

The Employment Journey on PEI

NEWS YOU CAN USE

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND • CANADA

2020 SkillsPEI Job Fairs happening across PEI

Many employers will be there with many jobs to be filled



A number of job fairs take place across PEI each year. If you want tips on how to prepare to make the best impression when meeting employers, you are in the right place.

Going to a job fair can be very intimidating and overwhelming. The key is to prepare ahead of time in order to make the best impression possible.

Before the Job Fair

Find out where it will be held, where to park, and if it is accessible.

If you have any questions, call and ask the organization hosting the job fair.

Be prepared to be interviewed on the spot. Practice answering questions such as:

- Why do you want to work for us?
- What do you know about our company?
- Tell me about your strengths and weaknesses.

Be prepared to answer questions to illustrate your good judgment and your problem-solving and people skills. Come up with examples of how you handled a difficult situation.

Try to get a list of employers who will be attending the job fair or take a look at employers who attended last year. Find out as much as you can about the organizations that interest you.

Check their websites to find out who they are, what they do, and what jobs exist there.

For a list of last year's employers, visit www.employmentjourney.com/download-the-june-july-august-2019-issue/



Your Resumé

Tailor it to the job and/or company of interest. Grab the employer's attention quickly with highlights of qualifications using strong statements about your experience, training, and soft skills. List accomplishments that relate to the company you are applying to.

Make it short – no more than two pages. On average, employers spend just 30 seconds reading a resumé. List your work experience with dates, employer, and a brief description of duties. Make sure your resumé is error free. Ask someone else to proofread it.

For more tips on preparing a resumé, visit www.employmentjourney.com/prepare-an-effective-resume-that-will-get-noticed/



What to do at the Job Fair

Get to the job fair early so that you can make an impression before the crowds arrive. Walk around the whole space, locate your target employers, and visit them while you are still fresh. If you go to the job fair with a friend, visit the booths by yourself. Make sure you turn your phone off.

How to dress

Dress the way you would for a job interview. Look professional. You will be standing for a long time, so wear comfortable shoes.

What to bring

Bring a portfolio to carry copies of your resumé and a note pad. Don't carry a coffee with you but a bottle of water is fine. Also, a list of references is great to provide if asked.

For more help with your job search, check out a complete list of community resources, visit www.employmentjourney.com/resources-services-for-job-seekers/



What to say

Smile, shake the employer's hand, introduce yourself, and be ready to be interviewed.

Be able to give a short description of your skills, abilities, and experience as they relate to the jobs of interest. Decide ahead of time when you are available to work.

Make notes of questions you want to ask. Employers don't mind if you look at your notes while you are talking. It makes you look more prepared.

Based on your research, prepare a few questions to ask each employer such as:

- When will you be interviewing and hiring for the positions?
- What is the hiring process?
- Who can I contact for more information?

When the employer asks if you know anything about the company, the previous information gathered will show you did your research. The employer will see that you are interested and ready to work for the company.

Get the employer's business card with the name of the person you spoke with and the person who does the hiring, and leave your resumé.

Follow up after the Job Fair

This shows your enthusiasm and positive attitude. Make a telephone call or send an e-mail. Thank them for taking the time to speak with you, and say you would be thrilled to work with them.

SkillsPEI Job Fair dates and locations

The Job Fairs will run from 12:30 to 4:30 pm

April 2, 2020 (Storm date April 3)
Eastlink Centre, 46 Kensington Road, Charlottetown

April 7, 2020 (Storm date April 8)
Holland College Waterfront Campus, 89 Water Street, Summerside

April 14, 2020 (Storm date April 15)
Cavendish Farms Wellness Centre, 21 Sullivan Drive, Montague

April 16, 2020 (Storm date April 17)
Mill River Resort, 180 Mill River Resort Road, Bloomfield

For more information, call **SkillsPEI** at 1-877-491-4766. Visit www.workpei.ca



Summerside Sunbank will generate about 200 construction jobs

by Heidi Riley

Funding has been announced to build a new 21-megawatt solar energy farm and storage facility in Summerside.

"This project will create over 200 full-time jobs in Summerside during the 18 to 24 months of construction," says Summerside Mayor **Basil Stewart**.

The **Summerside Sunbank** project is the result of collaboration between the City of Summerside, Samsung Renewable Energy Inc., and the provincial and federal governments.

Phase 1 of the energy project installed 1,548 solar panels and a battery at Credit Union Place in 2017. Soon, Phase II will be rolled out on about 80 acres near Linkletter.

More than 65,000 solar panels and about seven tractor-trailer sized batteries will be installed. The batteries will store enough energy to power at least 1,000 homes.

"There will be three to six months of preplanning, environmental assessments, public consultation, and construction approvals," says **Michael Thususka**, Director of Economic Development for the City of Summerside.

"Although the City of Summerside will be hiring some senior level staff, they will not be directly involved in hiring construction staff."

Businesses wanting to participate in this project will submit bids for the work. The winning contractors will then begin to gear up their employment numbers.

"With a large project like this, there is the potential for Islanders living away to come back to work on it. It will be an opportunity for local businesses to attract and grow their staff."

Project timeline

By late summer 2020, they hope to start construction of the access roads, installation of fencing, and site preparation.

"It will take a while to procure some of the equipment," says **Greg Gaudet**, Director of Municipal Services in Summerside, and an Electrical Engineer.

"Utility transformers can take a year to be constructed and delivered." The Sunbank is projected to be online by May 2022.

Hiring needs

"The project will require professional Engineers, Legal, Archeological and Environmental specialists, and Project Managers, who will be selected and hired by the City of Summerside," says Greg.

"The city will also engage an engineering firm to design the project, and will then put it out to tender."

"Contractors chosen during the tendering process will hire the construction staff they need, such as Road Builders, Foundation Builders, Heavy Duty Machinery Operators, Engineers, Electricians, Labourers, and Manufacturers and Installers for the racks holding the solar panels."

"The system will also require commissioning and testing by specialists. There will also be electrical utility work to connect power lines to the new system."

"Employers will bring in some construction specialists, but the construction of foundations and other work will be sourced locally," says Michael.

"This project will help local businesses grow their knowledge and put it to use. In the future I can see the construction of many more renewable energy projects here on PEI."



Greg Gaudet, Director of Municipal Services and Michael Thususka, Director of Economic Development for the City of Summerside discuss the Summerside Sunbank project.

Permanent positions

The City of Summerside will hire three to five people to operate and maintain the utility after it is constructed.

Potentially, there would be a Plant Manager and a few people to do general upkeep, routine facility maintenance, and control. Larger-scale batch testing, maintenance, and landscaping will be contracted out to local firms.

For more about the City of Summerside, visit www.summerside.ca

For a list of job opportunities in Summerside, visit www.bigpossibilities.ca/news-newsletters/look-whos-hiring-in-summerside

For the full interview, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search **Summerside Sunbank**.

New Holland College system makes it easier to apply for scholarships and awards

by Stacy Dunn

Students at Holland College now have an easier way to apply for scholarships, bursaries and other awards. The Student Services & Support department at the college recently set up new online software which will save time, effort, and money in the application process.

"In the past, students had to sift through a list of 250 awards on our website and seek out which ones they were eligible for," says **Melissa Josey**, Student Services Advisor – Outreach and Awards.

"Each student could be eligible for up to 10 awards. Formerly, they had to submit paper copies of their high school transcript, resumé, and biography for each award they applied for," she says.

"Now, students are automatically connected with awards they are eligible for, and can upload their transcript, resumé, and biography once and apply for multiple awards."

After the applications are received, they are reviewed by a selection committee of about 20 college staff in Admissions, Student Services, International Student Office, and Financial Accounts.

"We get many thank you notes from students, and the college is so appreciative of donors who support students, because the money changes a student's life."

"Through the generosity of donors, hundreds of students benefit annually from award money exceeding a total of \$500,000."

Application deadline

The application deadline for entrance scholarships, bursaries and awards is March 31, 2020. Prospective students must have an active Holland College application to apply for a student award.

For more information on scholarships, bursaries, and awards, call **Holland College's Student Services & Support** department at **902-566-9374** or email awards@hollandcollege.com Visit www.hollandcollege.com/admissions/money-matters/studentawards.php

Application process

Melissa says the application process can take just 20 minutes to complete. "Last year, students testing the new software gave it rave reviews."

"The intensive part of the application is the financial information. It asks for a budget outlining what you have and what you need. Another intensive part is the biography, which is a new component. It's the best way to get a picture of the students' academics, financial situation, athletics or volunteering, and their future goals. Most students have a great story to tell."



Melissa Josey, Student Services Advisor – Outreach and Awards.

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Helping employers adapt to a changing workforce

by Heidi Riley

Next Level Group (NLG) helps businesses achieve their goals by amending their business plans and guiding them through their accounting and human resource needs.

"Sometimes owners are so busy running their company that they can't move ahead with long-term business goals," says **Andrew Lavoie**, President of NLG in Charlottetown.

An important part of reaching those goals is to hire people with the skills businesses need. NLG helps employers connect with permanent or temporary staff in a whole range of occupations.

