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Chief Executive of CITB NI Barry Neilson, Matthew Graham and director of Rahoran Ltd, Heather Kirkpatrick.

Joiner 'very thankful' for support

BY MARK McGOLDRICK

A FIVEMILETOWN man has become the 1,000th apprentice to secure qualification into the construction industry in the North, after receiving support and help from the Construction Industry Training Board NI.

Set up in 2017, the organisation aims to address the skills shortage in some of the traditional trades, such as joiners, roofers and bricklayers, improving the industry across the North. Through its apprenticeship grants, graduates receive £6,500 over a three year period, with an extra £1,500 grant available for students who meet certain requirements.

Fivemiletown's Matthew Graham, an apprentice joiner with Rahoran Ltd, is very thankful

to the organisation for helping him secure his chosen career.

"The CITB (Construction Industry Training Board NI) apprenticeship grant has been a huge help in my role as a joinery apprentice for Rahoran Ltd," said the trainee joiner.

"Working as an apprentice you need an eye for detail and a passion for your line of work, be prepared to listen to advice and feedback on your projects and get all the hands on experience you can.

"It is a great industry to join, lots of variety and pride in seeing a project completed," added the Fivemiletown man.

Chief Executive of Construction Industry Training Board NI, Barry Neilson, said the business is pleased to reach 'this fantastic milestone' in their community involvement.

"Offering young people apprenticeships gives businesses the chance to play an active role in moulding their future workforce and creating the future skills they need to help their businesses develop," he said.

"We want employers to make a difference and that is why we have boosted the grants funding to help improve the apprenticeship uptake within our sector.

"Concerns over bureaucratic systems, paperwork, recruitment and retention all create barriers for employers taking on an apprentice.

"As well as supporting employers in grants available we are helping to break down the barriers to show that hiring an apprentice is a simple process and there are many benefits to getting involved," he added.