

The Employment Journey

News You Can Use

On Prince Edward Island



New skills development centre is being built with PEI's labour force needs in mind

by Gloria Welton

Tremploy Inc. is a skills development centre that has operated out of their existing building in Charlottetown for over 50 years.

Construction of a new building has begun at the BioCommons Research Park in Charlottetown and will be completed in the summer of 2023.

The new modern and energy efficient 24,000 square-foot facility is needed to meet the increased demand of clients needing services. The new centre will also allow for more space as staff continue to prepare clients to work on substantial contracts and to support and direct clients to work with employers and organizations in the community.

"The new Tremploy Skills Development Centre will allow clients to reach their full potential while making our organization more inclusive, productive, and accessible," says **Joel Dennis**, Executive Director.

Tremploy supports the employment goals of adult clients with intellectual disabilities. Day programming, one-to-one support and employment assistance services are provided to approximately 125 clients each year in the Charlottetown area.

Recently, Tremploy launched an international work skills development program called Project SEARCH at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to assist youth with intellectual disabilities in their transition from high school to the labour force.

Tremploy also works closely with Island businesses through social enterprise programs such as wood production projects and services and packaging assembly contracts.

Through the Career Bridges program, Tremploy offers career planning services across the Island for about 150 individuals a year who need support to transition or re-integrate into the PEI workforce or open their own business.

Tremploy is thankful for the generous support from the federal and provincial governments, foundations, businesses, and individuals on PEI. The registered charity has secured \$8.5 million towards the cost of the new \$9.5 million facility.

A capital campaign is working to raise at least \$1 million, with all donations going towards the construction and fit-up of the new facility.

"This is Tremploy's first fundraising effort in over 50 years and we are hopeful the community will support us in reaching our goal of at least \$1 million," says **Teresa Hennebery**, Chairperson of the volunteer capital campaign committee.

There are 40 staff, including Human Services Workers and Job Coaches. There is currently an opening for a **Human Services Worker**. The work is contract, full-time, and runs Monday to Friday. Wages start at \$20.70 per hour, and group benefits are available after completing a probationary period.

Qualifications: Human Services Diploma or equivalent education/experience.

To apply for employment with **Tremploy**, visit www.tremploy.com/careers

For more information about Tremploy's capital campaign, call **902-892-5338** or email jdennis@tremploy.com

Visit www.tremploy.com/donate

Employers and organizations who want to discuss contracts that can be done at the new location can contact **Bruce Cluney**, Business Development Manager, at **902-892-5338** ext. 3 or email bcluney@tremploy.com

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



From left, Bruce Cluney, Business Development Officer, and Joel Dennis, Executive Director, Tremploy. Submitted photo.



Tremploy's new facility will have a modern woodworking space, a state-of-the-art commercial kitchen area, an operational mailroom, and a product assembly area. "There will be ample room for clients to move around with ease and have lots of workspace to accommodate standards of operation as they work towards their skills development goals," says Joel Dennis. Submitted photo.

Consider a career as a Child Protection Social Worker or Youth Care Worker

by Ethan Paquet



The Department of Social Development and Housing Child Protection Team provides families with support with parenting, budgeting, life skills, family preservation, and reunification.

"We are always looking for Child Protection and Youth Care staff, and there are opportunities all across PEI," says **Jill Beagan**, Child Protection Social Worker.

Child Protection staff work in a variety of settings, including the intake of child protection reports, investigating allegations of child abuse or neglect, long-term planning with families to mitigate potential concerns, and helping foster parents navigate challenges.

Minimum qualifications for this role include a Bachelor of Social Work degree with some experience in Social Work. Prior experience in Child Protection is preferred.

The work is Monday to Friday, and there is sometimes evening and weekend work as well. The starting wage is \$32.31/hour.

Child and Youth Care Workers provide residential services, outreach, day-to-day supervision and intensive support and direction to children ages 6 to 12 and youth ages 13 to 17 who are in care.

"Our immediate opportunities are for casual Youth Care Workers at one of the seven residential group homes across PEI," says **Ray McAdam-Young**, Program Supervisor, Residential Services.

The minimum qualification for Child and Youth Care Workers is the completion of a Child and Youth Care Worker program, or a degree in Social Sciences including Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, or Family Studies. Individuals with a diploma in Early Childhood Education or a Human Services program may also be considered.

