

CELEBRATING
CANADA
CAREER MONTH

The News You Can Use Employment Journey

On Prince Edward Island



NOVEMBER is Canada Career Month.
Read through this edition for information that can help you with your career plans.

Bursary winner talks about life experiences that led to a perfect career choice

by Gloria Welton

November is **Canada Career Month** and the theme is, "It's Possible!" There is no better way to start the celebration this month than to profile a **Career Development Association of PEI** bursary winner.

Did you know there are many Career Development Professionals across PEI who can help you make your career plans happen? These empathetic and trained professionals encourage and support job seekers/career planners across PEI to take steps toward a lasting and satisfying career. They meet with clients regularly and watch them move towards their "It's possible."

Laura Mills from O'Leary is taking steps towards her "It's Possible." She enrolled in the first Human Services program offered at the Holland College West Prince Campus in Alberton in 2020.

During the process of applying for the **Phyllis Pitre Bursary**, she learned much more about Phyllis, and felt they had many things in common.

Phyllis, who passed away at the age of 48, valued lifelong learning and made a tremendous impact on people in her personal life and those she worked with to encourage and support them as they made life decisions and planned their career.

Because of Laura's amazing story and meeting all the criteria, the Career Development Association of PEI selection committee awarded her and two other recipients a \$500 bursary.

Laura's journey

"In applying for the bursary, I learned that Phyllis loved gardening and photography. Those abilities are also my passions, but now I realize that I also share a desire to be in the helping profession, because it is certainly a big part of who I am."

Laura has a degree in fine arts with a major in photography, and she worked in gardening throughout her school years, but her career journey started to take another path after moving to PEI.

"I was born in Ontario, and after coming to the Island for 17 years throughout my childhood and any chance I could get, I have now lived on PEI for six years and I see spending the rest of my life here. I love it here. I met my husband Sheldon on PEI, and after four years together we moved here. My parents moved here six months after I did.

"As my parents were getting older, and since I am an only child, I wanted to learn about physical care. I worked with a person who needed support in her home. I helped her in areas such as feeding, lifting, and companionship, and I learned so much. Actually, she guided me to help her properly, and it was an amazing experience."

When Laura's father became sick and was palliative, she took care of him at home for three months before he passed away. Presently, Laura is a caregiver for her mother, something Laura considers an absolute honour to do.

"Before dad's passing, I had a conversation with him about the idea of going into a profession that helps and supports people. However, I didn't quite know what that would look like.

"There was another experience I had in high school that now when I look back, I can see how important it was to who I am and my career path. I took a class to be a peer helper. The student I worked with had Down Syndrome.

"I was teaching her English and math. When I talked with her Educational Assistant (EA) to help me work with the student, I became aware of the roles and responsibilities of an EA position.

"I also did some social things with this student and set some goals to accomplish. I created a booklet to help her and it ended up being used for her the following year. Now that I am studying this field, I see how this experience was a great example of the work I will be getting into and my love for it.

"Until my experience with my parents, I never considered choosing Human Services as a career. It went full circle for me. I didn't realize how my experiences overall would resonate in my life.

"The Human Services program was a perfect match for me. It is an excellent program, and I am surrounded by an amazing group of students and faculty."

In the Human Services program, students develop the knowledge and skills to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities achieve their full potential.



Laura Mills was one of three recipients of the 2021 Phyllis Pitre Bursary provided through the Career Development Association of PEI. Submitted photo.

"I will be in the first class to graduate from the program in Alberton. Everyone in my class is so supportive of each other in our studies. You can bet an amazing group will be graduating soon, ready to work in this field.

"I would not have been able to take the program if it was offered at a college location farther away, because I am a caregiver for my mother.

"I am so thankful to be in my chosen field. I have discovered so much joy and satisfaction in helping others to reach their goals and helping with their wants and needs and accomplishing their dreams. It is so important to be client centered and to have patience and empathy."

She can't say enough about the fantastic on-the-job learning placements she experienced throughout the program. She has been at West Prince Housing and Hope Centre Clubhouse, and her last placement will be in the school system.

Before starting the program, Laura began working with Community Inclusions to get some experience and continues with that organization. "I learned so much there.

"I am so thankful for the bursary as I pursue a career choice that is a perfect match for me. I look forward to graduating and entering the profession that I was meant for."

For more information about the **Phyllis Pitre Bursary** and other bursaries, visit www.employmentjourney.com/bursaries-awards-scholarships

For guidance with your career plan checkout a list of organizations/agencies where Career Development Professionals work, visit www.employmentjourney.com/resources-services-for-job-seekers



Introducing the term 'Neurodiversity': Difference is not a deficit

Submitted by Sandy Slade, Registered Social Worker, Employment Support Worker with the Canadian Mental Health Association PEI Division, and the Founding Executive Director of ADHD PEI.

I have Generalized Anxiety, Dysgraphia, ADHD, and I am in my seventh year of recovery from a Gambling Addiction. What just went through your head while reading that? Would you hire me?

I am a Neurodiverse employee. No matter who you are, you work on a daily basis with neurodivergent employees, managers, customers, and clients. Perhaps you yourself are neurodivergent. I have succeeded thus far in my field, despite and because of my neurodiversity.

In this ongoing column, I will be diving into what neurodiversity is; what it isn't; the barriers of stigma and fear that stand as obstacles to creating a more neurodiverse workplace; how including, accommodating, and embracing neurodiverse employees can create more profitable, productive, and empowering companies.