"In our experience, the positions we tend to see the most demand for include IT Professionals, Social Media Experts, Accountants, HR professionals, and Labourers," says Andrew.

"Social media is a fairly new area that is very much in demand. We have noticed a significant jump within our clients and prospects who are taking advantage of adding a Social Media Expert."

Many companies are also looking for Software Developers, Quality Assurance, and Penetration Testers. "If I could find 50 IT professionals today, I am confident that we could find work for them right away."

"There is also a huge need for more Electricians, Plumbers, Carpenters, and other tradespeople. So many have moved to higher paying jobs out west or beginning a sole proprietorship that it is near impossible to find anyone to make a move within the Atlantic provinces. This is when we sit with our clients and become creative in determining a viable solution."

Andrew says his firm is so busy that he is forced to think outside the box when searching for his internal staff. "We are looking at our industry with hopes of offering something that is enticing and completely different without lowering our client Quality Control standards."

Changing trends

"As little as five years ago, there were many more job seekers than positions available. Now the opposite is true. Low unemployment numbers mean it is now much more difficult to find the candidates and the skill sets that employers are searching for. This shift forces our clients to think quicker, use a more strategic approach when interviewing, and in some cases alter their work culture.

"We have seen a shift where more employees are less engaged with their jobs and are more likely to move from one opportunity to another for a number of reasons.

"The skills shortage is so serious that sometimes candidates will accept a different position in the middle of a lengthy hiring process requiring multiple interviews and testing."

Andrew says there is an increase in situations where candidates do not show up for scheduled interviews, take time off without approval, or quit without notice, because it is easy for them to find other opportunities, especially with the tightened HR policies and guidelines.

To help with the recruitment and retention of employees, NLG helps ease the sometimes difficult transition to a new job in a number of ways:

- Find out as much as possible about the employer's work culture, pay, benefits, and what separates them from their competitors.
- Conduct detailed interviews and testing with candidates to make sure their skills, needs, and preferences are considered when matching them with job opportunities.
- Meet new employees at the worksite on their first day to help ease the transition to a new position. "Sometimes they don't even know what door to enter," says Andrew.
- Conduct exit interviews to find out how the workplace culture is working well and how it could be improved, and communicate this with the employer.

Employers looking for staff and job seekers may contact **Andrew Lavoie, Next Level Group**, at 902-940-2220 or email AndrewL@nlgrp.com Visit www.nlgrp.com



Andrew Lavoie, President, Next Level Group in Charlottetown.

Longstanding PEI video game company continues to grow

by Stacy Dunn

Video game testing company **Sculpin QA** has been based in Charlottetown since 2007. The company has about 35 staff in Canada and has been hiring steadily in the last few years.

The company focuses on quality assurance and services such as email customer support and community management for its sister company, Other Ocean Interactive, and many other game developers around the world.

"We help game developers who don't have the time to focus on talking to players," says **Max Knechtel**, Business Development Manager. "If they are constantly answering players' emails, then they are not working on a game. It's been a good service for us."

Hiring needs and process

"Hiring is ongoing," he says. "We post jobs on our own Sculpin website, Other Ocean Interactive, the Job Bank and Work PEI, among others."

Sculpin QA has hired people from Holland College's Video Game Art and Animation program and from UPEI's Computer Science program.

"Holland College and UPEI have really helped the PEI video game industry expand in the last 10 years. Our industry experiences are valued by those institutions, and as a result many graduates are working in the industry here."

Applicants for Tester jobs will field situational questions. "We look for technical expertise and personality," Max says. "You can stand out by showing your knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion for the video game industry."

Industry promotion

The company is a founding member of **Videogames PEI**. In March, the industry group will attend the **Island Entertainment Expo** in Charlottetown.

"We like to show the local community that PEI has a thriving game industry," Max says. "Considering the small size of this province, we have some major world-class studios here. It's a real success story."

For more information on **Sculpin QA**, visit www.sculpinQA.com

For the full interview, go to www.employmentjourney.com and search **Sculpin QA**.

For more information about **Videogames PEI**, search Facebook.



Max Knechtel, Business Development Manager.



A career in service to the public offers good job prospects

by Heidi Riley

The **Atlantic Police Academy (APA)** in Slemmon Park trains future public safety officers in programs such as Police Science (Cadet), Basic Firefighting, Conservation Enforcement, Correctional Officer, and Sheriff and Public Safety Officer.

"The type of people who do well at these jobs are people who truly want to serve their communities," says **Forrest Spencer**, Executive Director, Atlantic Police Academy.

"Police Science graduates are sought after by agencies across Canada," says **Jeffrey Minten**, Deputy Director of the Atlantic Police Academy.

"Cape Breton has approximately a dozen openings. Over the past five years, 88 to 93 percent of APA police graduates found employment in a field related to policing.

"Many officers who are hired as part-time on PEI work full-time hours and gain a lot of experience. Moreover, if they are willing to travel, agencies across Canada are looking for our cadets."

Both Forrest and Jeffery explained that there are also opportunities to join the RCMP. Regular RCMP cadets must take a six-month program, but APA graduates only require six weeks of RCMP training.

"Conservation Enforcement jobs are also available in Atlantic Canada," says Forrest. "We are working on a partnership with Environment Canada to increase opportunities for possible federal government employment as well.

"Corrections Services are in demand on PEI and across the Maritimes," says Forrest. "Also, Public Safety Sheriffs are in very high demand in Newfoundland and Labrador right now. Jobs for graduates are also available in PEI and New Brunswick."

Basic Firefighting graduates are trained to an international standard and can work anywhere in the world.

"In Atlantic Canada, many will join volunteer fire services to protect their communities. Full time positions in fire services are less common in the region, but there are also firefighting careers available in private industry such as oil and gas. The training also opens doors to such positions as Industrial Safety Officer."

Women and minorities in policing

The APA encourages women to consider a career in public safety. "Police Services across Canada are seeking female officers," says Forrest.

"Two years ago, we had our largest graduating class of women, with 16 women out of a class of 56. Last year, 10 women graduated from the police science program.

"Every police service in Canada would like to see more officers representing the communities they serve. It is a bonus to speak French, and it is also great to have an officer on hand who can speak Mandarin, Punjabi, or another language."

Changes to the program and policy

"In the past two years, there have been a lot of enhancements to the Police Science program," says Forrest. "With the change in cannabis laws, students are trained in standardised field sobriety testing for drugs and alcohol.



From left, Forrest Spencer, Executive Director, and Jeffrey Minten, Deputy Director, Atlantic Police Academy.

Liam Jay from Charlottetown is a student in the Police Science (Cadet) program. He chose the program because a couple of his buddies went through the academy, and they spoke of their great experiences. "They are all employed now, and they found jobs relatively quickly after graduation.



"I made the decision to enter this career after working for an Island-based security company for four summers. The company gave me training, and we worked hand in hand with police during many events.

"After graduation, given the realities of employment I am totally willing to go to northern Quebec or to join the RCMP. The job market is smaller in Atlantic Canada, and as a fresh recruit I can't expect to get a full-time permanent job in my home town right away."

Spencer Morrison from New Brunswick took the Basic Firefighting program and graduated in January 2020.



"When I was in high school, I took a co-op program at the Oromocto Fire Department, and I loved the atmosphere and the idea of giving back to my community.

"There are always opportunities in western Canada and many other places in the world. I plan to take advantage of that, because I like to travel."

"All our students receive cyber investigative training," says Jeffery. "More and more crimes are borderless and happen over the Internet, which brings a ton of challenges, because suspects and investigations extend beyond our borders. We are continuously challenged to keep up with the changes."

"De-escalation training here at the Academy is second to none. Cadets have the opportunity to become more empathetic and understanding of how to interact with people suffering from mental health issues."

For more information about the **Atlantic Police Academy**, visit www.hollandcollege.com/apa For the full article, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search **Atlantic Police Academy**.

Trained Administrative Assistants are in short supply

by Gloria Welton

For many years, the job market for Administrative Assistants has been very competitive. Now, the situation has changed as more employers, both government and private, are looking to fill these types of jobs and the people trained for this career are in short supply.

Katherine McQuaid, Director of Training at **Academy of Learning College** in Charlottetown, sees the need for more trained Administrative Assistants. "We are getting calls from employers on a regular basis wanting to hire students from our Administration Assistant diploma program.

"More federal and provincial jobs are being posted than I have seen in a very long time. We can't keep up with the demand, and we need to attract more students to the Administrative field.

"Most administrative jobs advertised are full-time, and compensation has increased, but there appears to be a wage gap between government and private sector positions. Government positions require the completion of a recognized Office Studies program.

"People thinking of getting into the field should reach out to employers to find out what post-secondary programming they require to become employed. Private employers may not have the same requirement, and can offer a lot of work experience in a wide choice of sectors.

"Employers are experiencing staff shortages across all of our complement of programming, including accounting, business administration, office administration, and medical administration.

"Right now, most of the requests we receive from employers are for administrative assistants. For many years, this type of job was very competitive because of the large number of people trained with the required skillsets.

"But today, these positions are more in demand because retirements are increasing, and people are changing careers more often and are not staying with one employer for long periods of time."

Katherine says because of the demand, they are definitely looking to expand the number of people coming into the Administration Assistant program.