"On PEI, positions start at about \$26 to \$31/hour. Once you have worked with us for a year, a training development fund of \$2,500 is available," Ray says.

To gain experience, they offer work placements for post-secondary students. "Depending on the program you are enrolled in, once you have done a work placement, we might hire you in the role of a Social Work graduate until you receive your Social Work registration.

"It's an incredible life-changing career that has a significant impact on youth and families across PEI. I encourage anybody with an interest in this field to give it a shot and reach out for more information."

To apply to government jobs, visit www.gov.pe.ca/jobspei

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

Being an entrepreneur was not a foreseen career plan but it was a perfect fit

by Gloria Welton

Recently UPEI held a Career Day with the Faculty of Business. One speaker was **Wendy MacIntyre**, owner of **resolveHR** in Stratford PEI. She has over 20 years of experience in Human Resources and loves her work.

She started her post-secondary education at UPEI and then transferred to Saint Mary's University to take a Criminology Certificate with her Bachelor's degree. In 2001, she returned to PEI to earn an HR Management Certificate.

Wendy has worked with a variety of small to medium-sized enterprises, not-for-profits, and start-ups across the Island and a few off-Island, as well as with Health PEI for a short term.

Wendy is a certified Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR). In 2015, she started her own business, **resolveHR**.

She is experienced in conflict management, workplace investigations, training and development, workshop facilitation, policy development, governance dynamics and solving 'people puzzles.' She also helps clients find and keep the right talent.

"I am in a perfect role, but there are some difficult aspects, such as dealing with conflict within companies, implementing new ideas, and letting people go.

"I love my independence, but owning a business involves lots of administrative duties such as bookkeeping, documentation, and information technology, so it can be complicated."

"All experiences will help you build skills and insight as you journey towards owning your own business. Cut your teeth on as many experiences as you can before making that leap."

For more information about **resolveHR**, visit www.resolvehr.ca

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



Wendy MacIntyre, resolveHR.
Submitted photo

A career plan detour after learning about the Human Resources profession

by Gloria Welton

Another speaker at the UPEI Career Day with the Faculty of Business was **Tanya Rowell**, CEO of PEI's Public Service Commission.

Tanya graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Diploma in Public Administration from UPEI. She also holds a Certificate in Human Resource Management and a Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) designation.

"In my fourth year in the business program at UPEI I had my plans all mapped out to become a Chartered Financial Planner, and I was working in a bank," says Tanya.

"While in university, I applied for a number of jobs to practice my interview skills. One job opportunity was with JD Irving Limited in Saint John, New Brunswick.

"The senior executive of human resources and the president of the company suggested that I was cut out for a job in HR.

"I was told the job entailed helping employees have the right skillset for their jobs and ensuring that the employer has the right people in the right place at the right time.

"After careful consideration, I took a chance, changed my plan, and after I graduated, I moved to Saint John to start my career in HR.

"Then I moved to PEI to grow HR with an affiliate Irving company. In 2001, an opportunity with the province of PEI presented itself and I have stayed with the government ever since."

Tanya has held senior roles within human resources in the departments of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Environment, Tourism, Health and Social Services, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and the Public Service Commission.

"We are in an interesting time. Working for government has really changed over the years and it is a great time to come into a government job and be part of the change.

"It is a job seeker's market, and there are many opportunities, especially with our provincial public sector."

For more about **Tanya Rowell**, visit www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/employee/rowell-tanya Check out provincial government opportunities at www.gov.pe.ca/jobspei

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



Tanya Rowell, CEO of PEI's Public Service Commission. Submitted photo

Discover the wide range of career paths available at Parks Canada

submitted by Nancy Clement, Partnering, Engagement and Communications Officer, PEI Field Unit, Parks Canada.

This is the first in a series of interviews with “Parkies” (Parks Canada employees) working on PEI.

Meet Donna Barnes, Heritage Presenter, Parks Canada

I was a Veterinary Technician for 39 years. Twenty-eight of those years were spent at the Atlantic Veterinary College. My passion has always been animals.

When I retired from the Veterinary College, I still felt that I had something to offer. I thought I would enjoy being a Heritage Presenter because of my communication coaching background and that the Parks Canada mandate ties into saving ecosystems and species at risk.