I will tackle practical challenges to implementation, the theories behind the movement, and the stories of lives that have been changed by finding jobs in neurodiverse work settings. I look forward to this employment journey with you into neurodiversity in the workplace.

Now, let's break this word down, shall we? Neurodiversity sounds kind of academic and a bit buzzy, but there is an important concept behind it.

Many people in society have what are called Neurodevelopmental conditions: *neuro* has to do with the brain, and *developmental* means they had it from birth, but traits develop in childhood and adolescence.

These include ADHD, Autism, Learning Disabilities, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, and Tourette's syndrome. "Neurodiversity" is the viewpoint that people with these conditions are more than broken brains, but rather experience and engage with the world in unique ways.

These different perspectives, far from being a deficit, can actually provide added value to individuals, organizations, and society.

The term Neurodiversity was first used by the Sociologist Judy Singer in the 1990s. She rejected the belief that people with Autism in particular were disabled, and that they needed to be "cured".

The concept and term was adopted by activists as they were advocating for themselves within systems such as healthcare, education, and employment.

To bring this down to a tangible local example of the progress that has been made on behalf of people with disabilities including neurodiverse conditions, the PEI Human Rights Commissions website says the following:

"A disability is a previous or existing intellectual, mental or physical condition that may result from an injury, illness, or birth defect. Temporary illnesses such as a cold or flu are not covered. Drug and alcohol addiction are covered under disability.

"If you live with a disability, you should have access to the same services and employment opportunities as those without disabilities. Changes may need to be made by employers or service providers to allow you to have equal and meaningful access to a job or service."

This is an important right that disability activists fought a long time to achieve: the right to not be terminated based on something one can't control, but this still comes from a framework of lack and deficit.

It is not my intention to say that employees with intellectual and mental health issues do not face any difficulties or create potential challenges to employers. It is, however, my hope to begin to reframe the narrative to show how recruiting, training, and promoting neurodiverse employees creates an advantage to employers as they become stronger and better able to adapt to change.



Sandy Slade. Submitted photo.

When companies and managers embrace Neurodiversity in the workplace, they get access to different perspectives and skill sets. This which puts them at a competitive advantage, while also creating a more accepting and understanding world. For questions and comments please email me at contact@adhdpei.ca



The state of literacy on PEI is in crisis

by Gloria Welton

Almost half of adults on PEI do not have the skills needed to thrive in our digital, knowledge-based society. (According to the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies.)

Close to 1,000 children a year are referred to PEI Literacy Alliance's summer tutoring program by PEI resource teachers.

The Alliance continues to work with community partners, government departments, and businesses to change the present state of literacy on PEI.

"It is important to support the literacy skills of people at all ages," says **Jinny Greaves**, Executive Director of PEI Literacy Alliance. "However, our recent strategic focus is on family literacy and getting books into the homes of babies, toddlers, and preschoolers. Early interventions are important. If children are not reading at grade level by grade three, statistics say it is four times more likely that those children will not complete high school."

The Alliance has been in operation for 31 years. "Our new mission is to ensure that literacy barriers are minimized and gaps in services are filled so that all people on PEI reach their highest achievable literacy level," says **Colin Beck**, recently appointed Chair of the Alliance.

"Over the years, the Alliance has helped tens of thousands of people on PEI achieve their highest level of literacy," says **Nathan Steeves**, past Chair.

The Alliance offers the following programs to children and adults:

Ready Set Learn offers free summer tutoring for children in grades K to 6 who struggle with reading, writing, and math. Each child receives one hour of tutoring per week for eight weeks.

"This past summer, 17 tutors were hired to work with 544 children to boost literacy skills, confidence, and learning attitudes," says **Christine Snowden**, Ready Set Learn Manager.

Imagination Library and Free Books for Kids gives out free books to inspire a love of reading in children and families.

By March 2021, 16,214 books were distributed, giving children access to their own library at home.

"I believe Statistics Canada has reported that about 25 percent of Canadian homes do not have a single book in them," says **Amanda Beazley**, Family Literacy Director. "We are working to reduce that statistic."

Essential Employability Skills is a free program for adults that includes 180 hours of classroom training and six-week work placements.

"In 2020, we helped nine adults gain literacy and employability skills," says **Lily Reaman**, Essential Employability Skills Manager. "Of these nine, seven gained full-time employment. We also worked with five supervisors and managers to build their mentoring skills so that when their new employees arrived at the work sites, they were ready to support them."

"We work hard each day to ensure Islanders are better informed about literacy, the supports that are needed, and those that are available," says Jinny.



Rosie Sprague loves books. Each month, children up to age four who enroll in the Imagination Library program receive a high quality, age-appropriate book in the mail for free! The program is administered through The PEI Literacy Alliance. Submitted photo.

For more information about PEI Literacy Alliance, call 902-368-3620 or email info@peiliteracy.ca

Visit www.peiliteracy.ca For the full article, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search the article title.



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Program assists a Mi'kmaq woman on her career journey

by Stella Shepard

Sasha Burkitt of Charlottetown is working towards her goal of earning Red Seal Certified Chef and Pastry Arts certifications, and possibly launching a catering business someday.



Sasha Burkitt

Sasha graduated from the two-year Culinary Arts program at the **Holland College Culinary Institute of Canada** in 2021 and is now enrolled in the one-year Pastry Arts program.

