

# Creative hobbies can lead to personal and professional growth

Much has been made of the value of hobbies in providing a distraction from the daily grind. The value of escapism is hard to define, but many successful professionals find that having a hobby that has nothing to do with their profession provides a much-needed respite during those times when work becomes overwhelming.

Hobbies might provide an invaluable escape for busy professionals, but those professionals should know that creative hobbies also could benefit their careers. A 2014 study published in the Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology found that non-work creative activity was positively associated with performance-related professional outcomes, including job creativity.

With so much to gain from engaging in creative hobbies, individuals looking for valuable ways to spend their time away from the office can take up activities such as painting, writing, sculpting, dancing, and/or knitting, among others. It's worth noting that the value of taking up such activities goes beyond personal and professional growth. According to the experts at Solara Mental Health, creative pursuits such as art increase brain plasticity, which is the brain's ability to grow and change over time. Increased brain plasticity can make it easier to learn new skills and maintain flexibility of thinking into old age. Increased brain plasticity also has been linked to a greater ability to maintain a high IQ.

Creative hobbies are often characterized as a valuable way to blow off steam and reduce stress associated with the many responsibilities of adulthood. Though such characterizations are accurate, the value of creative hobbies extends much further and can positively affect individuals' careers and long-term health.



## Women in Engineering: RJC Engineers Kelowna Office is ahead of the curve

Women make up more than half of the Canadian population but are significantly underrepresented in engineering education and in the engineering profession. Over the past decades, the number of women enrolled in post-secondary engineering programs has risen, as has the number of women in the engineering profession. Yet despite steady increases in the representation of women, men still vastly outnumber women in engineering.

The Engineers Canada Board aims to raise the percentage of newly licensed engineers who are women to 30 percent by the year 2030. Thirty percent is held as the tipping point for sustainable change. Reaching '30 by 30' will help drive cultural change in the engineering profession, supporting even more significant involvement of women in the profession.

RJC Engineers Kelowna office is fortunate to exceed the 30 by 30 goal with its leadership team, half are women. Deanna Perrin, Crystal Wegner, and Jocelyn Dickie bring their passion for buildings, leadership, expertise, and creativity to every project. They are leaders within RJC, industry, and their profession. Through their achievements and mentorship, they are role models for other women in engineering.

Deanna's skillset complements RJC's broad service offerings on unique building structures of various construction material types, including concrete, steel, timber, and masonry. During a recent leave, she served as a sessional instructor at the School of Engineering at the University of British Columbia (Okanagan Campus) for two fourth-year structural engineering courses in reinforced concrete design and concrete rehabilitation. Her leadership at the University has had a direct impact on helping to raise the visibility of women in engineering.

Crystal's determination and professionalism have always been vital facets of her work. She demonstrates personal integrity and inspires others to do the same. Working closely with the project team, Crystal draws on her strong technical knowledge of buildings and project management skills to meet clients' needs. In recognition of how she distinguished herself and demonstrated leadership, Crystal received the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of British Columbia Professional Leadership Award for Women in Technology.

Jocelyn's strong background in structures includes her being a recognized resource and expert with masonry and her being called upon to provide input to masonry assessments or designs. While working on her PhD with the University of Calgary, Jocelyn was invited to collaborate with an international team of researchers to investigate the performance of masonry buildings following the February 2011 earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand. While in Christchurch, she evaluated over 500 concrete block structures.

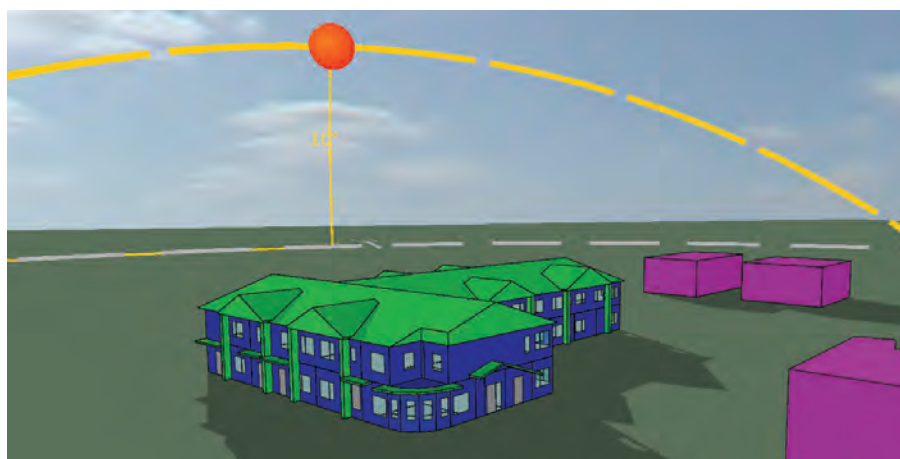
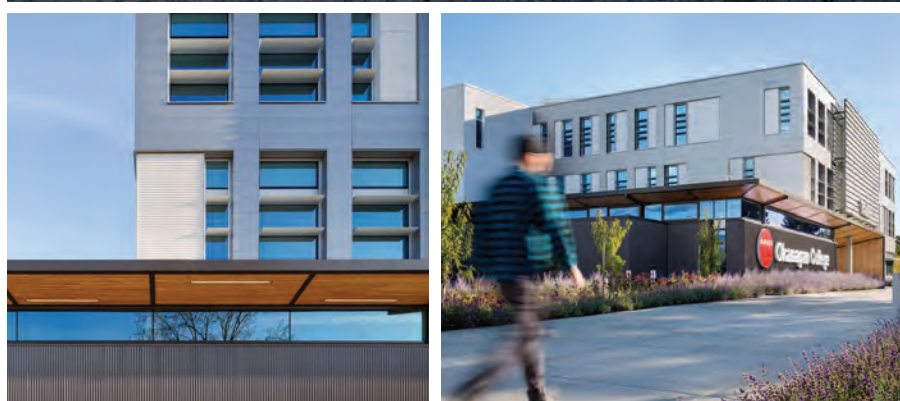
Significant steps forward are being made for better representation of women in engineering, including within RJC, where our Employee Resource Group has provided input to leaders resulting in meaningful change to our policies and programs. We are particularly proud of our supportive approach to preparation for engagement during and return from parental leave, supporting all RJCers leading up to and through significant change in their family. Diversity can thrive by creating inclusive learning and workplaces, and we all benefit. It is a collective effort to change engineering culture. The leadership of women like Deanna, Crystal, and Jocelyn are an impactful part of that change.



Creative Thinking  
Practical Results

Our people: passion for buildings and the Okanagan

- Efficient structures
- Efficient envelopes
- Restore, maintain, retrofit
- Carbon Reduction
- Energy modelling
- LCA



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