

Working towards becoming a veterinarian takes a well thought-out plan

by Heidi Riley

When completing post-secondary education, you need a plan to land work in your field of choice. But in many cases, you also need a strategic plan to be accepted into your post-secondary institution of choice.

Alanna MacKinnon, who lives in York, is working towards her dream of becoming a veterinarian. She realizes that being accepted into the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC) in Charlottetown is a very competitive process.

In 2015, Alanna applied to AVC. After writing the admission exam and getting an interview, she was put on the waiting list.

She has already applied for admission in 2017, and while she is waiting, she is building her skills to become a better candidate for the program.

“If I am not accepted this time, I will not give up,” says Alanna. “I know people who tried for a few years to get into medical school. The more times you try, the more it shows how determined you are to reach your goal. I’m only 23. I have lots of time to keep trying.”

Alanna graduated from Charlottetown Rural High School and then took the science program at the University of New Brunswick, specializing in biochemistry. She graduated in May, 2016.

“In my third year, I thought about how much I love animals, and how I wanted to be a veterinarian when I was very young.”

Doing all she can to be accepted at AVC in 2017

She wanted to see what it was like to work as a vet, so she volunteered with an animal hospital in Charlottetown. “I fell in love with it. I got to prep patients for pre-op, helped during surgeries, and did after care. I went back the next summer.

“When I was an outreach student working for Parks Canada giving presentations about wildlife species living in the National Park, I gave presentations at the AVC Vet camp. One of the student coordinators there heard I was applying for vet school, and she has been really helpful. She answered my questions, and helped me prepare for my interview and for the entrance exam.”



Alanna MacKinnon is working towards her goal of entering Atlantic Veterinary College in 2017.

Alanna wanted to add experience with large animals to her vet school application, so she volunteered at a dairy farm.

AVC will let her know by March 2017 if she will be invited to an entrance interview in May. “It is great that I have already gone through the interview process once, so I know what to expect.”

For the full interview, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search **Alanna MacKinnon**.



What would help youth establish a career on PEI?

by Gloria Welton

Recently, youth ages 16 to 34 had their voices heard at an event called **YDAY** at Holland College in Charlottetown. Over 100 youth from high schools, colleges, and UPEI discussed suggestions to make PEI an attractive place to work, grow, and thrive.

This day gave youth opportunities to share ideas that policy makers and businesses can use to better address the needs of the youth labour market, and to shape future policy and programs.

The highlights

- Six leading Islanders talked about their personal experiences of working, growing and thriving on PEI.
- Premier Wade MacLauchlan addressed many issues that were brought to the forefront and opened the floor to questions.
- Speakers, an artist, and the facilitator helped the youth to openly discuss their ideas by establishing a sense of hope and a feeling of being heard.

Comments from two youth: what would help them establish a career on PEI

Keyshawn Bonamy is from the Bahamas, and is studying economics at UPEI, with an interest in law. “I would love to stay in Canada and contribute to PEI if there are opportunities here,” he says. “I came here because I didn’t want to go to a bigger city. A place like PEI is perfect.”

He says a school advisor at his high school in the Bahamas talked to him about his career choices. “Corporate law came up, and I was interested enough to take steps in that direction.”

Keyshawn spoke about his need to find work on PEI after he completes his studies. “I need to become more aware of my work options on PEI and not lose sight of that as I continue with my education.”

YDAY was a result of funding and partnership from the Government of PEI through the Department of Workforce and Advanced Learning and from the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, the Charlottetown Chamber of Commerce, the University of PEI, Holland College, and Collège Acadie.

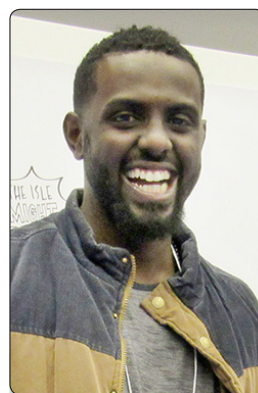


Keyshawn Bonamy

Islam Ahmed, originally from Sudan, was born and raised in Dubai and moved to PEI in 2012. “This discussion today is beneficial for the growth, development, and retention of youth on the Island.

“One thing I have noticed is the matter of retention. This is an issue not just on PEI but in every country, as residents tend to travel and like more sophisticated metropolitan cities rather than investing in and contributing to develop their cities to become a destination.”

He has a pre-engineering diploma, has worked in the aviation industry on PEI, and now works for Rogers Telecommunication. “I have to make some decisions about whether to continue engineering studies and get my degree.”



Islam Ahmed

Now that Islam has had experience working on the Island, he says there is much more to learn. “I find it hard to learn about job options on PEI, so coming to this YDAY event has given me many more options to consider. Creating your own work is very much an interest of mine, so hearing about Startup Zone makes me want to find out more about it.

“Youth need to be more aware of their career options, and we can create our destiny no matter where we are.” Islam says PEI is a very appealing place to live and create a business. “My direction seems to be more illuminated after attending YDAY. The event has given me more assurance that PEI is the right place to stay.”

About youth initiatives on PEI

The Department of Workforce and Advanced Learning is leading two ongoing Island-wide initiatives revolving around youth engagement:

- The **Youth Futures Council** is a province-wide youth advisory body created to help focus policy and programs in a manner that best serves the interests of young Islanders.
- **YDAY** will be an ongoing initiative aimed at providing the “youth lens” to the work of the Council for the upcoming year.

For more about YDAY, visit www.yday.ca