"In particular, we are focusing on attracting university graduates who might have an arts or a science degree and want to work in an administrative role. A university degree provides the theoretical background required for administration jobs today, and we provide the technology training.

"Along with keeping up with the latest technology, this career choice also requires the ability to assimilate new information, research, solve problems, and think critically, which are skills gained in university and are transferable to an administrative role.

"We have a lot more students taking medical administration because people have the impression that is where the opportunities are, and they are correct, but now there is a wide open door for office administration as well."

About the program

The 10-month Administration Assistant program at Academy of Learning can be taken on a full-time or part-time basis. Classes are available in the mornings, afternoons, evenings, and online. New students can begin at any time of year.

Students are given credit for skills they already have, which can reduce the time needed to complete the programs and the tuition as well.

All programs offer an on-the-job work placement. "The student identifies the employers they are interested in working with, and we set up the placement with the employer. We work together to meet the needs of the students."

For more information about **Academy of Learning College**, call 1-888-328-8973.

Visit www.aolpei.ca/how_we_teach.php

www.academyoflearning.com



Janine Ronney from Charlottetown started the Administration Assistant program in 2019. She was determined to succeed in the program, and now is preparing for her on-the-job placement.

"After 20 years in the hospitality industry, I decided to change my career. I have had many different positions that have given me many different skills, but taking this program has helped me expand on those skills to prepare me for my next career.

"It was scary to make the change, but this has been a great program with great support. When I was considering a career change I looked for a career that was in an office setting but still had that customer interaction. The Administrative Assistant diploma program fit that criteria.

"I used resources such as The Employment Journey website to make sure I was choosing the right career, and I noticed more and more job openings for administrative assistants, which helped solidify my decision. I am very excited to start my next career!"

New community outreach centre offers all the right help under one roof

by Gloria Welton

Right in the middle of Charlottetown, a refuge is open throughout the day for Islanders struggling with homelessness, poverty, and many other issues that require compassion and support.

The centre offers a warm haven for people to have a snack, take a shower, do their laundry, access a phone and computer, and talk with community support representatives who are there to help.

Mike Redmond, Manager of Bedford MacDonald House, a homeless shelter for men, also manages the new centre. He says as a result of a rising need and with the help of tremendous community support, the centre opened the first week in January.

"We have a social responsibility to make sure nobody is left behind," says Mike. "We need to do the best we can with the resources we have to help these folks get on the right path. Most of them have nobody, and that is the problem.

"Since we opened, we have been very busy. There are about 30 or 40 people who come through our door on a daily basis," says Mike. "Our visitors include men, women, teenagers, and families. Every case is different and complex."

Staff and service providers available at the centre

"Between Bedford MacDonald House and the Community Outreach Centre, we have four full-time and 10 part-time staff," says Mike.

About 10 to 15 service representatives from organizations such as the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, John Howard Society, Social Services and Housing, and Canadian Mental Health are on site at scheduled times. Also, UPEI nursing students will do their clinical rotation at the centre.

"At our mens' shelter, the first thing needed is usually medical and dental care. We have relationships with local dentists and other professionals who will do things quickly.

"Also, the need for identification is an issue for many people. We probably have the best relationships with police services in Canada in terms of identifying risk in a timely fashion and addressing needs.

"Staff and volunteers need to be compassionate and understanding. Unfortunately, in this country people using shelters have a certain stigma. It is assumed people have done something wrong.

"But 90 percent of the men coming to our shelter have experienced some type of trauma. Once you understand that, you realize many factors contribute to where they are now."

Personal stories need to be told

"We had a war veteran at the house with PTSD and various stages of dementia, and nobody was looking after him. We had to get assessments done and get him into long-term care. There was heavy pressure to get him out of the house, but what were we going to do? Those cases are hard.

"One guy we are working with is only in his twenties and has been an alcoholic for about 15 years. Now he has been five months without a drink and is doing really well. He has no place to go. He has developed a love for small engine repair and we need to help him follow that interest.

"Another man in his early forties has spent 75 percent of his life in jail. He has had a hard life. In the last few months, I have seen a change in him. It is important to understand and appreciate that life has not been kind to some people."



Mike Redmond, Manager of the Community Outreach Centre, with Tami MacIntyre, Case Worker. Abby Wilson, far right, and Amber Laybolt, far left, are third-year UPEI student nurses doing their clinical rotation at the centre. "Probably 60 percent of the Island's population is two paycheques away from being homeless," says Mike. "When you know that, you can approach the issue of homelessness with more compassion and understanding."

Employment support and employer engagement

"A construction company has asked for some labourers, and another company called All Star Cresting Embroidery and Screen printing has already hired two of our guests.

"As a result, they have been able to exit the homeless shelter and go to transitional housing. When our clients are hired, we offer support by visiting the workplace to see how they are getting along.

"We are looking for employers who have compassion, understanding, and flexibility to understand the journey people are on.

"People here stay with us as long as they need to, until they are ready to take the next step."

For more information, contact **Mike Redmond**
902-892-9242
michaelredmond1888@gmail.com

For the full interview, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search **Community Outreach Centre**.



Leadership program helps youth gain employability skills

by Stacy Dunn

St. John Ambulance now offers **SJA Connect**, a health, safety, and leadership development program for young people aged 14 to 19. It is designed to improve the health, safety, confidence and competencies of youth through training, volunteer service, and leadership opportunities.

"By delivering a variety of topics, youth learn useful skills essential for entering the workforce," says **Annette Deagle**, Director of Operations & Community Service, St. John Ambulance-NS/ PEI Council.

"Along with First Aid, the program covers WHMIS, team leadership, personal risk and stress management, public speaking, team dynamics, and volunteer opportunities."

Youth receive a SJA Connect Youth Leadership Certificate, a First Aid Certificate, and gain diverse leadership skills such as team building, conflict resolution, and citizenship. This national program was launched in 2018 and came to PEI in March 2019.

"To date, we have offered Level I of the program to 22 participants," says Annette. "We plan to offer Level I again this year over two days during March break."

Besides First Aid, Level I covers five topics: SJA in Canada, Why Volunteer, Team Dynamics, Conflict Resolution and Citizenship. It takes 10 hours to complete.

Topic options are relevant to real world skills and career paths. "Youth are encouraged to seek out volunteer opportunities within their communities at various non-profits, charitable organizations, or their high school or post-secondary institution."

Community support

SJA Connect also looks for partnerships in the community with organizations that serve youth.



"These organizations can help increase the awareness of the value of community engagement, help develop life-long health and safety habits, and improve job readiness as they participate in diverse volunteer opportunities."

Videos with testimonials

Life Skills Development:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rgHWZMMBD8>
Building Confident Community Leaders:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glQmnhtcGSU>

For more information on **SJA Connect**, contact **St. John Ambulance-PEI** at **902-370-3670** or email infopei@sja.ca

Visit www.connect.sja.ca



New HR Coordinator will help address shortage of Truck Drivers

by Heidi Riley

Randy Shaw was hired last September as the HR Coordinator for the PEI Trucking Sector Council. One of his roles is to speak with people interested in a career in Trucking, and helps match job seekers and employers.

He also works closely with industry to help develop new HR strategies and opportunities around everything from immigration and training, to recruiting non-traditional entrants to the industry.

"I do everything from marketing to social media, creating company profiles and posting new positions, to answering inquiries such as how to bring new immigrant drivers to Canada.

"I also help promote the trucking industry and what it offers. I visit schools and make industry presentations to tell students about the good wages, benefits, and lifestyle offered by the industry.

"We are trying to steer away from the public perception of truck driving, because it is not what it appears to be."

Randy grew up in a family that owned a trucking business, and drove a truck on the family farm. He earned a Business Diploma at Holland College, and worked as a Truck Driver to finance his tuition.

"Trucking is a flexible job with good pay. I enjoyed driving to earn a second income."

After graduation, he worked in a financial institution, and then went to Alberta to drive trucks for the oil and gas industry. In 2017, he came back to PEI, worked in construction, and then was offered a job at the Trucking Sector Council.

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

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

Funded in whole or in part through the Canada/PEI Labour Market Agreements.



From left, Brian Oulton, Executive Director, and Randy Shaw, HR Coordinator, PEI Trucking Sector Council.

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 information sessions will be held at the Farm Centre in Charlottetown at 9:30 am on March 19 and April 16.

Agriculture programs promote farm safety, employment support, and skills building

by Gloria Welton

Laurie Loane, Executive Director of **PEI Agriculture Sector Council**, is proud of all the great work taking place across the Island to promote careers in agriculture and safety on the job.

"We were successful in getting a Workers Compensation Board (WCB) grant last year to develop the first Agriculture Train the Trainer safety program," says Laurie. "We put that on for six weeks with a group of farms across the Island.

"The program was awarded a Special Project National Award and presented at the Canadian Society of Safety Engineering 2019 conference. We applied for another WCB grant to develop the project further, perhaps into videos or an online module with an educational institution.

"This is the first time such a program has been offered. It includes the training procedures farmers should be following, and gives them the ability to take the information and train their staff."

