

# A partnership between two leaders in marine power & propulsion will result in jobs for rural PEI

by Stella Shepard

“The new partnership between **MAN Diesel & Turbo SE** and **Aspin Kemp & Associates Inc. (AKA)** will bring in a large amount of business development opportunities that should result in an increase in jobs in manufacturing and engineering,” says **Tobia Wiedemer**, Business Development Specialist with AKA.

The majority of the new jobs will be at AKA’s Poole’s Corner location, with some growth expected at the Stratford location.

“As engineering ramps up and opportunities are converted to contracts, we should see up to 10 or more new production and technician positions created between the Poole’s Corner and Stratford locations in the short term. Long-term employment benefits will certainly be positive. However, it is difficult to estimate at this early stage in the partnership.”

**Jason Aspin** is the CEO and co-founder of AKA. Their headquarters are in Montague, and there are locations in Stratford and Poole’s Corner. The company operates internationally with offices in Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Singapore. About 100 full-time staff and a number of contractors work on PEI.

The investment and partnership has MAN Diesel & Turbo stepping in as a 40 percent shareholder in AKA. “It’s really been critical to take the innovation that we’ve developed to the next level,” says Jason. “It’s been important to find a global partner who has a stronger brand and client base and is able to allow us to compete with larger organizations around the world.”

MAN Diesel & Turbo, based in Germany, is the world’s leading provider of large-bore diesel and gas engines and turbomachinery.

The company employs about 14,500 staff at more than 100 international sites. The company manufactures two-stroke and four-stroke engines for marine and stationary applications, turbochargers and propellers, gas and steam turbines, compressors, and chemical reactors.

“MAN Diesel & Turbo has a huge marine and power customer base throughout the world, and we will be introducing and directing work to AKA,” says **Dave Samson**, Integration Lead for MAN’s new partnership with AKA.

“The partnership will allow AKA to access new global opportunities that have been challenging for the company to secure in the past,” says Jason. “This will result in the steady production of new products that will bring in more employment for the Island-based AKA locations.”

## Hiring plans

“We’ve recently hired a graduate of the UPEI School of Sustainable Design Engineering,” says Tobia. “We will hire locally as much as we can. Most of the Technicians on AKA’s team are typically Holland College graduates or other skilled trades people from the local area.”

## Job titles to be filled into 2018

- Mechanical Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Software Engineering
- Mechanical Technicians
- Electrical Technicians
- Human Resources
- Administration
- Sales Team



**Tobia Wiedemer, Business Development Specialist, AKA.**

For information about **Aspin Kemp & Associates**, contact **Tobia Wiedemer** at 902-620-4882.

Visit [www.aka-group.com](http://www.aka-group.com) To apply for a position, send your resumé to [careers@aka-group.com](mailto:careers@aka-group.com)

For more information about **MAN Diesel & Turbo**, visit [www.dieselturbo-canada.man.eu/](http://www.dieselturbo-canada.man.eu/) and [www.marine.man.eu](http://www.marine.man.eu)



# A health career that combines creativity, patient interaction, and product development

by Gloria Welton

The primary goal of the Orthotist is to restore mobility and to prevent or limit disability.

An orthosis is a device that assists a limb or the spine. Orthosis can range from a foot orthotic, to a knee, back, hand or other joint brace. They should not be confused with a prosthesis that replaces a lost part of the body. Orthotists also receive training in wheelchair fitting and compressive garments.

Two Certified Orthotists work on PEI. One works at the QEH. **Vanessa Lavoie** works in Charlottetown with **Island Orthotics**, which is owned by three Orthotists Joanne St-Pierre, Francois St-Onge and Danny Charron. Vanessa has been at the clinic for five years.

“I spend a lot of time with my clients conducting complete walking and running biomechanic assessments, as well as examinations of the joints. Then comes the design and manufacturing of the orthotic device, followed by the important step of making the necessary adjustments to make sure the client is comfortable.”

She is originally from Packington, Québec, and received her diploma in 2009 from Collège Mérici, one of the four institutions in Canada that train Orthotists and Prosthetists. She immediately found employment in Moncton. In 2012, she was recruited to work at a practice in Charlottetown.

When Vanessa arrived on the Island, she did not speak any English. She understands the challenges of communicating in another language, and is proud to offer quality services in both English and French.

Always looking to better serve her clients, Vanessa continues to seek training in new and emerging technologies and treatments that are continually being updated in this field.

## Vanessa Lavoie’s employment journey

Vanessa started her education by training to work with people with disabilities. She went on to study jewelry making, a skill she loved. She also worked in a facility making dental bridges.

“I was at a point where I knew I wanted to go back to school and do something else. I was looking for a career in the medical field where I could work directly with people, because I am very social. I also like to work with materials to design and create a finished product. Orthotics seemed to be a great fit for me. Once I started the training, I fell in love with the profession.”

“I had the opportunity to open a clinic on PEI, and even though I had very little English, I jumped in because I love PEI. As a child, I watched *Road to Avonlea* and I always wanted to come here. I am from a small community in Quebec with a population of about 600. I never wanted to live in a big city, so PEI suits me very well.

“When I first came to PEI, what helped me most was the nature of the people here. I meet great people every day. My personality is to help and do the best job I can, so people trust me. All of this helped me overcome the language barrier I initially faced.

“With the experience I am getting, I am now more confident, and feel that I have made it through the learning curve of starting out in a new profession.”

## Opportunities on PEI

Vanessa believes employment opportunities are limited on PEI because of the Island’s smaller population. Prospects are better in the rest of Canada.

An Orthotist may work in hospital in the rehabilitation department or they can work in the private industry in a variety of roles.



**Vanessa Lavoie, Certified Orthotist CO(c)**

Vanessa says the best avenue to ensure employment is to be certified through Orthotics Prosthetics Canada (OPC).

For more information, visit [www.opcanada.ca](http://www.opcanada.ca)

For more information about **Island Orthotics**, visit [www.equilibrium.ca/EN/expertise.php](http://www.equilibrium.ca/EN/expertise.php)

For the full interview, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search **Certified Orthotist**.

