

**CELEBRATING  
CANADA  
CAREER MONTH**

# The NEWS TO HELP REACH CAREER GOALS Employment Journey on PEI PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND • CANADA

**NOVEMBER is Canada Career Month.**

**Read through this edition for information that can help you with your career plans.**

## Highlighting many growing Bioscience companies on PEI

by Heidi Riley

As part of **Global Biotech Week** in September, a virtual BioNetworking session was presented by the PEI BioAlliance. Representatives from local bioscience companies provided highlights on the activities and growth happening in the sector.

"We have more than 60 companies in the sector, employing more than 2,000 full-time, highly skilled workers," says **Oliver Technow**, Board Chair, PEI BioAlliance and CEO, BioVectra.

"The average income of those working in this sector is more than 40 percent higher than average of all workers on PEI."

For more about the **PEI BioAlliance** and job listings in the sector on PEI, visit [www.peibioalliance.com](http://www.peibioalliance.com)

### BioScience companies discuss their successes and challenges:



"The PainTrace® system combines wearable hardware and software that allows us to visualize pain," says **Deb Dullen**, CEO. "We work in multiple industries, including animal welfare, horse racing, research and pharmaceutical, and families and companion animals in the veterinary space."

"On PEI, we have an amazing team of software engineers who created an online data analytics system with healthcare-grade encryption and speech detect, so we can document the activities when we are visualizing pain, and track it over time."

"We are also working with an excellent hardware team that has developed a 'Fitbit on steroids' so to speak. It is the combination of hardware and software that allows us to see our PainTrace® biosignal. We have an amazing team and we are expanding our offices and we are currently hiring."

For more information, visit [www.biotraceit.com](http://www.biotraceit.com) or [www.facebook.com/PainTrace](https://www.facebook.com/PainTrace)



"Despite the global pandemic and economic turmoil in the first half of this year in the seafood sector, CAT has gone through tremendous positive changes," says **Jason Cleaversmith**, VP of Health and Nutrition and GM for Canada.

"We have tripled our Canadian footprint with the addition of a new facility, and we have doubled staff numbers as well. We are very optimistic about our future continued growth and success. We are in the process of launching a business service with a feed extruder. We are also the world's largest privately held provider of AQC3 aquaria space, and we can work with any aquatic species or aquatic pathogen."

CAT's PEI locations in Souris and Victoria by the Sea are supported by the head office in San Diego, California. The PEI facilities have about 75,000 square feet of aquaria and office space where they focus on health, nutrition and diagnostics for domestic and international clients.

For more information, visit [www.aquatechcenter.com](http://www.aquatechcenter.com)



Brian Stewart  
Submitted photo.

"**Elanco** is one of the larger bioscience companies on the Island," says **Brian Stewart**, General Manager. "Globally, Elanco is the second-largest animal health company, with a focus on supporting food protein production and products that care for companion animals. On PEI, we focus on the food side."

Elanco has manufacturing sites all over the world. In Charlottetown, Elanco has three facilities in the West Royalty Business Park. Two are for manufacturing, and the third houses administration and the quality control lab.

Elanco manufactures vaccines for the aqua market, specifically farmed salmon. The manufacturing facility in Charlottetown has equipment for fermentation, upstream and downstream processing, labelling and packaging, and quality control release testing.

"A few years ago, we had about 75 staff members. Now, 135 people work at the PEI site. It is a young and diverse workforce which is highly educated. We are always looking for strong talent and people who want to be part of our team."



For more information about **Elanco**, visit [www.elanco.com](http://www.elanco.com)



**NATURESCROPS  
INTERNATIONAL**

This company, based in Kensington, PEI, manufactures specialty oils for dietary supplements, food, and personal care products. "We grow oilseed crops, manufacture those crops into oil, and sell the oil," says **Crystal Cormier**, General Manager.

There are office locations in Canada, the US and the UK. At the company's Canadian location in Kensington, there is an oil production facility, a refinery, and a quality control laboratory.

"Due to increased demand, the company has doubled the production of Crambe and Meadowfoam seed oil. This is very good news for Island growers of Crambe."

"A big part of operations is in our production facility, where we look for people with production and mechanical and equipment-related experience to fill those positions."

For more information, visit [www.naturescrops.com](http://www.naturescrops.com)



## AffinityImmuno®

This biotech company located in Charlottetown develops and commercializes antibody-related technologies. "We were one of the early companies involved in developing research products for COVID-19," says **Jon Zuccolo**, Founder and President.

"We developed our first antibodies by early March 2020, which positioned us to quickly get involved in research and in developing products for COVID-19."

For more information, visit [www.AffinityImmuno.com](http://www.AffinityImmuno.com)





Because every result matters™

Sekisui manufactures in vitro diagnostic test reagents to diagnose diseases, and has manufacturing and distribution locations worldwide.

"We make enough reagents to perform 1.7 billion tests per year," says Eugene Howatt, Site Director. "Many of these tests are produced at our PEI site."

The company is the maker of Honibe® products, which uses pure dried honey to deliver health and wellness products.

"Right now, we have a big focus on our people," says Scott Spenser, President and Chief Operating Officer. "In October 2020, we instituted a plant-wide production wage increase across the board. We want to give our team an opportunity to have a career at Island Abbey Foods."

"We are focused on hiring college graduates to fill our leadership ranks and develop them from scratch. We want to encourage Atlantic Canadians to grow with our company and be the next round of leaders."

"The years 2021 to 2023 will be a very busy time for Island Abbey Foods. We are planning to expand our facility on Innovation Way in Charlottetown by an additional 30,000 square feet."

"We will also be expanding our bottling and warehouse space and installing a warehouse management system."

For more information about Island Abbey Foods, visit [www.islandabbeyfoods.com](http://www.islandabbeyfoods.com) and [www.honibe.com](http://www.honibe.com)



"On PEI, our 93,000 square foot facility has 150 staff members with educations ranging from PhD, Masters, college diploma to grade 12."

