

GAIGE SCHAMAHORN & DAVID SIENWSKI

AUTOBODY TECHNICIAN INTERNS

At just 17, Gaige Schamahorn, an intern at FixAuto Sherwood Park, already knew he wanted to work in the trades. While many of his classmates were still figuring out their future paths, he had already decided. In Grade 11, he fast-tracked his courses, completing his Grade 12 requirements early so he could dive into the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP).

"I wanted to get into it as soon as possible. It gives you a huge head start. You're in the trade already, and then you can go to school earlier because you have most of your hours," he explained. For Gaige, the hands-on training, the opportunity to earn while learning, and avoiding years of university debt were major motivators.

David Sienwski also took advantage of the opportunity to gain real-world experience through an internship at FixAuto.

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to complain about employee shortages, but it's another to take it into your own hands and make sure we have a solution going forward," he explained. *"They are just looking for an opportunity, right? It's nice that CAREERS can offer that and partner with great organizations that see how important it is to give these individuals the care and attention they need to excel in different industries."*

For Gaige, the decision was life-changing. *"It feels a lot more secure. You know what you want to do, and you are able to go do it, get paid, and go to school. It's a good choice,"* he reflected.



He appreciated being able to explore the industry before committing fully. *"You get to try it out, and if you don't like it, you can switch,"* he said.

From the employer's perspective, the decision to hire youth was clear. FixAuto's Scott Koughan shared, *"The reason why we went for a kind of youth movement is that in this industry, we found it easier to hire those individuals and train them up the way we want them to work."*

Scott also recognized that hiring youth is essential to addressing employee shortages while supporting the community. *"This is the future of our industry. It's one thing*

