until the ECAO/ETBA and IBEW exchange proposals. If you are an ECAO member contractor and would like to use the database, email me at pwrobel@ecao.org and we will schedule a time to connect.

RUBICON GOVERNMENT LOBBYING

Federal

In 2024, an 18-month lobbying effort by Rubicon concluded with the federal government incorporating Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program (EVITP) requirements into its procurement process for electric vehicle infrastructure projects. Under the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP), contractors who employ EVITP-certified electricians now receive additional points in their grant applications, giving ECAO contractors a competitive advantage when applying for grants under the program.

This milestone was achieved in July, shortly before the release of the ZEVIP grant applications. Capitalizing on the new criteria, ECAO and Energize Ontario engaged potential applicants to highlight the benefits of hiring ECAO contractors. Throughout the summer, Energize Ontario worked to identify new business prospects, while Rubicon secured clarification from federal officials on specific application requirements.

Having successfully positioned EVITP training as a recognized standard, we will use this momentum in 2025 to identify other

elements of ECAO's business model that can be incorporated into federal procurement processes. This will help further enhance the competitive edge of ECAO contractors in securing future government contracts.

Ontario

In 2024, the Ontario government continued to advance its priorities in labour and energy policy, opening opportunities for targeted lobbying and strategic partnerships. Rubicon's efforts contributed to securing substantial provincial funding for ECAO initiatives, including a successful Skills Development Fund (SDF) Round 4 application that provided \$935,027 for ECAO's Virtual Reality Certi-Fire Lab Assessment Continuation Project. This brings the total SDF funding secured for ECAO to \$5,658,927 under Rubicon's guidance.

Looking ahead to 2025, Rubicon will continue working closely with the Ministry of Labour to deliver on proposed SDF Round 5 applications, including:

- Virtual Reality Certi-Fire Lab Assessment Continuation 2025 – \$1,343,622
- PROMEX: Project Management Skills for Construction Excellence – \$2,150,345

RUBICON STRATEGY

Rubicon also made significant headway on behalf of the Windsor Electrical Contractors Association regarding the Apprenticeship Achievement Incentive program. After persistent engagement, the Ministry of Labour approved an ad hoc decision granting WECA \$319,000 for previously completed work. The Ministry has also committed to revising the program in 2025 to accommodate ECAO contractors under a new model.

Following Ontario's recent cabinet shuffle, Rubicon is working to strengthen the Energize Ontario plan under the leadership of the new Minister of Energy, Stephen Lecce. By building this relationship, Rubicon will ensure the Ontario government follows through on key recommendations and that ECAO maintains a central role in shaping the province's strategies for revitalizing the energy sector and expanding clean energy initiatives.

HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT



TOM MACKAY

Changing times

In 2024, Cristina Najera transitioned into a part-time role, taking on Health and Safety responsibilities. She now works closely with our member representatives and Tom Mackay to support our member contractors in elevating their safety standards.

WSIB Health & Safety Excellence Program

As a program provider, the ECAO meaningfully contributes towards program member companies improving safety experience and strengthening their health and safety programs and culture.

In 2024 the Excellence program has continued to evolve. WSIB has made many changes to simplify topics and topic selection while encourage new topics to be explored. The ECAO continues to support member companies through the process of developing, implementing and communicating robust health and safety management systems that keep workers safe, earn rebates and set our member companies up for health and safety success.

Throughout 2024, we saw significant growth in our members' engagement, with an increasing number of active participants throughout the year.

Looking forward into 2025 we will continue to provide guidance, materials and support to member companies involved in the program, encourage additional companies to join us and make programs more robust while earning premium rebates.

Our continued commitment to helping members protect the health and safety of workers helps to promote our contractor's reputation as the safest companies to work within the electrical industry.

Committees

The ECAO will continue to take a leadership role in worker health and safety in 2025. Our commitment and dedication include active participation in several provincial committees and subcommittees, notably the Provincial Labour Management Health and Safety Committee (PLMHSC), the Provincial Electrical Sector Labour Management Health and Safety Committee, WSIB Construction Advisory Committee (CAC), and Council of Ontario Construction Associations (COCA) Health and Safety and WSIB Committees including the legislative review committee.

In addition, we have participated in research and to raise awareness and develop strategies to assist vulnerable new workers including immigrants adjust to safety protocols, structure and methods to ensure a safe transition and Ontario Skilled Trades Anthropometric Database for the Inclusive Design of PPE and Assistive Technologies.

We will continue our working with the committee and subcommittees to help shape legislative change and improve worker health and safety across the province. Our work included participating in a safety training standards working group defining the need for training standards including hoisting and rigging. We also participated in the CSA Z301 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion standard committee.

In addition, we promote improvements to health and safety in the construction industry by active participation in the ECAO/IBEW Labour Management Safety Committee, the COCA WSIB and Health and safety committees and the WSIB Chairs Construction Committee WSIB.

NECA

In 2024 Our team workers with NECA to ensure that members could be eligible for the NECA safety recognition award program. For the first time ever, member companies received recognition having safety records that stand out above national averages and in some cases with zero reportable accidents. Once again, our members focus on health and safety is evident, setting the bar high.

