

# The Employment Journey

News You Can Use

On Prince Edward Island



## Advancing reconciliation in the business sector on PEI

by Gloria Welton

**Senator Brian Francis** recently spoke at an Inspiring Leadership Series event held by the Greater Summerside Chamber of Commerce (GSCC).

"We are encouraged by the response of the business community to Senator Brian Francis' presentation," says **Jessica Cormier**, Event and Marketing Manager, GSCC.

"It is evident that businesses desire to be inclusive, understanding, and respectful of the diverse cultures that make up our community, and the Senator's educational presentation provided practical suggestions that can be easily implemented by local business owners."

**Curtis Reilly**, Senior Program Coordinator, **Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI** Employment Services, was on hand to talk with GSCC members about connecting and developing partnerships.

Senator Francis shared some of his adventures and successes that began with becoming the first Indigenous person on the Island to receive his inter-provincial Red Seal trade certificate.

He hopes that people will take the time to listen, learn, and act in their personal and professional lives to make real progress toward reconciliation.

"I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting today in Epekwitk, the territory of my people, the Mi'kmaq, who have lived and cared for this land and its resources for more than ten thousand years. A land acknowledgement is an important first step in terms of reconciliation."

The Canadian constitution recognizes three groups of Indigenous People in Canada: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. "These are distinct groups with unique histories, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs."

Senator Francis explained there are roughly 630 First Nations communities in Canada which represent more than 50 nations and 50 Indigenous languages. "Abegweit First Nation and Lennox Island First Nation are part of the broader Mi'kmaq Nation."

"I'm privileged being in one of the highest offices in the country, but I still fall under the rules of the *Indian Act* as a status First Nations person who lives on reserve.

"When I became the Chair of what was called the Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, I said this name is outdated, and we worked hard to change the name to the Committee on Indigenous Peoples.

"Our history is complicated because while Indigenous people have much to be proud of, our lives continue to be impacted by more than 150 years of dispossession, assimilation, and genocide.

"Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, we had strong, healthy, thriving societies. We were self-governing and self-sufficient. We had complex and sophisticated cultures, identities, traditions, languages, and institutions. We also had a close relationship with the land.



"However, in the 1800s the relationship shifted to one of sovereign and subject. Europeans assumed that their own civilization was the pinnacle of human achievement. In their view, Indigenous people were ignorant and savage, and incapable of managing our own affairs and raising our own children.

"Governments used various ways to disrupt, displace, assimilate, and eradicate Indigenous people. A prime example is the Indian agents, who acted under the authority of the Indian Act, and played a key role in the imposition of policies like Residential Schools, reserves, and more."

Senator Francis says one of the most harmful consequences of the Indian Act was the creation of Residential Schools and Day Schools.

"First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples were forced to attend these government-funded, church-run schools. Parents were threatened with jail if they tried to stop their children from going.

"At Residential Schools, Indigenous children experienced widespread neglect and abuse. Nutritional deficiencies and overcrowding led to regular outbreaks of disease at the schools and as a result the death toll was very high.

"Their purpose was not education but forceful assimilation into Euro-Canadian culture by separating thousands of children from their families and communities.

"Children who entered Residential Schools in grade 1 often reached age 18 with a grade 5 level education.

"On PEI, there were Indian Day Schools in Rocky Point from 1915 to 1922 and in Lennox Island for 118 years from 1869 to 1987. I had no choice but to go to day school on Lennox Island from grade 1 to grade 8. When you start off with a substandard education you spend a lot of your life trying to catch up.

"I think I'm caught up now, but you have to work twice as hard when you don't have that solid educational foundation. I took control of my life at a young age and made changes.

"Now Lennox Island is a beautiful community with an excellent education system, controlled by the First Nation."

He went to high school, became a journeyman carpenter, and went on to work for the federal government. "My first job with the federal government was as a mailroom clerk at Veterans Affairs. I was happy but I wanted to find a way to move forward.

"I always look for chances to increase my skills and look at new jobs. I went from Veterans Affairs to Service Canada to Fisheries and Oceans.

"It is very important to always look for ways to improve yourself. I tell my children that

life is what you make it. You have your own career path and there's consequences to whatever you do, so do the best that you can. That is what I live by."