The journey to a higher education was not an easy road for Sasha. Classroom learning is challenging because she is dyslexic.

For years, she worked at low-paying entry-level positions. At age 39, she decided on a career that is enjoyable, offers good employment prospects, and provides better wages.

In 2018, Sasha completed an Entry Level Cooking program through the Tourism Industry Association of PEI and discovered a passion for the culinary world. She wanted to gain more skills by taking Culinary Arts. She was accepted in 2019 but lacked a plan to pay for tuition.

The Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) program assists off-reserve Indigenous peoples to prepare for and determine career paths. Clients are offered educational supports, work placements, and much more. The Native Council of PEI administers the program as a sub-agreement with the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.

"The ISET program changed my life," says Sasha, who is Mi'kmaq. "The assistance opened the door, and made it possible for me to achieve my career goal."

For more about **ISET**, contact **Nancy MacLean**, Employment & Training Coordinator, at **902-892-5314**, or email iset@ncpei.com. Visit www.ncpei.com

The ISET program is funded through partnership with the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and Employment and Social Development Canada.

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



Not giving up on her goal to earn her GED

by Heidi Riley

The **Workplace Essential Skills (WES) Lennox** program, delivered by **Workplace Learning PEI**, helps people improve their essential skills, such as reading and literacy, and helps them prepare to take their GED and other certification exams.

Training is structured to best meet each participant's learning needs, and could include classroom, small group, one-on-one, or online delivery.

This past year, three participants of the WES Lennox program earned their GED, including **Nora Richard** of Summerside.

Nora started her GED journey at Holland College in 2008. "I tried to get my GED many times over the years," says Nora. "Each time I had to stop and go back to work because I could not afford to be on Employment Insurance and go to school."

Nora did not give up on her dream to earn her GED. For the last two years, Nora attended the WES Lennox program while working part-time, basket weaving at home, and facilitating basket weaving courses. Four days a week, Nora made the 35-minute drive from her home in Summerside to the WES Lennox classes in Bidford.

"It is an awesome program. There were just nine of us in the class, so we had more one-on-one time. The instructors kept saying not to worry if I couldn't do something, and not to be ashamed to ask for help. If there was a program like WES Lennox when I was a kid, I probably would not have quit school."

"Everyone in the class works at their own pace. If you are struggling, instructors Cat Ronahan, Joe Byrne, Jillian Bulger, and Jonathan Simmonds went that extra step to make sure we understood everything."

"Now that I have my GED, I have more confidence. It is something I always wanted to do, and it didn't matter how long it took or how many times I had to try."

"If you want to earn your GED, find a good mentor. It is important to get a lot of one-on-one time. If you can't get that with an instructor, try to find someone else who can help."

"It is hard, but if you really want something bad enough it doesn't matter how many times you try and fail, eventually it will work out."

Growing up, Nora was interested in carpentry, but the math defeated her. Now she is following her dream. With help from the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, she was hired at Poppy's Porch, a woodworking craft shop in Margate near Kensington. She started by organizing the shop, and then went on to paint the Adirondack chairs made by owner Roger Gillcash. Then she graduated to cutting out the wood pieces to make the chairs.

Nora also makes traditional Mi'kmaq baskets and holds workshops to teach the craft. "When I make baskets, it's just like when I was working towards the GED. When I have trouble with a design or pattern, I think about it for days, and try again and again."

For more about **Poppies Porch**, search on facebook.

For more about the **WES Lennox program** and **Workplace Learning PEI**, visit www.workplacelearningpei.com

WES Lennox is sponsored by Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI and funded by the Department of Economic Growth, Tourism & Culture through the Canada-PEI Labour Market Agreement.

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



Career services assistance offered to Holland College students

by Stacy Dunn

Holland College's Office of Retention, Part-time Study, and Career Services offers academic support, academic advising, and career preparation support as students continue their educational journey.

The support offered for career preparation helps students investigate their interests and goals through workshops, exploration tools, assessments, and networking opportunities with potential employers.

"I help students look at their values, passions, and skills, and use different resources to figure out how those translate to a career," says **Haley Doherty**, Employment and Career Advisor.

She helps students navigate labour market information and coaches them on job search skills. She can meet one-on-one with a student, facilitate group discussions, or organize industry panels and job fairs with employers.

Haley also looks forward to connecting employers to Holland College student talent and supporting them with their hiring and employment needs.

"Career planning is not about the job title you want. It's asking what you are good at and what you like to do, and how you can do that in various industries or organizations. It's amazing how you can expand your options when choosing a career."



Haley Doherty, Employment and Career Advisor, Holland College.

Check out the Service Canada JobBank career planning tool at www.jobbank.gc.ca/career-planning

For more information, call **902-566-9368** or email hedoherty@hollandcollege.com

Visit www.hollandcollege.com and search Office of Retention, Part-time Study and Career Services.

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



Computer company encourages more people to consider a career in the digital industry

by Heidi Riley

Combat Computers focuses on sales, service, and support of computers and computer systems from tip to tip across PEI and into New Brunswick.

In the last 23 years, the company has grown to a staff of 17 spread between retail locations in Charlottetown and Summerside and a mobile service.

For home users, they sell and repair cell phones and computers and set up printers, sound systems, home security systems, and much more.

For businesses, they install and maintain servers, manage anti-virus platforms, remote access, and networking, set up WiFi for campgrounds and apartment buildings, and many more services. The technology is managed remotely or in person.