In 2025 we expect even more companies to earn recognition as we at ECAO continue to develop strategies and resources to help share information and strategy to ensure resources are effective and available.

COCA

The COCA safety and WSIB committees continue to represent the construction industry has worked together to submit positions on several consultations, regulatory changes and updates including the Working for Workers ACT , Rope Access, WSIB Appeals, practices and procedures and premium rebates. In 2025 We will continue to join in development of consultation positions and industry positions.

R. H. Carroll Safety Awards

It is our privilege to recognize the efforts of our member firms, who exemplify the values that this award represents, worker safety through effective and collaborative health and safety management systems and processes.

The R. H. (Hugh) Carroll Safety Award was created in 1999 by the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario. Named after R. Hugh Carroll, a professional engineer and the first employee of the ECAO. R. Hugh Carroll was elected to the first ECAO/IBEW Labour management health and safety committee and was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Accident Prevention Education Program (APEP), ensuring uniform and consistent electrical apprentice training.

The RH Carrol Safety Award pays tribute to member firms who best exemplify the dedication and commitment to safety in the electrical contracting industry as exhibited by R. H. (Hugh) Carroll through his years of service.

In 2024 we were honoured to have Soussanna Karas, Director of Licensing, ESA, deliver a keynote session, thank you Soussanna.

Congratulations and thank you for your continued commitment to health and safety for all of our applicants. The selection of award recipients was very difficult due to many excellent applications.

Recipients for 2024 were

G1 Category

Contractors with fewer than 20 Employees/Workers: *Rogol Electric*

G2 Category

Contractors between 20-100 Employees/Workers: *C&M Electric*

G3 Category

Contractors between 100-250 Employees/Workers: *Mellon Inc.*

G4 Category

Contractors with over 250 Employees/Workers: *E.S. Fox*

In 2024 we plan some changes to maintain the integrity and prestige of the awards. We will continue the focus on safety culture and inclusion of all workplace parties to improve the health and safety in our workplaces.



C&M Electric



E.S. Fox



Mellon Inc.



Rogol Electric

The year ahead:

The year ahead will be exciting with new technological advances, equipment and procedure changes contributing to excellent health and safety statistics throughout our membership. I can't wait to see where 2025 will take us.

The safety awards will be reorganized to recognize more of the hard work exhibited by our member companies to develop, implement and maintain robust health and safety systems.

We will continue to develop and enhance a wide range of resources to support our members, ensuring they have access to valuable tools for growth and development. This includes the expansion of in-house training programs designed to address specific needs, foster skill development, and create opportunities for hands-on learning. Our commitment to ongoing education will also be reflected in the regular hosting of webinars, where experts will share insights on relevant topics, and members can engage in live discussions and Q&A sessions.

We will continue to participate in committees and groups to help lead changes that will make the industry safer for all including developing materials, policies, procedures, and training while providing information and resources to assist members with building solid health and safety systems.

We will continue to provide resources, materials and support for the ECAO/WSIB excellence program with the goal of growing member participation.

Finally in 2025 we will be ready to help with members with understanding OHSA and applicable regulation requirements, develop resources and health and safety training modules and communicate changes to keep members current with health and safety news, events and requirements.



The year ahead will be exciting with new technological advances, equipment and procedure changes contributing to excellent health and safety statistics throughout our membership. I can't wait to see where 2025 will take us.

DIGITAL MARKETING REPORT



KAMAKSHI AHLUWALIA

Social Media Channels



Twitter | ECAOntario

908
Followers

7.2k
Organic Impressions



Facebook | ECAOntario

1114
Followers

8k
Page Reach

847
Likes



Instagram | ECAOntario

549
Followers

10.6k
Profile Reach

20k
Organic Impressions



ECAO Website

42k
New Users

238k
Event Count

82k
Page Views

100% of the ECAO Website Traffic and Users are Organic.



E-Newsletter

24
Number of Campaigns

26,930
Total E-mails Sent

47.9%
Average Open Rate
(+7.9% from the industry average, which is 40%)

4.7%
Average Click Rate
(+1.7% from the industry average, which is 3%)