I applied to Parks Canada in 2015 and did not get in that year, but I persevered and applied again in 2016 with the help of Career Development Services and was successful.

I made a huge career change and I have loved every minute of it. I never thought I could be as passionate about this job as I was about veterinary medicine.

To search for current job openings with **Parks Canada**, visit parks.canada.ca/agence-agency/emplois-jobs

The application form for student summer positions is available at parks.canada.ca/pei-jobs

Send completed application to rhipe-peih@pc.gc.ca or drop it off in person at Ardgowan National Historic Site, 2 Palmers Lane, Charlottetown, PE, C1A 5V8. **Deadline to apply is Friday, February 10.**



Donna Barnes, center, Heritage Presenter, Parks Canada. Submitted photo

For more information, contact **Human Resources, Parks Canada PEI**, at rhipe-peih@pc.gc.ca

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

PERCÉ program helps bilingual students kickstart their career on PEI

by Ethan Paquet

RDÉE PEI Inc. offers programs and services related to community economic development, employability, and entrepreneurship to PEI's Francophone communities.

Since 2003, its **PERCÉ** internship program has helped hundreds of post-secondary students from all over the Island find summer employment in their field of study.

“Our goal is to keep Islanders living and working on PEI in jobs they are passionate about,” says **Julie Gallant**, Economic Development Officer, Youth Sector.

The program includes five days of training for all participants, including workshops on employability skills to better prepare students for the workplace.

As students prepare for a 12-week work placement, they develop a list of places they would like to work.

“PERCÉ is beneficial to both students and the employers who hire them,” says **Alecia Arsenault**, Program Coordinator.

By hiring a PERCÉ student, employers receive a wage subsidy of \$7 per hour for a maximum of 450 hours.

In 2023, the program will accept 35 students. The application deadline for students is **March 31, 2023.**

For more information and to apply, visit www.percepe.ca. To learn more about other programs and services offered by **RDÉE PEI Inc.**, visit www.rdeeipe.net

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



Alecia Arsenault, PERCÉ Program Coordinator, and Christian Lacroix, RDÉE PEI president. Submitted photo.

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RCMP & Armed Forces Recruiting

RCMP & Armed Forces Recruiting officers will be going across PEI to the different Career Development Services (CDS) offices as follows:

MARCH 13		MARCH 14	
Montague CDS	9:30 – 11:00	Charlottetown CDS	9:00 – 10:30
Souris CDS	1:00 – 2:30	Summerside CDS	1:00 – 2:30
MARCH 15		MARCH 16	
O'Leary CDS	10:00 – 11:00	Summerside CDS	9:30 – 11:00
	1:00 – 2:00	Charlottetown CDS	1:30 – 3:00

Police and Public Service Career Fair

On **April 22, 1:00 – 3:00** there is a large Police and Public Service Career Fair at Stratford Town Hall.

For more information about all the above events or to book a presentation, contact **Constable Ellen Peters** at LDIV_Recruiting@rcmp-grc.gc.ca or call **902-368-0232**.

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Pro-Active Recruiter for PEI RCMP



Trucking repair, supplies, and sales company has hiring needs for trades people

by Stella Shepard

East Coast International Trucks provides repairs and maintenance for all makes and models of trucks and trailers. There are branches on PEI and in Moncton, Dartmouth, and Truro.

With 11 staff at the PEI branch, including three apprentices, they are looking for both Red Seal and apprentice technicians. "I am also taking applications for a parts person," says **Patty Walfield**, Parts Manager.

"Both Red Seal technicians and experienced parts people are challenging positions to fill. When we hire, job experience is always an asset, but training is provided."

"In addition to our full-time PEI staff, we have support from our other branches for service, new truck sales, trailer sales, and trailer parts."

For more information about **East Coast International Trucks Inc.** visit www.ecitrucks.com and click **Careers**.

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



The PEI team at East Coast International Trucks from left back row: Brent, Laura, Ron, Jeff, Stuart, and Mike. Front row: Ross, Jason, Robin, and Patty. Submitted photo

Job titles

- Shop Foreman
- Service Writer
- Outside Salesperson
- Salesperson
- Technicians
- Parts Person
- Shipper/Receiver
- Manager

How can people apply?