"We are looking at another 20 full-time equivalent positions in our PEI facilities to support our continued growth. We are also continuing to drive our Six Sigma and Lean training by hiring a dedicated Continuous Improvement Manager to run that department."

"Through COVID-19, we have continued to work and to expand. We are continuing our capital and facilities expansion. Currently in progress is a multimillion-dollar capital project to purchase and install two new lyophilizers."

"Our company is all about continuous improvement. We train and encourage our employees to look for ways to improve the sites. We have developed communication routes for employees to bring their ideas forward and be part of the improvement process. Employees are rewarded for ideas that improve any part of the operation."

For more information about Sekisui, visit [www.sekisui.com](http://www.sekisui.com)

For the complete interviews, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search each company by name.



## The current state of the manufacturing sector by Gloria Welton

Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC) recently held a virtual meeting to discuss the current state of manufacturing across Canada. EMC is a unique not-for-profit organization of manufacturers of all sizes and sectors.

The meeting was held to support owners and executive/senior level individuals in Atlantic Canada who make critical decisions every day, a task which has been taken to a new level since the pandemic struck.



EXCELLENCE  
IN MANUFACTURING  
CONSORTIUM

### COVID-19 impacts on the manufacturing sector

Scott McNeil-Smith, Vice President of Manufacturing Sector Performance with EMC, talked about a report about the industry which was released on July 31, 2020. The report includes input from manufacturers who describe significant challenges such as:

- Urgent health and safety concerns for their staff, management, and customers
- Ability to sustain operations, supply chains and future productive capabilities
- Skills shortages, vacancies and related HR issues are still a top priority for industry
- Steps to pandemic recovery, including restart and return-to-work processes, employee safety, production, customer relationships, sales orders, and supply chain issues



The report states that these issues have been compounded further by the need to significantly adapt new ways of doing business, while dramatically reducing or isolating their workforce.

EMC is listening to manufacturers' needs as it works to provide support, a clear roadmap, and resources to enable a rapid recovery from the pandemic and the resulting recession. "However, some good news is as of August 31, manufacturing employment in Canada has recovered to 95.3 percent of its pre-COVID-19 level," says Scott.

The Atlantic Provinces Economic Council reports that nearly 78,000 people are employed in Atlantic Canada's manufacturing sector, which is the seventh-largest employer. Average weekly wages in Atlantic manufacturing are \$1,032. On PEI, 6,500 people are employed in the manufacturing industry

For more information about manufacturing, contact Joan Richard, Operations Manager, Eastern Canada, at 506-530-0229 or [jrichard@emccanada.org](mailto:jrichard@emccanada.org)

Visit [www.emccanada.org](http://www.emccanada.org)



## New business produces kiln dried wood shavings for animal bedding by Stella Shepard

Floyd Burke is embarking on a new business journey after life-long work in the trades. Transferable welding and fabrication skills inspired Floyd to launch Triple S Holdings located on the Gowan Brae Road in Rollo Bay.

"It's the only kiln-drying facility on the Island producing dried wood shavings from pine and aspen logs for animal bedding," says Floyd. "It took a couple of years of thought, research, marketing, and purchasing and fabricating my own equipment before I opened the business in 2020."

Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC) is located at the Rural Action Centre on Main Street in Montague. "Without the financial assistance of CBDC East, I would not have been able to open the business," says Floyd. "The support and encouragement Martina MacDonald and Helen Antle offered was phenomenal. They looked at my business plan and said that we need this service on PEI."

CBDC East assists in creating small businesses and in expanding and modernizing existing businesses by providing financial and technical services to entrepreneurs. Services target entrepreneurs who require customized financing not ordinarily available from traditional sources.

"CBDC relaxed my loan payments for three months because of COVID-19. I am doubtful if any other financial lending institution would have done the same."

"I'm sourcing the wood locally," says Floyd. "As well, I will be hiring two to three staff full-time, year-round. I'm willing to train people who have some mechanical knowledge. They should be reliable and be willing to learn new skills."

For more information about Triple S Holdings, contact Floyd Burke at 902-969-8056.

For more information about Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC) visit [www.cbdc.ca](http://www.cbdc.ca) or call 902-838-4030.

For the full article, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



# Innovative tradesperson offers new technology solutions for the construction industry

by Stella Shepard

**Robert MacLeod** of Murray River researched new energy efficiency technology for a year before becoming an authorized dealer for **AeroBarrier**. With this, **Efficiency First Air Sealing Inc.** was born in October 2019.

The company uses an innovative technology in new construction and large scale renovations that improves energy efficiency and offers more economical energy options by sealing gaps and cracks left behind in the building process.

"I'm the first and only authorized dealer on PEI," says Robert. "I projected to use this new sealing technology in 30 houses in the first year of business. Even with the pandemic, it was very busy with 47 seals. I'm predicting a large demand for this new sealing technology as the construction business continues to boom on PEI and word spreads of this product."

**Community Business Development Corporation-East (CBDC)** provided Robert with a loan to buy into the franchise and purchase the necessary equipment. As well, he was able to access business-related programs and services provided by CBDC, which is located at the Rural Action Centre on Main Street in Montague.

Robert became a member of the **Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce** to make better connections and to build his business locally. "Supporting our members with their immediate and future challenges is a major role that we play here in Eastern PEI," says **Lori MacGregor**, Executive Director.

"I will be hiring when the pandemic stabilizes," says Robert. "I will be looking for people with construction experience who are interested in learning efficiency-related technology."

For more information about **AeroBarrier** and how **Efficiency First Air Sealing Inc.** can help you, contact **Robert MacLeod** at **902-969-1234** or email **efficiencyfirst@outlook.com**

Visit **www.efficiencyfirstairsealing.com**

For more information about **Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC)**, visit **www.cbdc.ca** or call **902-838-4030**.

For more information about **The Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce**, contact **Lori MacGregor** at **902-838-3131** or visit **www.epeicc.ca**

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



Robert MacLeod, Owner of Efficiency First Air Sealing Inc. and authorized dealer of AeroBarrier.