Webinars / Seminars

15
Sessions

**Website Analytics Source: Google Analytics
Industry Average: Mailchimp*



LinkedIn | ECAOntario

2280
Followers

20k
Organic Impressions



Threads | ECAOntario

89
Followers

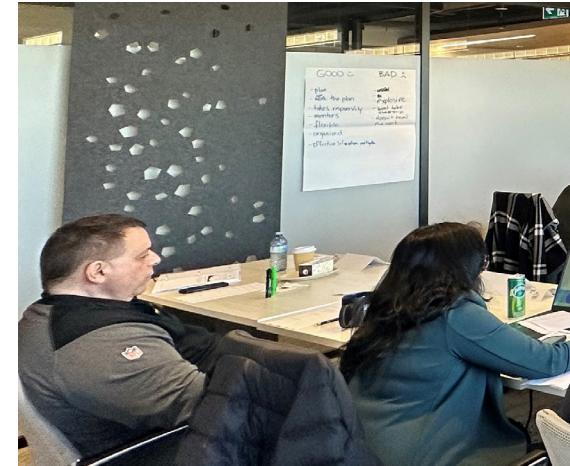


Youtube | ECAOntario

14
Videos

TRAINING & EDUCATION

- January 19: Overview of the Principal Agreement
- March 19 & 20: Electrical Estimating Training by Suderman Estimating Course 1
- April 09 & 10: Electrical Estimating Training by Suderman Estimating Course 2
- April 12: Learn About ECAO's Free Project Tracking Software
- May 09: Key Challenges & Solutions to Become COR 2020 OR ISO 45001 Certified by 4S Consulting Services
- May 22: Key Challenges & Solutions to Become COR 2020 OR ISO 45001 Certified by 4S Consulting Services
- August 27: NRCan EV Charing Grant Program Webinar by Energize Ontario
- September 10: Collective Bargaining Communication: Dos and Don'ts Unveiled by Erich Schafer





- October 22: The Top Habits of High Performing Foremen in the Electrical Construction Industry by Dr. Awad Hanna
- October 23: Managing and Quantifying Electrical Construction Delay Claims by Dr. Awad Hanna
- October 24: What Supervisors Need to Know about Electrical Estimating and Scheduling by Dr. Awad Hanna
- October 31: ECAO-WSIB Health and Safety Excellence Program Webinar
- November 06 & 07: NECA Train-The-Trainer Field Leadership Essentials Training by Jay B. Jones
- November 14: COR 2020 Simplified: Full Support Demo & WSIB Rebate Benefit by 4S Consulting Services
- November 27: Don't Sweep it Under the Rug: Obligations to Respond to Workplace Complaints by Zaheer Lakhani

ECAO 2024 ANNUAL INDUSTRY CONFERENCE: LISBON

The Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) successfully hosted its 2024 Annual Industry Conference from September 15 to 21 at the Four Seasons Hotel Ritz in Lisbon, Portugal. This event provided an excellent platform for networking, business discussions, and cultural exploration, made possible by our esteemed sponsors.

The conference kicked off with arrivals and welcome activities, including a reception and dinner sponsored by RS Breakers and Controls. Attendees enjoyed guided tours of Lisbon landmarks and cultural experiences such as the "Feel & Taste" Cooking Experience. Business sessions, held on September 17 and 18, were well-attended and sponsored by Graybar and Province Electric, facilitating valuable industry discussions. Networking lounges, supported by various sponsors, provided informal opportunities to connect.

Evening events included a Farewell Dinner and Reception, with sponsorship from Robertson Electric Wholesale and additional partners. Optional excursions, such as tours of Sintra and Cascais, allowed attendees to explore Portugal's rich history and scenic beauty. The conference concluded with a final networking breakfast before departures.

ECAO extends its sincere gratitude to our Platinum Sponsors: Robertson Electric Wholesale, RS Breakers & Controls, and IBEW Construction Council of Ontario (IBEW CCO). Our Bronze Sponsor, Federated Insurance, and Supporting Sponsors, including Graybar Canada, Mathews Dinsdale & Clark LLP, Province Electric Supply Ltd., People Corporation, Aon Construction Services Group, TeksMed Services Inc., and Milwaukee Tool Canada, were instrumental in making this event a success.

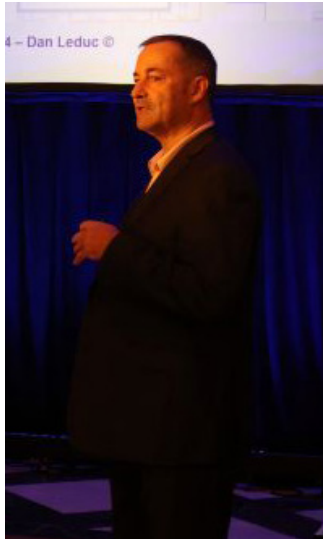
The ECAO 2024 Annual Industry Conference combined business, networking, and cultural exploration, strengthening Ontario's electrical contracting community. We look forward to ECAO 2025!





The ECAO 2024 Annual Industry Conference combined business, networking, and cultural exploration, strengthening Ontario’s electrical contracting community. We look forward to ECAO 2025!





ECAO 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: TORONTO

The Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) held its 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) on June 6, 2024, at Woodbine Racetrack. This in-person event brought together industry professionals for networking, education, and celebration.

The day began with a BBQ lunch on the patio, followed by the AGM where members reviewed key updates and industry trends. The ECAO Safety Awards, including the R. Hugh Carroll Safety Awards, recognized companies demonstrating exceptional commitment to workplace safety.

A keynote presentation by Josh Bone from ELECTRI International explored the Potential Impacts of AI on Electrical Contracting, offering valuable insights into innovation and efficiency. The event concluded with an Industry Night at the Races, providing a relaxed networking opportunity.

