

80+ UNDERPRIVILEGED MEN ARE ONE STEP CLOSER TO EMPLOYMENT, THANKS TO YOUR DONATIONS

December 11, 2013
People

Since last fall, **Tonia Jurbin**, Senior Engineer, Transmission, has collected over 80 pairs of used steel-toed boots for donation to Working Gear, a non-profit society in Vancouver who assists low income unemployed men in their return to the workplace by providing work appropriate clothing – everything from “boots to suits.”

“These boots make a big difference in the lives of many men who are trying to enter the workforce,” said Tonia. “When it comes to most construction or other labour jobs, they can’t even walk on-site for an interview if they don’t have steel-toed boots.”



Above: **Harry MacMath** and **Matt Furumori** help Tonia load the van.

“People have also sent in hi-vis coveralls and jackets, some of them lined for winter, as well as many pairs of gloves and safety glasses,” said Tonia.

John Warrington, who sits on the Board of Directors for Working Gear, has been especially appreciative of the effort. After a recent drop-off, John told Tonia that within two and-a-half hours of receiving the items, three pairs of boots and one jacket were already out the door.

“Thank you again for the generous donations from BC Hydro to Working Gear,” said John. “Your efforts had an immediate and beneficial impact for three men that specific evening alone. One of our clients was doing steel welding in the construction industry and was ecstatic to get such a good pair of boots. He was excited to say that he had one day of paid work on Wednesday, but was told that it was only under the condition that he would come to work the next day with the right safety equipment. He walked out of our store standing tall.”

Tonia is grateful to everybody who has supported her with this cause and donated gear: “Special thanks goes to [Judy MacKay](#) who helps out with the inventory, [Laurel Stevens](#) who has volunteered to deliver materials to Working Gear, and to [Ricky Cox](#) in the loading dock who found space for this collection and intercepts many of the boxes if they say ‘Boots’ anywhere on the box, so they don’t all pile up in my office!”

If you have a pair of steel-toed boots to donate, please send them to Tonia at Edmonds 07, or you can drop them off directly to Working Gear at 1249 Kingsway in Vancouver on Saturdays between 10:00 a.m. and noon, or Wednesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

When donating items, please note that:

- Items can be sent through interoffice mail (OCS) at no charge to anyone’s cost centre;
- Clothing items should be laundered;
- All BC Hydro insignia (patches, labels) must be removed from coveralls, work shirts and jackets – there are consequences if a non-BC Hydro employee is seen wearing the BC Hydro logo; and,
- Even boots that aren’t in good condition are worth donating – it’s enough for someone to go on-site for an interview and if they get the job, they can use their first paycheck to buy newer boots.

For more information about clothing donations, visit workinggear.ca.