Employment services match job seekers with employers

Agriculture employment services are offered year-round. People can contact **Natalie Li** to post jobs or connect with an employer.

"Our industry is changing," says Laurie. "A lot more crops are growing longer into the season. More warehouses are being constructed, which extends the work season and means jobs can extend for a longer period of time.

"Potato farmers look to hire more people in March and April. In the summer, 200 to 300 jobs could be listed, and there are still a lot of jobs available in the fall and winter. It's more than labour jobs. There are a lot of high-end jobs too, like management and Human Resources.

"With our current demographics, demand far outweighs the supply of people willing to work in agriculture, which is very common now for most industries across PEI. It is important that we talk to students in schools to get them interested in agriculture."

Farm Technician Apprenticeship program

The Farm Tech program is a two-year registered apprenticeship program offering hands-on experience on a farm gaining skills with a farm mentor.

Apprentices also participate in five weeks of in-class training on PEI delivered by instructors from Extended Learning, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture.

The program teaches skills such as crop production, pesticide application, food safety, production of potatoes, forages and other field crops, shop skills, preventative maintenance, tractor safety, communications, occupational health and safety, soil and nutrient management, and much more.

After they complete the program and log 6,000 hours, Apprentices write the Certificate of Qualification exam for Farm Technicians to obtain a Blue Seal from Apprenticeship PEI.

"Farmers are always looking for employees," says Laurie. "The Farm Technician designation shows that they received set training and education that will add to their skill set, which means a lot to employers."

Laurie says those interested in taking the program can sign up at any time. Applications are reviewed by Apprenticeship PEI, which sets up the paperwork and logbooks, which track hours and the skills they must have.



Farm Technician Apprenticeship program participants, facilitator, and sector representative.

Doug Burris from Nova Scotia teaches a major component of this two-year program. "I work for Dalhousie University, which facilitates a lot of this program for the PEI Department of Agriculture."

Kurt Rogers, Apprentice, (sitting on the tractor seat) works for Issac Murnahan in Vernon Bridge. "This is my first year, and the training is going great. The instruction is really in depth yet easy to follow."

Ally MacDonald, (sitting in front of Kurt) works on a dairy farm for Vernon and Bertha Campbell at Mull Na Beinne Farms Ltd. in Kensington. "I grew up in Toronto, but spent a lot of time in agriculture. Taking this program is giving me a chance to be more qualified and will help me gain more experience."

For more information about the **PEI Agriculture Sector Council**, contact **Laurie Loane** at **902-892-1091**, or email info@peiagc.ca

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

Funded in whole or in part through the Canada/PEI Labour Market Agreements.

Truck Drivers training program leads to employment

by Heidi Riley

“More than 2,000 Truck Drivers work on PEI, but the need for more Drivers is beyond desperate,” says **Brian Oulton**, Executive Director, PEI Trucking Sector Council.

As a response to the pressing need for more Truck Drivers, the PEI Trucking Sector Council is facilitating a training program called **One Journey**.

The program began several years ago in Nova Scotia, PEI Trucking Sector Council worked with the counterparts in Nova Scotia to bring the program to PEI.

Nova Scotia administers the current PEI pilot program, and takes care of screening, interviewing, and the online application process, and also receives weekly updates about each participant.

“Our first three participants have done really well,” says Brian. “The second group started at the end of January, and another training session may be held in the future. Down the road, we see good potential to target specific groups like youth, women, mature workers or Indigenous people.”

Participants take eight weeks of training with JVI on PEI, followed by four weeks of coaching with an employer.

The program covers 100 percent of training costs, a \$300 allowance to pay for safety gear, and pays a stipend to those not on EI.

“We ask each applicant about their commitments,” says Brian. “If they need to be home every night, we recommend they speak to employers who offer local work. Those interested in long-haul driving can meet with employers that offer that type of work.”

“We screen applicants hard. They can have no driving or medical issues and no criminal record. Their essential skills are assessed and must be strong. They also need a letter of intent from an employer, and must go through an interview process.”

Those who fit the criteria will be accepted into the program only after they meet with an employer who agrees to hire them after the training is completed. “The advantage of this program is that the employers get to know the participants, and get weekly updates during the training period.”

“The program will produce more highly qualified drivers who have been thoroughly screened, trained, and coached. It allows everyone to keep an eye on the participants’ progress in their training. If someone is struggling, companies will come in and help build their skills.”

Brian Oulton and **Randy Shaw** of the **PEI Trucking Sector Council** welcome people interested in a career in trucking to contact them at **902-566-5563** or email **info@peitsc.ca** Visit **www.peitsc.ca**



Chad Dawson was the first person to enter the One Journey program. He was working as a Delivery Driver in Charlottetown, and was looking for a change to a higher paying position. “Chad was the ideal candidate because he has a young family which makes it difficult to quit a job to take the training,” says Brian Oulton of PEI Trucking Sector Council. “He already had similar truck driving experience, was working below his skill level, and just needed more training. With his new job, he will be earning more money, and will probably have a better work/life balance.”

Chad says it was a big decision to quit his job and go into the unknown. “I didn’t know if I could learn it, if I would like it, or what kind of lifestyle it would be. The program covers 100 percent of the costs of training, which is like winning the lottery! It is a good opportunity to learn a trade instead of being stuck in low-paying jobs.”

“The training was good, and it was challenging. During the eight weeks with JVI, there was airbrake testing and road testing, and I had to study different aspects of the mechanics of the truck.”

“There was a lot more to it than I thought. Driving a big truck is not like driving a car. My biggest struggle at first was to learn so much information and learn to drive a standard transmission.”

“The first couple of weeks I felt a bit overwhelmed, but you have to be patient. My advice is to take one day at a time.”

Chad finished the coaching component on January 17, and by the following Tuesday took his first solo trip to Dartmouth. The next evening, he took a load of carrots to the Sobeys Distribution Centre in Nova Scotia. “There are lots of opportunities for drivers. You just need to be willing to work and put in your time, and something will come your way.”

Funded in whole or in part through the Canada/PEI Labour Market Agreements.

Turning a passion into self-employment in the forestry industry

by Stella Shepard

Tyson Regular is well-versed in the forestry industry. His father **Marvin** and grandfather **Clarence** were self-employed Forestry Processors, earning a living from natural resources.

“It started with my grandfather Clarence, and every generation after followed in his footsteps,” says Tyson. He grew up shadowing Marvin and Clarence as they worked in woodlots. Now he is following in their entrepreneurial footsteps.

In 2015, Tyson started **Regular’s Firewood & Logging** located on the Cape Bear Road near Murray Harbour. His wife **Chermaine** is the bookkeeper.

The company delivers firewood year-round to customers in central and eastern PEI and provides commercial and industrial clear-cutting services. He also owns and operates a sawmill in Georgetown.

Tyson worked as a Diesel Mechanic for mining companies in Ontario, British Columbia, and the Yukon for years. A father of young children, he grew tired of working off Island and being away from family for extended periods of time.

“Forestry is my way of life,” says Tyson. “It’s what I know and it’s what I love.”

“Working in the woods is peaceful, unlike commuting to work in slow moving traffic in Ontario. Being self-employed, I can schedule work around family activities.”

Steps to self-employment

The resources at Community Business Development Corporation (CBDC) help budding entrepreneurs turn a skill and passion into a viable business or expand an existing business.

CBDC provides business loans, counselling advice, entrepreneurship development, and business training. CBDC East is housed at the Rural Action Centre in Montague, and is staffed by **Martina MacDonald**, Executive Director, **Helen Antle**, Loans Officer, and **Terri Taylor**, Accounts Officer.

“I started my business by chain sawing and blocking fire wood for sale,” says Tyson. “I needed forestry equipment to expand the business to clear-cut land for agricultural and blueberry use.”

He approached a lending institution for a loan to purchase forestry equipment. Although he had an excellent credit rating, the loan was refused. “I didn’t meet the criteria of being in business for two years before being eligible for a business loan,” he says.

“I heard about CBDC through a friend. Chermaine prepared a business plan.

“I took the plan to Martina and Helen at CBDC and the loan was approved. I would not have been able to expand the business to meet customer demand without the assistance of CBDC.”

Martina says when considering the approval of business loans, an eight-member Board of Directors puts emphasis on the vision, passion, skill, and background of the clients.

“CBDC was very cooperative and understanding of my request to adjust the payments during the slow work season,” says Tyson. “They were phenomenal.”

Advice to anyone considering a business

“It’s important to do your research and know the costs involved in all aspects of the business,” says Tyson.



Tyson Regular is the Owner and Operator of Regulars Firewood & Logging located on the Cape Bear Road near Murray Harbour. Submitted photo

“You need to have a detailed business plan and know who the competitors are.

“Word-of-mouth is powerful in small places. Satisfied customers will recommend your services.

“I keep the business close to home. It’s convenient and it keeps costs down. Without the support of my wife, I would not be self-employed.”

For more information about **Regulars Firewood & Logging**, contact **Tyson Regular** at **902-218-7031**, or email **regular_tyson@hotmail.com** Search for the company on Facebook.