The ECAO was proud to present the Douglas J.B. Wright Award to Mr. Allan Kellett, Co-Owner of K-Line Group of Companies, for his outstanding contributions to the electrical contracting industry.

This successful event was made possible through the generous support of sponsors: Southwire Canada, Federated Insurance, Electrical Safety Authority (ESA), Teksmmed, People Corporation, Graybar Canada, K-Line Maintenance & Construction Ltd., and Avatara Software.

The ECAO extends its gratitude to all attendees, speakers, and sponsors for making the 2024 AGM a success, celebrating industry achievements while paving the way for future advancements.





ECAO 2024 LOW VOLTAGE AND SYSTEMS INTEGRATION SYMPOSIUM

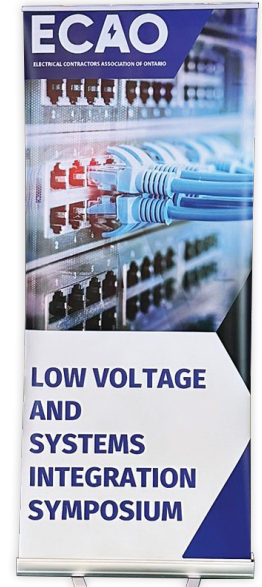
ECAO successfully hosted its first ever Low Voltage & Systems Integration Symposium on June 5, 2024, at the Toronto Congress Centre. With over 150 members in attendance, the event brought together industry professionals, contractors, and experts to explore the latest advancements in low voltage and systems integration. The symposium was emceed by Jeff Beavers (NECA) and Robert Ritzmann (Energize Ontario), and featured four insightful educational sessions, covering key topics shaping the industry today.

The day commenced with a panel discussion, "The Ontario Market Now," featuring insights from Benjamin van de Putte (APCI Communications), Steve Watson (S&T Group), and Mike Shaw (Vollmer – Data/Communications), moderated by Tom Beros (Net Electric). This discussion set the stage by analyzing market trends and challenges in Ontario's communications sector. Jeff Beavers (NECA) then delivered an engaging session on "The Convergence and Disruption of Electrification," highlighting the transformative impact of electrification on the industry. The symposium continued with Farukh Aslam (Sinclair Digital), who presented "DC Powered Buildings: A Leap Towards Net Zero," showcasing innovative approaches to sustainable infrastructure. Closing the educational portion, Josh Bone (ELECTRI International) shared forward-thinking strategies in "Reinventing the Industry," inspiring attendees to embrace emerging opportunities.

Following the sessions, participants had the opportunity to network and explore cutting-edge solutions at the vendor exhibition, which featured a diverse range of companies, including A.P.C.I Communications Inc./Corning, Belden, Cence Power Inc., Certi-Fire, Energize Ontario, FLAC, Graybar, GridShield, Impact Technical Products, Job Perfect, Panduit, PataBid, RS Breakers, and Southwire. The event fostered valuable connections and knowledge-sharing among professionals in the communications sector.

ECAO was thrilled to see both new and experienced industry members engage in meaningful discussions about the challenges, opportunities, and emerging technologies shaping the future of low voltage and systems integration. The success of the symposium would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors: Joint Electrical Promotion Plan (JEPP), IBEW Construction Council of Ontario, and Greater Toronto Electrical Contractors Association (GTECA). Their contributions helped create an enriching experience for all attendees.

As the industry continues to evolve, ECAO remains committed to providing education and awareness on emerging trends. We look forward to welcoming even more participants at future events and continuing to support innovation in this rapidly growing field.





AWARD WINNERS

D.J.B WRIGHT AWARD WINNER (2024): ALLAN KELLETT

The Douglas J. B. Wright Award was created in 1992 by the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario and Ontario Electrical Construction Co. Ltd. to pay tribute to individuals who best exemplify the dedication and commitment to the electrical contracting industry as exhibited by Doug Wright through his decades of service.

Allan Kellett's lifelong dedication to the electrical industry is rooted in family tradition and an unwavering commitment to safety, innovation, and industry advancement. His contributions have rightfully earned him the prestigious Douglas J.B. Wright Award.

Allan's journey began early, working alongside his father at K-Line Maintenance & Construction Ltd. He progressed from laborer to Powerline Technician and later led crews

across Canada. His extensive field experience shaped his deep appreciation for safety.

As co-owner of K-Line, Allan pioneered a no-blame safety culture, empowering employees to report hazards without fear of reprisal. His leadership helped K-Line earn consecutive R. Hugh Carroll Safety Awards in 2022 and 2023 and maintain key industry certifications. K-Line also contributed to Ontario's second Powerline Technician training facility and continues supporting post-secondary programs.

Allan led K-Line in developing the patented "K-Clamp" polymeric insulator, improving safety and efficiency. He also collaborates with safe work advocates like MySafeWork to promote workplace safety.

Allan actively serves on key industry committees, including the Electrical Trade Bargaining Agency and the ECA Line. His leadership extends beyond Ontario, having influenced policy and labor negotiations in British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

As the head of a Canadian, family-run company, Allan prioritizes employee well-being, fostering a workplace culture of inclusivity and recognition. Under his



leadership, K-Line has become a Platinum Member of Canada's Best Managed Companies program and is committed to diversity through EHRC's Diversity Accord and Progressive Aboriginal Relations certification.