"Interested candidates can drop a resumé off at the shop, email directly to me at patty.walfield@ecitrucks.com or use our website."

Many opportunities in the Trucking sector on PEI

submitted by the PEI Trucking Sector Council

"On PEI, about 4,000 employees work in the trucking industry, and about 2,000 are Truck Drivers," says **Brian Oulton**, Executive Director, **PEI Trucking Sector Council**.

"We have a population in our industry who are reaching the age of retirement, and we have companies that want to expand and grow. There is certainly so much opportunity.

"The most challenging positions to fill are Truck Drivers and Mechanics, although finding skilled people for any role is getting tough these days," says Brian.

"We forward resumé regularly to industry employers, and we can help applicants ensure their resumé and accompanying documentation are strong. We also work with applicants to help them find opportunities they might not be aware of."

"New US Long Haul Truck Drivers start at about \$60,000 to \$80,000 per year. If they are willing to drive longer distances, they could earn up to \$100,000.

"More women are moving into the trucking industry," says Brian. "The number of women in trucking on PEI is currently around 13 percent of the workforce."

In early 2023, the PEI Trucking Sector Council will be offering a new Class 1A Driver training program called **Find Your Drive**.

From March 6 to April 21, 2023, and again from May 1 to June 30, 2023, Holland College is delivering Truck and Transport Mechanic/Ag Equipment Technician/Heavy Duty Equipment Technician Apprenticeship in-school training.

For more information, call the **PEI Trucking Sector Council** at 902-566-5563.

Visit www.peitsc.ca

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



Longstanding IT company hiring needs are ongoing

by Heidi Riley

The **Maximus Canada - DeltaWare Division** provides eHealth solutions through their Medigent® suite of products. The company specializes in IT solutions for the healthcare sector, such as program administration, claims processing, and drug management and systems. The ERP Solutions team provides Oracle solutions for public and private sector organizations.

DeltaWare has been in operation since 1992, and is part of Maximus, a global company with approximately 1,350 employees in Canada. On PEI, the company employs over 150 professionals with various backgrounds and specializations.

This past summer, the company opened a new office in Summerside. New hires can work from either the Charlottetown or Summerside office location.

Roles the company is currently hiring for on PEI

- Account Manager
- Software Developer
- Database Administrator
- Business Analyst

"The most challenging roles to hire for are the more senior roles, such as Senior Software Developer or Senior Business Analyst. These roles tend to be the most highly sought after across our industry.

"We provide co-op opportunities for students from local educational institutions including UPEI and Holland College, and we have hired many new graduates from these programs."

Open positions are advertised through the company website, LinkedIn, and Career Beacon. To apply, email hr@maximuscanada.ca

For more information, visit www.maximuscanada.ca/job-postings-charlottetown

For the complete article, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search the article name.



Susan Frizzell, Director, HR & Corporate Administration, DeltaWare Maximus.

Submitted photo

Starting a career in Human Resources led to many solid options

by Gloria Welton

Recently UPEI held a Career Day with the Faculty of Business. One speaker was **John David Hammer**, Director of Human Resources with **Amalgamated Dairies Limited (ADL)** in Summerside.

He is a Saint Mary's University graduate with a Bachelor of Commerce degree and currently is board chair of the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources PEI.

His 15-year Human Resource career began at Health PEI, where his many roles included HR Coordinator, HR Manager, and finally Labour Relations Coordinator. He now works with ADL, providing HR direction and guidance to over 350 employees across six production sites.

ADL is a producer-owned, independent co-operative that operates dairy processing and retail food distribution facilities throughout PEI. ADL produces dairy products for markets across Canada, the US, Asia, and the Caribbean.

"To be in this field, it is important to be able to help folks who need to be directed through the process of change and conflict, which is constant in any work setting. You also need to be empathetic and willing to listen. This career is not for everyone.

"If HR is your career path it is important to prepare yourself educationally and be open to being mentored by others in this field."



John David Hammer, Director of Human Resources, ADL. Submitted photo

For more information about **ADL**, visit www.adl.ca/careers

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



Navigating a career path: you have to network to get work

by Gloria Welton

Another speaker at the UPEI Career Day with the Faculty of Business was **Christopher Gillis**, Deputy Minister, Priorities & Intergovernmental Affairs with the province of PEI.

