

# The Employment Journey

News You Can Use

On Prince Edward Island



## Job search success in a rural community

by Ruby Arsenault, Employment Coach/Facilitator  
with Tignish Employment Resources Centre

Tignish, just as many other small towns across Atlantic Canada, has welcomed many newcomers and past residents who are returning home.

Many of these individuals want to join the workforce either part-time, seasonal, or full-time, which is good news for our local businesses and organizations.

Meet one of Tignish's newest residents and a successful job seeker: **Jennifer Heaman**. In April 2021, Jennifer and her partner **Larry LeClair** moved from the Ottawa area to Larry's hometown of Tignish. It was Larry's desire to retire and replant his roots closer to his mom and sisters.

Jennifer has had a wide variety of work experience. "Most recently, I was providing end of life and transitional care services as a Peace Doula for seniors and their families. I was also a Security Clearance Officer for government human resource staffing offices in Ottawa.

"Previously, I worked for 20 years providing global program management support in the aerospace and telecommunications engineering industry. I am very familiar with the operating realms of program management and coordination and thrive in shifting hats and building relationships.

"Prior to this, I worked for eight years supporting mental health and nursing facilities for seniors in psychogeriatrics and community care.

"After a health scare in 2012, I stepped away from corporate life to enrich my own health and soul with personal studies that included over 900 hours in yoga and meditation teacher training studies."

### Her job search on PEI

Jennifer says when she started applying for work on PEI, she was relieved to find that the job market is quite healthy with many options.

"The job market on PEI is thirsty for employees. However, finding a full-time year-round position in the West Prince area was not easy. I sought opportunities to volunteer and show my interest in supporting Tignish. I connected with town representatives and was an enthusiastic volunteer with the Tignish Irish Moss Festival, supporting the Quilt Show and organizing a Yoga on The Beach event.

"My job research led me to the Tignish Employment Resource Centre, which I found to be very connected to the pulse of the community," says Jennifer.

In my role as an Employment Specialist, I helped Jennifer to become a volunteer at the **Tignish Seniors Home Care Cooperative Ltd.** Her first step was to attend an information night with senior home representatives LoriAnne Keough and Brenda Doyle.



Jennifer Heaman, Office Manager of Human Resources for Tignish Seniors Home Care Cooperative.



Tignish Seniors Home Care Cooperative Ltd. Submitted photo.

"The meeting was a great way to break the ice and learn more about the senior home and how I may be of assistance," says Jennifer. "The meeting led to an invitation for me to volunteer to help grow the volunteer base for the centre."

In September 2021, Jennifer was invited by the Tignish Employment Resource Centre to reapply for a position at the **Tignish Seniors Home Care**. "I was delighted to be invited for an interview with the Executive Board. Although it felt intimidating at first, the members soon made me feel very comfortable and I left the interview excited for the opportunity.

"Waiting to hear about your future employment can be stressful, and Ruby's encouragement was very much appreciated. When LoriAnne Keough called to offer me the job of Office Manager of Human Resources, I was in shock, as I knew many had applied for the role, and my excitement has stayed with me since.

"Tignish Seniors Home Care is quite unique. The employer goes the extra mile for their residents and staff. Administrator LoriAnne Keough and Floor Supervisor Sheila Pridham have worked hard for many years to ensure the facility is a home without stress or worry for our residents.

"They have put together a team that respects our facility, its residents, and each other. The Board of Directors led by Brenda Doyle actively works to ensure that we have all that we need to operate. I respect their dedication and am proud to be a valued part of this team.

"Our centre provides care for our community's most fragile, which is especially challenging during the pandemic. The demands on our team are extremely high right now. My responsibilities are vast and every task is important.

"I am so proud to watch how supportive and interactive our team is to everyone they work with. The staff shortages increase the responsibilities and pressure here; however, the support of the community of Tignish leverages our strength.

"I recently witnessed staff arrange to sleep at our facility when a blizzard threatened to blow through in order to ensure there would be enough people to care for our residents. I have never witnessed this same commitment elsewhere, as normally bad weather can be a general excuse for those that do not commit 100 percent to their employer."

### Further training

Jennifer is now enrolled in the online Holland College Human Resources Management program. "Ruby recommended that I take this course, and I am very grateful to her for researching and connecting me to the training.

"Our centre is in need of volunteers and staff. In order to acquire the best, we must lead by example. This training will help me support our teams by providing me with knowledge of PEI labour laws, health plans, counselling services, and current database development options.

"As well as marketing our employment requirements, I plan to continue to help to develop our administration system, employee benefits, arrange external company discounts, and training and team-building events.

"Our company is growing and our teams will be growing with it. As a newcomer to Tignish, I sympathize with the courage required to put yourself out there to establish yourself and succeed in a new arena. Tignish is a great place to relocate for a fresh healthy start and I am grateful to be here.

"I owe a lot of my recent career success to the kindness of the lady behind the desk at the Tignish Employment Resource Centre. Thank you, Ruby Arsenault! Your support is the very best."

For more information about the **Tignish Employment Resource Centre**, call **Ruby Arsenault** at **902-882-2498**.

Check Facebook.

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



# PEI BioAlliance working to recruit more people to the bioscience sector

by Heidi Riley

On PEI, over 2,200 people work in the bioscience industry, and there are 61 bioscience companies in operation on the Island.