Allan Kellett's contributions to safety, industry advancement, and employee well-being exemplify the qualities of the Douglas J.B. Wright Award. His leadership continues to shape a safer, more inclusive, and prosperous future for the trade.

Scholarship Award Winners (2024)

ECAO is pleased to announce the following successful recipients of the 2024 ECAO Scholarship Award:



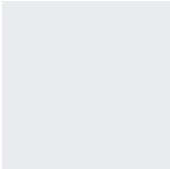
Kaitlyn Walpole
E.S.Fox Ltd.



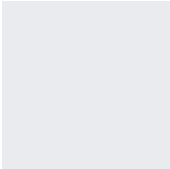
Laura Daniela Hernandez-Ruiz
Alltrade Industrial



Lillian Doleman
E.S.Fox Ltd.



Mackensie Surian
Alltrade Industrial



Sarah West
E.S.Fox Ltd.

NEW MEMBERS

Greater Toronto ECA

- Crozier Mechanical
- Eurotech Safety Inc
- CJ's Express Plumbing & Electrical
- ON-TEK Electric
- Nestech
- Practical Electric Contracting Inc

ECA Niagara – Hamilton

- Charge Pro Electrical
- Cro-Tech Electrical
- Merla Electrical Services Ltd.
- Harson Electrical Services

- Block Clohecy Electric
- Songer Canada

ECA Thunder Bay

- Over All Electric

Ottawa ECA

- Paragon Electric
- Cahill Electrical Contracting Inc
- Finch Electric Ltd

Windsor ECA

- FM Sylvan

NEW AFFILIATE PARTNERS



CERTI-FIRE: Driving Innovation and Excellence



**VAISHNAVI (V) BALA &
NATHAN PARSONS**

 **Certi-Fire**

 **RFAC** REGISTERED
FIRE ALARM
CONTRACTOR

SDF Round 3: A Milestone Achievement

2024 marked a transformative phase for Certi-Fire, with SDF Round 3 delivering remarkable results. Over 700 participants were enrolled in the program, including 100 students who successfully completed VR training, showcasing our commitment to expanding access to cutting-edge fire alarm certification methods. These accomplishments bring us closer to our goal of becoming a self-sustaining program, reinforcing the Certi-Fire legacy as a premier education platform.

Modernized Digital Experience

Our revamped website, www.certifire.org, was launched to improve accessibility and provide a more seamless experience for our users. The updated platform is now a hub for detailed program information, participant resources, and streamlined course navigation.

Updated Learning Resources

To align with evolving industry standards, we developed and launched new textbooks for Levels 1 through 4. These updated resources ensure participants gain knowledge that is

both modern and comprehensive, furthering their expertise in fire alarm systems.

Enhanced Industry Engagement

Certi-Fire strengthened our industry presence through active participation in key events such as the ECAO AGM, ECACO AGM, and committee engagements like the Future Leaders Advisory Council (FLAC) and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). These initiatives foster collaboration with industry leaders and keep Certi-Fire at the forefront of fire alarm training.



Streamlined RFAC Processes

We improved our processes for the Regional Fire Alarm Committee (RFAC), creating more aligned and efficient updates. Certi-Fire now has 41 active RFAC members, reflecting our ongoing effort to build effective partnerships and elevate the program's outreach.

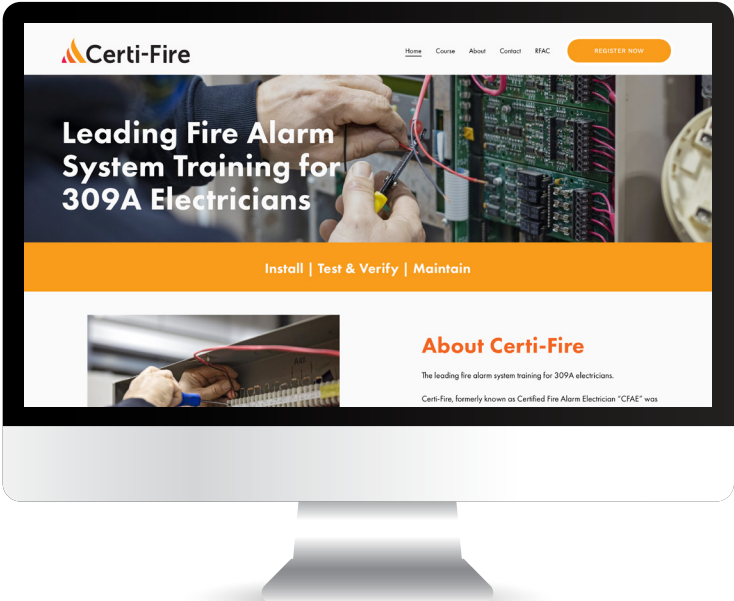
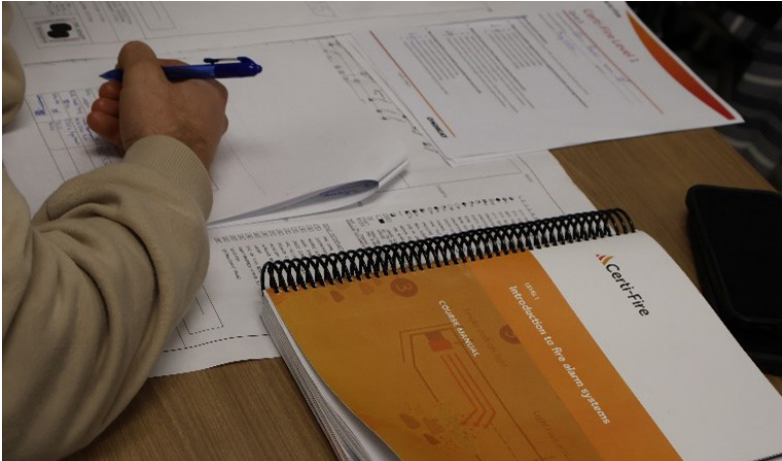
A Vision for Growth and Sustainability

