

Appendix 1

Places for London employment and skills case studies

Case Study 1 - Sabin Tudorache, Level 3 Curtain Waller, Schneider GB (Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park)

Sabin Tudorache has faced a number of barriers in his life. His family moved to the UK when he was 16, he left school with no qualifications as English was not his first language, and numeracy and literacy proved challenging.

His father worked in construction, so Sabin had some understanding of the sector and decided to try labouring. This gave him exposure to a number of core trades particularly carpentry and first fix electrics.

Following a Places for London engagement event held at Build East, our state-of-the-art training centre on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Sabin was referred for a role with Schneider who were working at East Bank. Sabin recognised this was his chance to flourish. "I think people still think it's about brickwork, carpentry or groundworks but there are hundreds of roles in the sector, so once I was in, I knew the massive and varied opportunities it offers," he says.

With Schneider, Sabin quickly established himself as a motivated, capable and reliable young man who was always on time, willing to listen and helped teams across the site.

Working at the Olympic Park and studying at Build East, he secured his blue National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level Two card, after which Schneider progressed Sabin into a Level Three Curtain Waller NVQ qualification. Training in this in-demand skill in cladding systems meant long days working and then finding the time to study and revise the non-practical elements of his qualification.

However, after his supervisor left in mid-2022, Sabin felt a bit short of support. As with most challenges, Sabin saw it as an opportunity to test and prove himself. "Ability, attitude and reliability are things employers look for in a person. I know I need to show I can perform and that I am working safely and efficiently every single day," Sabin says. In a demonstration of the importance of mentoring young people as they transition into the industry, a new supervisor arrived, took him under his wing and Sabin has flourished.

Learning new technical skills, adapting to new environments and new teams, sitting exams and reading technical drawings, whilst initially daunting, have now become part of his everyday work; his challenges of numeracy and literacy long forgotten. Once through his Level Three qualification, Sabin has high hopes: "I want to become a site supervisor, before progressing onto managerial roles. Those aspirations are echoed by his employer: "Sabin has been on quite a unique journey. It is a testament to his commitment and passion that he's got to where he is today. We hope Sabin stays and progresses with us as he's the sort of young man the industry of tomorrow will need."

Case Study 2 - Agnes Duncan, Health and Safety Officer, Ardmore (Kidbrooke)

A lifelong resident of the Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG), Agnes Duncan was always fascinated by construction going back to her childhood passion of playing with Lego and Tonka toys.

Having had various jobs in the recent past and facing a period of unemployment, Agnes felt she had reached a critical juncture in her life and was seeking both a new challenge and some stability to her working life.

In autumn 2022, Agnes attended one of Places for London's regular local outreach events aimed at attracting new workers into the construction and built environment industries. At the event, Agnes met colleagues from Places for London's partner, Women into Construction and RBG. Via an opportunity brokered by the Places Skills team, she was supported into a work placement as an administrative support role with Ardmore's document controllers at Kidbrooke.

Agnes says, "Construction was something I liked but never thought of it as a career for women. It was only when I spoke to friends and family, and they encouraged me to try something different and that was the sort of spark I needed."

The work placement gave Agnes key insights into the multi-faceted nature of the industry and, once she had completed her placement, due to her enthusiasm, time-keeping and problem-solving skills, we sought for Agnes a permanent post with Ardmore. In late 2022, she was appointed as a Health and Safety Assistant at the Kidbrooke site.

Agnes has progressed brilliantly in the last year, being promoted to a Health and Safety Officer position, and Ardmore, recognising her hard work and passion, have funded numerous qualifications for her including National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health and, shortly, Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS) supervisor training, as well as putting her forward as a diversity and inclusion ambassador for Construct_In (Places for London's Diversity and Inclusion in construction programme) for Kidbrooke.

Agnes says, "I guess everyday you learn something new; get to see new faces at site induction and can network with all kinds of people. Health and Safety is our priority and keeping up with regulations is something I care about passionately. Diversity and inclusion is another passion of mine. A lot of people still feel the industry is dominated by men. I remind them there are lots of women and we play just as important a role in the industry."

For Agnes, SMSTS is the next step in what she hopes will be a long and rewarding career. "I'd like to work my way up to a senior role", she says. Fortunately, her employer feels the same. Thomas Doherty, her line manager, hopes Ardmore retains her for the long-term. "Agnes came to us with no experience but bags of enthusiasm. Her passion and hard work have shone brightly, and we are looking forward to continuing her development and journey with us here at Ardmore".