"We are always looking for people," says Owner **Steve Van Duinkerken**. "Our work is so diverse that we can offer jobs to people who are specialized in such areas as networking or servers."

"We hire Computer Technicians most frequently. Right now, we are looking for a Network Technician and a Managed Services Technician."

- Network Technicians visit worksites and fix problems on site.
- Managed Services Technicians work from an office, taking calls and fixing computer problems remotely.

"IT is not just one job," says **Jeff Van Duinkerken**, Steve's son and Senior Network Administrator. "There are thousands of different jobs in Information Technology."

"The digital industry is booming because it is part of every industry, including healthcare, aquaculture, and agriculture. For example, some potato facilities now use fully automated driverless tractors on PEI. Robots in the facilities change pallets, empty trucks, and wash and package the potatoes."

Staff titles - onsite department

- Senior Network Administrators take care of servers and complex networks
- Network Technicians take care of home-based networks and businesses
- Dispatcher takes calls and sends out technicians
- Junior Technicians solve less complex issues for all users

Staff titles - retail department

- Computer Technicians, Phone Technicians, Accounting, Retail General Manager



From left, Jeff Van Duinkerken, Senior Network Administrator, and Steve Van Duinkerken, Owner, Combat Computers.

They look for people who have CompTIA certifications in A+, Network+, and Security+. "You can start your career by taking college programs that lead to those certifications, or you can study all the materials and write the exams on your own online," says Jeff.

"Passing those exams is a great starting point, but we also look for relevant work experience and the ability to communicate and take care of our customers properly."

To apply for a job at **Combat Computers**, email jobs@combatcomputers.com or visit the retail location in Charlottetown and speak to Steve or Jeff.

Visit www.combatcomputers.com

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

Landscape Management Network opens new office in Charlottetown

by Ethan Paquet

Landscape Management Network (LMN) helps landscape professionals and snow removal contractors with budgeting, estimating, scheduling, time tracking, and invoicing. Its proprietary cloud-based platform is used by over 85,000 professionals at 4,000 landscape companies across Canada and the US.

Now, the company has opened a new site in Charlottetown which will house more than 50 employees, including customer service, account management, business development, sales, and technology positions.

The new location will offer flexible roles during normal business hours as well as hours to accommodate students and part-time workers.

"There are currently nearly a dozen open roles still available," says **Mike Lysecki**, Chief Technology Officer. "We'll continue to grow the staff at our new office and add people who can help our customers and are a great fit for our culture."

For more information, visit www.golmn.com/careers or contact **Annette Mendezcuria**, Human Resources Manager, at amendezcuria@golmn.com

For the full article, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search **Landscape Management Network**.

For more about PEI's Digital and Computing industry, visit www.employmentjourney.com/industries/digital-computing-industry



Landscape Management Network's Chief Technology Officer Mike Lysecki, far left, at LMN's recent job fair in Charlottetown. Submitted photo.

Aerospace company is thriving and hiring

submitted by Adam Kress, Director of External Communications, Honeywell

Honeywell is a Fortune 100 technology company that delivers industry-specific solutions that include aerospace products and services, control technologies for buildings and industry, and performance materials globally.

Honeywell Aerospace products and services are found on virtually every commercial, defense, and space aircraft. The Aerospace business unit builds aircraft engines, cockpit and cabin electronics, wireless connectivity systems, mechanical components, and more. Its hardware and software solutions create more fuel-efficient aircraft, more direct and on-time flights, and safer skies and airports.

The Slemon Park site on PEI, which has 58 staff members, is a Fuel Control Center of Excellence. The core business at the site is the repair and overhaul of fuel controls and fuel control accessories.

World-wide, the aerospace and aviation industry has been hard hit by the pandemic. At Honeywell, there was an initial slowdown at the beginning of the pandemic. However, operations have quickly returned to pre-COVID-19 levels and are actually increasing in terms of receipts and demand. This is reflected in the high levels of hiring at the site.

Right now on PEI, Honeywell is looking to hire seven Technicians, one Machinist, and one ISC Supervisor.

For more information, visit www.honeywell.com and www.honeywell.com/newsroom

For more about careers at **Honeywell**, visit <https://careers.honeywell.com/us/en/search-results>

Holland College hiring needs

by Gloria Welton

Holland College has campuses and centres across the Island. Hiring is ongoing all year, with the busiest time being from April to September, and most positions are full-time.

The locations include Georgetown Centre, Prince of Wales Campus, Tourism and Culinary Centre (home of The Culinary Institute of Canada), West Prince Campus, Summerside Waterfront Campus, Marine Training Centre, and Atlantic Police Academy.

There are about 720 staff at these campuses during the peak academic period with a variety of staff titles, including:

- Learning Manager/Instructor
- Administration
- Student Services Advisor
- IT Services
- Counsellor
- Management
- Service Worker
- Lab Assistant
- Curriculum Consultant/Instructional Designer
- Food Product Developer

"Positions that are more challenging to fill are Learning Managers for our Trades and Healthcare programs, IT positions, and positions within the Early Childhood Education space," says **Patty Bell**, Human Resources Staffing Officer.

Holland College offers competitive salaries and a comprehensive benefit package for permanent and eligible term staff that includes a pension plan, supplemental health and dental, life insurance, health spending account, and other optional benefits. The Employee and Family Assistance program support is available to all employees.