Certi-Fire's commitment to excellence is unwavering. Supported by ECAO, IBEW CCO, JEPP, and our dedicated instructors, we

continue to expand our offerings and community engagement. Steps taken this year—updated materials, revamped infrastructure, and greater collaboration—ensure that Certi-Fire remains Ontario's gold standard for fire alarm certification.

With the progress achieved in 2024, we are poised for sustained growth, continued innovation, and unparalleled leadership in the fire alarm education sector.

2024 marked a transformative phase for Certi-Fire, with SDF Round 3 delivering remarkable results.



JOINT ELECTRICAL PROMOTION PLAN (JEPP)



ROBERT RITZMANN

With a renewed and sharpened focus on business development in 2024, JEPP set out to accomplish several major initiatives throughout the year. I'm very pleased to report on our progress.

Rebranding in Alignment with Industry Growth

We began by rebranding JEPP as **Energize Ontario**, a name that encapsulates our mission to promote the growth of the electrical industry. The Energize Ontario brand reflects the daily work of the Province's electricians and their contractors, who not only power up complex installations but also drive the industry's advancement.

The current electrical infrastructure in Ontario is insufficient to meet the province's evolving needs. It is estimated that an investment of \$50 billion will be necessary over the next 20 years to sustain and expand our electrical capabilities. Energize Ontario reflects our goals to invigorate, enlighten, empower, promote and support the significant growth required in our sector.

Planning for Success

Given the growing and evolving electricity needs of our Province, we recognized the necessity for an updated Strategic Plan. We engaged an external professional to consult with our stakeholders, including both union and management representatives from each local in Ontario. The feedback was clear: transitioning from a marketing perspective to a business development strategy was essential. Minor refinements were made to our Vision, Mission and Values and four Key Result Areas were established: Business Development, Government Relations, Training & Curriculum Standards, and Organizational Development. Moving forward, we will report on each of these areas in our quarterly meetings.

To roll out the new Strategic Plan and introduce Energize Ontario, we scheduled an Ontario-wide Roadshow. To-date, we have held meetings in seven of the eleven Local Areas, seeing high engagement and receiving very positive feedback. Each area of the Province has its unique characteristics and demographics, but our discussions revealed that successful strategies in one area can

often be adapted for others. Collaboration among the different areas will be key to our success across Ontario.

Evolving to Meet a Changing Industry

It has become evident that the electrical construction industry is undergoing an unprecedented transformation. While the demand for power in buildings and industry continues to grow, the Low Voltage sector is experiencing exponential growth. New technologies are changing how buildings are wired, presenting new market opportunities for contractors while potentially reducing traditional lighting markets. The conventional practice of electricians wiring all lights is evolving, with new Low Voltage installations reducing or even eliminating the inherent risks of electrical installation.

Educating ourselves, our contractors and electrical workers on this evolution in our industry is essential. To better understand these changes, Energize Ontario participated in the Low Voltage BICSI Conference in January and the NECA EMERGE Conference in April. Additionally, the ECAO team hosted the Low

Voltage Symposium in June in Toronto. Close to 50 per cent of attendees at this popular event were new to ECAO, which is further indication of an emerging and growing market.

In July, ENCan offered an EV Charger Installation Grant that included an incentive for EVITP-trained contractors. Energize Ontario quickly established a dedicated team comprising Business Development, Marketing, Trainers, Suppliers and Product Manufacturers. The EV Charger Team made numerous calls, held webinars, advertised and informed interested owners about installing EV chargers. NETCO provided exclusive training to IBEW members and ECAO contractors, and assisted property owners with the application process. As a result, \$15 million in applications was submitted, and we are now awaiting their approvals.

