

New fisheries project offers training, work placement, and employment

by Gloria Welton

Atantic Aqua Farms (AAF) is the first employer on PEI to take part in a new pilot project called **Essential Skills for Atlantic Fisheries (ESAF)**.

The six weeks of training started in August and was packed full of information around workplace essential skills, employability skills, and computer skills training. Training was customized for managers, supervisors, and new recruits.

"We were so thrilled to work with Atlantic Aqua Farms," says **Lily Reaman** of PEI Literacy Alliance, Coordinator of the project. "We learned a lot about the high quality of knowledge and professionalism in PEI aquaculture, the nature of hiring in this industry, and what further training and supports may be of interest to staff and new recruits."



Pictured are project staff and participants. Back row second from the left, Maureen Boudreau, Manager of Atlantic Aqua Farms in Georgetown, took the training program as well. "I found it really interesting, and it's nice to see the others coming out of their shells and taking part. It was great to learn about different skill sets, such as how to deal with conflict in the workplace and other skills we haven't had training in before." Back row first from right, Lily Reaman, Coordinator of the project. "The goal is to help people return to the workforce or develop skills within their workplace."

Another project to come

Another cohort will be scheduled for early 2020. "Employers are welcome to contact us. The next area of the fisheries industry we will focus on depends on the interests that employers bring to us. The company we work with next could be involved in harvesting, processing, or aquaculture."

Here is what the project has to offer:

Employers

- Assistance in recruiting new employees
- Free training for new employees
- Free mentor training for supervisors and managers
- Increased productivity and reduced errors
- Partial wage subsidies for work placement terms.

Participants

- Upgraded skills and capabilities for the workplace
- On-the-job training
- An opportunity for a paid work placement and full-time employment
- A new Chromebook computer to keep upon completion of the training.

About Atlantic Aqua Farms Ltd. (AAF)

AAF is the largest grower and processor of high quality PEI blue mussels under the brand names Canadian Cove and JP's Shellfish. They also offer a wide selection of branded oysters, clams, and live Maine and Canadian lobster.

"We employ over 200 staff across PEI," says **Dana Drummond**, Vice President of Farm Operations at AAF.

They have facilities in Georgetown, Orwell Cove, and Borden Carlton.

"All of the farming operation sites employ 20 to 30 people full time year-round and another 100 staff are seasonal, which is approximately eight months of the year.

"We are actively looking to grow our team and further build our business through qualified people who understand the aquaculture business and how to deliver the highest quality product for our customers."

Dana says although it is too early to report on the long-term results and impact of the ESAF project, they are encouraged with the interest shown and cooperation to date.

"Recent conversations with folks on the project show that progress is being made in areas such as financial literacy, computer competency, and better communication skills. With a good attitude towards learning new skills, I expect everyone involved will benefit. We committed to hiring the new recruits as soon as the project was completed."

Mentorship training

Part of the support for the company was one week of mentorship training, delivered at Workplace Learning PEI in Charlottetown.

"Supervisors and managers came from the AAF harvesting and plant operations across the Island," says **Jeremy MacEachern**, Facilitator.

Mentorship training covered the following topics:

- Essential skills for the fishing industry
- Communication, teamwork, and leadership skills
- Learning styles and how they relate to the workplace
- Problem solving strategies for the workplace

Jeremy recommends that companies take the time to invest in training for their staff because people are their greatest asset.

The Essential Skills for Atlantic Fisheries (ESAF) project, funded by the Government of Canada's National Essential Skills Initiatives program, is led by the Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick in partnership with the PEI Literacy Alliance, Literacy Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador Laubach Literacy Council.

To apply to be a participant or a potential employer, or to find out more about the project, contact **Lily Reaman**, Coordinator, at **902-218-8484** or email **lily@peiliteracy.ca**. Visit **www.peiliteracy.ca/esafpei**



New program and new website make it easy to explore a career in trucking

by Heidi Riley

A new program called **One Journey** will cover 100 percent of the training costs for people entering the trucking industry as truck drivers. Three applicants will start in mid-October, and three more will start in January 2020.

"Employers will pre-hire the participants, so that a job is guaranteed at the end of the training," says **Brian Oulton**, Executive Director, **PEI Trucking Sector Council**. "Participants will also be paid a stipend, and most training expenses will be covered."

The new program is based on a Nova Scotia model that has seen success. "The retention rate of people in that program is almost 100 percent, which is nowhere near the rate on PEI."

The 12-week program will include eight weeks in the classroom and four weeks with a driver coach, followed by a full-time position.

"Companies will be involved right away, and will help address training gaps and build skills."

Human Resources help

The Trucking Sector Council has hired an HR Coordinator, who will start in October. "The Coordinator will help match employment opportunities between individuals and employers as well as ensure more of our industry positions are being posted.

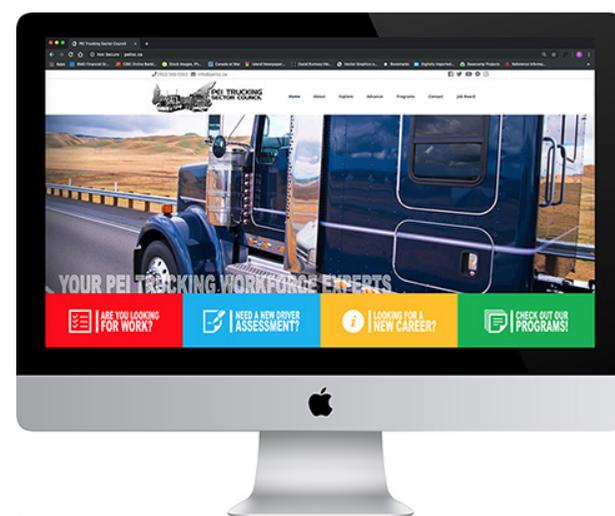
"The Coordinator will also work closely with industry to help develop new strategies and opportunities around immigration, training, and recruiting non-traditional entrants to the industry."

Seats are limited, so interested individuals should apply right away. For more information or to register, contact the **PEI Trucking Sector Council**, Farm Centre, Charlottetown, at **902-566-5563** or email **info@peitsc.ca**. Visit **www.peitsc.ca**

PEI Trucking Sector Council website has a new look

Visit **www.peitsc.ca** to find tips for entering the trucking field, including the following:

- Job board listing trucking-related jobs
- Labour market information: explore the industry, the careers, and the training available
- Tips on finding a job in the trucking field
- Job descriptions
- Programs to help new candidates enter the field
- Information about training in Atlantic Canada



The PEI Trucking Sector Council welcomes people interested in starting a career as a truck driver to attend a **Career in trucking information session**.

The next sessions will be held at 9:30 am on October 17 and November 21.

Funded by the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning through the Canada/PEI Labour Market Agreements.