"All throughout my career my motto was: you have to network to get work."

He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from UPEI and a Master of Public Administration from Queen's University. He is a Certified Professional in Human Resources through CPHR PEI and a Project Management Professional as well as a PMI certified leader in organizational transformation.

Christopher says graduates are launched into a labour pool of people with similar education levels, so having work experience gives you a competitive edge.

"Co-op programs are an incredible opportunity to get professional work experience and to build your network."

Prior to his current role, Christopher was the Executive Director of the Canadian Alliance for Skills & Training in Life Sciences (CASTL). He was also a sessional professor at UPEI and taught at Holland College.

After graduating with a Master of Public Administration he started his career with the Department of Veterans Affairs. "I had an interest in leadership and management. Becoming a certified HR professional allowed me to move into the private sector for several years.

"I started to think about going back to work with the government. That dream came true almost two years ago when I was appointed Deputy Minister.

"In government, the ability to work in teams and the ability to manage change and general interpersonal skills around being cooperative and collaborative are important. Effective communication skills, trust and being responsive are skills that are needed.

"There are emerging talent needs and opportunities on PEI. With all the issues and challenges we are facing, it is a fascinating time to be with the provincial government."



Christopher Gillis, Deputy Minister, Priorities & Intergovernmental Affairs with the province of PEI. Submitted photo

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



Starting a business while still in university has great advantages

by Gloria Welton

Another speaker at the UPEI Career Day with the Faculty of Business was **Michael Thompson**, who co-founded a media production company called **Odyssey Virtual** while in his second year at UPEI.

In his final year of university, Michael purchased the remaining 50 percent of the business, becoming the sole owner.

He graduated in May 2020 with a Bachelor of Business Administration specializing in Marketing. Within just two years Michael grew his company to become PEI's top drone company and top real estate marketing company.

"The concept for Odyssey Virtual began while volunteering with a UPEI engineering team. The team built and raced an off-road vehicle in an international competition.

"As part of the engineering competition, we used virtual reality and drone videos to show the vehicle's safety features. The sites and perspectives captured inspired the idea to create a business using this technology for the real estate market, private sector, and government entities.

"At the time, these combined services were not offered on PEI. We ordered a drone and a couple of VR cameras, and I went on YouTube to learn everything I could about Photoshop and video editing. I was a full-time student and a full-time entrepreneur for three years. By graduation, I had built a full-time business for myself which I continue to run years later."

"There is never a better time to start a business than when you are a student. Students who have a business idea have access to seasoned experts every day. I went to professors after class and told them about my business and asked for advice. They were eager to help.

"Never in your life will you have access to so much expertise, consulting, and mentorship. Business students have a great opportunity in their years at post-secondary to start a business, take the business off the ground, and create networks before they graduate."

For more information about **Odyssey Virtual**, visit www.odysseyvirtual.ca

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



Michael Thompson, Odyssey Virtual. Submitted photo

Being in business is like running a marathon

by Gloria Welton

Another speaker at the UPEI Career Day with the Faculty of Business was **Heather MacAulay**, Co-founder and Chief Movement Officer of **Volume 18**, a strategic communications firm. She is also the Co-Owner of **Sterns Launderers and Drycleaners**.

Heather believes the foundation of any business starts with honesty, positive relationships, and a whole lot of passion. "Being in business is like running a race. It is a marathon, not a sprint. Keep a steady pace and you will make it through."

She always wanted to get into business from a very young age when she started selling potatoes on the side of the road. "My family instilled good work ethics in me."

She earned a BA in Psychology from St. Francis Xavier University and a Master of Business Administration from UPEI. While studying, she also worked in radio. "I loved all my jobs, but I always knew that I was going to be an entrepreneur.

"At Volume 18, we aim to help our clients meet their business goals, and work to develop impactful campaigns, provide strategic direction, and facilitate meaningful conversations. We set them up for success, all while enjoying the process along the way.

"What I love about our small Island is that there is great support, and people want to work together. I never see anyone in my industry as competitors. We need to work as allies.

"The biggest lesson I have learned is to adapt to change, especially in technology. We need to be able to look at how we communicate and how trends affect business and relationships."

