

Addressing the demand for bus drivers and short-order cooks

by Ruby Arsenault

To address the growing demand for bus drivers, Rural Community Learning Inc. (RCLI) is arranging three-week Class 2A Bus Driver training sessions across the Island. The training is being done by JVI Transportation & Safety Academy.

Upcoming programs:

Alberton: February 11 – 28

Charlottetown: March 4 – 21

“The PEI Public Schools Branch recognized the need to train more people to fill the growing need for more casuals and substitutes,” says **Sharon Horne**, Executive Director, RCLI. “Since 2015, we have implemented the bus driver and the short-order cook programs because of the need for more people to have training in these fields.”

About the Class 2A Bus Driver training

Training consists of classroom learning, air brakes endorsement test, and hands-on driving. Applications can be picked up at all Career Development Services offices across the Island and at the Alberton and the Tignish Employment Resource Centres. All applications are forwarded to the PEI Schools Branch and interviews are conducted to determine suitability.

Bus Driver training requirements

- Completed Public Schools Branch substitute/casual support staff application
- Proof of grade 12 education or equivalent
- Submit driver’s medical certificate and vision test
- Submit driver’s abstract and a criminal record check (vulnerable sector check)
- Photocopy of driver’s license
- Hold a valid driver’s license for at least five years
- Up to date resumé
- Completed JVI application form
- Interviewed by staff of the PEI Public Schools Branch

Sharon says RCLI has delivered 16 of these programs across PEI. “Of the 46 participants who received the training, 34 are working as casuals in the industry and six gained permanent positions.

“We hope to continue to offer these free programs in order to have more people trained and in the system as the baby boomers retire.

“Each time a casual driver gains a permanent position, there is another need for a casual. Casual drivers are often required to do multiple runs in a day due to the lack of casuals. The Charlottetown area has the greatest need at the present time.



Sharon Horne, Executive Director, Rural Community Learning Inc.

“These are well-paying jobs, and once they are hired permanently, bus drivers receive good benefits as well. After completing the program, which also offers a first aid & CPR course, graduates are employable within the PEI Public School Branch, along with opportunities with private bus companies.”

About the short-order cook program

Sharon hopes to help meet the demand for more cooks by offering another short-order cook program in the near future.

“Last spring, RCLI delivered a program at the Northport Inn Restaurant. This program offered the food safety certificate, responsible beverage program, and an online cooking course certificate through Holland College.

“I encourage employers who struggle with finding cooks to contact me. Also, if employers know of someone who requires the training, please feel free to refer them to me.”

RCLI is a non-profit organization with the goal to provide opportunities to increase the quality of life of West Prince residents.

Funding is provided through the Canada-PEI labour market agreements.

For more information, contact **Sharon Horne** at **Rural Community Learning Inc.** at (office) 902-853-3715, or cell 902-853-5720, or email sharonhorne@rcli.ca

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Young plumbing apprentice plans to live and work in a booming trade on PEI

by Stella Shepard

Apprenticeship is a unique post-secondary opportunity to earn while you learn. It is a combination of 20 percent in-school training and 80 percent on-the-job work experiences under the supervision of a journeyman.

It is a partnership between industry, educational institutions, and government. PEI has 56 designated trades under apprenticeship, which is a stepping stone to becoming a journeyman.

Daniel Grant is a plumbing apprentice who plans to live and work on PEI. He graduated from Montague High School in 2016. He went on to take the plumbing program at Holland College Georgetown Center, and graduated in May, 2017. “I’ve always had an interest in the trades,” says Daniel.

“I just bought a house outside Montague. This is where I want to live and raise a family someday. More young people are staying on the Island to work. Contractors are saying employment in the trades is increasing on PEI. Plumbing is a job that will always be here. It’s not going away.”

In June 2017, he began an apprenticeship with **Petrie Plumbing Inc.** in Belfast. In January 2019, Daniel returned to Georgetown Holland College Centre for six weeks of study.

He will write his Block Three test, return to work for another year, and then write the Block Four test. He will be eligible to write his Red Seal interprovincial exam when he acquires the necessary apprenticeship hours.

Job prospects

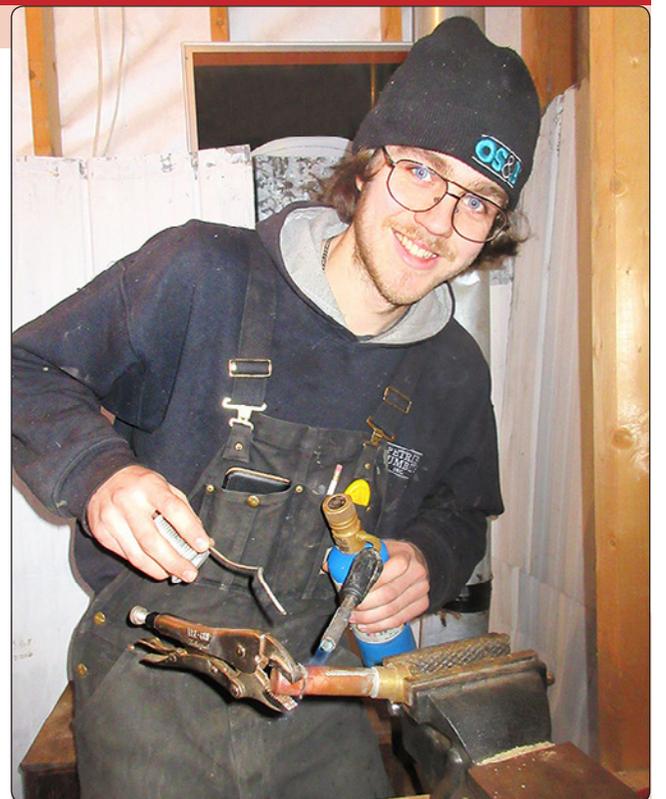
“I like working for the company I am with,” says Daniel. “New home construction is just one aspect of plumbing employment on PEI. I mostly do residential plumbing, but many of my classmates are employed in commercial jobs building and renovating factories, apartment buildings, etc. From what I hear and see, the commercial plumbing sector is experiencing an increase in construction as well.

“Construction on PEI is definitely getting jobs for apprentices and keeping them employed.

“Winter construction has increased in recent years, allowing year-round employment. There is a lot of service work as well with plumbing, so there will always be work available. The wages are good, especially for PEI standards.”

Career advice

“I recommend trades as a career option,” says Daniel. “When I asked my high school counsellor about employment prospects on PEI, she gave me a list of Holland College courses with high employment rates within a year of graduation, which indicated there was a good chance of finding immediate employment in the trades on PEI.”



Daniel Grant of Valleyfield Road is a plumbing apprentice with Petrie Plumbing Inc. in Belfast. Daniel plans to live and work on PEI as he completes the apprenticeship program and writes his Red Seal Interprovincial exam.