The **PEI BioAlliance** advertises about 350 open positions each year. The breakdown of opportunities is:

- Research/scientific roles: 20%
- Quality Assurance/Quality control roles: 15%
- Engineering/production roles: 50%
- Business administration roles: 15%

*The Employment Journey* spoke with **Vivian Beer**, Manager, HR Strategy, and **Chelsey Rogerson**, Director of Communications and Marketing with the PEI BioAlliance to find out more about PEI's bioscience sector.

"We are consistently in outreach mode and maintain a current database of contacts and resumés of those interested in PEI bioscience careers," says Vivian. "Also, we collaborate with key contacts who have connections to broad groups of talent.

"We help to match talent to company needs by encouraging job seekers to send us their resumés and reach out to us for one-to-one meetings. Our online resumé library is shared with hiring managers."

## What types of jobs are in demand?

- Production Technicians
- Specialized scientific/researcher roles
- Quality Assurance/Control professionals
- Business admin roles e.g., accounting, HR, and marketing

## Creating local talent

"To meet the growing demand for talent, there is a critical need for more skills, training, and infrastructure," says Chelsey.

**The Canadian Alliance for Skills and Training in Life Sciences (CASTL)** partnered with the National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training (NIBRT) to provide world-class training.

CASTL works with select post-secondary partners throughout Atlantic Canada including UPEI and Holland College to support and develop programming related to bioscience.



Chelsey Rogerson, Director of Communications and Marketing. Submitted photo.



Vivian Beer, Manager, HR Strategy. Submitted photo.

CASTL also delivers a 12-week reskilling program in partnership with Holland College to develop talent that meets the large demand for production and processing technicians within the sector across PEI.

The program also includes an OJT component to give trainees real-work experience and offers employers an opportunity to recruit new employees who are work-ready. This program has been very successful in helping newcomers and women transition into a rewarding and exciting career in the PEI bioscience sector.

With the recent launch of the **CASTL Online Academy** powered by NIBRT, CASTL now has multiple applied learning streams and offers easy to access, interactive and cost-effective online learning options on all aspects of biopharmaceutical manufacturing.

Job seekers may send their resumés to [vivian@peibioalliance.com](mailto:vivian@peibioalliance.com). Resumés will be added to the online resumé library and shared with hiring managers.

For more information, visit [www.peibioalliance.com](http://www.peibioalliance.com). For the complete article, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



# Skincare company in Summerside is expanding and hiring

by Heidi Riley

**Sharon Quann**, owner of **Quannessence** in Summerside, creates and markets her own specialized holistic skincare line for retailers, professionals, and distributors.

Her journey to entrepreneurship started when she studied to become an Aesthetician and grew with her interest in the holistic pharmaceuticals field.

"Near the beginning of my aesthetics career on PEI, I had a lingering sense that there was something more for me in aesthetics," says Sharon. She attended a school in Germany where she learned about the importance of combining a nutritious diet with healthy skincare ingredients and products that utilize local and naturally sourced plant botanicals.

"It was under their tutelage that my dream began to materialize - creating and manufacturing a professional, holistic, and botanically based skincare line in idyllic Prince Edward Island."

After completing her studies, she returned to PEI, and over the next 20 years performed aesthetic treatments on thousands of satisfied clients. She went on to create holistic skincare creams and serums for her clients with the help of a contract formulator. Slowly, an entire professional and retail line was created, made up of 48 different products.

Sharon is grateful for the support she received from Innovation PEI, ACOA, CBDC, Central Development Corp., PEI BioAlliance, NRC, BioFoodTech, PEIBWA, and SkillsPEI.

Sharon also owns and operates QuannSpa in Summerside, which offers a full range of aesthetics services. QuannSpa employs five full-time employees. In addition, one full-time Registered Massage Therapist rents a room at the facility.

Meanwhile, the other side of the business, BioSpa (Quann) Cosmeceuticals Inc., which manufactures the skincare line, has seven full-time and two part-time employees who work in Research & Development, Logistics, Production, Accounting, Sales & Marketing, Education, and as Lab Technicians.

## Hiring needs

The company plans to hire an Executive Assistant/Office Manager as well as Lab Technicians. Jobs are advertised at [www.peibioalliance.com](http://www.peibioalliance.com)

"In the future, we plan to expand into the Ontario market and to begin exporting to the US by mid-2022. Our current facility is prepared to triple our growth."



Sharon Quann Submitted photo.

For more information about **Quannessence**, visit [www.quannessence.ca](http://www.quannessence.ca) or [www.quannspa.ca](http://www.quannspa.ca)

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



# PEI Community Navigators help newcomers and rural employers

by Stella Shepard

**PEI Community Navigators** assist newcomers from other countries and Canadian provinces by creating inclusive and welcoming communities and assisting with challenges newcomers face in rural communities.

"We work with all new residents in rural Western, Central, and Eastern PEI," says **Maxine Rennie**, Program Lead and Executive Director, CBDC West Prince Ventures Limited.

"We have a declining population and are experiencing a labour shortage. Community Navigators support employers planning to bring in newcomers or immigrant workers. Once they arrive, we can help newcomers get familiar with the communities they will be living in."

**The Atlantic Immigration Program (AIP)** is a pathway to permanent residency for skilled foreign workers and international graduates from a Canadian institution who want to work and live in one of Canada's four Atlantic provinces. The program helps employers hire qualified candidates for jobs they haven't been able to fill locally.

