

Co-operators Community Fund

Voice-over:

Co-operators Community Funds proudly supports charitable, non-profit organizations across Canada that are providing employability-focused skills training to underserved youth and individuals with mental health challenges. This year we're spotlighting Bois Urbain, a Montreal based non-profit focused on woodworking.

Natalia Cojocar

General Director, Bois Urbain

Bois Urbain is a social reintegration company in the woodworking sector that has been active in the market and in society since 1994. We have a dual mission: economic viability through woodworking, but above all, the social reintegration of youth and adults to promote their future inclusion in society and in the Quebec labour market.

Maryse Trudel

Customer Service Trainer, Bois Urbain

All our participants face challenges integrating into the regular job market. Sometimes this is due to mental health issues or substance abuse; other times, it's because they're first-generation immigrants. Our role is to support them through a six-month program to help them integrate, specifically through woodworking.

Mathieu Hebert

Woodworking Trainer, Bois Urbain

Bois Urbain empowers each person by helping them tap into their own potential. We build their confidence, guide them, and encourage them to believe in themselves and in their ability to achieve great things in life.

Elise Desjardins

Wood Finish Trainer, Bois Urbain

They don't necessarily have experience in wood finishing; most of the time, they get here with no prior knowledge. So we have to teach them everything: how to sand furniture, what kind of sandpaper to use, how to strip a piece of furniture, what the different steps are, and how to apply the finish. And we don't just train them in manual

skills; we also offer them psychosocial support. We try as much as possible to meet their needs, which sometimes go beyond just the work experience.

Natalia Cojocar

General Director, Bois Urbain

At Bois Urbain, we foster a culture of trust, a culture of respect, a culture where people can grow together and help one another, express their needs, and offer constructive criticism. They also learn to work together in a professional setting.

Paul-Marc Gerard

Woodworking Participant, Bois Urbain

I've learned that it takes time to become 100% proficient with all the materials, tools, and machines.

Denis Pelletier

Wood Finishing Participant, Bois Urbain

I learned...patience. Yeah, patience.

Annick Chery

Wood Finish Participant, Bois Urbain

My goal in being here is to finally have a trade, a certificate that says I know how to do something. And of course, when I'm done the program, hopefully I'll find a job in finishing, and then I can do what I've been doing; I can work in the field I've been studying for six months.

Voice-over:

Co-operators is proud to support organizations like Bois Urbain, that reflect our values and are committed to strengthening our communities.