# Helping women enter and journey through careers in skilled trades

by Stacy Dunn

**The Office to Advance Women Apprentices** marked its first anniversary on PEI in October. The office assists in improving employment outcomes for women in skilled trades by:

- Addressing barriers limiting women's entry, advancement, and completion of apprenticeship in Red Seal construction trades
- Developing and maintaining a registry database to help track and connect women to trades
- Providing career services, employment supports, and networking opportunities
- Coaching and mentoring employers and apprentices
- Providing workshops to prepare tradeswomen to write their Red Seal exam
- Helping women to consider trades and take steps to explore the many options

The PEI office recently welcomed **Joan Paynter** as their new Project Coordinator. The Kensington native just returned from Alberta, where she spent years working as a Journey person. The original Project Coordinator, **Cheryl McNeill** will be staying on with the office as a consultant to continue supporting an initiative that is dear to her heart!

Joan is a Red Seal Parts Technician and was a Mechanic in the Canadian Armed Forces for 11 years. "In my 27-year career, I worked in non-traditional trades alongside both men and women and have seen the barriers others face," says Joan. "I have experienced being held back and I worked through barriers myself."

"In our first year on PEI, we were successful in connecting women to 30 employment opportunities," says **Karen Walsh**, Executive Director and based out of Newfoundland and Labrador, where the office was formed 11 years ago.

As a result of COVID-19, events are held online and are promoted through social media and through partnerships with other trades organizations.

"Our website has been updated to include success stories of local women in trades and companies who support the office's vision and goals," Karen says.

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

For more information, call **902-201-2922** or email **Joan Paynter** at **jpaynter@womenapprentices.ca** or **Cheryl McNeill** at **cmcneill@womenapprentices.ca**

Visit **www.womenapprentices.ca/pei**

Funded through the Federal Government's Women in Construction Fund.



Joan Paynter  
Submitted photo.



Cheryl McNeill  
Submitted photo.

# Island entrepreneurs are riding the wave of success

by Stella Shepard

**Sisters Kim Doherty-Smith and Jennifer Doherty** started **Fleece & Harmony** Woolen Mill with a passion to raise their own animals and handcraft every batch of fiber produced. In 2016, they began their entrepreneurial journey in rural PEI when Kim moved from Montreal and Jennifer moved from Toronto.

"We raise our own flock of Corriedale and Border Leicester cross sheep and source all the fibre for our yarns right here on PEI," says Kim. "We also carry our own brand of roving fiber, and showcase several local Island artists, potters, felting artists, and knitwear designers. They also sell ChiaoGoo knitting needles, Rowan yarns, and Cocoknits notions."

"Before we opened the business, we did our research and realized we could not rely solely on local sales," says Jennifer. "The first risk we took after we opened was to invest a lot of money in an e-commerce website that ships internationally and has marketing platforms that work for us."

It took four years for the business to become well established on the e-commerce website, and then COVID-19 struck. Sales for their products increased as more people stayed at home because of the pandemic.

Kim and Jennifer also host a popular bi-weekly video podcast on YouTube, which is building a global community of followers and has increased sales.

## Advice to entrepreneurs

- Reach out and connect with partners and pitch ideas
- Work collaboratively instead of competing with other businesses
- Be willing to take researched risks
- Invest in an e-commerce website and hire professionals such as photographers

The business employs one full-time and two part-time staff members. Kim and Jennifer plan to increase staff hours and hire more people in the future as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

For more information about **Fleece & Harmony**, contact **Kim** or **Jennifer** at **902-659-2550**.

Visit **www.fleeceandharmony.com** or **www.facebook.com/fleeceandharmony**

For the full article visit **www.employmentjourney.com** and search the article title.

# A social enterprise that helps the community

by Heidi Riley

**The Shoppe/Malsano'Kuo'm Thrift Store**, which opened in December 2019 on Lennox Island, is a great example of a social enterprise which exists for the greater good of the community.

**Misti Myers**, Manager, has a long history of helping her community. For a few years, she ran an online support group called Lennox Island Families Helping Families which collected donations for those in need.

As more and more donations came in, Misti partnered with **Chief Darlene Bernard**, who secured funding to allow the thrift shop to find a location. Misti was then mentored by Chief Darlene Bernard, Mike Randall, and Curtis Reilly. Misti now plays an active role in continuing to mentor new staff and summer students.

The thrift store offers affordable secondhand household items and clothing, as well as new brand-name items at deeply discounted prices. "We welcome everyone from all communities to shop and donate," says Misti. "We work extremely hard to ensure the store is a safe place to shop for our customers, staff and donors."

"We are undergoing some construction right now, which was slowed down because of COVID-19, and eventually we plan to operate a soup kitchen and a food bank from this location."

In addition to Misti, The Shoppe has two employees, and students were hired this past summer. "We also have many volunteers, and some of them have no employment experience. Volunteering gives them something to put on their resumes and offers valuable employability skills."

For more about **The Shoppe/Malsano'Kuo'm** visit **https://m.facebook.com/lifnshoppe/**

For the complete interview, visit **www.employmentjourney.com** and search the article title.



From right, Kim Doherty-Smith and Jennifer Doherty, owners of Fleece & Harmony Woolen Mill, with some of their sheep on site in Belfast.  
Submitted photo.

# One question brought her career path back to agriculture

by Gloria Welton

At the age of 30, **Laurie Loane**, was asked about her career passion for the first time, and at that point she realized she was in the wrong job.

"So in 2014, I applied for the Executive Director position with PEI Agriculture Sector Council and moved back to PEI. This job encompasses my education, management skills, finance skills, and my passion for agriculture.

"I was fortunate to grow up on a farm on the Island. My dad and mom decided in 1971 to quit their jobs and come home to farm full-time."

The PEI Agriculture Sector Council has been in operation for almost 30 years. "Over the years, we have seen the diversity of agriculture-related jobs grow. One in eight jobs in Canada are related to agriculture.

"You could be running a farm, owning a multimillion-dollar company, banking, nutrition, teaching - there are so many different avenues where people work in agriculture."

