



RV Technician training proves to be a dream choice for OC student

Imagine constructing a building using WhatsApp.

This was Kartik Choudhury's reality, as he made the decision to build and sell a property of land in his homeland of India. The funds he earned from the property would propel his future in a way he never could have imagined, ultimately helping him pursue a new dream as a student in the Recreation Vehicle Service Technician Foundation program at Okanagan College.

Three years ago, Choudhury knew he wanted to get into trades. A businessman living in Calgary at the time, a switch in career and the enticement of technical know-how was enough to draw him in. After sharing his excitement with his wife, he knew that before he pursued a career change, they needed to save for their daughter's post-secondary fund before he could make a transition to full time school himself.



“I had a small stretch of land beside my ancestral house in India,” says Choudhury. “Very odd shaped like a shoe box.”

He confirmed that he could work remotely for a period of time and started on the process of constructing a building on his shoe-box piece of land. With the help of his mother-in-law and communicating through WhatsApp, he started the process utilizing the app to send photos back and forth to confirm the pace and progress of construction.

The structure eventually sold and Choudhury knew it was time to apply, but the field of choice became the next question. It was a turning point after he had seemingly waited what felt like years to simply start, but he still needed to determine what area he wanted to work in.

“I thought to start with being a motorcycle mechanic. Everybody in India uses a motorcycle or scooter, but when I returned to my old university, I didn’t find many opportunities. I thought it was something I should see.

“Then I stumbled across the RV service technician program. I started looking into it and stumbled across Okanagan College.”

After months of back and forth to India to confirm the sale of his property and to be with family, nearly all of Choudhury’s hurdles seemed to be cleared. It wasn’t until he confirmed his enrolment at the College that it all became real.

“The most interesting part of all of this is that I had never used any tools,” he laughs.

Despite navigating the construction of a building through an app, Choudhury still had never swung a hammer or used a drill. Now six months into his program, he credits his instructors and classmates with helping him find his rhythm and easing the transition from his old life to the new.

“If I don’t get something, everyone helps me to understand,” he says. “In my previous line of work, if you didn’t know something, that was your problem. So, it’s refreshing that everyone is so willing to share information. It’s an unreal situation, that people are so forthcoming, just remarkable.”

Knowing he made the right choice, the hardest part of being a student now is simply getting across how content he is living his dream.

“Now? I chose this and I know I have not made the wrong choice. I am 46 and feel like this is something crazy, but I am happy. There’s more pressure but there’s no stress and I love it.”

“Stories like Kartik’s are always truly inspiring for us as educators,” says Steve Moores, Dean of Trades and Apprenticeship for Okanagan College. “And they’re stories that we want people to hear beyond the shops and classrooms of the College. We hear all the time from employers just how strong the demand for skilled works is right now, how many opportunities there are, and so we’re always trying to spread the word that there has never been a better time to pursue a career in the trades.”

Adds Moores: “Congratulations to Kartik for the strides he’s taken, and the hard work he’s put in, to seize his dream.”

Next RV Service Technician program starts September 2020. For more details or to apply visit okanagan.bc.ca/rv