"Research shows that Indigenous people are the youngest and fastest growing demographic in the country. We are creating businesses at nine times the rate of the average non-Indigenous Canadian.

"Despite these trends, we always begin several yards behind the starting line. Some would say we have our hands tied behind our backs and some of us are not even allowed to run, so we need to look at ways to improve on that.

"The key is working together to make a better future and an equal future. We are making progress, but Canada can and must do better by Indigenous people."

### The National Indigenous Economic Strategy: economic reconciliation

"The thriving economies and communities of Indigenous people were profoundly disrupted after the arrival of Europeans, including the displacement and dispossession of our land and resources and the violation of our dignity and rights.

"Economic reconciliation is a process of reconnecting our people's communities and businesses with all aspects of economic activity in Canada through the creation of meaningful partnerships and mutually beneficial opportunities. We all share this responsibility."

For more about **Senator Brian Francis**, visit [www.sencanada.ca/en/senators/francis-brian](http://www.sencanada.ca/en/senators/francis-brian)

For more about the **National Indigenous Economic Strategy**, visit [www.niestrategy.ca](http://www.niestrategy.ca)

For more about business and employment partnerships, contact **Curtis Reilly**, **Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI**, at [creilly@mcpei.ca](mailto:creilly@mcpei.ca)

Visit [www.mcpei.ca/#contact](http://www.mcpei.ca/#contact)

For more about the **Greater Summerside Chamber of Commerce**, visit [www.summersidechamber.com](http://www.summersidechamber.com)

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



Senator Brian Francis Submitted photo.



# Parks Canada employee shares his Indigenous culture

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

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

## Meet Lucas Milligan, Heritage Presenter, Parks Canada.

### What led you to apply for a position at Parks Canada?

I really wanted a job that would give me the opportunity to learn and grow as a person and Parks Canada definitely helped me achieve that.

### How was your experience with Parks Canada during your first two years?

My experience has been amazing over the past two summers. I have made many friends and have interacted with people from all over the world.

### How did your experience complement or support your studies or your career path?

Parks Canada made me really think about going back to school, so I am currently attending upgrading courses. Then I plan to attend college so I can hopefully get a full-time position at the park.

### What positions have you worked in so far?

I have worked as a Heritage Presenter, participating in programs for visitors and creating information tables about the famous beaches in PEI National Park.

My first year at Parks Canada was a learning year, seeing how everything worked. My second year at Parks Canada was a lot more comfortable and I felt confident about my work.

### What is the best thing about working for Parks Canada?

Parks Canada helped me spread the knowledge about my Indigenous culture. All the information I learned from Elder Junior Peter-Paul (who is also employed by Parks Canada as a Mi'kmaq Heritage Presenter) helped me learn more about my culture and appreciate it that much more.

### Would you encourage a friend to apply at Parks Canada, and if so, why?

I would encourage a friend to join Parks Canada; actually, I have several times. Everybody at Parks Canada is great at accepting and welcoming new people. Parks Canada is also a great place to be yourself.

## Employment Open Houses open doors to opportunity and adventure with Parks Canada

Parks Canada hosted two Employment Open Houses in early February at Ardgowan National Historic Site.

Staff from Parks Canada Human Resources, Resource Conservation, Indigenous Relations, and Visitor Experiences teams were on hand to assist with filling out applications and to give participants behind-the-scenes info on working with Parks Canada.

### So...what did the participants learn from these open houses?

Some of them asked if there are any jobs with Parks Canada that are not bilingual positions. Staff were able to point them to jobs they could apply for as an English speaker (called “English Essential” jobs in the public service).

Many participants were surprised to learn that seasonal entry-level jobs really can lead to long-term or year-round positions and that some of Parks Canada’s current senior staff began as students!

### Another frequent comment was on the wide range of jobs

Only certain positions were available during this round of hiring, but many others may become available later in the spring or even during the summer and fall, so participants were encouraged to keep an eye out for future openings.

Although the current round of hiring for positions specific to students and youth is over, there may be more opportunities for all ages posted through the spring and early summer.

Keep your eye on [parks.canada.ca/pei-jobs](https://parks.canada.ca/pei-jobs), check out **GC Jobs**, or follow the official Facebook sites for **PEI National Parks** or **Green Gables Heritage Place**.