"We manage a job posting site which farmers really appreciate. We have that personal connection with our farmers and other employers, and we can help them connect to those looking for work.

"Our employment officer helps employers create the job ad and helps those trying to find a job in agriculture. Typically, there can be up to 200 jobs posted every month for positions such as labourers, food specialists, safety officers, and other roles on farms and with companies here on PEI."

To find agriculture job postings, visit [www.peiagsc.ca/employment.php](http://www.peiagsc.ca/employment.php)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/agriculture.council/](https://www.facebook.com/agriculture.council/)

## Specific training available on PEI

The **Blue Seal Farm Technician Apprenticeship** program will start January 11, 2021. Tuition for the program is 100 percent subsidized by SkillsPEI.

For more information, visit [www.peiagsc.ca/farmtech.php](http://www.peiagsc.ca/farmtech.php)

For more information about careers in agriculture, call the **PEI Agriculture Sector Council** at **902-892-1091**.

For the full article, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



Laurie Loane, Executive Director, PEI Agriculture Sector Council, has a career she promotes every day. Submitted photo.

# Sharing the vast number of choices in agriculture with Island students

by Gloria Welton

**Marilyn Balderston** grew up on a farm, which she says has taught many life skills that she would not have learned otherwise.

In her present role with Agriculture in the Classroom, she loves to see the amazement on the faces of the grade 11 and 12 students in the genAG Program as they learn about the impact of agriculture in our lives.

"The work we do in collaboration with teachers and students across the Island is so instrumental in sharing the importance of agriculture. We want students to know where food comes from and why people need to consider this area as a career path.

"My dad Lowell Balderston has been involved in farming all his life. We are fortunate that our father is still farming, and our mother Sally takes care of the behind the scenes responsibilities to keep the farm operational.

"My sister Nancy is a grade three teacher who is always doing things with the kids related to agriculture. My youngest sister Lori began her university career at Nova Scotia Agriculture College and graduated in the first Dalhousie Faculty of Education Agriculture class. She is using her research skills in her current position here on the Island.

"I have my Master's in Education and Counselling. My learning also comes from travel and the cultures I have been exposed to in opportunities such as an exchange program while in university. I also do other work in holistic health, and agriculture has always been my love."

"The teachers are always amazed how the genAG program gets students engaged to the point they want to share with their peers about careers in this area. Some students say the program has changed their career path and now they are studying and working in agriculture and they love it."

For more information about the **genAG** program, contact **Marilyn Balderston** at [genagpei@gmail.com](mailto:genagpei@gmail.com)

Visit **Agriculture in the Classroom** at [www.genag.ca/en-ca](http://www.genag.ca/en-ca)

Visit the **PEI Agriculture Sector Council** at [www.peiagsc.ca](http://www.peiagsc.ca)

For the full article, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



Marilyn Balderston has worked for five years with Agriculture in the Classroom PEI as genAG Coordinator. With her is her horse Astronomical Spirit. "As I continue in my career in agriculture, Spirit is a major part of my life and we are growing and learning together."

# Life on the farm

by Gloria Welton

**Lowell and Sally Balderston** are owners of **Fountain Farm Inc.** in North Wiltshire, PEI. The couple and their three daughters Nancy, Lori, and Marilyn are also very involved in agriculture.

Agriculture has always been a major part of Lowell's life. He went to university but couldn't see himself in an office job. Farming was his destiny.

"Mom came from the city, so farming did not come naturally to her," says Marilyn. "She leaves the animal work to us, but she is instrumental with everything else. She worked every potato harvest grading potatoes and throughout the winter in the warehouse, continues to make meals and delivers them to the fields for the workers, does the bookkeeping, preserves food from the garden and the list goes on. We have all contributed to the farm in our own way, but Dad and Mom have taken the lead and we have been blessed as a family."

Over the years this family produced dairy, beef, pork, potatoes, soy beans, grain crops such as oats and barley, as well as hay and straw. "Even though Dad is in his mid-80s and has downsized the farm, he still has a very active farm with planting and harvesting various crops, doing custom work for others and of course, caring for his Standardbred mares, foals and yearling horses."

Lowell started raising Standardbred horses about 19 years ago. Their horses race on the Island, throughout the Maritimes and even the United States.

Although farming can be stressful at times, Lowell says it was never monotonous because of the variety of tasks keeps things very lively, and working with the animals is such a joy. He acknowledges that the challenge today is how difficult it is for the younger generation to start farming. "With farms being so big and so costly to get going, it is a problem. We need to help those interested in farming to find their way in such an important profession."

Marilyn spoke of her Mom and Dad's generosity over the years in helping other farmers. "Many times Dad did work for other farmers and charged a very low price or did not want to be paid at all. Many people still come to the house to ask for Dad's advice on different aspects of farming. Mom is so hospitable, welcoming neighbors and friends into our home for a meal and support."

Lowell was always able to put his hand to the repair and maintenance required around the farm to keep machinery working. He says the technology now used on the farm boggles his mind. "Young folks are brought up with technology, so it is a lot easier for them to move in that direction than it is for the older generation."



Marilyn and her father Lowell Balderston share their story of life growing up on a farm and encourage others to pursue what they consider to be a very satisfying career choice.

# Program encourages youth involvement in the PEI horse industry

submitted by Shirlene O'Brien, Let's Talk Horses executive member

**Let's Talk Horses**, formed in 2018, provides an inter-generational educational opportunity for individuals of all ages, genders, and abilities, regardless of limitations and social challenges.

Participants learn about the equine industry and experience positive interaction with horses within a healthy learning environment.

Did you know there are more horses per capita on PEI than anywhere else in North America? Let's Talk Horses aims to continue and nurture this tradition which has been practiced in Canada for 250 years.

A program taking place on horse ranches across the Island aims to invigorate the harness racing industry by introducing it to youth and anyone else interested in this sport. The program introduces young people to horses in a safe environment through 16 modules. Participants are introduced to the industry by a certified trainer or driver.