Residential Construction on PEI continues strong in 2020

by Heidi Riley

“The years 2018-19 was really hard because everyone was so busy,” says **Andrew Garth**, President of **Canadian Home Builders Association-PEI (CHBA-PEI)**. Andrew is also owner of **Ravenwood Stairways** in Alberton.

“PEI Residential construction companies are working as hard as they can,” says **Allan Manley**, Executive Officer of CHBA-PEI.

“With the increased demand for construction, there is an increased need for more workers and getting them up to speed with the skills needed. Attracting people becomes more difficult as the population ages.”

“Construction has turned into year-round work, the work doesn’t stop in December like it used to,” says Andrew. “The industry is cyclical, and I expect at some point that demand will slow down when more housing sale comes on the market.”

“There was a big drop in builds in 2015 when HST on new housing was implemented. We lost a lot of tradespeople at that point because there was no work. The cycle is now at a high point, and there is a worry about when something could affect the market again.”

CHBA-PEI has approximately 35 members, including new home builders and renovators, land developers, trade contractors, product and material manufacturers, building product suppliers, lending institutions, insurance providers, service professionals and those specializing in plumbing & heating, windows, siding, electrical, and many more.

It is a national lobby group that communicates with municipal, provincial and federal governments. It provides services to its members such as helping to promote the trades as a viable career choice, and facilitates training with Workers Compensation Board, Fall Arrest, and other essential training.

Job titles in residential construction

- Estimator
- Home Inspector
- Surveyor
- General Labourer
- Framing Carpenter
- Painter
- Drywall/Seam Filler
- Siding Installer
- Foundation Installer
- Building supplies retail
- Tiling and Flooring Installer
- Architectural Technologist
- Project Manager
- Architect
- General Contractor
- Electrician
- Fine Carpenter
- Plumber
- Landscape Designer
- Bricklayer
- Roofer
- Interior Designer

“Residential Construction is more than carpentry or electrical or plumbing,” says Andrew.

“For instance, seam filling is a job in very high demand right now. The job is dependent on weather and drying times. If a job is projected to take a week but things are not drying properly because it is raining a lot, the seam fillers can’t finish on time, which means the next job is pushed back and the project is delayed.”

The National Building Code is now coming into force for residential construction in rural areas across PEI. “Members of CHBA-PEI always did build to code, so the change will not affect them,” says Allan.

“In 2020, single family and semi-detached housing is being inspected but the code will not be strictly enforced until January 2021.”

“Inspectors will work with contractors to make sure things are built to requirements. Reputable contractors are comfortable with following the code, but it may eliminate some of the fly-by-night people who work under the table. The homeowner should get a better structure if it is built according to the rules.”

Andrew and Allan say that the influx of newcomers to PEI has helped drive the demand for residential construction, and if immigration numbers decrease, it could adversely affect demand.

“We are such a small population that it takes so little change to affect the market,” says Andrew.

The future looks bright

“As long as the province maintains its current policies and encourages immigration of skilled individuals, it will benefit all facets of the PEI economy, including residential construction,” says Allan.

“We benefit from the much higher housing prices in Ontario, Alberta, and BC. Many baby boomers are selling their homes there and buying or building homes on PEI for much less money.”

“If the Canadian dollar stays low, we will continue to benefit from people moving here from New England as well. If people are building houses, then furniture, and appliances and other retail sectors will also benefit.”

Advice to anyone interested in Residential Construction

“No matter what trade people chooses, they need to continue to educate themselves,” says Allan.

“They must learn the basics first, and they have to expect to put in the groundwork and start from the bottom so that they can achieve the next level.”

“There needs to be an aspect of pride in your work too,” says Andrew. “In my business, people are proud of their good workmanship.”

“There are a lot of incentives to help people join the trades,” says Allan. “Apprentices receive a grant of \$4,000, and an additional \$6,000 is given to women to encourage them to earn their Red Seal.”

For more about the **Canadian Home Builders Association-PEI**, contact **Allan Manley**, Executive Officer at **902-218-6425** or email allan@chba-pei.ca

Visit www.chba-pei.ca

From left, Andrew Garth, President of the Canadian Home Builders Association-PEI (CHBA-PEI) and owner of Ravenwood Stairways, and Allan Manley, Executive Officer, CHBA-PEI.



From employee to owner of a stairway construction company

by Heidi Riley

Andrew Garth is owner of **Ravenwood Stairways** in Alberton. He started at the company as a Salesperson and Estimator, and purchased the company six years ago.

Andrew, who is an Islander, was working in Ontario, came home and was hired by the company to help reinvigorate sales and develop the Maritime market. After four years, the owner Ralph Clark decided to retire, and developed a succession plan to sell the company to Andrew.

Since then, Andrew has brought on two partners, and has expanded the business significantly. “The boom on PEI has helped get our name out to a lot more contractors, and now we can prove the benefits of saving time and money with a subcontracted staircase.”

The company has been a member and has been involved with the Canadian Homebuilders Association-PEI for a number of years.

Ravenwood has five employees, including:

- Shop Manager
- Stair Designer and Installation Expert who has been with the company since the late 1980s
- Two Installers
- A part-time worker in the summer

“It is hard to find qualified labourers that are ready to jump into the business. We need a specific set of skills and we pride ourselves in our workmanship. If I lost one of my more experienced workers, it would be very hard to find someone to come into the position and pay him what he is worth while they are being trained. Even though a person may be very knowledgeable in the construction trade, it could take at least three months working with an experienced stair maker to get up to speed.”

“Bringing in younger students isn’t always easy either. An entry-level position involves a lot of moving and sanding, and it takes someone who is interested and motivated to build their skills starting from the bottom and working their way up.”

“The work can be slow, mundane, and tedious. Our people started at an entry-level position and built their skills. Some have been with us for more than 20 years, and some have started businesses of their own.”

“Often people who leave and start their own businesses become customers of ours or we will work together on a big job. It seems to be a constant struggle with all contractors to help build up the skills of their employees, only to have them leave and start their own businesses. That is not necessarily a bad thing. There is so much work right now, there is enough for everyone.”

“In September, we took on a Holland College Transitions program student who is working out really well. He has been with us for six months, and he is still learning and working hard. He is a success story, and we hired him after the program finished. At the moment, he can do the sanding, identify mistakes, fill holes, and do touch-ups.”

“We will be moving him into a role where he is more independent as he learns to install stairs himself. It can be a long training process. The last person we hired took five years of training before he was comfortable building and installing a staircase on his own.”

Andrew says he expects his employees to be very self-sufficient and have great attention to detail. “We need staff to be able to work independently and make their own decisions so that the job gets done on time. The work is very much project-based, and if we get the project done on time, we can take off personal time when needed.”

“Our work hours are 7 am to 5 pm, with Friday afternoons off, and our employees like that arrangement.”

Women in construction

“A diversified labour force will benefit all sections of the industry,” says Andrew. “One woman was with us for seven years, doing finishing work and drafting work on the computer, and she moved on to become a Drafter. We had an Administrator in the business as well, who has moved on to another administration job. I am seeing more and more women doing labour work on construction sites.”

Andrew believes there will be a big increase in women in the trades in the future, especially in business management. “There are many husband and wife teams where husband still does the traditional hammer and nail role and the wife handles the books, schedules the tradespeople on a job and makes sure things are running on time and on budget.”

“I think women can still be intimidated working with men, and it is not something business owners always consider. It is a learning curve for everyone. Women need to be confident in their abilities, keeping in mind that starting out, no one is confident in their abilities. Women bring a different perspective to the workplace, and it is important to include them.”

For more information about **Ravenwood Stairways**, call **902-853-3037**.

Search **Ravenwood Stairways** on Facebook.



New rural women's business centre opens

by Ruby Arsenault

The **Rural Women's Business Centre** is a place for women to find the support and inspiration they need to succeed in their business endeavours. Located in Central Bedeque, the Centre predominantly serves women in the central Queens to West Prince regions.

Shelley Jessop, Manager, says the centre was established to make it easier to help women who don't have the time to drive to Charlottetown. It has an advisory group of women from central Queens to West Prince to guide its development.

"The new business centre provides a meeting place and offers support and inspiration, and is here to meet the needs of business women with training, information sessions, workshops, networking and mentoring," says Shelley. "Our co-working space offers high-speed Internet access.

"The centre aims to provide women entrepreneurs with the training and resources needed to overcome obstacles on the road to building a business, and to provide working women with the skills to support their success in the workplace."

Shelley recently visited the Tignish Employment Resource centre to speak with women from the community about the new centre and its services.

"Coming to Tignish was an excellent way to meet and network with business women from this area," says Shelley. "It was amazing to hear stories of how they have grown from employee to management roles."

At the meeting, **Paulette Arsenault** from Tignish Co-op Member Relations says her job requires a lot of speaking at public events. "I think confidence building is necessary for success. I struggled with this, and many others do too. It is one thing to have a great product but to be able to stand in front of crowds and speak is another."

Paulette says attending the speech craft program held last winter at the Tignish Employment Resource Centre was a great help. "It was the best thing I could have done for myself. I would take it again."

Partners work together to offer support

The Rural Women's Business Centre, Tignish Employment Resource Centre, and Tignish Co-op Member Relations are very much looking forward to continuing their partnership. They encourage women in business to stay tuned to their social media posts for upcoming events.