Positions are posted on the Holland College careers website page, social media, Work PEI, Career Beacon, Indeed, LinkedIn, and industry specific publications and networks. "We also leverage our program advisory committees and the alumni channels, as strong networks of industry professionals to promote employment opportunities," says Patty.

To apply, submit your resumé by email and include a cover letter and three professional references.

To be successful in the screening process, ensure your cover letter and resumé clearly articulate how your qualifications, experience, and skill set align with the job posting.



Andrew MacLaine is a Learning Manager with the Child and Youth Worker program at Holland College. Submitted photo.

For more information about employment opportunities at **Holland College**, email careers@hollandcollege.com or call **902-566-9680**.

Visit www.hollandcollege.com/about/Careers.php

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



Connecting job seekers with employment opportunities

by Heidi Riley

Integrated Staffing, a staffing agency with offices across Atlantic Canada, recently opened an office in Charlottetown.

"Currently, there is a labour shortage on the Island and businesses are flocking to us to help fill their vacancies," says **Justin Smith**, Client Service Representative for Integrated Staffing.

Justin says the biggest need right now on PEI is for temporary workers in areas such as industrial labour, administration, hospitality, and technical trades.

"General Labour positions in construction come up most often. There is also a big demand for people to work on remediation projects such as flooded basements and property restoration.

"For smaller companies which do not have an HR team, Integrated Staffing can post jobs, screen resúmes, follow up with candidates, book interviews, and process payroll. We can also process criminal record checks and conduct drug testing if necessary."

Integrated Staffing offers mostly temporary employment with weekly pay, fair wages with vacation pay, and the opportunity to work casual, part-time, or get a full-time/permanent placement in many cases. "You could work a few days a week or almost full-time if you choose.

"I would love to speak to high school graduates who are not sure what they want to do. I can give them temp work and they can figure out what type of work they are suited for."



Tami Fitzgerald.



Justin Smith.

For more information, contact **Tami** or **Justin** at **902-201-4400**.

Visit www.integratedstaffing.ca

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



BioVectra looks to hire more staff

by Heidi Riley

BioVectra is a leading Canadian biotechnology company looking to hire 40 people at their locations in Charlottetown and in Windsor, Nova Scotia.

The company is focused on contract manufacturing and product development of active pharmaceutical ingredients, pharmaceutical intermediates, and bioreagents.

There are currently about 400 employees on PEI, and about 150 in Nova Scotia. A few Business Development employees work in the US and one in Europe.

Lester Wood, Vice President, People and Corporate Culture, says the company's hiring needs are the result of company growth and attrition.

"For many industries, COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the Canadian labour market, which is seeing unprecedented turnover due to people wanting a change of lifestyle or career or deciding to go back to school. The slow-down in immigration due to the pandemic has also affected the number of people available to hire."

Lester has also seen unforeseen benefits come from the pandemic. "There has been an influx of people leaving bigger centres for Atlantic Canada.

"As many people question how and where they want to live during this time of uncertainty, a lot of very interesting and qualified candidates have moved to PEI.

"We are looking to hire many types of skillsets and experience levels. It is a bit of a myth that the biotech industry is all PhD scientists. Our entry-level roles, such as Production Technician, do not require a post-secondary education. We do like to see a high school diploma and basic math and literacy skills and the ability to read and follow instructions.

"Pre-COVID-19, we started a recruitment and education plan for BioVectra to hire Indigenous peoples, and now we would like to continue that initiative. I want to reach out to that community and let them know we have training opportunities and we welcome them to join us."

How to apply

The best way to apply is to check the list of open positions at www.biovectra.com/join-our-team and apply for a specific position.

For more information, call **902-566-9116**. Applicants can also email a resumé to careers@biovectra.com

For a list of open bioscience positions on PEI, visit www.peibioalliance.com

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



The BioVectra plant in Charlottetown. Submitted photo.

BIOVECTRA Career Fair

Where: Saturday November 13, 2021 – 9 am to noon

When: Charlottetown Delta Hotel, Bonshaw Room

We are hiring:

Production Technicians - operate, monitor, adjust and maintain pharmaceutical processing units and equipment in the manufacture of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) and Fermentation products

Quality Control Chemists - conduct testing on a wide range of chemical compounds and consumable items, using a variety of instrumental and wet chemical analysis methods

What we offer - Group Insurance Plan including life insurance, dependent life, AD&D, long-term disability, health & dental benefits
• Pension Plan • Short Term Incentive Program • Continuing Education
• Wellness Program • Health Spending Account

Bring your resumé for your chance to be interviewed!

Berry production facility growing and hiring

by Stella Shepard

Tom Margeson is President and CEO of **Healthy Berries Ltd.** which is a state-of-the-art facility on Commercial Road in Montague. The company produces high quality puréed berry products.

Tom has more than 40 years of experience in the food industry and is passionate about helping people eat healthy.

"After the sudden passing of the previous owner **Peter Kohler**, I officially took over the company in 2020 after restructuring the management team, reorganizing the business, and keeping the company working through COVID-19," says Tom.

The products are available in every Canadian province and in nine other countries. By the end of 2021, the products will be available in the United States and India.

"We produce a one-of-a-kind wild blueberry purée on-site in four flavours: wild blueberry, wild blueberry and strawberry, wild blueberry and cranberry, and wild blueberry and haskap in 350 ml glass bottles. The fruit is Maritime sourced except for the Ontario strawberries.