## Two horse ranches connected to the program

**Grand River Ranch** in western PEI is in its fifth year as an approved non-government organization and vendor with the province of PEI. "The Department of Family and Human Services refers and supports clients of the Accessibility Support Program and Children in Care to our programs," says **Heather Blouin**, Owner. "Our program also hosts those supported by Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, Lennox Island Health Centre, and the Jordan's Principal Program."

Heather is a Registered Social Worker, is certified as an Instructor with the Certified Horsemanship Association and is an Equine Assisted Learning Facilitator.

**Bracken Hill Stable** is a horse breeding farm located on 22 acres of land overlooking Malpeque Bay. "We have quality broodmares and currently one of our horses is racing and one is about to start training," says **Christina Lecky**, Owner.

Christina has an honours Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree majoring in Animal Science from Dalhousie University. She has over 40 years' experience in the horse industry, and is a member of Standardbred Canada, The American Quarter Horse Association, and Island Horse Council, and has a Gold License with Equestrian Canada.

For more about **Let's Talk Horses**, contact **Shirlene O'Brien** at **902-206-1352** or email [scaobrien@upe.ca](mailto:scaobrien@upe.ca)



# Agriculture path from Africa to PEI by Gloria Welton

**D**r. Judith Nyiraneza is a Soil Scientist and Nutrient Management Specialist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) at the Charlottetown Research and Development Centre. She moved to PEI with her family in 2012.

AAFC has office and laboratory space in Charlottetown and a research farm in Harrington, PEI, where it conducts agriculture science research.

"I grew up in central east Africa, where crops grow all year round. When I was in high school, I was very interested in sciences, but I wanted my studies linked to something practical.

"The study of agriculture is important for many reasons. The population is growing, and we need to feed the world. Therefore, managing the land properly is very important."

## Telling youth about the many opportunities in agriculture

She says one of the mandates of AAFC is to train the next generation. "We hire about 40 students for the summer months. The pay and experience gained is very good.

"We need to talk to youth about opportunities in this sector to give them a chance to be informed. Agriculture employment makes up 12 percent of the labour force, and with agriculture being an economically important activity, there are lots of opportunities to explore."

At **AgCareers.com**, career profiles showcase a great variety of opportunities in agriculture and food production.

The website features agriculture career options and pathways in the following areas:

- Agricultural Business
- Agricultural Mechanics
- Animal Science
- Environmental Services
- Food Science
- Natural Resources
- Plant Science.

For more information visit **www.agcareers.com/career-profiles**

For more information about a career in agriculture on PEI, contact **Laurie Loane** at PEI Agriculture Sector Council, **902-892-1091**.

Visit **www.peiagisc.ca**

For the full article, visit **www.employmentjourney.com** and search the article title.



Dr. Judith Nyiraneza highly recommends working in agriculture-related careers, but she says do your homework first. "Starting with an education in the sciences connected me to a career path that has options. There are many choices, many jobs available, and very worthy careers." *Submitted photo.*

# Students believe there is a promising career in agriculture for many by Gloria Welton

**C**arleigh MacLeod from Kinkora and **Jillian Ferguson** from Spring Valley have started their career path towards a career in agriculture, a direction which totally took them by surprise.

A high school program called **genAG** opened their minds to a whole new world of opportunity. Carleigh and Jillian say they learned so much about working in agriculture and what it takes to move products from the field to our plates. This experience gave them a plan for their post-secondary education and a start on a career path they are passionate about.

"When you realize all the hands that help put food on your plate, it can be eye opening," says Carleigh. "There are farmers, veterinarians, agronomists, nutritionists, soil health specialists, salespersons, communications, and many more. We discovered there really is something for everyone."

## Carleigh's story

Carleigh grew up surrounded by agriculture but did not live on a farm herself. In high school she considered a career in healthcare but changed her plans after meeting some people who worked in agriculture and marketing.

After graduating high school, she got a summer job with Farm Food Care PEI. "At that point, I knew what I wanted to do. I switched my post-secondary goal to business with marketing and communications in mind."

She is now a third-year business student at UPEI and works for the East Prince Agri-Environment Association, which represents 15 farms working to improve environmental practices in agriculture on the Island. The job keeps her connected to employment in her chosen field.

"Every time I say yes to an opportunity, something good has come out of it. I said yes to the genAG program and it set me on an amazing career path. By giving it a chance, I discovered what to study and where I want to work."

## Jillian's story

"When I started grade 12, I did not have a career plan whatsoever," says Jillian. "I was interested in sciences and was considering becoming a veterinarian or physiotherapist, but I wasn't sure."

I was actually enrolled in a physics class but I switched to agri-science, which introduced me to the genAG program. I would urge anyone in high school to take a risk by exploring options because it pays off."

She is now in her third year of an Environmental Science degree at Dalhousie Agriculture Campus in Nova Scotia. "Being on an agriculture campus, I can see that we are the up and coming future for farming. The world is ever-changing, and science estimates that we will need to feed 9 billion people by 2050 - in our lifetime!"

"Here, I am surrounded by others with a strong interest in agriculture and I am able to take courses with a focus on plants and animals. I am enjoying the agronomy side of things so I will see where that leads me."

## Continuing to spread the word about careers in agriculture

When Carleigh and Jillian were a part of a genAG program in grade 12, they won a provincial award for a social media page they created called Ag in the Field.



From left, Carleigh MacLeod and Jillian Ferguson believe their future is in farming. They are seen in a carrot field that is owned by Bunny Burrow Vegetable Co. in Emerald. Land owners Gordie and Andrea McKenna want to pass on the skills and interest in farming to their young family.

They say being involved in the genAG program changed their career paths, which has changed their lives, and they have continued the Facebook and Instagram page to help others realize career opportunities in agriculture.

To check their posts, visit **www.facebook.com/aginthefield**

For the full article, visit **www.employmentjourney.com** and search the article title.



# Students learn about the many career paths in agriculture by Gloria Welton

by Gloria Welton

**"T**here are many jobs in agriculture related to the farm, but it is surprising how many other jobs there are as well," says **Suba Aiyer**, a teacher at Colonel Gray High school. She teaches math and four agriculture-related subjects including agri science, animal science, oceanography, and environmental science.