"We also encourage anyone to contact us to share their ideas and their business needs," says Shelley.



From left, Shelley Jessop, Rural Women's Business Centre, Sharon Horne, Rural Community Learning, Ruby Arsenault, Tignish Employment Resource Centre, Paulette Arsenault, Tignish Co-op, and Elizabeth Noonan, Rural Women's Business Centre.

For more information about the **Rural Women's Business Centre**, contact **Shelley Jessop** at **902-887-3171** or email shelley@peibwa.org



Visit www.peibwa.org/rural-womens-business-centre
Sign up for workshops and events at www.peibwa.org

For more information about the services and events at the **Tignish Employment Resource Centre**, contact **Ruby Arsenault** at **902-882-2498** or email rubyarsenault@rcli.ca
Visit www.facebook.com/tignish.employmentcentre



For more information about **Tignish Co-op Member Relations**, contact **Paulette Arsenault** at **902-882-2020** or email tignishmemberrelations@hotmail.com



Visit www.facebook.com/tignish.coop

New business offering Occupational Health & Safety Training

by Ruby Arsenault

After 10 years of working in the field of Occupational Health & Safety Training, **Alvin Smith** from West Point PEI decided it was time for a change, and started his own business called **ASTA Safety**.

His office and training room is located at Future Tech West in O'Leary. He offers a variety of courses and training at that location, and he also travels to deliver training to a variety of businesses, groups, and individuals.

Many of the training courses offered are required by various college programs and work sites. "Standard First Aid/CPR is a requirement for Holland College's LPN and RCW programs," says Alvin. "I offer a First Aid course each month in my training room and at other locations such as the Alberton Employment Resource Centre, for clients applying to college programs."

Alberta safety tickets such as H2S Alive™ are a must for individuals who work on oil rigs or in the oil patch. "Some courses expire within three years, so they must be re-taken. I am required to travel to Alberta periodically to update my certification as a trainer."

Alvin says he was recently asked to create and provide an Air Brakes Endorsement course to 10 participants at the Tignish Employment Resource Centre.

"The demands on Truck Drivers are huge. I spent an eight-hour day with these individuals, taking them through the training manual, and then we were provided a truck to go over trip inspections.

"At the end of the day, they took a pre-test and were ready to book and write the actual test with PEI Transportation/Access PEI. From there, they can challenge the driving test or enroll with JVI to earn their class 1 or 3 license."

Alvin says many of these individuals expressed interest in operating potato trucks, snow plows, or other equipment that requires an A on their driver's license.

"Another component of my business is consulting. This service helps businesses create a safety and training plan for their employees."

He recently was a consultant for the Agriculture Sector Council's Train the Trainer program.

Future plans

In the very near future he may hire a second staff member to assist with training, and/or a part-time administrator.

Courses offered

- Emergency/Standard First Aid
- Fall Protection
- Forklift
- Elevated Work Platform
- WHMIS
- TDG-Transportation of Dangerous Goods
- Confined Space
- Boom Truck
- H2S Alive
- Common Safety Orientation (coming soon)
- Air Brakes Endorsement



Alvin Smith from West Point PEI decided it was time for a change, and started his own business called ASTA Safety.

For more information about **ASTA Safety**, contact **Alvin Smith**, at **902-206-0122**, alvin@astasafety.com



Visit www.astasafety.com and www.facebook.com/astasafety/

Seasonal business is a dream come true for an entrepreneurial artist

by Stella Shepard

Emily Carlaw is an artist who turned passion, talent, and a creative imagination into a thriving business. The shop located in St. Peter's Bay is a long-time dream come true for Emily.

She opened **Freckles & Porcelain** in 2016. "I got word that one of the little shops at St. Peter's Bay that I visited as a kid was available for rent for the coming summer," says Emily.

"With some encouragement from friends and family I decided to dive in head first. I was also fortunate to have a lot of help from the former shopkeeper **Deb MacLeod**, along with some much-needed community support."

Freckles & Porcelain is not your ordinary retail shop. When customers visit the business, they step back in time. "I have tried to create a modern version of a General Store from the past," says Emily. "I sell my own artwork along with a curated collection of locally-made goods and day-to-day essentials."

"My shop also features MacAusland blankets, linen dresses, pottery, jars of jam, knitted accessories, favourite books by local authors, wooden spoons, giant soaps, field cut flowers, and farm fresh eggs."

The shop boasts of items that represent the Island and the local artisans. Her own artwork tells the story of bygone days. "My work includes a series of hand tinted copperplate etchings and watercolours," says Emily.

"I have prints, cards, postcards, tags, to-do list pads, calendars, mugs, T-shirts, recipe cards, and notebooks with my artwork on them, along with dried flower bundles and wildflower arrangements."

"In my four summer seasons at the St Peter's Landing, I have come to realize the strength that comes with being located next to other talented small business owners and what a draw that is to customers. There is so much to be gained in working together."

Community resources

"I was able to receive help and support through Innovation PEI and CBDC," says Emily. "I also attended and spoke at an Entrepreneurship forum, which was a great learning experience and networking opportunity."

"There is lots of help on the Island for small business owners to help them find ways to grow their business."

Steps to becoming an entrepreneur

"Before I opened the shop, I lived and worked in Scotland, where I produced a lot of artwork at the Glasgow Print Studio," says Emily.



Emily Carlaw of St. Peter's Bay is an artist and owner of Freckles & Porcelain, a seasonal shop. "Along with being a shopkeeper, I work as a librarian, and I see my shop as a place to foster community, learning, and creativity," says Emily. *Submitted photo.*

"I decided to move to PEI and try my hand at opening a small shop to sell and share my artwork and highlight the talented makers and artisans we have here."

Emily is considering opening a second location for Freckles & Porcelain in a high traffic area on the Island. "I am just waiting to find the right spot."

Staffing

"Right now I have myself and two staff members to help me run the shop," says Emily.

"Someone from last year is coming back full-time and I will be looking for another part-time employee for the spring."

For more information about **Freckles & Porcelain**, contact **Emily Carlaw** at **902-629-5898** or email **frecklesandporcelain@gmail.com**. Visit **www.frecklesandporcelain.com** or follow on Instagram.



Local makeover show aims to change lives and encourage new career directions

by Heidi Riley

A team of three Islanders is shooting the pilot for a new makeover show to help people enhance their image and gain the confidence to make a career change or find a new job.

Darling, You Look Fabulous features clients before and after their hairstyle, makeup and wardrobe makeovers, and will tell their stories of adversity and success.

The production team includes Island producer and musician **David Rashed**, hairstylist **Miguel McCristall**, owner of **Salon Miguel** in Charlottetown, and author and artist **Cindy Lapeña**. The show will be filmed at Miguel's hair salon.

The team is collaborating with PEI employment service organizations to highlight the many resources available while job searching. The team is also looking for support from PEI businesses to donate clothing, shoes, and other products, talent, and time, and who could consider helping jobless clients find employment.

The idea started with Miguel, who moved to PEI from Oshawa, Ontario and sought out Cindy to write his autobiography. In Ontario, he won awards and created and produced a TV show called **Makeover Mondays** with Miguel.

After he moved to PEI, he decided to do a PEI version of the show, and Cindy spread the word through Facebook and a blog.

They joined forces with David Rashed, who has a recording studio at The Guild in Charlottetown, and has a great deal of sound and video production experience. He will record the show. Cindy will take over the script writing, directing and management, and Miguel will handle the makeovers.

"We wanted to add value and novelty to the makeover idea," says Cindy. "We decided to help people who can't afford to get a makeover, but need a boost of confidence that can help them move ahead in their lives. If you look fashionable and confident on the outside, it helps you believe you can do more."

They are reaching out to the homeless and to those who have experienced a major trauma and want a new start. They are also profiling people who want a job change and could benefit from a makeover to boost their confidence.

Cindy has made connections with many Island service providers. "I have spoken with Karrie MacDougal of **First Impressions**, which sells second-hand clothing at low prices to women who can't afford to buy a new wardrobe."

From left, David Rashed, Cindy Lapeña, and Miguel McCristall have teamed up to start a production company and produce a TV show called **Darling, You Look Fabulous**.

Submitted photo



"I have also been in touch with Blooming House, a women's shelter in Charlottetown."

"We want to give their clients a boost with a new wardrobe and a new look that they can't afford, so that they have the confidence to move forward with their lives."

"We have also connected with Career Development Services, and we are willing to refer clients to them after their makeovers so they can get help with writing a resumé and looking for a job. Eventually, we would like to bring in employers willing to hire our clients."

The production team is excited about producing a TV show on PEI, and is hoping to get CBC interested in buying this Canadian content.

"There is great potential for local television telling compelling stories," says Cindy.

Volunteers needed

The production is working with no budget at the moment, and is looking for volunteers. Production Assistants will be needed for time keeping, scheduling, continuity, and many more duties that keep the show running. "This experience will teach the volunteers about TV production and would look great on a resumé."

There will be three volunteer positions for hairdressers and three for Aestheticians, which will be filled by students from the Private Institute of Hair Design and Aesthetics. The interns will also have the opportunity to do on the job training at Salon Miguel.