Heather says she surrounds herself with people who help her to adapt and appreciates how important it is to have an open mind and to communicate clearly and effectively. "In the communications and marketing world, we must always be open to growing and learning."

For more information about **Volume 18**, visit www.volume18.ca

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



PEI Literacy Alliance scholarship winners make career dreams come true

by Ethan Paquet

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

In November 2022, the Alliance partnered with Master Packaging, Holland College, Tops to Floors, Murphy's Pharmacies, Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy, Canadian Tire, and Upstreet Craft Brewing to raise money for bursaries and scholarships and to support their free literacy programs on PEI.

Lydia Cudmore won the Master Packaging Scholarship Award, which awards \$1,500 to students enrolled in the Alliance's Essential Employability Skills program who are entering a full-time post-secondary program.

"I always wanted to be a nurse, but I struggled with anxiety and depression," says Lydia. After two concussions in Grade 10, she experienced migraines and vision issues, which were detrimental to her grades, attendance, and mental health.

"I put in a lot of hard work, and I graduated with an overall average of 85 percent, but it still wasn't good enough for a future in nursing."

Lydia began taking the Environmental Applied Science Technology program at Holland College. "Right away I knew it wasn't the right fit."



Scholarship Award Winner, Lydia Cudmore. Submitted photos

She dropped out of the program and applied for the 10-week **Essential Employability Skills Health Sector** program, offered by the PEI Literacy Alliance, which helps prepare participants for work in long-term care homes and other healthcare settings.

"This program inspired me to enroll in Adult Education to upgrade my high school marks and I was accepted into the Practical Nursing program at Holland College," Lydia says.

During her second semester, she was accepted into the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at UPEI. "I look forward to my future as a Registered Nurse."



Learner Achievement Award Winner, Matt Perry.

Matt Perry received the 2022 Learner Achievement Award from the PEI Literacy Alliance. "I wouldn't be where I am today without the Essential Employability Skills Health Sector program," he says.

Having dropped out of high school at the age of 15, Matt later regretted not completing his education.

At the age of 29, he completed his GED and upgraded his academic credits. He began a full-time post-secondary program, but an illness forced him to put his education goals on hold.

By 2019, he eased back into school part-time by taking Open Academic Studies at Holland College.

"I always wanted a career in healthcare, but with no experience or education in the field, I wasn't sure how to get started." He decided to apply for the Essential Employability Skills program. He went on to take the Resident Care Worker program with Marguerite Connolly Training & Consulting.

Matt now works as a Resident/Patient Care Worker with Health PEI. He has a permanent position with the Mental Health and Addictions division.

To learn more about the **PEI Literacy Alliance Essential Employability Skills** program, visit www.peiliteracy.ca/ees

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

J & D Custom Butchery: Using skills gained from work experience to become a business owner

by Stella Shepard

Johnny Blaisdell worked at a butchery and meat market for 25 years before purchasing the business and renaming it **J & D Custom Butchery**, located at Pooles Corner, near Montague.

The business, which is co-owned with his wife and business partner **Debbie Keefe**, launched in July 2019.

"There is a huge demand for custom butchering," says Johnny. "Business is as busy as ever since opening and it's going strong."

Johnny transitioned from employee to employer with the assistance of the **Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC)** 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.

Johnny and Debbie were eligible for a loan through CBDC East and enrolled in business courses, which were helpful in making the transition to becoming owners.

"There are seven staff members, including myself and Debbie. I could use six to eight more employees, but I'm not hiring because I can't find the trained staff I need.

"Custom butchering is a physically demanding trade and there is no training available at the post-secondary level on PEI, which makes it more challenging to hire trained staff."

For more information about **J & D Custom Butchery**, call **902-838-3498**.

For more information about **CBDC**, call **902-838-4030**.

Visit www.cbdc.ca

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



Debbie Keefe and Johnny Blaisdell own and operate J & D Custom Butchery.

Healthy Berries Ltd. walks out of the Dragons' Den with hope for a deal

by Stella Shepard

Tom Margeson, President and CEO of **Healthy Berries Ltd.** pitched his high-quality puréed berry products on the popular CBC TV show, **Dragons' Den** and ended up with a potential deal and much more.

"After the show aired, our online sales doubled, we received product inquiries from every province, and our instore sales improved," says Tom. "No deal has been signed yet, but we got our brand on national TV."