Suba grew up on a farm in India. "Life on the farm holds my best memories. When we moved to PEI and I got the chance to teach agri science, I was thrilled."

When she was asked to teach agri science at Colonel Gray, which at that time was the only course at the school related to agriculture, she was happy to take on the subject.

"As the students' interest grew, the school introduced other agriculture-related subjects to the curriculum, and I love teaching them all."

"We are seeing more and more interest from the students, thanks to the PEI Agriculture Sector Council and genAG, a unique career exploration program that inspires high school students to consider pursuing careers in agriculture and food.

"Not only do they learn about career choices and pathways, but this program helps promote agriculture jobs to their peers in other classes through class projects.

"In May 2019, genAG students helped organize a farm day right here at the school.

"We had pigs, chickens, ducks, and a calf, and all 1,000 students from the school were invited to attend.

"Students loved being around the animals, and in fact it was the first time for some students to get close to the animals, hold them, feed them and care for them. They learned so much."

"I strongly feel we have to keep teaching students more about the career pathways to agriculture and do a better job of promoting this essential sector."

To explore the many career options in agriculture, visit **www.agcareers.com/career-profiles**



During farm day at Colonel Gray High School in the spring of 2019, students had a chance to learn about the agricultural sector by caring for the animals and hearing about the many career choices. *Submitted photo*

# Community Inclusions growth means many more employment options

by Ruby Arsenault

**C**ommunity Inclusions Ltd. provides employment, residential, day and recreational services to adults with intellectual challenges in western PEI. "With growth in any field or industry comes a demand for more positions and more hiring," says **Kevin Porter**, Executive Director.

"The homes we operate require more Residential Group Home Workers and Community Support Workers," says Kevin. "These positions are unionized and offer very competitive wages. Full-time employees also receive other benefits such as group medical insurance along with a pension plan.

"The West Prince Campus of Holland College started a program in the fall of 2019, and many of their students filled our summer vacancies." Kevin says he hopes Holland College sees the huge need for this program in western PEI and will continue to offer it.

"We also hire people from other programs of study such as RCW and Youth Care Worker programs, along with other related areas of education and work experience.

"Wages for unionized full-time positions for our front-line Community Support/ Residential Group Home Workers range from \$17.42 to \$20.50 an hour and will move to \$17.94 to \$21.11 in the new year," says Kevin. "Our casual staff receive \$16.41 an hour.

"Positions in our other departments, from the Maple House Bakery and Café to Employment Services, are not unionized. Although benefit packages are not offered, it is something we hope for the future," says Kevin.

"Sometimes we struggle with finding staff for Maple House Bakery and Café. We have a unique environment where staff work closely with our clients. Once someone tries it, they tend to love it."

The Employment Services department has an Employment Counsellor and an Employment Coach and is currently seeking to hire an Employment Assistant. "The demands are growing in that area and in the drop-in program."

"Open positions are posted on a regular basis and I always welcome interested people to drop off resumés for casual work to create a pool."

For more information, contact **Kevin Porter** at **902-726-3144**.

Visit [www.communityinclusions.com](http://www.communityinclusions.com) and [www.facebook.com/CommunityInclusionsLtd](https://www.facebook.com/CommunityInclusionsLtd) and [www.facebook.com/MapleHouseBakeryandCafe/](https://www.facebook.com/MapleHouseBakeryandCafe/)

For the full article, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.

Employment Unit is funded largely through the Canada/Prince Edward Island Labour Market Development Agreements.



# An inside look at a career as an essential worker in a senior's home

by Ruby Arsenault

**C**aregivers' Shelley and Bim are nervous of the threat COVID-19 poses to seniors, however the Tignish Senior Home Care Cooperative has adopted, along with the whole profession, a more rigid routine to ensure residents and staff remain safe and healthy.

"Since I started working here, it has never once crossed my mind to change careers," says Bim. "I love it here and I couldn't think of any better place to work."

"During the past 13 years, I have cared for more than 200 residents and have gotten very attached," says Shelley. "I know the residents are equally attached to us."

"We do the best we can to help the seniors have a great day and feel good about themselves," says Shelley. "This is so very rewarding," says Bim. "It is all about the little things, like spending that extra five minutes listening to a resident or helping them do their hair. We have become like one huge family under one roof."

"One of the biggest challenges in our line of work is having enough casuals to cover days off," says Bim. "As in many industries, it can be difficult to fill openings and have a pool of casual workers to draw from. I encourage youth to give this job a try. Shadow for a day, or even better, apply as a casual or work during school holidays."

"One of the hardest parts of the job is losing a resident," says Shelley. "At present, we do not have a family doctor available to make regular visits to the home. We work very closely with other health care professionals to ensure the well being of our residents."

The Tignish Senior Home, which opened its doors in 2002, has more than 50 rooms. Staff includes an Administrator, Office Manager, Floor Supervisor, Housekeepers, Care Providers, Kitchen Staff, a Maintenance worker and Activity Director.

They always accept resumés for all positions and they can be dropped off to the Administrator, **LoriAnne Keough**, at 116 Macleod Lane, Tignish. She will set up a time to speak to each applicant

For more information **902-882-4663**.

Visit [www.peicommunitycare.ca/facilities/tignish-seniors-home-care-co-operative-ltd/](http://www.peicommunitycare.ca/facilities/tignish-seniors-home-care-co-operative-ltd/)

For the full article, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



From left, Shelley DesRoches and Bim Pitre, who have both been Care Providers for over 10 years at the Tignish Senior Home Care Cooperative.

## Tips to help job seekers connect with employers during COVID-19

submitted by Nicky Perry, Career Development Practitioner with Career Development Services, Souris

**A**nationwide shutdown in March 2020 greatly hindered job search activities, including face-to-face meetings with employers.

Even with loosened restrictions, it is often still difficult to visit some workplaces because of limits to on-site visitors or a lack of space to ensure the current six-foot social distancing requirement.