"PEI Community Navigators will be facilitating the Intercultural Competency Training that is now a requirement for the AIP employers," says **Scott Smith**, Western PEI Community Navigator. "Employers can reach out to us to deliver the training."

For more information, contact:

**Lindee Gallant**, Eastern PEI Community Navigator: **902-969-5989** – [Lindee.Gallant@cbdc.ca](mailto:Lindee.Gallant@cbdc.ca)

**Scott Smith**, Western PEI Community Navigator: **902-853-3636** – [Scott.Smith@cbdc.ca](mailto:Scott.Smith@cbdc.ca)

**Peggy Miles**, Central PEI Community Navigator: **902-598-7560** – [Peggy.Miles@cbdc.ca](mailto:Peggy.Miles@cbdc.ca)

**Maxine Rennie**, Program Lead, Executive Director of CBDC: **902-853-3636** - [Maxine.Rennie@cbdc.ca](mailto:Maxine.Rennie@cbdc.ca)

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

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



# The Way Forward: career opportunities of the future

by Stacy Dunn

What are the best career opportunities of the future?

Career consultant **Ann Nakaska** of **Constructive Career & Life Designs** in Alberta says the healthcare, agriculture, aerospace, and energy sectors will experience growth. "There will be new ways of working in these industries because computer and digital technology is changing the way we live," says Ann.

**Digital technology jobs of the future:** Information Security Analysts, Computer User Support Specialists, Systems Software Analysts, Computer Systems Analysts, Application Software Developers, Computer and Information Systems Managers, and other computer specialists.

**Healthcare jobs that focus on seniors:** Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Physiotherapists, Recreation Therapists, Recreation Workers, Massage Therapists, Resident Care Workers, and businesses that help seniors stay in their own homes.

**Aerospace and aviation jobs after the pandemic:** pilots, drone operators, aircraft mechanics, dispatchers, customer service personnel, and administrative staff.

**Agriculture:** jobs in food production, environment, food science, farm equipment sales and repair.

Ann says there will also be a need for sales and marketing people, human resources, and business development people in a wide variety of industries.

For more about **Constructive Career & Life Designs**, visit [www.constructivecareer.com](http://www.constructivecareer.com)

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



Scott Smith



Peggy Miles



Lindee Gallant



Maxine Rennie

Submitted photos.

# Podcasts spread the word about employment opportunities and resources

by Heidi Riley

The number and variety of podcasts has exploded in the past few years. You can find podcasts covering almost any topic, including current news, history, comedy, science, and psychology.

Some podcasts even share information about companies and their hiring needs. Listening to these podcasts is a great way to gain insights on what is happening in your local community and what companies could be hiring.

**Huddle Insights** is a podcast which explores business news in Atlantic Canada. A recent episode features an interview with Oliver Technow, CEO of BioVecatra. Oliver says the company is hiring 125 new staff members.

**Bizy in the Sticks** is a podcast about rural people and rural businesses on PEI. The hosts encourage listeners to shop local by promoting products and services offered by small businesses across rural PEI. Entrepreneurs also talk about how they started their business and the programs and financial help they received.

There is even an episode about making post-secondary decisions with input from a student and a recent graduate and Career Bridges participant. The podcast also promotes Chamber events and shares advice and news to members.

The podcast is a tool of the Rural PEI Labour Market Development partnership, which is a joint effort between the Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce and the West Prince Chamber of Commerce.

For a look at all the episodes, visit [www.ruralpeilabourmarket.com](http://www.ruralpeilabourmarket.com) and click **podcast**.



For the full article and a list of more employment related podcasts, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.

# Next Level Group celebrates 10 years in business

submitted by Andrew Lavoie, President, Next Level Group

**Next Level Group (NLG)** supports numerous job sectors, creating the best match possible between clients and candidates.

With plans to move away from traditional recruiting methods, we are shifting towards cutting-edge headhunting strategies that create tailor-made partnerships between the employer and employee.

We want to place people in environments where they will feel safe and happy, and where they will be proud to work.

I am incredibly proud of the entire decade's journey, having started out with my wife Erica, and now employing a team of 10.

One notable difference in PEI's current job market is the ever-increasing demand for temporary contracts as companies restructure and add temporary staff.

Jobs most in demand include general labourers, skilled trades, IT consultants, reception/office administration, transportation, technical, packaging, warehousing, and both entry-level and experienced managers.

The secret to success is change. This can be in remodeling, restructuring, learning new programs, reading business journals, and being open to new ideas. I am a firm believer in business coaching, and strongly encourage others to strategize with like-minded professionals.

Job seekers and employers looking for staff may contact **Andrew Lavoie, Next Level Group**, at **1-888-404-9990** ext. 501 or **902-940-2220** or email [AndrewL@nlgrp.com](mailto:AndrewL@nlgrp.com) Visit [www.nlgrp.com](http://www.nlgrp.com)

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



PODCAST



Andrew Lavoie, President of Next Level Group in Charlottetown.  
Submitted photo.

# 2022 employment opportunities across PEI in the aquaculture & fisheries industry

by Stella Shepard

PEI's aquaculture and fisheries industries offer job opportunities in many communities across PEI, and they are looking to hire people for a variety of roles.