Engaging with NECA

Our efforts to further engage with ECAO's American counterpart, the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA), have been invaluable. Learning from their business development experiences, connecting with suppliers, and leveraging their training

courses has been highly beneficial. While not everything south of the border is directly applicable to Canada, many emerging electrical trends are similar. There's much to learn from our partnership with NECA, and we'll continue to collaborate for the benefit of Ontario's electrical contractors.

2025 and Beyond

Looking ahead to next year, we will complete our Ontario-wide Roadshow and continue to focus on our business development objectives. As our industry continues to evolve and grow, Energy Ontario will remain tuned into market needs and changes, and work hard to deliver valuable resources, learning and growth opportunities to ECAO's valued members.

FUTURE LEADERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S (FLAC): ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS



**BRANDON GATTEN &
DANIELLE GRAY**

We extend our sincere gratitude to the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) for featuring the Future Leaders Advisory Council (FLAC) in this year's publication. This opportunity allowed us to showcase our progress and accomplishments, reinforcing our commitment to leadership, innovation, and collaboration within the industry.

2024: A Year of Milestones

2024 has been a transformative year for FLAC. Our meetings featured esteemed guest speakers such as Paul Clipsham of Skills Canada Ontario and Clark Thomas of Platform Insurance. Their valuable insights shed light on critical industry issues, emerging trends, and important considerations, sparking engaging discussions that enriched our understanding of the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of our field.

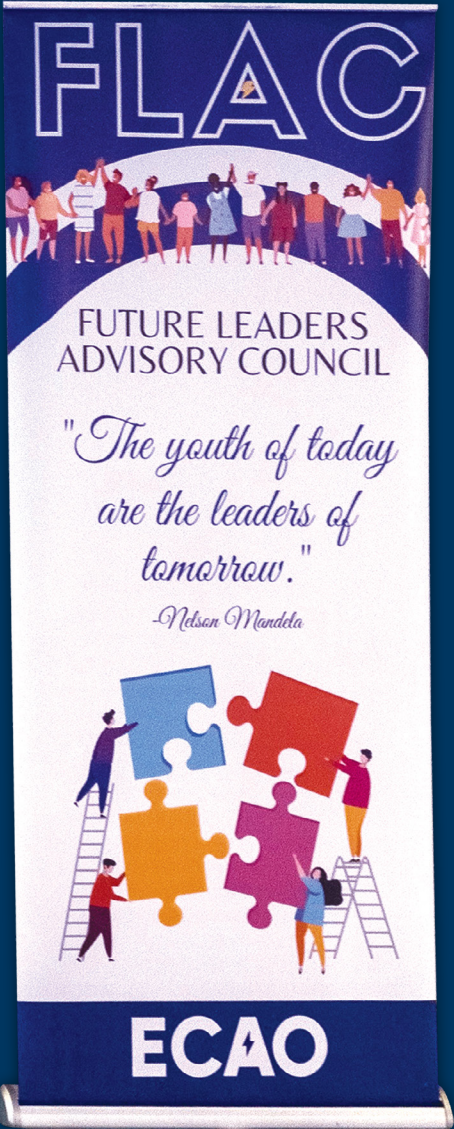
At ECAO's inaugural Low Voltage Symposium in the summer, FLAC's co-chair and members gained valuable insights into the future of

the low voltage market. As part of the event, our co-chairs hosted a booth during the tradeshow reception, fostering awareness and engagement with the committee's mission.

A standout moment of 2024 was our impactful joint event with ECAO's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. The event featured engaging panel discussions on vital topics such as health and safety, diversity, equity, and inclusion. A key highlight was a presentation by the distinguished Lieutenant General Ronald Bailey from NECA, who shared his expertise on cultivating inclusive leadership for the future. This event emphasized the value of collaboration in equipping future leaders to address the challenges and opportunities of our evolving industry.

Advocacy in Action

FLAC demonstrated its commitment to advocacy in 2024 by reaching out to MPPs with a letter addressing the critical labour shortages affecting the electrical contracting sector. This initiative sought to build awareness and encourage political leaders to support solutions for this pressing issue. Looking ahead to 2025, FLAC aims to deepen its political engagement, empowering



the committee to raise awareness and better understand the challenges and opportunities shaping our industry.

Looking Ahead to 2025

As we move into 2025, FLAC remains committed to enhancing member engagement and fostering collaboration across the industry. In partnership with the DEI Committee, we aim to explore essential topics such as building a culture of belonging, addressing workforce challenges, and promoting innovation through joint initiatives within the electrical industry.

We look forward to another ambitious year, working together to create opportunities for leadership development and industry growth. Here's to building a stronger, more connected community and shaping the future of the electrical contracting industry!

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S (DEI) REPORT



KAMAKSHI AHLUWALIA

In 2021, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Committee of the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) was established to provide guidance, education, and resources that support ECAO members in integrating DEI principles into their policies, programs, and practices. With a mandate to identify systemic barriers and combat racism within the industry, the committee continues to play a pivotal role in fostering a more inclusive work environment.