It is important to do your homework when connecting with employers. Some prefer you follow and connect with them through social media. Before applying anywhere, review your own social media accounts (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.) to ensure a positive impression on employers or recruiters.

Before making contact, update your resumé and be prepared to describe your skills and assets to a hiring manager.

Go beyond checking job ads. A great place to start your job search is with your personal network and community, as many job opportunities are discovered through word of mouth.

Looking at how industries and workplaces have changed in the last year can help you determine where your own skills might be best utilized. Ask yourself what employers need and what you can contribute.

Perhaps the biggest challenge during the pandemic has been a decline in employment opportunities due to an economic slow-down in several industries. As a result, many job seekers have struggled to transition to new jobs outside their usual fields or they have faced a reduction in work hours.

The personal impact of COVID-19 on job seekers must be recognized. The disruption of normal life activities has added an additional layer of stress, uncertainty, and fatigue to the usual challenges of job searching.

As a Career Practitioner, I work with job seekers to build hope and resilience. Almost everyone has experienced and survived difficulties or failures in their life. I believe those experiences hold the seeds of wisdom and strength that will take us through today's struggles.

For help with your job search, contact a **Career Development Services** office in your area. Visit [www.cdspei.ca](http://www.cdspei.ca)



UNIVERSITY  
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CONTINUING EDUCATION  
and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Are you an Administrative Professional looking to update your skills or develop new ones? Do you want to move into a new role within your organization but are missing some key qualifications for the job? A brand new certificate is being launched by the UPEI Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development.

The **Executive Administration Certificate** is set to launch in November 2020 and will focus entirely on the admin professional and the importance of their role in any organization. The certificate will be offered online through six modules. Participants in the first cohort will receive a certificate of completion in April 2021.

This certificate is one of the first of its kind on the Island and will include the following modules: Partnering With Your Boss; Become the CEO of Your Own Position; Managing Your Productivity; Project Management for Admins; Communicating Clear and Professional Messages; Simple and Effective Minute Taking.

For more information or to register, please visit us online at: <https://www.upei.ca/professional-development/certificate/executive-administration-certificate>

You can also reach **Melanie** by email at [pdp@upei.ca](mailto:pdp@upei.ca) or phone at **902-628-4394**.

We look forward to having you join us!



# 2020 Phyllis Pitre Bursary winners tell their stories

by Heidi Riley

The Phyllis Pitre Bursary, administered through Career Development Association of PEI, awards PEI adult learners who are working towards completing a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree.

## 2020 Phyllis Pitre Bursary recipients

### Dmytro Ponomarov

and his wife Olena and two small children moved from Ukraine four years ago. Dmytro has an engineering degree and is pursuing a Bachelor of Psychology at UPEI. "After coming through certain stages of personal growth, I realized if I want to live my authentic life, I must reach a decision and change my career."

In addition to a full course load, he works full time as a technician for a communications company. "This summer, I woke up early and studied from 5 am to 8 am. After work, I studied for another two to three hours."

"There are so many aspects of psychology. You could go into the scientific field or be a clinician. I am also interested in social psychology. As soon as I figure out the exact direction I would like to go, I will put all my efforts into getting to the finish line."

He is considering going on to a Doctor of Psychology at UPEI. "It may take eight to 10 years to achieve, but I am focused on the ultimate goal."

"I want to thank the bursary's sponsors and organizers and I want to credit my professors Dr. Gerald Wandio and Dr. Philip Smith. And I want to thank my wife Olena, who keeps believing and supporting me no matter what challenges I may engage our family with."



Dmytro Ponomarov

**Oyedamola Aina** arrived on PEI with his wife and four children last September. In his home country of Nigeria, he had worked in the banking industry for 18 years.

This fall, he began studying Computer Networking Technology at Holland College in Charlottetown.

As part of his efforts to integrate into his new life on PEI, he spoke with **Lisa Chaisson**, Employment Counsellor with the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada. He also took adult education upgrading at Holland College.

"My lifetime goal is to improve myself and the standard of living of my family. I want to earn my diploma and work for a company where I can gain more skills and experience and rise through the ranks. I also want to contribute towards improving my community by volunteering."

"I am putting all my energy into my studies, so that eventually I will be able to reap the benefits. Starting all over again is not easy, but it is the best thing that could happen to someone."



Oyedamola Aina

### Shelby McCarron

came through many changes in her education path until she found the career direction that suited her best. She began with a science degree at UPEI and then studied Radiation Therapy, but realized she wanted more patient interaction and rapport.

"After a long period of uncertainty, I decided to walk away and figure out what I wanted to do in my career. Although it was a very difficult decision, I am proud of myself for putting my happiness first and paving the way to my success."

In 2018, Shelby earned her Bachelor of Social Work degree. Currently, she is working towards a diploma in Health Administration.

In addition to a full course load, Shelby works full-time at Fitzroy Centre as a Mental Health Rehabilitation Worker in the Employment Unit. "Once I delved into the non-profit world at Fitzroy Centre, I loved it, and I know this is what I want."

"I am truly appreciative of the Phyllis Pitre Bursary for Adult Learners, as the financial burden is always one of the biggest hurdles students must overcome."



Shelby McCarron

For more about the **Phyllis Pitre Bursary**, visit [www.cdapei.ca/phyllis-pitre-bursary.html](http://www.cdapei.ca/phyllis-pitre-bursary.html)  
For the complete interviews, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



## Career planning support for post-secondary students

by Stacy Dunn

Finding suitable employment while keeping up with studies and after graduation are on the minds of many students. The Employment Journey asked the **Academy of Learning College** and **UPEI** how they help students and recent graduates connect with employers.

### Academy of Learning College career planning services



**Katherine McQuaid**, Director of Training, says the business college helps students and graduates with resumés, cover letters, cold calls, informational interviews, job interviews, thank you letters, and follow-up.

"We encourage students to document and keep good notes when looking for work," she says. "Following up and keeping everything organized are critical when searching for the right career fit."

Katherine and her staff encourage students to do research and informational interviews. "Most employers are more than willing to talk with students and let them know what they are looking for in prospective employees."