Most seafood processing plant jobs start in April or May, but many aquaculture plants are open year-round. Apply as soon as possible!

The *Employment Journey on PEI* contacted several industry employers across the Island.



## The following employers are hiring and provided contact information:

### Acadian Supreme Inc.

8323 Route 11, Wellington  
Phone: **902-854-2675**  
Fax: **902-854-2140**  
Contact: Lynn Rayner, Operations Manager  
[info@acadiansupreme.com](mailto:info@acadiansupreme.com)  
[www.acadiansupreme.com](http://www.acadiansupreme.com)

### Atlantic Aqua Farms Ltd.

10 Borden Ave, Borden-Carleton  
Contact: Melanie Waite  
Phone: **902-437-2700**  
[www.atlanticaquafarms.com](http://www.atlanticaquafarms.com)

### Beach Point Processing Company

75 Wharf Lane, Beach Point, Murray Harbour  
Phone: **902-962-4340 / 902-962-2030**  
Fax: **902-962-3917**  
Contact: Debbie Buell, Payroll Clerk  
[debbie@beachpoint.ca](mailto:debbie@beachpoint.ca)  
[www.beachpointprocessing.com](http://www.beachpointprocessing.com)  
*\*A free bus service for employees runs daily from Charlottetown and Montague to Beach Point.*

### Belle River Enterprises Ltd.

12 Waterview Lane, Belle River  
Phone: **902-962-2248 / 902-659-2385**  
Fax: **902-962-4276**  
Contact: Dean Hancock, Manager  
[bre@pei.aibn.com](mailto:bre@pei.aibn.com)

### Captain Cooke's Seafood Inc.

Borden-Carleton  
Phone: **902-437-3620**  
Fax: **902-437-3621**  
Contact: Thane Cooke, Manager  
[captaincookes@gmail.com](mailto:captaincookes@gmail.com)

### Green Gables Seafood (L. & C. Fisheries Inc.)

96 Jollimore Drive, French River  
Contact: Calvin Jollimore, Owner  
Phone: **902-886-2770**  
[calvin@greengablesmussels.com](mailto:calvin@greengablesmussels.com)  
<https://canadasfoodisland.ca/export/company/l-c-fisheries-ltd>

### Howard's Cove Shellfish Ltd.

152 Frederick's Cove Road, Ellerslie  
Phone: **902-831-2158 / 902-831-2842**  
Fax: **902.831.2849**  
Contact: Randy Cooke, Manager  
[hcs@pei.aibn.com](mailto:hcs@pei.aibn.com)  
[www.howardscove.ca](http://www.howardscove.ca)

### Montague Bay Foods

a division of North Lake Fisheries (2013) Inc.  
150 Central Street, Montague  
Main: **902-838-3908**  
Fax: **902-838-5467**  
[hr@northlakefisheries.com](mailto:hr@northlakefisheries.com)  
[www.northlakefisheries.ca](http://www.northlakefisheries.ca)

### North Lake Fisheries (2013) Inc.

58 North Lake Harbour Rd., Elmira  
Main: **902-357-2572**  
Fax: **902-357-2386**  
[hr@northlakefisheries.com](mailto:hr@northlakefisheries.com)  
[www.northlakefisheries.ca](http://www.northlakefisheries.ca)

### PEI Mussel King

318 Red Head Road, Morell  
Phone: **902-961-3300**  
Fax: **902-961-3366**  
Contact: Kelly McGrath: [kelly@peimusselking.com](mailto:kelly@peimusselking.com)  
Contact: Esther Dockendorff: [esther@peimusselking.com](mailto:esther@peimusselking.com)  
[www.peimusselking.com](http://www.peimusselking.com)

### Prince Edward Aqua Farms Inc.

New London  
Phone: **902-886-2220**  
Fax: **902-886-2335**  
Contact: Heather Tuplin, Human Resources  
[htuplin@peaqua.com](mailto:htuplin@peaqua.com)  
[www.peaqua.com](http://www.peaqua.com)

### Raspberry Point Oyster Co.

Charlottetown, New London Bay, Hope River  
Phone: **902-963-3278 / 902-393-8308**  
Fax: **902-566-3407**  
Contact: James Power, Manager  
[james@raspberrypoint.com](mailto:james@raspberrypoint.com)  
[www.raspberrypoint.com](http://www.raspberrypoint.com)

### Royal Star Foods Ltd.

175 Jude's Point Road, Tignish  
Phone: **902-882-2050**  
Fax: **902-882-2846**  
Contact: Angela Gaudet, Human Resources Manager  
[jobs@royalstarfoods.com](mailto:jobs@royalstarfoods.com)  
[www.royalstarfoods.com](http://www.royalstarfoods.com)

### Seafood 2000 Ltd.

Georgetown  
Phone: **902-652-2316**  
Fax: **902-652-2023**  
Contact: Jeanne Dobbin, Production Supervisor  
[Jeanne.sf2000@pei.aibn.com](mailto:Jeanne.sf2000@pei.aibn.com) or  
[ieshia.sf2000@pei.aibn.com](mailto:ieshia.sf2000@pei.aibn.com)  
check Facebook

### Simpson Aqua Ventures Ltd.

Savage Harbour, PEI  
Contact: Jason Simpson, Owner  
Phone: **902-393-5750**  
[eatmussels@gmail.com](mailto:eatmussels@gmail.com)

