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August 9, 2015

## Forestry Letter

Let's be honest: online quizzes are almost 100% inaccurate when it comes to determining which career will really match a given person's interests. And yet, this is the only chance that most high school students get to discover a job that they will be passionate about. With no work experience to speak of, except part-time jobs in grocery stores, it's difficult for anyone to feel confident about their choices as they enter their first real workplace. However, as I toured everything from the Campbell River Watershed to Holbrook Dyson Logging with the rest of my class, I was given the opportunity to meet with many professionals and see them going about their every-day jobs, always speaking about their careers with pride and showing the class around with enthusiasm. Through the Carihi Forestry class, I had the chance to see what working in the forest industry would really be like.

Not only did we go on numerous field trips and make connections in the industry, we also got hands-on experience, learning how to traverse and run deflection lines, among other things. I thought this was one of the most important aspects of the program. While the ability to study is certainly useful, it won't benefit anyone much beyond university... and the majority of students never attend post-secondary institutions. In high school, education is rarely geared towards the majority. In fact, the Forestry class is the only course I ever took that attempted a different approach to education and taught students skills that may directly benefit them in a work-place. Also, one of my favourite parts of the class was when we were given time to work on projects of our choice. This gave everyone the chance to explore an aspect of forestry that interested them, at their own pace and in their own style. A few local professionals were even happy to help guide me through the research for my project, and answer all my questions. This experience was more valuable to me than anything I learned in my Pre-Calculus course.

It was ultimately because of my time in the Carihi Forestry class that I was able to get a job in the forest industry straight out of high school. Without the class, I would never have been hired by any forestry company. This summer, I have gained work experience in the forest industry and I have learned a lot about my dream career. In the fall, I will be attending UBC for the Forest Resources Management program, with a specialization in International Forestry. Through this program, I will eventually become a RPF. I have no idea where I may go from there, but I can't wait to find out.