For more information, email [rhipe-peih@pc.gc.ca](mailto:rhipe-peih@pc.gc.ca)



Lucas Milligan Submitted photo.

# Board member training offered online

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

PEI is known for its many co-operatives and not-for-profit organizations. Many organizations are governed by a board of directors. One can gain valuable transferable skills and knowledge as a director and that experience is often viewed as highly favourable by employers.

Some organizations offer stipends to their directors, and all volunteers are valued for contributing to the community. Terms of service can range from one year to three years or more.

### Do you know what qualifications are required to volunteer to sit on a board of directors?

Each board has its own values, missions, and goals. Qualifications may include:

- Good credit standing
- Clean criminal record
- Good listening skills
- Dedication to attending board meetings
- A genuine interest in the organization’s mission
- Community oriented
- Strong team player
- Ability to read financial statements
- Ability to maintain confidentiality

### Have you heard of Board Member Training?

Training is an excellent way to gain the fundamentals of a director’s role. I have participated in the program, and I felt it equipped me with the skills and knowledge to be a strong director. The most important thing I learned was about the liability or financial responsibility of a director.

Holland College’s customized training department offers board member training. Many organizations encourage their directors to participate in such training, and they may cover the cost.

The Board Member Training program is designed for members of boards of directors for not-for-profit organizations. The program brings awareness of key topics revolving around a board of directors and board operational procedures.

The course is now offered online. Students have access to a series of modules delivered through Holland College’s online learning management system. They explore curriculum, interact with guest speakers, and gain important knowledge needed to be on a board of directors.

Topics covered include:

- Board Composition
- Financial Literacy
- Conflict Resolution
- Boardroom Etiquette
- Leadership Fundamentals
- Community Engagement
- Succession Planning
- Human Resource Fundamentals
- Fiduciary Responsibility
- Communications
- RFP Process

“This program has been offered since 2019,” says **Emma Murray**, Administrative Coordinator for the College’s customized training department. “To date, we have offered 13 programs.

“This online program is easy to navigate,” says Emma. Participants need a laptop or desktop computer, WiFi, and access to the site.

“This course was developed because many non-profit organizations are guided by a volunteer board of directors. This course creates awareness of many aspects of being a board member, including the significant liability members have. The goal of the course is to help current and future members gain the knowledge they need to be successful.”

## BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

Topics Covered:

- Procurement/ RFP Process
- Community Engagement
- Human Resource Fundamentals
- Effective Communication Practices
- Conflict Resolution
- Succession Planning
- Board Composition and Roles
- Boardroom Etiquette
- Leadership Fundamentals
- Fiduciary Responsibility
- Financial Analysis

Online 25 hour course with three zoom calls facilitated by GMD Consulting

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902-566-9372  
CUSTOMIZEDTRAINING@HOLLANDCOLLEGE.COM

\*Participants must be 16 years or older

For more about this course, contact the Customized Training department at **902-566-9372** or email [customizedtraining@hollandcollege.com](mailto:customizedtraining@hollandcollege.com)



# Self-employment is a satisfying ride

by Heidi Riley

“We sell smiles,” says **Frank MacEachern**, owner of **Rising Tide Bike Shop** in Charlottetown. “Many people who buy from us come back in to say how much they enjoy their e-bike.”

The shop opened in June 2022. Along with electric bikes, the shop also offers service, repairs, and rentals, and sells accessories like trailers, panier bags, helmets, locks, and air pumps.

This coming summer, Frank plans to offer more e-bike rentals and to provide a shuttle service to the eastern end of the province.

## How the business started

After working with the government for several years and then self-employment, Frank was looking for a career change. “I was not ready to retire mentally or financially.”

Frank was approved for the **Self Employ PEI** program with SkillsPEI. Self Employ PEI is an employment program developed to help job seekers who want to launch their own businesses. The program provides financial support and business counselling to new entrepreneurs during their first year of operation.

“The program is a great help,” says Frank. “It saves me from taking money out of the business during the early days, when cash flow is so important.”

“I also invested a lot of my own money, and I was able to secure small loans from CBDC and from Finance PEI.”

