

COLBY BROWN

HVAC APPRENTICE

In the busy city of Edmonton, Alberta, something inspiring is happening inside one of its leading trades companies. At Legacy Heating & Cooling, what began as a high school internship through CAREERS: The Next Generation has grown into a meaningful opportunity for one student — and a valuable mentorship experience for the team guiding him.

When Joe Kilcup, mentor and trainer at Legacy Heating & Cooling, connected with CAREERS, he knew exactly what kind of student he hoped to bring onto the team. He wasn't just looking for extra help — he wanted to invest in someone who was curious, hardworking, and ready to learn. CAREERS helped him find exactly that.

"The owner of Legacy started in this industry as a youth," Joe explains. "So he's always had a vision of bringing up more young people through the industry — helping them find their place in the trades, which can be tough to do without the right connections."

That's where Colby Brown comes in. A high school student with a strong work ethic and a growing interest in hands-on learning, Colby joined Legacy through the CAREERS program and quickly found himself immersed in the day-to-day world of HVAC installation and maintenance.

"It's more hands-on," Colby says. "I'm learning valuable skills, and this experience has helped me decide what I want to do after I graduate."

From day one, Colby was welcomed as part of the team. Joe developed a learning plan that allowed students like Colby to start contributing right away while understanding the 'why' behind each task. "They're always learning," Joe says, "but they're going to be helpful and learning right from day one. So they really feel a part of the process."

What started as an internship has turned into something bigger — a clear path toward a meaningful career. For Colby, it's not just about earning a paycheck; it's about building something lasting with his own two hands.

"I didn't realize how much I'd enjoy it until I started," he admits. "It's made me see the trades in a totally different way."

The partnership between Legacy and CAREERS shows what's possible when businesses invest in young people. For Joe and the Legacy team, the return goes beyond filling a labor gap — it's about shaping the future of their industry.

"My advice to other companies," Joe says, "is just make the jump. Make that investment. It's going to pay off on both ends."

As Alberta continues to grow, the need for skilled tradespeople remains critical. Thanks to partnerships like this, students like Colby are not just finding jobs — they're finding purpose, confidence, and a future in the trades.