After introducing the concept on social media, there were many applications from people looking for a makeover. Video interviews with each applicant helped the team determine who was chosen for makeovers. The show, which began filming in February, includes tips on hair and makeup.

For more information, visit **Salon Miguel** at 236 University Avenue in Charlottetown or call **902-367-5330**. Visit **www.darlingyoulookfabulous.ca**



My employment journey and the many training opportunities on PEI

by Ethan Paquet, Coordinator of Career Development Association of PEI (CDA of PEI)

When I finished the Holland College Journalism program, I looked for a reporting job on PEI. To stay on top of my job search, gain experience, and network, I did some videography work, I was constantly reworking my resumé, and I looked for photo and story opportunities to submit to local newspapers.

While this helped slowly build my portfolio, it wasn't paying the bills, so I took the first job I could find.

I began working on a blueberry farm in Cardigan. As much as I enjoyed it, I knew I wanted to be a writer, and from my experience in journalism, I wanted a job where I could meet people who are doing extraordinary things.

However, working on the farm set the wheels in motion. My supervisor worked with an amazing program called **The Adventure Group**.

This organization provides customized programs to help participants build a solid foundation that includes stable housing, childcare, employment skills, self-confidence, financial literacy, a strong social network, and much more.

In July 2019, I was selected to attend the Adventure Group's Prosper program. This seven-week program allowed me to expand my resumé with skills and training such as CPR, Standard First Aid, Food Safety, and many other courses, all while being paid to attend. The facilitators of the Prosper program offered job references and letters of recommendation as well.

I knew the program was there to help me find work. What I didn't know was the journey I would travel before I reached that point.

I learned the life stories of the other participants, the things they had overcome, the struggles that were still holding them back, and the places they wanted to go in life.

I left the Prosper program with many new skills, and they even provided a job coach to help me figure out how my skills and my job aspirations could line up.

My job coach scheduled an informational interview with the staff of **The Employment Journey**, and although they weren't hiring, I was assured they would keep me in mind if they heard of any opportunities.

Shortly after, my job coach called to say she'd heard from The Employment Journey manager that a new short-term opportunity was available at the Career Development Association of PEI (CDA of PEI). With funding through the provincial government, I was able to begin that job in October.

Many of the skills learned through journalism have been beneficial to my present job. I am constantly writing everything from emails to information pieces for social media and the CDA of PEI website, which I was able to redesign and add content. I was recently hired part-time by The Employment Journey as a promoter of their publication and website.



Ethan Paquet is seen with his job coach, Kelly Clements-Gennis. He continues to develop the many skills and abilities learned through his college training, and he is building skills through further training and work experience.

Looking back, the training provided by Holland College and the services offered by The Adventure Group were instrumental in my present job. As I continue on this journey and meet so many career development professionals and explore where they work, my career interests are evolving, and I am certain these opportunities have set me up for future success.

The training services I have mentioned are just a few of the many opportunities available to help Islanders continue on their path to employment. To learn more about the education and training opportunities available in your community, visit www.employmentjourney.com/education-training

About CDA of PEI

The association is a network of career professionals, career influencers, community partners, post-secondary institutions and individuals committed to providing leadership to strengthen career development programs and initiatives on PEI.

The objectives:

- Increase public awareness of the career development field
- Advocate for services that strengthen the continued growth of career development
- Promote networking opportunities, professional development and resource sharing
- Disseminate information on developments occurring in the field provincially and nationally
- Advance career development and the capacity of the profession to respond effectively to all clients and stakeholders in an ever-changing work environment

For more about **CDA of PEI**, visit www.cdapei.ca or email cdaofpei@gmail.com



Mature worker re-enters the workforce after a longtime teaching career

by Stella Shepard

Theresa Spingle of Fortune Bridge retired in 2016 from a 35-year career in education, most of which was in Quebec. Within a year, she realized she wasn't ready to leave the workforce. She sought out a program for people needing direction with a career change, and now she is a Facilitator for that program.

"I had worked in a field I really enjoyed, especially at the high school level," says Theresa. "I wanted to continue in the education field, but I was not sure what other opportunities were available."

Her previous teaching experience was helpful in navigating her own career journey. She taught a Personal Orientation project in Quebec for several years. Students learned about researching careers, resumé writing, transferable skills, essential skills, learning styles, and interviewing styles.

"Being in the teaching field helps one become very versatile in using transferable skills," says Theresa.

"Teaching is not only about developing and encouraging students' learning but also about finding ways to facilitate one's own personal development as you put into practice what you teach."

Her pathway to a new career

Theresa enrolled in the **Career Bridges** program in Montague in February 2019. The program offers vocational assessment and guidance for people considering a career change or further training. It is designed to assist individuals in career exploration, planning, and decision making.

She completed the work placement component of the program at the Career Bridges office in Charlottetown, where **Patrick Campbell** and **Mary Conway** were facilitating the program.

Less than a year after she finished her work placement at the Charlottetown location, she was hired as the Facilitator of the Career Bridges program in Montague.

"Theresa brings a wealth of education and work experience to this position," says **Bruce Cluney**, Coordinator of Career Bridges.

"But more importantly, she has the passion and caring attitude so necessary in working with our clients."

"Theresa is a former graduate of our Career Bridges program in Montague, and we are excited to have her as part of the Career Bridges Team."

Advice to mature workers wanting to re-enter the workforce

"My advice is to take some time to think about what you really want to do, and then find ways to accomplish your goals," says Theresa.

"Talk to friends, counsellors, local businesses, and employment centres to find the information you need to help you make a decision, which might involve taking a program or taking additional training. Also, a well written updated resumé is a very good first step."

A **Career Bridges** program will start in Charlottetown, Summerside, and O'Leary on March 30, 2020.

A **Passport to Employment** program will start in Charlottetown on May 11, 2020.



Theresa Spingle is now a Facilitator of the Career Bridges program in Montague, the very program that helped her get back into the workforce by helping her consider her options.

For more information about **Career Bridges**, contact **Bruce Cluney**, Coordinator, at **902-566-2811** or email bcluney@careerbridges.pe.ca
Visit www.careerbridges.pe.ca



Looking for work in the fisheries? Want to increase your skills? Apply now!

Be one of the 12 participants who will receive six weeks of free training in Charlottetown. Along with classroom training, there will be a six-week work placement as Labourers in Oyster Bed Bridge with Atlantic Aqua Farms or Raspberry Point Oyster Company.

Participants will receive a weekly training allowance, mileage reimbursement, childcare subsidy, a free Chromebook (upon completion of the program) and a certificate of completion.

Atlantic Aqua Farms, Raspberry Point and the PEI Literacy Alliance have partnered on this innovative project called **Essential Skills for Atlantic Fisheries** (ESAF).

Classroom training will cover these topics:

Essential Skills for the Workplace: Working with others, Writing, Reading, Numeracy, Critical Thinking, Oral Communication, Chromebook use, Document use, and Continuous Learning.

Employability Skills: Attitude, Confidence, Accountability, Motivation, Time Management, Teamwork, Stress Management, Personal presentation, and Adaptability.

Training will take place at the Sherwood Business Centre at 161 St. Peters Rd, Charlottetown from March 23-May 1, 2020.

The work placement is 40 to 50 hours a week at \$15 per hour. Those who successfully complete the work placement will have the opportunity to continue working until December.

For more information, contact **Anne MacDonald** at 902-628-5644, anne@peiliteracy.ca

Visit www.peiliteracy.ca/fisheries

The ESAF project is funded by the Government of Canada's National Essential Skills Initiatives, and 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.

DID YOU KNOW that employees can take breaks during their work?

Employees can get daily and weekly breaks during their employment.

Daily rest period

An employee is entitled to a one half-hour unpaid rest period after every five consecutive hours of work. The daily rest period is unpaid and cannot be unreasonably denied by an employer. An employee is not required to remain on the premises of the employer during the half-hour unpaid period.

Situations can arise when employees do not get the full one half-hour break at one time and in such circumstances the employers must pay for the half-hour.

Weekly rest period

An employee is entitled also to a rest period of at least 24 consecutive hours in every seven-day period and whenever possible the rest period shall include a Sunday.

This article provides only general information. Details about rest periods or any other provision of the Prince Edward Island *Employment Standards Act* and Regulations can be obtained by contacting the Employment Standards Branch: 902-368-5550 or toll free at 1-800-333-4362.

The Branch is located in Charlottetown at Sherwood Business Centre, second floor, 161 St. Peter's Road.

Visit www.peiemploymentstandards.com for more information.

Calendar of events – 2020

Career Fairs

2020 UPEI Career and Summer Job Fair

March 11, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Location: W.A. Murphy Student Centre, McMillan Hall
Storm Date: Thursday, March 12, same location and time. The annual UPEI Career Fair provides an opportunity for students to meet employers face-to-face to learn about job opportunities and discuss future employment options.