## Hiring staff

“I looked for almost a month to find the right employee. I advertised on Indeed and on WorkPEI and I was getting hundreds of resumés from people who were not qualified or who were from Toronto, Vancouver, India, or South America.”

“The person I hired as Assistant Manager walked in the door with a well-written hard copy resumé. He could carry on a conversation and had retail experience and good customer service skills.”

“Comparing his qualifications to the job ad, he may have checked half the boxes. But I was sold by his personality and his willingness to go door-to-door to find a job. That personal contact made him stand out.”

“Job seekers could also make their resumé stand out by printing it on coloured paper or a different font—anything that will make it pop out of the pile will catch the employer’s eye.”

## Hiring needs

In spring, Frank plans to hire back an employee who serviced the ebikes last summer. “I will probably hire another bicycle mechanic. I expect to have a very busy summer, and I will probably hire at least three summer students.”

Jobs will be advertised by word of mouth and will be posted on WorkPEI.



Frank MacEachern, owner, Rising Tide Electric Bicycles, located at 125 Queen Street, Charlottetown.

For more information about **Rising Tide Electric Bicycles**, contact **Frank MacEachern** at **902-367-3670** or email **frank@rtebike.com**

Visit **www.rtebike.ca**

For more about **Self Employ PEI**, visit **www.skillspei.com**

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



# New pet supplies business opens in O’Leary

by Ruby Arsenault

**West Prince Animal Supplies - Pet, Farm & Tack Store** opened in January. The store is the first of its kind in western PEI.

Owners **Dana Ellis** and his wife **Priscilla**, who is a veterinarian, also own **West Prince Veterinary Hospital**. “We were looking for ways to expand our retail section, so we could offer more than prescription food and a few pet necessities,” says Dana.

“Our veterinary hospital did not have enough space to accommodate all the products we wanted to offer,” says Dana. “We decided to seek out a second location and open a separate and independent pet supplies store, where we could offer everything needed for pet owners and equine enthusiasts.”

“I definitely feel there is a need to have this business locally,” says Dana. “The number of pets and the variety of species in West Prince is astonishing!”

“So many people had to travel out of West Prince to get the supplies they need to keep their pets happy and healthy. And many horse owners are in need of riding equipment and other equine products.”

“So, we are hoping we can stock everything needed to care for dogs, cats, fish, birds, pocket pets, rabbits and reptiles. We sell food, treats, toys, habitats, grooming supplies, and bedding. We will also be offering tack and horse supplies and some farm supplies.”

Dana says the staff at the new store are ready to help customers determine what products best suit their pet’s needs. “We look forward to serving our clients,” says Dana.

## About the staff

Two full-time staff have been hired, and additional part-time staff may be required in the future.

For more information, visit **West Prince Animal Supplies - Pet, Farm & Tack Store** in O’Leary at 1777 O’Leary Road, or **902-859-2033**, email **info@westprinceanimalsupplies.ca**

Search **West Prince Animal Supplies** on **Facebook**.



## Hiring needs at West Prince Veterinary Hospital

The West Prince Veterinary Hospital in O’Leary is co-owned by Dana Ellis and his wife, Dr. Priscilla Ellis. Dr. Ellis is also a full-time veterinarian and they have operated this establishment since 2008.

The hospital offers many diagnostic and treatment options, outpatient care, and a variety of in-hospital services, including dental and surgical care, radiology, ultrasonography, acupuncture, and hospitalized care. They also provide a full range of services for livestock and other farm animals.

The hospital has nine full-time staff: three veterinarians, three veterinary technicians, two receptionists, one support staff, one part-time veterinarian, one part-time bookkeeper.

## Future hiring needs

“We would welcome another full-time veterinarian and/or registered veterinary technician,” says Dana Ellis.

They advertise open positions on-line through **WorkPEI.ca** and on veterinary employment listing sites.

Resumés can be forwarded to **info@westprincevet.com**

For more information, call **902-859-2441**. Visit **www.westprincevet.com** or **Facebook**.



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# Helping Island students grow their future in agriculture

by Ethan Paquet

**A**griculture in the Classroom PEI educates students about the food they eat, where it comes from, the farmers who grow it, how it gets to their plates, and the occupations in the industry.