### Summerside Seafood Supreme Inc.

105 Queen's Wharf, Summerside  
Contact: Kevin Robicheau, General Manager  
Phone: **902-436-9892**  
Fax: **902-436-2345**  
[krobicheau@sss supreme.ca](mailto:krobicheau@sss supreme.ca)

## Job titles in the Aquaculture industry

- Boat Crew/Worker/Helper/Mussel Socker
- Plant/Processing/Production Worker, including Graders, Strippers, Packers and Baggers
- Research and Development Scientists
- Machine/Heavy Equipment Operator
- Maintenance Worker/Manager
- Plant/Production Supervisor
- Aquaculture Workers
- Administrative Workers
- Quality Control
- Boat Captain/Operator
- Biologist

## Job titles in the Fisheries industry

- Operations Manager
- Accountant
- Parts Manager
- Port Manager
- Quality Control
- Production Line Worker
- Product Manager
- Boat Crew
- Production Manager
- Maintenance
- Port Captain
- Forklift Operator
- Night Sanitation Crew
- Plant Custodian
- Boat Captain

For more about the **Fisheries** and **Aquaculture** industry, visit:

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

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

For a list of open positions, visit the **PEI Aquaculture Alliance** at [www.aquaculturepei.com](http://www.aquaculturepei.com) and click **Employment**.

For a list of jobs in both **Fisheries** and **Aquaculture**, visit [www.workpei.ca/jobs/](http://www.workpei.ca/jobs/)



# Caring for parents leads to decision to become a Resident Care Worker

by Stacy Dunn

For **Don Cantelo** of Summerside, his parents' influence led him to a new career as a Resident Care Worker.

In 2015, Don's father Lloyd moved into long-term care. His mother Helen remained at home, and Don drove his mother to doctor's appointments, to get groceries, and to visit with his father. His mother's health issues with COPD and diabetes led to her death in 2017. Lloyd died in 2019.

"Before my mom passed, I was at the manor three or four days a week. I visited my dad seven days a week after that," says Don. "While visiting him, someone said I would make a great Resident Care Worker."

In late 2019, Don was laid off from his job as a welder. He went to Career Development Services of PEI to discuss his next career move.

"They suggested I sign up with **Career Bridges**, a 12-week program to work on my resumé and plan a new career.

"I spent four years visiting my father at the manor and saw what healthcare professionals do, so I wanted to explore that further by taking a Resident Care Worker program. Also, I like to socialize with people, so I thought it would be a good fit."

After doing a work placement, he enrolled at **Marguerite Connolly Training and Consulting**. Don got help from the PEI government's **Healthcare Priorities program**, which covers 70 percent of a student's costs in a Resident Care Worker or Licensed Practical Nursing program.

"The first semester focused on hands-on learning like patient transfer and hygiene. I did well on that part because I am a hands-on learner," he says.

"It was a bit of a struggle with tests and computer use, but my instructor and my classmates were a great help. I passed the final exam in November, and I was ecstatic.

"Here I thought at near age 60, I was too old to become an RCW. But now I see this is a way to give back to the healthcare team who was so helpful to my parents."

During Don's work placement, he was asked to write about how he would want to be treated as a resident in long term care. He wrote the following heartfelt poem, reproduced in part below:

## Remember, you may take my place one day

*If I find myself in a LTC,  
my prayer and hope is I will have a wonderful caregiver who will keep me safe,  
and care for me with dignity and respect.  
Love me as you would love your own mom and dad,  
hold my hand when I am sad.  
Listen to me when I am talking, hug me when I need a hug.  
Dress and feed me without rushing, sing me a song of hope and joy.  
Tell me stories and kiss me goodnight.  
This is the caregiver I would like to be.*

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

For more information on **Marguerite Connolly Training and Consulting**, call 902-566-9705 or email [info@rcwtraining.ca](mailto:info@rcwtraining.ca)

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



Don Cantelo. Submitted photo.

# Bursary winner tells her story of overcoming adversity to earn her GED

by Ethan Paquet

Each fall, the **PEI Literacy Alliance** awards bursaries to adult learners working toward their GED. These bursaries help to remove financial barriers for adults working to improve their education and their lives.

In November 2021, the Alliance partnered with Master Packaging, Holland College, SkillsPEI, Canadian Tire, Arsenault Properties, Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy, and Upstreet Brewing to raise money for bursaries and scholarships.

One of the winners is **Sheryl Sock**. As a child, Sheryl was in and out of foster care, and she switched between schooling on Lennox Island and off-reserve. Without stability in her life, she struggled in school.

"I grew up using my native language, and I could speak English and French, but reading in English was more challenging," says Sheryl. "I had to stop using my native language because nobody around me knew how to speak it."

She was determined to stick with school but was forced to drop out when she got pregnant at 17 and had no access to daycare. She eventually had four children and when they were old enough to start school, Sheryl began working at a fish plant, but she wanted more for herself.

In 2019, she entered a 20-week program called **Workplace Essential Skills (WES) Lennox Program** delivered by Workplace Learning PEI on Lennox Island in partnership with program sponsor Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI.

WES Lennox is funded by the Department of Economic Growth, Tourism & Culture through the Canada-PEI Labour Market Agreements.

WES helps people improve their essential skills such as literacy skills and helps them prepare to take their GED and other certification exams.

