



2015-2016
PORTRAIT N° 1

Laurence Beaulieu

Naval Architecture Technician



Learn together to recognize the workers who provide us the routing of 90% of our consumer goods, thus supporting our Quebec maritime industry both at sea and ashore!

Tribute for our maritime ambassadors!

« Our projects are very different from one another and very motivating! The challenges and tasks vary enormously! »

When you love what you do

► When you ask Laurence Beaulieu about her job as a Naval Architecture Technician, it's clear that she loves what she does for a living!

This 27-year-old already has 8 years' experience in the field. She is enthusiastic in her description of the little-known occupation she holds: "Basically, we make plans; we're engineers...designers. For most projects, we come to the office, prepare drawings and plans and draft specifications. My role, at Concept Naval, involves design, drafting and ensuring stability: the possibilities are virtually endless!"

AN IMPRESSIVE CAREER

Laurence loves boats. As a child, she got to know the marine sector as a sea cadet and a resident of Montréal's South Shore, where she watched the ships on the St. Lawrence. "I wanted to be an architect. I went to the National Job Fair at Place Bonaventure and visited the Institut maritime du Québec stand where a representative talked to me about naval architecture. I took home the paperwork, signed up and was accepted!"

After three years of Naval Architecture Technology studies at the IMQ and an internship at Transport Canada

in Montréal, Laurence was hired by the Davie shipyard before she had even completed her studies. In June 2008, she started working alongside her husband in the Engineering Department, where she analyzed plans and adapted them to the shipyard so that construction could begin.

When the shipyard closed in December 2008, Laurence had to find a new challenge. No sooner said than done when you're a Naval Architecture Technician! In February 2009, she joined Concept Naval. At the time, the company had 6 office employees. Now, it has 12.

TEAM WORK

Cruise lines, small and large vessel operators, shipyards, the Québec and federal governments, the Coast Guard and pleasure craft owners, to name a few, are among the clients of Québec City-based Concept Naval.

When Laurence describes her work, she uses words like thoroughness, versatility, team work, multiple challenges and focus: "Our projects are very different from one another and very motivating! The challenges and tasks vary enormously! Many of my friends and my husband work in the same field, but we all do very different things, despite the fact that we're all naval architecture technicians!"



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What's the difference between a naval architecture technician and a residential architecture technician? According to Laurence, they are similar yet worlds apart. "Similar in that both involve drawings and plans, but different in that when you design a house, you can make more than one using the same plan, like Maisons Bonneville. In naval architecture, each client has specific requirements, each ship and each project is unique. There's no such thing as mass production".

An example of a project? "Take a client who wants to add a partition in his boat. First, we go on board and take measurements. Then, we come back to the office, compile our data, and draw what we took down and checked in our structural analysis. We have the final product approved by one of our engineers and then it goes to Transport Canada for official approval. Finally, the client receives the plan and can ask a shipyard to start building."

The new vessels replacing the Tadoussac ferries are the pride and joy of the Concept Naval team and Laurence. They are the ones who designed the project, from A to Z. "We started from nothing. The STQ issued a call for tenders. We worked hard to get the contract and succeeded. It was a huge challenge! We did all the preliminary design work. Then, the client issued a call for tenders for a shipyard and the boat was built. We saw the vessel when it was launched at the Davie shipyard and realized: "Wow, we came up with that! If it hadn't been for us, that ship wouldn't be there. What a great example of team work."

A DEFINITE FUTURE IN THE FIELD

Laurence ignore où elle sera dans 5 ou 10 ans, mais Laurence doesn't know where she'll be in 5 or 10 years, but she'll definitely still be in the field of naval architecture: "While the major government shipbuilding contracts in eastern and western Canada are definitely interesting, at Concept Naval, we're close to our family and every

day brings new challenges."

According to Laurence, the occupation Naval Architecture Technician is still not well known, which explains the shortage of human resources trained in this field. Young people still perceive the technical courses at the Institut maritime du Québec as difficult and know little about them. "If you don't want to work in an engineering firm or at a shipyard, you still have plenty of job opportunities. You can work as an inspector for Transport Canada or a classification society, inspecting foreign vessels entering Canada to make sure they comply with Canadian standards and requirements."

What advice would she give young people considering a career as a Naval Architecture Technician? "Don't be afraid. Go for it! Sure, Rimouski isn't right next door but I left Longueuil to go there, and I have no regrets. It's a beautiful place, the IMQ is a great school and the industry is full of interesting challenges! Naval architecture technicians are in demand and there'll always be work for us. The industry will always need people on board ship and in companies that design and build vessels. Our roads and highways are overcrowded. Transporting cargo by ship is currently more than viable and will, no doubt, remain so for the future."

Ships travel up and down the St. Lawrence, carrying men, women and cargo...but also evidence of naval architecture technicians' work. "Before a boat is afloat and carrying goods, we come in. A naval architecture firm does the preliminary design and detailed engineering. Men and women design and draw the hull, piping and everything down to the smallest detail found on a ship."

For these men and women, working as naval architecture technicians means doing what they love.

By Josée-Ève Poulin
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