"We make a fantastic product, with a great team in Montague," says Tom. The products are available across Canada and in nine other countries.

"Depending on production schedules, we have between nine and 15 full-time and part-time staff. We need a minimum of four more Production Workers, and 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."

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

Community support

Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC) in Montague 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.

"CBDC was 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.

Visit www.cbdc.ca or call **902-838-4030**.

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

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

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

Creative workers on PEI take stock of their mental well-being

by Stacy Dunn

Creative PEI recently hosted a gathering of creative workers to discuss mental well-being in the arts.

The conference theme centred around a survey recently released by Creative PEI. This initiative was supported in part by the PEI Alliance of Mental Well-Being.

The 91 respondents were all artists based on PEI. "The top three respondents were visual artists (photographers, sculptors and painters, et cetera), singers/musicians, and crafters," says **JoAnna Howlett**, Project Coordinator.

JoAnna says 59 percent of respondents said they earn income from their creative work. "But just 20 percent said they make enough money to survive from their creative work alone."

The survey also asked creative workers about their mental health. Forty-eight percent responded they have been diagnosed with a mental illness. Twenty percent said they have not been diagnosed with a mental illness, but they believe they are struggling with one.

Common stressors include financial insecurity, lack of community or support network, lack of professional opportunities, lack of access to appropriate medical care, and housing insecurity.

More than 75 percent said poor mental health has negatively impacted their practice of art.

The survey reported 62 percent of respondents have sought support through peers, friends, and family. Forty-three percent sought formal supports such as counselling or therapy, and 18 percent said they don't have supports for their mental health.

Respondents pointed to breaking the stigma of seeking professional help and finding ways to assist creative workers to access affordable counselling. "More funding in general will support creative workers and reduce the risk of burnout, which is huge in this sector."

Other suggestions included mentorship, shared art space, and affordable workshops. "We need more opportunities for connection, where it's not about competition or networking for business."

Mark Sandiford, Executive Director of Creative PEI, moderated a panel that included a singer/songwriter, a psychologist, and an arts educator.



From left: JoAnna Howlett, Mark Sandiford, Creative PEI, and Stephen Loo, Program Manager, PEI Alliance of Mental Well-Being.



Eryn Foster Submitted photo

Eryn Foster teaches a professional practices class at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. She spoke about her work with Virtual Arts Nova Scotia on its Artists in Mind project in 2021.

"Our research found that the most important needs were for expanded accessible mental health services and greater financial support to stabilize the cultural sector."

She would like to see the implementation of a benefits package for creative workers. "Society needs to carve out more space to give artists a chance to contribute to the community."

However, not everyone has a support system of friends and family. Many need help to find accessible mental health services."

He would also like to see government and experts in strategic planning collaborate with the creative sector to develop workshops and creative arts education programs for kids.

Raquel Hoersting is the Assistant Professor of Psychology for UPEI's Doctor of Clinical Psychology program. She is also a visual artist who is originally from Brazil.

After moving to PEI, Raquel was part of a project where newcomer artists designed a mural. "It was a life-changing experience. What was fantastic about our group was our artistic identity. We could connect more with each other through art than through our newcomer status."

Raquel says the growth of music therapy and art therapy services on PEI, as well as organizations like STEAM PEI adding Arts into the traditional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) sector, builds on youth's artistic, scientific and technical skills.

For more information on **Creative PEI**, visit www.creativepei.ca

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



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Holland College opens a new test centre offering a testing service newcomers need to succeed in Canada

by Heidi Riley

The **International English Language Testing Service (IELTS)** is available for anyone who needs to prove their English language ability for immigration, work, or study purposes in an English-speaking environment.

There is a high demand from immigrants living on PEI to take the IELTS test. "Two companies offered monthly venues to write the paper-based tests on the Island, but those were often completely booked six months ahead of time," says **Maureen Duffy**, Program Manager for Adult Education at Holland College.

"People living on PEI often had to travel off Island to take the IELTS test in a timely manner."

In September 2022, the first and only IELTS Test Centre on the Island was officially opened, providing a more convenient option for taking the test. The new centre is located at the Prince of Wales Campus in Charlottetown.