A significant highlight of this year was the Future Forward: Inclusion & Leadership Forum, a collaborative effort between the DEI Committee and the Future Leaders Advisory Council (FLAC). This transformative event brought together industry leaders, changemakers, and advocates to explore strategies for fostering inclusive workplaces and promoting transformative leadership. Attendees engaged in dynamic conversations,

interactive workshops, and inspiring keynote addresses that emphasized the importance of inclusion in the electrical contracting industry.

The event was opened with a Land Acknowledgement by Kamakshi Ahluwalia,



Marketing & Communication Manager and ECAO DEI Committee Coordinator. The event was emceed by Anthony Tofano, ECAO Vice-President and DEI Committee Co-Chair, alongside FLAC Co-Chairs, Brandon Gatten and Danielle Gray.

The forum featured several insightful sessions addressing key DEI topics:

- **Opening Ceremony:** Led by Valerie Vanderwyk, setting an impactful tone for the event.
- **Inclusive Leadership in a Multigenerational Workforce:** Presented by Muhammad Ahsan from EHRC, offering valuable insights into managing diverse teams.
- **Powering Collaboration & Inclusion in the Electrical Industry:** A panel discussion featuring Jacqueline Morin (Plan Group), Ekaterina Borshevetskaya (Birn Electric), Jonathan Lemoine (IBEW 353), and Imraan Mohamoud (IBEW 353), moderated by Graeme Aitken (ECAO).





- **Building Inclusive Leaders for the Future:** Led by Lt. Gen. Ronald Bailey of NECA, focusing on leadership development in an inclusive industry.

- **Safety and Inclusion: A Powerful Combination:** A discussion featuring Cassandra Crawford (C&M Electric), Jenn Sammut (Ainsworth Inc.), Hanah Ballou (WSN Construction), and Cristina Najera (ECAO), moderated by Tom MacKay (ECAO).

The event was made possible through the generous sponsorship of Southwire, Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC), the

Provincial Building & Construction Trades Council of Ontario, and RS Breakers & Controls.

The committee also welcomed James Barry, IBEW Executive Secretary Treasurer, as a Co-Chair. His expertise has been instrumental in advancing the committee's mission and strengthening DEI initiatives within the industry.

ECAO and the DEI Committee maintained their commitment to the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) as an Employer Partner. CCDI, a leading Canadian organization, provides tailored DEI solutions that support employers and HR professionals in fostering inclusive workplaces.





Additionally, the DEI Committee actively participated in a wide range of DEI events, webinars, and training sessions hosted by organizations such as CCDI, RESCON, and EHRC. Through these engagements, committee members enhanced their understanding of DEI best practices and strengthened their capacity to drive meaningful change within ECAO and the broader electrical industry.

The DEI Advisory Committee remains dedicated to its mission of education, awareness, and advocacy, ensuring that ECAO members are equipped with the tools and knowledge to create a more inclusive and equitable industry for all.



ECAO 2025 LOW VOLTAGE & SYSTEMS INTEGRATION SYMPOSIUM

Date: June 04, 2025

Location: Marriott on the Falls,
Niagara Falls

YOU ARE INVITED TO

ECAO 2025 LOW VOLTAGE AND SYSTEMS INTEGRATION SYMPOSIUM



WEDNESDAY
JUNE 04, 2024



TIME
11:30 AM - 07:00PM



**MARRIOTT FALLSVIEW HOTEL,
NIAGARA FALLS**

ECAO
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO



UPCOMING EVENTS

ECAO 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, SAFETY AWARDS AND PRESIDENT'S GALA

Date: June 05, 2025

Location: Wyndham Fallsview Hotel, Niagara Falls

Registration Link: eca0-agm-2025-registration.eventbrite.ca



ECAO-IBEW CCO 2025 ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

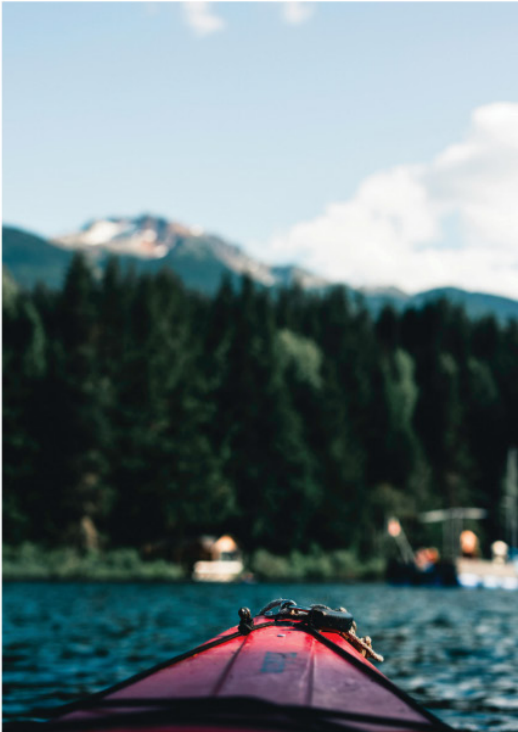
Dates: June 18, 2025

Location: Royal Ontario Golf Club, Milton

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



UPCOMING EVENTS



ECAO

ELECTRICAL
CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION OF
ONTARIO