Sheryl wanted to earn her GED and start a career in bookkeeping or accounting. The WES program supported her learning style. She was able to work at her own pace and take the extra time she needed to learn.

Shortly after the program began, she lost her house in a fire and then came the sudden death of someone close to her. She left the program temporarily, but the staff reached out to help guide her back on track.

"They helped me to come back to the program and stay focused on the pre-tests for my GED, and they helped me apply for this bursary."

While COVID-19 restrictions have caused her to put her plans on hold for now, she is confident that once the WES program returns to in-person classes, she will complete her GED testing.



Sheryl Sock, (right) receives a bursary cheque from the PEI Literacy Alliance. Submitted photo.

"Through all the challenges, I have always tried to stay positive. I know I can do it. I just need to stay on top of everything and stay focused on my end goal."

For more about the **PEI Literacy Alliance Adult Learner Bursaries**, visit [www.peiliteracy.ca/adult-learner-awards](http://www.peiliteracy.ca/adult-learner-awards)

For more about the **Workplace Essential Skills** program in Charlottetown, Summerside, and Lennox Island, visit [www.workplacelearningpei.com](http://www.workplacelearningpei.com)

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

# What are post-secondary students saying about their educational journey?

by Gloria Welton

In 2021, more than 17,000 students from 190 different post-secondary institutions across Canada completed a survey by a company called **Brainstorm Strategy Group Inc.**, based in Toronto. The results of the survey were compiled into a report called **2021 Student Career Interests**.



## Some survey findings

- 40 percent of the students agreed their school transitioned well to teaching virtually during the pandemic. However, only 68 percent said they were very likely to graduate.
- Only 32 percent of students strongly agreed that they would enroll at their present school if they had a chance to do it over again.
- 70 percent of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they wanted to get work experience with an employer (example co-op, summer employment or internship) before being hired by them full-time.
- 66 percent agreed that there should be a required course on career planning and finding a job as part of curriculum at their school.
- Students said they were somewhat prepared to create a resumé and handle an interview, but didn't feel they had the right resources and tools to know how to explore and find the opportunities that are a fit for them.

For more about this report and many others, visit [www.brainstorm.ca](http://www.brainstorm.ca)  
For the full article, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



# Truck and Transport Mechanic Apprenticeship training now available on PEI

by Heidi Riley

A new apprenticeship program which trains Truck and Transport Mechanics is designed to support industry needs and strengthen the province's labour force.

The first cohort of students started in January 2022. Holland College is delivering the Block Release training, which includes practical training on specialized equipment for the Truck and Transport, Heavy Duty Equipment, and Agricultural Equipment industries. The program is based at the Queens Country Highway Depot and includes onsite visits to industry shops across PEI.

The program was developed in partnership with the provincial government, Holland College, PEI Trucking Sector Council, and PEI Agricultural Sector Council.

"The agriculture industry identified an increase in demand for skilled agricultural equipment technicians due to retirement and growing technology and training requirements," says **Greg Stavert**, chair of the PEI Agriculture Sector Council.

"With shipping demands ever-growing, so too is the need for highly skilled, certified mechanics to keep PEI's professional drivers rolling safely down the road," says **Brian Oulton**, Executive Director of the PEI Trucking Sector Council.

"By enabling apprentices to train on PEI, this partnership helps the industry resolve a pressing labour challenge."

Government is funding the cost of bringing this training to PEI and the tuition for all participants in the program.



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



# Understanding executive function and how to support staff in the workplace

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.



Sandy Slade. Submitted photo.

What are you going to have for supper tonight?

This simple question is actually very complex. Do you have the ingredients you need? Can you remember the recipe? Can you get it ready in time to eat before your child's hockey practice?

Executive function is the part of your brain that helps you make a plan, meet a deadline, prepare meals, get to appointments, manage money, and stay organized.

Everyone experiences issues with executive functioning during periods of high stress, anxiety, grief, or an extended period of sleeplessness. However, the issues are more severe for those living with neuro-developmental conditions such as ADHD, Autism, and Tourette's.

## Advice for employers

If your employee discloses that they have an executive function disorder, or if you suspect they do, the following accommodations can make things easier:

1. Provide clear bullet-point instructions in writing.
2. Work with them to set up reminders, a to-do list, or task management software.
3. Allow flextime to fulfill their required duties.

For questions and comments, email me at [contact@adhdpei.ca](mailto:contact@adhdpei.ca)  
For the full article, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



# Program helps job seekers start a career in healthcare

by Ethan Paquet



Submitted photo.

Last October, PEI Literacy Alliance launched a second cohort of the 10-week **Essential Employability Skills Health Sector** program to help prepare participants for work in long-term care homes and other healthcare settings.

Topics and skills covered included digital literacy and numeracy skills, CPR, WHMIS, Psychological First Aid, and Gentle Persuasive Approach Dementia Care.

Guest speakers presented on topics such as financial planning and debt management, accessing mental health services, resumé and cover letter writing, job searching, and programs and funding available to participants.

After six-week work placements, the successful participants now work in positions such as Geriatric Care Attendants, Resident Assistants, Activities Coordinators, Dietary Aides, and more.

Partner employers include The Mount Continuing Care Community, PEI Seniors Homes, and MacLeod Cares Group.