"This year, we launched two flavours in our new 250 ml squeeze bottle. Before the end of the year, we will be launching Superfruit Purée Solos, single serve stick tubes filled with our purée.

"Our patented state-of-the-art process utilizes the entire berry, including the skin, pulp, seeds, and juice, and produces a purée that is extremely high in antioxidants and is much healthier than juice."

Hiring needs

"Depending on production schedules, we have between nine and 15 full-time and part-time staff," says Tom.

"We are adding Production Line Workers, who we train on site. We are currently looking for Shift Supervisors and Machine Operators, as well as a Food Safety person to work in our lab. We will require more staff as we develop and add new production lines.

"When hiring, we look for individuals who want to learn new skills and work in a clean production facility that has a BRCGS Global Food Safety certification. We look for individuals who are self-starters, enjoy new challenges, and want to progress in their career and develop new skills.

"We offer above minimum wage for entry-level positions and a higher salary for specialized staff."

For more information about **Healthy Berries Ltd.**, visit www.superfruitpuree.ca

To apply, email a resumé to info@superfruitpuree.ca

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

Community support

Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC) is located at the Rural Action Centre on Main Street in Montague.

CBDC East provides business loans, counselling advice, entrepreneurship development, and business training.

CBDC East is staffed by **Martina MacDonald**, Director, **Helen Antle**, CBDC Officer, and **Terri Taylor**, Accounts Officer.

"Martina and Helen were very helpful as we secured a loan for new product line processing and packaging equipment acquisitions that the company needed to maintain and grow the business," says Tom. "They are very supportive of the business."



Tom Margeson is President & CEO of Healthy Berries Ltd. located at 6246 Commercial Road, Montague. Submitted photo.

Check out the PEI Farm Technician Apprenticeship Program

The 2022 Farm Equipment Training Block

Dates: Monday, January 10, 2022 to Friday, February 11, 2022
Location: Farm Centre, 420 University Avenue, Charlottetown

Developed in consultation with the PEI Agricultural Trade Advisory Committee, this one-of-a-kind, two-year registered apprenticeship program combines classroom learning with on-farm experience.

Students are awarded a Certificate of Qualification in Farm Technician from the PEI Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning. The program was developed to address the demand for a skilled, sustainable, agricultural workforce on PEI.

Apprentices work throughout the year gaining skills on-farm with a farm mentor and take five weeks of in-class training delivered by Extended Learning, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, on PEI. Forty Apprentices have received their Blue Seals from Apprenticeship PEI

Program tuition is subsidized 100 percent if EI eligible, by Skills PEI through the Canada/PEI Labour Market Agreements.

Those interested in starting the journey to become a Blue Seal Certified Farm Technician must first register with:

PEI Agriculture Sector Council

Phone: **902-892-1091**, Fax: **902-892-1891**

Email: info@peiagsc.ca

Visit www.peiagsc.ca



Building skillsets and supports for athletes beyond the field of play

by Gloria Welton

Special Olympics PEI has for many years worked with people with intellectual disabilities through leadership training, health supports, and sport.

Health and Wellness management has always been a focus for this organization, and it became even more so now. "When the pandemic started, we continued the training virtually, and now we are gradually building back to our participation in-person," says **Charity Sheehan**, Executive Director.

"Special Olympics International had to delay the 2021 winter games until 2023. We have held some local competitions and we are looking at Maritime competitions in 2022."

Program Director **Matthew McNally** says the Health and Wellness project offers free health events Island wide. "The events are directed by health professionals who are willing to provide their expertise to athletes and others with intellectual disabilities."

The most recent partnership was with Sports Centre Physiotherapy Clinic in Charlottetown. Special Olympics International provided clinical director training to Physiotherapist Haley MacDonald, who led the event.

"Six health-related professionals are now trained in six of the eight health focus areas. Athletes walk away with helpful information as they train for their sport."

Another aspect of the Health and Wellness project is to empower and equip athletes with skills to become health advocates in their community. "Five athletes have completed Health Messengers training," says Matthew.

"The messengers inspire and empower other athletes to develop healthy lifestyles and bring awareness to health and wellness services in their community."

Health Messenger **Janet Charchuk** is a motivational speaker and advocate for people with disabilities and works closely with the Canadian Down Syndrome Society and is the Canadian representative for Down Syndrome International.

For the Health Messenger program, Janet and her mentor, who is her mom Jackie, first took a course online. "After the training, I led a warm-up session and gave health tips to a group of athletes," says Janet. "Also, I talked with students in the Human Services program at Holland College in Alberton."

For more about **Special Olympics PEI**, call **1-800-287-1196**.

Visit www.specialolympics.ca/pei

For the complete article and a video, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search the article title.

Janet is participating in a research project examining the link between exercise and cognition for people with Down Syndrome. Janet does physical and mental exercises and brain games, and the data is used for the study.

"Exercise is important for everyone," says Janet. She has competed at Special Olympics events, including golf, bocce, 5-pin bowling, and snowshoe.

Janet also says it is important for athletes to be screened for health issues and for all people with disabilities to have a family doctor.

"Health professionals dealing with people with disabilities should use plain language and visuals, to communicate. Also, it is better to ask the questions directly to the patient, and not to the caregiver, mentor, or parent they come in with. Take time with people and be patient!"



Along with working and volunteering in her community, Janet Charchuk from Alberton has been an athlete and has been very involved with Special Olympics for the past 25 years. Submitted photo.