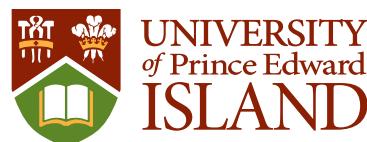
Once students complete their program, career services are still available. "We are here if they have questions around job searching until they find a job. Many employers reach out to us and we do our best to connect our graduates with employers looking to fill positions."

She says **Marguerite Connolly Training and Consulting** takes the same approach in helping Resident Care Worker students find work. "We set up interviews with the Public Service Commission for all students before they graduate. Most of our RCW students are offered jobs on or before graduation day."

For more information, visit [www.academyoflearning.com](http://www.academyoflearning.com) and [www.rcwtraining.ca](http://www.rcwtraining.ca)



### UPEI job career planning services



**The Career Studio** is a support service delivered by UPEI's **Department of Experiential Education and Work-Integrated Learning**. Since the pandemic, drop-in hours for students and alumni have been offered by phone or virtually. Individuals can receive virtual assistance with things such as resumés/cover letters, interview skills and job search strategies.

Career skills workshops are held on Google Meet. "Students and alumni can view the list of free workshops through the 'program schedule' link on the Experiential Education website and register for those that they want to participate in," says **Kylah Hennessey**, Career Counsellor. "We could also meet in person. However, everyone present must wear a mask and maintain social distancing."

"We are also still coordinating career-related events such as employer information sessions, but these are now happening virtually."



Submitted photo

"The best way to stay informed and up to date with the services we offer is by visiting our website and follow us on social media," she says. "Experiential Ed is on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn."

For more information on Experiential Education, visit [www.upei.ca/exed](http://www.upei.ca/exed)

The department has a new digital platform called **UPEI Connect** to bring alumni and students together for networking and mentorship opportunities monthly.

Individuals who sign up are matched with a new connection once every four weeks and can schedule a chat to take place either in person or online.

"This could be a 15-minute conversation or an hour-long meeting," Kylah says. "It's a great way for students to connect with alumni and for alumni to give back to the university community."

UPEI students or alumni interested in networking or giving back to the university community can visit [www.upei.ca/exed/students/upei-connect](http://www.upei.ca/exed/students/upei-connect)



# A huge variety of volunteer options available

by Heidi Riley

The annual **UPEI Volunteer Fair** held in September featured local organizations in need of volunteers. Volunteering is a wonderful way to give back to your community, meet new people, and learn new skills.

"Volunteering has helped me in so many ways," says **Jenna Gaudet**, of UPEI's Experiential Education Office. "It has helped me expand my network of friends and professional connections, and I have travelled in Canada and the US through volunteer experiences. I learned a lot about myself and what I enjoy doing, which helped me in the world of work. I helped my community in various ways, and I gained a lot of different skills.

"The best way to start getting experience to put on your resumé is to volunteer. It does not have to be a huge time commitment – it could be just one or two hours a week."

For a complete description of volunteer opportunities featured at the virtual fair, visit [www.upei.ca/exed/students/volunteering](http://www.upei.ca/exed/students/volunteering)



## Organizations looking for volunteers:

### Upper Room Food Bank Hospitality Ministry

Email [events.urhm@gmail.com](mailto:events.urhm@gmail.com) or call 902-892-7092.

### UPEI Student Union

Email [info@upeisu.com](mailto:info@upeisu.com) Visit <https://upeisu.ca/volunteer/>

### Chantiers Jeunesse

Email [kkliparchuk@cj.qc.ca](mailto:kkliparchuk@cj.qc.ca)  
Visit [www.cj.qc.ca/en/more-opportunities/become-a-volunteer/](http://www.cj.qc.ca/en/more-opportunities/become-a-volunteer/)

### Big Brothers Big Sisters of PEI

Call 902-368-7760, or email [info@bbbs.pei.ca](mailto:info@bbbs.pei.ca)  
Visit <https://pei.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/volunteer/>

### Canadian Mental Health Association

Email [s.maceachern@cmha.pe.ca](mailto:s.maceachern@cmha.pe.ca)  
Visit [www.pei.cmha.ca/home/our-programs/for-children-youth/](http://www.pei.cmha.ca/home/our-programs/for-children-youth/)

### Community Museums Association of PEI

Visit [www.museumspei.ca](http://www.museumspei.ca). Under Join the community, click volunteer positions.  
For more information, email [info@museumspei.ca](mailto:info@museumspei.ca).

### Let's Talk Science (LTS)

Email [upeiits@gmail.com](mailto:upeiits@gmail.com) Visit <https://letstalkscience.ca/> or Facebook.

### PEI Association for Community Living

Call 902-388-5432 or email [supportmatch@peiaci.org](mailto:supportmatch@peiaci.org) Visit [www.peiaci.org](http://www.peiaci.org)

### St. John Ambulance

Call 902-370-3670 or email [Jazlyn.Macleod@sja.ca](mailto:Jazlyn.Macleod@sja.ca) Visit [www.sja.ca](http://www.sja.ca)

### The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award-Canada-Prince Edward Island

email [pei@dukeofed.org](mailto:pei@dukeofed.org) Visit [www.dukeofed.org](http://www.dukeofed.org)

### Learning Disabilities Association of PEI (LDA)

Email [Martin@ldapei.ca](mailto:Martin@ldapei.ca) Visit [www.ldapei.ca](http://www.ldapei.ca)

### Rising Youth Community Service Grants program

Visit [www.risingyouth.ca](http://www.risingyouth.ca)

### Beach Grove Home and Prince Edward Home

Visit [www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-pei/prince-edward-home](http://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-pei/prince-edward-home)  
or call **Cheryl Young** at 902-368-5792.

For the full descriptions of each organization volunteer opportunities, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



## Calendar of Events

Check out all employment-related events online such as virtual conferences, workshops, courses, information sessions, training, programs, and much more.

[www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com)

Check out this upcoming training



Like us on Facebook  Follow us on Twitter 

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