Tourism Job Fairs

March 7, 10 am to 2 pm: Delta Prince Edward Hotel
April 18, 10 am to 1 pm: North Shore – Kensington Intermediate Senior High School
For more information, call 902-566-5008 or email dmol@tiapei.pe.ca

Culinary Job Fair

March 21, 10 am to 1 p.m. Culinary Institute of Canada, 4 Sydney St.
Live demonstrations at 10:00, 11:00, and 12 noon
For more information, call 902-566-5008 or email amackenzie@tiapei.pe.ca
Visit www.tiapei.pe.ca

Training & Workshops

UPEI Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development is offering the following courses:

April 3: Writing Fundamentals

April 9: Customer Service for Managers

April 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29:

Collaborative Leadership: Facilitating the process
For a full list of courses, call 902-628-4394 or pdp@upeai.ca
Visit www.upei.ca/professional-development

Greater Summerside Chamber of Commerce

Business Bootcamp: Monthly sessions run until September 2020. Topics include sales, marketing, online business, planning and productivity, strategy, networking, and many more. Facilitated by Craig Noonan, Integrity Consulting at the Loyalist Country Inn, Summerside.

March 10, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm:

The Content Creation Blueprint

April 2, 11:30 to 12:30:

Creating Powerful Partnerships

To register, visit www.summersidechamber.com
Call 902-436-9651 or info@summersidechamber.com

March 17, April 21, May 19:

Charlottetown Rodd Royalty

March 19, April 23, May 21:

Loyalist Inn, Summerside.

April 3: Holland College Alberton

May 1: Cavendish Farms Wellness Centre, Montague
Food Safety Course – all courses run 9 am to 4 pm. Early registration is recommended. Cost: \$57.50 per participant (\$50 +HST), payable online. Call 1-902-368-4970. Toll Free: 1-800-958-6400 or email envhealth@ihis.org

March 23: Big Brothers Big Sisters is offering a 10-week program to help those 14-24 facing barriers in school find a career or go on to further education. For more information, call 902-569-5437 or info@bbbspei.ca
Visit www.bbbspei.ca

March 30: Career Bridges: new sessions will start in Charlottetown, Summerside, and O'Leary. Career Bridges is a vocational assessment and guidance program for people considering a career change or further training. For more information, call:

O'Leary | 902-726-3016

Summerside | 902-436-5739

Charlottetown | 902-566-2811

May 11: Passport to Employment is a provincial government strategy sponsored by Tremploy Inc. (Career Bridges). It is designed for Island workers ages 55 to 64 who wish to re-enter the workforce. Training involves five weeks of classroom time. Participants enhance their job search skills, increase their computer skills, receive personal awareness training and increase their opportunities for full or part-time work. Location: Charlottetown. For more information, call the Career Bridges centres or contact **Bruce Cluney** at 902-566-2811 or bcluney@careerbridges.pe.ca

Women's Employability program: 12 participants are seeking work experience for the month of March in the Greater Summerside/Borden area. The women will have spent 8 weeks in the classroom enhancing their employability skills and are interested in putting those skills to work. Participants are covered by Workers Compensation and liability. There is no cost to the employer. Interested employers may contact

Andy Lou Somers, East Prince Women's Information Centre, at 902-436-9856 or 902-439-7268 or email epwic@eastlink.ca

Air Brake and class 3A license training: PEI Agriculture Sector Council will facilitate these two courses through JVI and Access PEI. For more information, contact **Laurie** or **Robin** at 902-892-1091.

Montague CDS and **Souris CDS** are collecting names of those interested in learning some **Basic Computer Skills for job search**. Workshops are held weekly and will be adapted to the skills you are interested in learning. To register, call: Montague CDS: 902-838-5453
Souris CDS: 902-687-1526

Check the calendar at www.cdspei.ca for a list of the many workshops and training sessions offered by Career Development Services across PEI.

PEICDS is funded by the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning under the Canada/Prince Edward Island Labor Market Development Agreements.

www.eForcePEI.ca is a government funded initiative which offers skills training to individuals, small business owners, and non-profit organizations at **no cost**. Over 200 FREE courses are available through the program.

The selection of courses helps users improve their skills and knowledge in order to get back into the workforce, and to excel in the ever-changing world of business. Subjects include Microsoft Office programs, social media, small business management, HR fundamentals, financial literacy, and many more. For more information, call 902-566-9372 or training@eforcepei.ca

Adult Education – Institute of Advanced Learning offers GED training for grade 12 equivalency and high school credits in Math, English, Biology, Chemistry and Physics in Charlottetown and Summerside. Classes begin each week so you can get started any time. Students have instructors with them every step of the way and small classes allow for individual attention. For more information contact **Katherine McQuaid** at 902-368-2828 or email kmcquaid@aolpei.ca

Computer & Business Skills Training – Academy of Learning College offers career counselling for those looking for employment or thinking of going back to school. Appointments can be made any time Monday through Friday, 9 am to 4 pm. Locations in Summerside and Charlottetown. For more information call 902-368-7214 or email info@careeralc.ca

Resident Care Worker Program – Marguerite Connolly Health Training: Next RCW program starts April 14, 2020 in Charlottetown. Resident Care Workers are an important part of our health care system and the demand is high for Resident Care Workers across PEI. Programs are available in Charlottetown and Summerside. For more information call 902-566-9705 or email info@rcwtraining.ca

Employment services

PEI Agriculture Sector Council Employment services are available for employees and employers for free. Call 902-892-1091 or toll-free 1-866-892-1091. Check job listings at www.peiagc.ca

East Prince Youth Development Centre at the Holland College Waterfront campus in Summerside offers case management, assistance with Skills PEI funding applications, resumé and cover letter development, and an updated job board. For information about upcoming workshops, call 902-436-2815. Visit the events calendar at www.epydc.org

Information sessions

SkillsPEI Self Employ PEI program Information Sessions

March 10, May 19, 10 am to noon: **O'Leary**

March 13, 27: 10 am to 11 am: **Montague**

March 19, April 23: 10 am to 11 am: **Souris**

March 18, April 29: 10 am to noon: **Summerside**

March 20, April 3: 10 am to 11 am: **Charlottetown**

Individuals interested in **SkillsPEI's Self Employ PEI** program must register to attend an information session prior to applying for assistance under the program. After attending the information session, a Self Employ PEI Program Officer will be available to schedule a time to meet with potential applicants individually.

For more information and eligibility requirements, call 1-877-491-47666 or visit www.skillspei.com

To register, call your nearest office:

Montague: 458 Main St, 902-838-0674

Charlottetown: Suite 212, 178 Great George St., 902-368-6290

Summerside: 120 Heather Moyle Dr. 902-438-4151

O'Leary: 454 Main St.: 902-859-8898

Alberton: 455 Main St.: 902-853-3616

March 10, 24, April 7, 21, May 5, 19:

SkillsPEI holds information sessions at the Atlantic Technology Centre, Suite 212, in Charlottetown to provide Islanders with information on its programs and services. Space is limited for each session. Call 902-368-6290 in advance to register.

Work PEI Information sessions: sign up to learn how WorkPEI can help you find a job or recruit employees.

Job Seekers - March 19, 10am to 12pm

Employers - March 26, 2pm to 3pm

Location: Atlantic Technology Centre, Charlottetown. To register for an information session, visit www.workpei.ca/workpei-info-sessions

Events

March 6, 7, 8, PEI Provincial Home Show, Eastlink Centre, Charlottetown is a chance for job seekers to speak with employers in the construction and renovation industries about positions coming up in the busy spring season

March 13, 9 am to 3 pm: **CBDC East & Central** present **PEI's Premier Entrepreneurial Event** at the Assumption Parish Church (Blue Church) at 151 Stratford Road. This 5-star event will feature presentations from Food Network Host and culinary expert Chef Michael Smith & motivational speaker and author Eddie LeMoine. Entrepreneurs will be entered to win one of TWO \$1,000 micro grants which will be drawn during the event! Tickets are \$25 and being sold on www.eventbrite.ca
Contact **Krista McKeeman** for more info at krista.mckeeman@cbdc.ca

March 14, 5 pm: **Acadian Entrepreneurs' Gala:** The Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of PEI will present eight awards and special recognitions a formal banquet hosted at Centre Belle-Alliance in Summerside. Tickets \$40, sold in advance. Contact **Raymond J. Arsenault** at 902-854-3439 ext. 231 or raymond@rdeipe.org.

March 19, 4 to 6 pm, The Guild, Charlottetown: **Third Thursdays** is a fantastic opportunity to network with members of creative industries. This event is held on the third Thursday of every second month. For more information, contact **Shannon Pratt** at slpratt@gov.pe.ca or visit www.eventbrite.ca/o/innovation-pei-cultural-development-division-17792775644

March 31, 1 to 4 pm: **Art of the Pitch:** Uncertain how to connect with strangers at networking events? Hesitant to fully promote all the skills and experience you have to offer? Join us for a supportive hands-on workshop that will build confidence and get you on your feet. You'll be pitching in no time! This workshop is led by Margaret Magner, Executive Director of the PEI Business Women's Association. Location: 106 Linkletter Ave, Central Bedeque. Space is limited so book early. Registration: Non-Members – \$25.00 - **PEIBWA Members – FREE** Visit www.peibwa.org

2020 Provincial Skills Competitions: The public is welcome to watch high school and college students compete in a host of trades categories. For a schedule of events, visit skillscanada.pe.ca