Volunteering connects students to the community and to future employment

by Heidi Riley

PEI Connectors works to grow PEI's economy by offering support services to businesses owned and operated by immigrants. It also connects people who are new to the local labour market to business and community leaders so that they can grow their professional networks and expand career opportunities on the Island. It is an initiative of the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce.

Elmira Moghimi is a Program Officer with PEI Connectors. She helps post-secondary students and recent graduates meet with community leaders, business owners, HR managers, and employers.

She also tells job seekers about how important it is to volunteer. "Some people think they do not have time to volunteer and work for free," says Elmira. "But it pays off. Volunteering helps expand your network while helping an organization and contributing to society."

"People who volunteer for an extended time with one organization have a greater chance of being hired when a job opportunity comes up. When hiring, employers often hire people they already know."

Elmira also coaches job seekers on how to apply for work and shares information about creating professional resumés, interview tips, and employment resources.

PEI Connectors serves domestic and international post-secondary students in their final year of studies, as well as recent graduates who are looking for work related to their area of expertise. All services are free of charge. Clients are also able to attend PEI Connectors webinars and in-person events.

For more about **PEI Connectors**, call 902-628-2000 ext. 257 or email emoghimi@charlottetownchamber.com

Visit www.peiconnectors.ca

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



Employers get help connecting with post-secondary graduates

Digital Skills 4 Youth PEI is a new internship opportunity for Island youth up to 30 years of age. The program connects recent graduates to meaningful employment and gives them the skills to succeed in the digital economy.

SkillsPEI partners with Island businesses or non-profit organizations who will act as Intern Host Organizations, providing a recent graduate with professional experience and an opportunity to learn.

The program provides the approved employer with a maximum of \$21,500 per intern, which is understood to be 75 percent of the intern's total salary.

SkillsPEI also provides Digital Workplace Skills Training, to be completed during the internship. This is supported at no cost to the employer.

Eligible employers can submit proposals to the department listing beneficial experiences for the intern and the possibility of the internship leading to long-term employment.

Special consideration is given to employers in rural areas and those looking to hire youth facing employment barriers, Indigenous youth, members of a visible minority group, persons with disabilities, and women.

After the employer is approved to hire an intern under the funding, the employer can start the hiring process.

How to apply

Employers can get the application form at www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/form/digital-skills-for-youth-program-application-form

For more information, call the **SkillsPEI** general inquiries line at 1-877-491-4766 or visit a SkillsPEI office.

Funded by the Department of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture and Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada.



Elmira Moghimi, Program Officer, PEI Connectors.

Free mentorship program to prepare for a career in life and health sciences

by Ethan Paquet

If you are in high school and would benefit from speaking with a student currently in university, apply to be a PowerUp mentee!

If you are a university student currently in a life or health sciences program, apply to be a mentor!

The **PowerUp** program helps connect high school students considering a career in life and health sciences with experienced and passionate university mentors.

The program is the result of a partnership between **STEM Fellowship** and **Prospective Medical Professionals (PuMP)**.

Lucy Zhao, Founder of PuMP, saw the need for a resource to help students interested in pursuing life and health sciences. She met with other students who were passionate about this idea, and posted surveys across social media and reached over 100 students.

The survey found that four out of five teenagers have considered a career in medicine. Of those, 76.3 percent are looking for learning opportunities, and most cite difficulties in finding these opportunities.

STEM Fellowship programs help hundreds of high school students across Canada by offering a variety of courses such as scholarly writing, Big Data, neuroscience, chemistry, and more.

"STEM Fellowship brings scientific literacy and knowledge of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math to traditionally underrepresented groups such as Indigenous-identifying, rural, or low-income," says **Laura Jarycki**, an outreach coordinator for STEM Fellowship's STEMpowerment program and the Director of Outreach for PowerUp.

For more information and to become a mentor or mentee, visit www.stemfellowship.org

For more about PuMP, visit www.pumpprofessionals.org

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



Volunteers have many opportunities to make a difference

by Heidi Riley

A Volunteer Fair held at UPEI brought together many organizations looking to recruit new volunteers. All the representatives agreed that the work of volunteers is essential to the good work they do in the community, and that the experience can build skills and connections.

Below is one example of organizations looking for volunteers. For an extensive list, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search by the article title.

ADHD PEI

ADHD PEI offers peer support groups for adults and parents of children of ADHD online and in person.

Volunteers are needed for database creation, to reach out to other health officials, and to create materials to place in doctor's offices.

To get involved, call 902-978-0351 or email contact@adhdpei.ca to ask for a volunteer interest form. Visit www.adhdpei.ca or www.facebook.com/adhdpei



Grace Meade and Sandy Slade.

Considering a career as a Resident Care Giver?

Short-term training now available *by Ruby Arsenault*

Recently, managers and staff from **Rev. W.J. Phillips Residence** in Alberton and **Tignish Seniors Home**, along with committee members from O'Leary, called a meeting with stakeholders to address the shortage of staff in their facilities, especially Resident Care Givers.

After a few meetings it was decided there was a need to come up with a recruitment plan for these positions.

Rural Community Learning Inc. (RCLI) was asked to submit a proposal to SkillsPEI for funding to coordinate the activities associated with the recruitment process. RCLI continues to coordinate this two-week hands-on training for individuals interested in becoming a Resident Care Giver at the long-term care facilities in West Prince such as Rev. W.J. Phillips Residence and Tignish Seniors Home.