"The three-hour test can be delivered electronically or on paper," says **Sharon Campbell**, Site Administrator, IELTS. "People are traveling to Charlottetown from as far as Tignish and Souris to take the test."

"Having an IELTS centre on PEI saves me so much time," says one user of the service. "I don't have to worry about the travel, because Holland College is close to my home. The staff at the front desk were very nice, helpful, and responsive!"



From left, Tanya Wedlock, Test Day Supervisor, and Sharon Campbell, Site Administrator for the Holland College International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) Test Centre.

For more information about the new Holland College **IELTS Test Centre**, visit www.hollandcollege.com/ielts

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

Volunteering on a Board of Directors offers excellent transferable skills plus more

by Ruby Arsenault, Employment Coach/Facilitator with the Tignish Employment Resources (ER) Centre

The skills and knowledge gained from sitting on a board of directors can be so valuable to the job seeker.

Volunteer experience is often viewed highly by employers, as it shows the initiative and transferable skills an employer may be seeking in a staff member.

In the 20 years I have assisted individuals to create resumé's, I always encourage them to include their volunteer experience. I also encourage clients to get involved with their community. This kind of exposure to the world of business and organizations is priceless.

Sharon Horne, Executive Director of Rural Community Learning Inc., has spent much time volunteering on numerous boards. "When you give your time, you receive it back ten-fold," says Sharon. "I have gained so many skills from my experiences."

Sharon says as an employer she is very pleased to see volunteering/director experience on resumé's. "Any employer would see this type of experience as valuable."

Skills gained by being on a board

- Leadership
- Team player
- Good listening & communication
- Public speaking
- Confidence

John Handrahan has been involved with various boards since he was 26 years of age.

"As an entrepreneur and employer of a family farm, we operated our business with many of the same principles that co-ops abide by," says John.

"The vast knowledge I have gained through being a director has equipped me with many learning experiences that transferred into my own career.

"One of the highlights is being a part of a collaborative team and hearing and sharing ideas with fellow directors. This has given me a broader perspective on problem solving and business operations.

"Being a director has led to many positive experiences and has been an excellent means of networking. It can be a good eye opener as to how others handle similar situations, and it is rewarding when a conclusion is made through each director's input."

John says as an employer he highly regards an applicant who has experience on a board as it demonstrates character. "I would encourage people to put their names forward. It is a tremendous opportunity to learn and gain positive problem-solving skills and you meet some pretty amazing people along the way."

For a list of local community organizations who look for volunteer board of directors, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search the article title.

Resident Care Workers are vital to healthcare on PEI and there is a strong demand

Marguerite Connolly Health Training will be offering a spring Resident Care Worker Program starting April 11 in Charlottetown and April 24 in Summerside.

The program is offered at no cost to students if they are eligible. Funding is provided by SkillsPEI.

To learn more about the program, call **902-566-9705** or visit www.rcwtraining.com or reach out to your nearest Career Development Services location.



"Wherever there is a human in need, there is an opportunity for kindness and to make a difference"
Kevin Heath

Applications are available now and you can apply any time. Spaces are limited!



Digital Jumpstart program helps people increase their computer skills

by Gloria Welton

Neil Squire Society is a Canadian non-for-profit organization focuses on innovation, digital literacy, employment, assistive technology, and collaboration. An office opened in Charlottetown in 2021.

The **Digital Jumpstart** Program, offered by the Neil Squire Society, helps people with disabilities across Canada take their next steps to improve their computer skills.

"The Digital Jumpstart program helps people with disabilities improve their digital literacy so they have the confidence to take their next steps," says **Louise Poirier**, Digital Literacy/Assistive Technology Specialist with the Neil Squire Society.

This free online program is in its third year. "Participants have gone on to join a job placement or readiness program, return to school, join the workforce, or simply became more confident using a computer.

"All the equipment they need is provided through the program, which they get to keep after the training is complete. All the training is done virtually one-on-one."

For more information on the **Digital Jumpstart** program, contact **Louise Poirier** at **506-856-9101**.

Toll free: **1-866-446-7999**, email louisep@neilsquire.ca

Visit www.neilsquire.ca/new-charlottetown-pei-location

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



Louise Poirier, Digital Literacy/Assistive Technology Specialist with the Neil Squire Society.
Submitted photo