For more information about the **Essential Employability Skills Health Sector** program, visit [www.peiliteracy.ca/ees](http://www.peiliteracy.ca/ees)

To learn more about the **PEI Literacy Alliance** and the services they provide, call **902-368-3620** or visit [www.peiliteracy.ca](http://www.peiliteracy.ca)

Funded by the Government of Canada's Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program, in partnership with PEI Literacy Alliance, Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador Laubach Literacy Council.

For the full article with the stories of three program participants, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.



# Helping parents help their children with career planning

by Gloria Welton

Research tells us that parents or caregivers have the most influence over their children when it comes to career decisions.

However, there is a lot of pressure on parents to offer their child a broad range of perspectives.

**Michael Ford** and **Danielle Kershaw** of Simon Fraser University in British Columbia recently spoke at a national career development conference, saying that parents need help as they help their children with career planning.

“As career advisers, the youth who come to see us are often lost and confused,” says Danielle. “Many parents do not know how to help or where to go to for assistance to help their child, and it becomes very frustrating and anxiety ridden on both sides.”

“It is hard to keep up with trends such as the increased cost of living, gig work, access to opportunities, and a rapidly changing world of work where jobs are created and eliminated at a fast pace,” says Michael.

Danielle talked about a student who chose his degree based on what his parents wanted him to do. “He was struggling with the feeling he was on the wrong path. This student is an example of what a lot of young people face when their chosen career is not a fit for them.”

Career Development Professionals can help with exploring the labour market and educational streams. They can also help connect career planners to those who can help them find a good fit based on interests, preferences, values, and abilities.

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

## Community Outreach Centre update: present activities and future plans

by Stacy Dunn

**Community Outreach Centre (COC)** in Charlottetown is a refuge open throughout the day for Islanders struggling with homelessness, poverty, and many other issues that require compassion and support.

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

The Salvation Army has operated COC since it opened, but recently announced that they were not able to continue managing the centre.

The COC working group has been established to implement a plan to attract a new operator. Group members include Upper Room Hospitality Ministry, the John Howard Society of PEI, Adventure Group, Native Council of PEI, CMHA PEI, ResourceAbilities, PEERS Alliance, PEI Department of Social Development and Housing, Health PEI Mental Health and Addictions, Mi’kmaq Confederacy of PEI, Blooming House, Community Legal Information, and Charlottetown Police Services. The Government of PEI funds the centre.

Programs and services delivered at COC include employment supports, housing, cultural support, legal support, case management, and harm reduction.

For more information on **Community Outreach Centre**, call **902-367-3884** or visit their Facebook page.

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



Michael Ford, Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

Submitted photos.



Danielle Kershaw, Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

# 10 steps to landing a summer job on PEI

by Ethan Paquet

For many students, a summer job is a chance to prove you are responsible, to make your own money, and to meet new people.

It is also a chance to set the groundwork for career planning as you begin to network, pick up employability skills, build a resumé, and learn about what you want to do in the future. Here are some steps to help you on your journey.



1. Understand what you are sacrificing and what you are gaining from this experience. Your first job will help you earn extra money and gain work experience, but you won't have as much free time as before.
2. Get your documents in order, including obtaining a Social Insurance Number and a bank account.
3. Consider your skills, talents, abilities, and interests to determine where you can work that will allow you to find a good fit.
4. Use social media to your advantage. Research job search advice. Google yourself and make sure there is no record of offensive comments, inappropriate photos, or public conflicts. Create a new email address just for your career journey. Keep it simple - just your first and last name.
5. Prepare an effective resumé that will get noticed. It should clearly show how your education, abilities, and experience fit the open position.

For more details and a list of five more steps to landing your first job, visit [www.employmentjourney.com](http://www.employmentjourney.com) and search the article title.

## A new approach to finding your place in the world of work

by Gloria Welton

**JP Michel**, founder of **SparkPath** in Toronto, recently made a virtual presentation at a national conference for Career Development Professionals. His message was to change the way young people are helped to prepare for their career by altering the conversation from what they want to be to asking what problems they want to solve.

JP says that career tools are based on identifying interests and preferences. This can limit student options because they may have a limited exposure to the world of work.

He went on to explain how traditional career exploration systems recommend a list of job titles or categories to explore. “Focusing only on job titles limits people’s ability to explore career options. This method is too narrow and continues to limit people from reaching their full potential.”

Research indicates that almost half of young people pick their dream job from a small list of the most popular, traditional occupations, like teachers, lawyers, or business managers. Too many teenagers are ignoring or are unaware of new types of jobs that are emerging.

“Start career decision-making by identifying challenges, then help students explore the companies working on these challenges, what jobs they offer, and what they have to learn to be qualified to work in that field. This helps students understand the critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving and technical skills sets needed for their future.”

For more about a new approach to career discovery, visit [www.mysparkpath.com](http://www.mysparkpath.com)

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



JP Michel, founder of SparkPath.  
Submitted photo.

# A prosthesis manufacturing company founded by a breast cancer survivor

by Stella Shepard

**S**imonne Cormier of Valleyfield became an entrepreneur out of a need and a passion to make a difference for breast cancer survivors.

Her entrepreneurial journey began after she was diagnosed and treated for breast cancer in 2016. After her lumpectomy surgery, she did not feel comfortable with a chemical-based prosthesis, which she considered unhealthy and unhelpful to the healing process.

"My doctor advised that if I choose to buy a breast prosthesis, I should look for one made with natural fibres," says Simonne.