The training experience gives participants an inside view of the work involved and helps them decide if they could be a fit for the position.

Sharon Horne, Executive Director of RCLI, is in charge of implementing this new training, which is funded through SkillsPEI. "As in many sectors across PEI, seniors homes are struggling with hiring and retaining staff," says Sharon.

"Many times, job seekers are curious about a field of work but may be intimidated to try in case they don't like the work. This program is an excellent method of getting your foot in the door and receiving hands-on training."

Do the participants get paid?

Participants are paid during the two-week training or if they are drawing Employment Insurance they would continue to draw while in training. Training is provided by senior staff at each seniors home.

To help with the recruiting process, a video has been developed with staff of both facilities talking about what it's like to be a Resident Care Giver.

Visit www.youtube.com and search **Senior Care Provider Recruitment**

How to apply

Those interested can register by contacting Sharon Horne or staff at the Alberton/Tignish Employment Resource Centre.

Resumés are passed along to seniors home managers, who interview suitable candidates. Those selected will start on-the-job training and be offered a position.

RCLI will be accepting applications until all 10 positions are filled.

RCLI is also involved in coordinating programs to address the shortage of casual bus drivers across PEI.

To find out more about the **Resident Care Giver** program or the **Bus Driver** program, contact **Sharon Horne** at 902-853-3715 or 902-853-5720 or email sharonhorne@rccli.ca



Colleen Parker, Executive Director of Rev. W.J. Phillips Residence in Alberton.

Resident Care Givers program helps fill job vacancies

Colleen Parker, Executive Director of **Rev. W.J. Phillips Residence** in Alberton, says the facility has been struggling for some time to fill positions for Care Providers and Cooks.

"Since the pandemic began, we have developed a close working relationship with the Tignish Senior Home and have voiced requests to the government for some assistance.

"The Resident Care Giver program, the video, and the promotions have captured a lot of attention, and the community is now more aware of the hiring needs in long-term care facilities," says Colleen.

"So far, I have hired a few excellent employees from within the program. This is an excellent, flexible training program, and I am feeling very positive about it."

The Rev. W.J. Phillips residence has 30 licensed community care beds along with eight independent living apartments.

"We have a wonderful, dedicated staff who offer excellent care, activities, and meals to our residents," says Colleen.

"We are very much interested in hearing from anyone interested in participating in the new hands-on training program and welcome resumés anytime," says Colleen.

To apply, email your resumé to **Colleen Parker** at erc@eastlink.ca

For more information about working at **Rev. W.J. Phillips Residence**, call 902-231-3009.

Visit www.revwjphillipsresidence.ca or search **Rev. W.J. Phillips Residence** on Facebook.



Left: Sharon Horne, Executive Director of RCLI, with LoriAnne Keough, Tignish Senior Home Care Cooperative Ltd., CEO.

Tignish Senior Home Care Cooperative Ltd. has a new hiring initiative

Tignish Senior Home is a nonprofit facility offering 54 community care beds for seniors.

"We have been struggling with gaining enough staff to operate fully," says **LoriAnne Keough**, CEO of the facility. "We have a tremendous, dedicated staff but we need more. Since the pandemic, we seem to be struggling even more with recruitment.

"After several meetings with the province requesting assistance, the Resident Care Giver pilot project was created. "It is a great opportunity for people to see firsthand what our facility is all about. I know participants suited for this work will fall in love with the seniors and enjoy being a part of our team.

"I understand that this line of work may not be for everyone," says LoriAnne. "I also understand some people may be intimidated, so this is a great chance to give it a try."

Interested participants are interviewed by LoriAnne and their new Human Resources staff member **Jennifer Heaman**. The chosen participants are processed through the project by Sharon Horne, Executive Director of RCLI, who is coordinating this program.

After completing the two weeks of training, participants will be interviewed again to see if they are interested in becoming employed. "Full-time employment may be offered, but we are open to offering opportunities to work part-time, seasonal, or job share. We also are in need for casuals to offer staff holidays and time off.

"We are open to discussion with our staff and try very hard to work out a workable schedule for everyone.

"Come join our team and contact us today to participate in this great NEW hands-on training program."

For more information about working at **Tignish Senior Home Care Cooperative Ltd.**, contact **LoriAnne Keough** at 902-882-4663 or email: tsh@pei.aibn.com

Project provides training to address sexual harassment in the workplace

by Stacy Dunn

The PEI Human Rights Commission's **SHIFT Project** provides education and resources on workplace sexual harassment to employers and employees.

"Everyone deserves a safe workplace," says **Laura K. Bird**, Project Manager. "We want people to have a plan of what to do and consider prevention strategies to SHIFT the situation through interrupting harassment at the earliest opportunity," Laura says.

"The skills people learn when responding to workplace sexual harassment can be applied to all kinds of harassment. Bystander intervention and investigation works in many situations."

National statistics show that workplace sexual harassment happens to both men and women, and there is a greater risk for people in marginalized groups or vulnerable communities.

SHIFT is surveying the Island community to gauge the awareness and experiences of employers and employees when it comes to sexual harassment in the workplace. "We want a clear picture of what is happening on PEI to see the gaps and target the resources available."



Laura K. Bird, Project Manager, SHIFT Project, PEI Human Rights Commission.

For more information on the **SHIFT Project**, call 902-368-4180 or email lkbird@peihumanrights.ca

Visit www.peihumanrights.ca For the full interview, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search the article title.