"I searched many specialty stores for two years without success. So, I decided to open a business manufacturing prostheses made from all-natural materials. It was not in the plan to become an entrepreneur, but I want women to experience freedom from toxic materials when using a breast prosthesis."

In 2019, Simonne launched **Au Naturel Solutions Inc.**, which recently moved to the LaunchPad in the Montague Business Development Center.

LaunchPad is a non-profit incubator that supports the growth of new technology companies on PEI.

"Au Naturel Solutions Inc. is the first company to introduce a patented, innovative, all-natural handcrafted breast prosthesis to the marketplace, filling a need for those who are looking for a natural alternative," says Simonne.

"I chose bamboo/cotton material for the outer shell with a layer of felting and fill made from alpaca fleece. I am working with a designer, a mill, and a manufacturer, all in Atlantic Canada."

The company plans to have material produced and ready for manufacturing by April 2022, Canada-wide, with the goal of eventually becoming an international supplier.

## Ignition Fund

In 2019, Simonne was one of the winners of Innovation PEI's Ignition Fund and received a grant of \$25,000 which she invested in start-up costs.

"I was able to patent the product, incorporate the company, research Canadian-sourced natural materials, and develop prototypes for testing that were shipped to 100 women who are new or experienced prosthetic users."

## Hiring needs

Production will begin at the Launchpad location until a larger facility is necessary. Plans are to hire Inclusion East clients to do final assembly and packaging. Simonne will also be hiring a Manager in a shipping, receiving and supervisory role.

"Hiring depends on need but I will be starting with two or three full-time positions. Over time, other positions will need to be filled."

## Advice for entrepreneurs

"My business was born out of a health journey and a need for a product not available to breast cancer survivors," says Simonne.

"I retired in 2020 after working for the federal government for 33 years. It was scary and challenging stepping out of my comfort zone.

"When starting a business, the main thing is to know what you want to achieve. Do your market research and an evaluation of your product to see if it is viable and how different it is from what's already out there."



Simonne Cormier of Valleyfield launched Au Naturel Solutions Inc., a company that manufactures prostheses for breast cancer survivors. Submitted photo.

For more information about **Au Naturel Solutions Inc.**, contact **Simonne Cormier** at [info@anaturesolutions.com](mailto:info@anaturesolutions.com)

Visit [www.aunaturesolutions.com](http://www.aunaturesolutions.com)



# A home-based food business launched during COVID is soaring with success

by Stella Shepard

**I**n 2021, **Jeffrey Haight** and **Marco Leboeuf** launched **The Boys Comfort Cuisine Inc.**, a home-based business in Vernon Bridge.

The business opened to fill a niche in the market, because of a demand for home-cooked meals during COVID-19.

Jeffrey worked in the food and beverage industry for 37 years and is a Red Seal Chef. Marco was previously employed in the healthcare field. They moved from Montreal to PEI in 2010.

"We wanted a simpler, quieter life than living and working in Montreal," says Jeffrey, formerly of PEI.

Due to a recent hearing loss, Jeffrey could no longer tolerate employment in a noisy environment. He had to find a quiet space to work. "The quiet space was our garage," Jeffrey says. "Marco and I flipped it into a certified kitchen."

Marco, born and raised in northern Quebec, recently exited the healthcare field to become an entrepreneur.

"When COVID-19 hit, I heard about restaurants in Montreal that were closing, which was heartbreaking," says Jeffrey. "I wondered how the food industry would have to change."

"People who want to eat out might not be comfortable going to a restaurant. So, Marco and I decided to prepare restaurant-quality food with high-end ingredients for a reasonable price."

"Some families buy our home-cooked meals for an entire week. Others order 30 or 40 meals for their loved ones to put in the freezer. And people from Calgary are buying meals for their Island families. A diverse clientele is growing mostly through word-of-mouth."



Jeffrey Haight (left) and Marco Leboeuf (right) own and operate The Boys Comfort Cuisine Inc. located at 88 Earncliffe Road, Vernon Bridge. Submitted photo.

"We keep the prices low because we buy directly from local producers rather than from larger chain stores."

## Community support

Through friends, Jeffrey and Marco heard about **Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC)** located at the **Rural Action Centre** on Main Street in Montague.

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.

They met with **Martina MacDonald**, Executive Director of CBDC East, and **Helen Antle**, Business Development Officer. They were eligible for a loan to assist with starting their business.

"CBDC East was very helpful with providing business-related information and made suggestions to improve our business plan," says Marco. "We also enrolled in business courses offered through CBDC East, which were helpful."

## Advice

Jeffrey and Marco offer the following advice for anyone considering starting a business, based on their own entrepreneurial journey.

- Educate yourself through researching, asking questions and networking.
- Family support is important to be successfully self-employed.
- Hire an accountant who can provide information about grants and rebates that are available.
- Give back to the communities that support you.
- Support local by buying locally.
- Have a good business plan.

"We take customer service seriously, which is very important in the food service industry," says Jeffrey. "We treat our clients like friends."

For more information about **The Boys Comfort Cuisine Ltd.**, visit <https://theboyspei.ca/> and [www.facebook.com/theboyspei](https://www.facebook.com/theboyspei) Email [theboyspei@gmail.com](mailto:theboyspei@gmail.com)

For more information about **Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC)** call 902-838-4030.

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



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