Over the past six years, the **genAG PEI** program has challenged high school students to inform and inspire their peers to consider careers in agriculture. Students research the diverse and abundant career opportunities within the agriculture and agri-food sectors.

"Students work collaboratively as marketing teams to organize a school event, create inspiring ways to promote agricultural careers to their peers, and then implement their marketing plan at the school event with the goal of reaching as many of their peers as possible," says **Marilyn Balderston**, genAG PEI Coordinator.

"Our goal is for students to know that there is a place for them in the agricultural industry."

The program is offered in three to four Island high schools each semester. "We are seeing an uptake in students taking agriculture courses in direct response to participating in genAG school events.

"For example, at Colonel Gray High School, students are flocking to the agriculture courses because they want to help plan and implement our Farm Day & Agriculture Expo.

"As they gain confidence and develop transferable skills, they encourage their friends to take agriculture courses as well," Marilyn says.

According to recent estimates, we will need to produce 70 percent more food by 2050 to feed the growing world population. "We need young people to know and care about these issues. What they learn today is essential to our future, so we hope to have genAG in every school at some point."

"The teachers involved in the genAG PEI program are very dedicated to their student's learning and well-being and they are so commendable. I can't say enough good things about them!"

## One student's perspective

"Growing up in a small rural community, I had a great appreciation for our neighbouring farm families and the crops they grew, and that was something that I wanted to learn more about," says **Jillian Ferguson**, who attended Kensington Intermediate Senior High School.

Throughout school, she struggled to develop a career plan. "I was interested in science and was considering becoming a veterinarian or physiotherapist, but I wasn't sure."

In Grade 12, she decided to switch into the Agri-science program. "They had great opportunities to tour businesses and farms, go on trips, and make connections with other students."

When Jillian's genAG class visited Canada's AgDay in Ottawa, featuring industry leaders from across the country, her eyes were opened to careers she might have never considered.

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

To check the career information offered by **Agriculture in the Classroom-PEI**, visit [www.aitc-pei.ca](http://www.aitc-pei.ca)

For more about **PEI Agriculture Sector Council**, visit [www.peiagsc.ca](http://www.peiagsc.ca)

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



She recently graduated from the Environmental Science program at Dalhousie Agriculture Campus in Nova Scotia and works at the PEI Federation of Agriculture as a Program Coordinator for **Farm & Food Care PEI**.

"The genAG program is a big part of the reason I am where I am today. I love having the opportunity to connect with producers and farmers and share the good news with consumers."

"One in eight jobs are in the agriculture industry, from farm labour and technicians to managers," says Marilyn.

"Find your passion and you could find a place to connect with agriculture and make a difference for future generations."

# Employment opportunities for students working with youth

by Stella Shepard

**S**ummer Work Student Exchange (SWSE) is one of three national programs for youth coordinated by **YMCA**.

"The SWSE program runs for six weeks over the summer," says **Florence Lux-Côté**, Regional Coordinator, Atlantic-Quebec (East), YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth Employment Services.

The exchange takes students who are 16 or 17 from across Canada to another province where they stay with a local host.

"The youth in the program hold a paid job, practice their second official language, and participate in summer activities led by local coordinators."

## Hiring needs

"We have positions available in Charlottetown and across Canada for coordinators," says Florence. "These positions are for post-secondary students."

"They promote the program to community organizations and help recruit youth participants. They participate in the whole support process to prepare the outbound youth for the exchange.

"They also help chaperone the youth and plan and deliver a full program of activities for the youth in their own community.

"It's a great opportunity for post-secondary students looking for employment working with youth and wanting to be part of a national team," says Florence. "It is also a great opportunity if you want more work experience and to build a strong resumé."

To apply, visit <https://swse.ymcagta.org/> and click **Apply Today**.

For more information, contact **Florence Lux-Côté**, at [Florence.luxcote@halifax.ymca.ca](mailto:Florence.luxcote@halifax.ymca.ca) or visit [swse.ymcagta.org](http://swse.ymcagta.org)

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



Florence Lux-Côté, Regional Coordinator, Summer Work Student Exchange. Submitted photo

## Tourism Job Fair 2023

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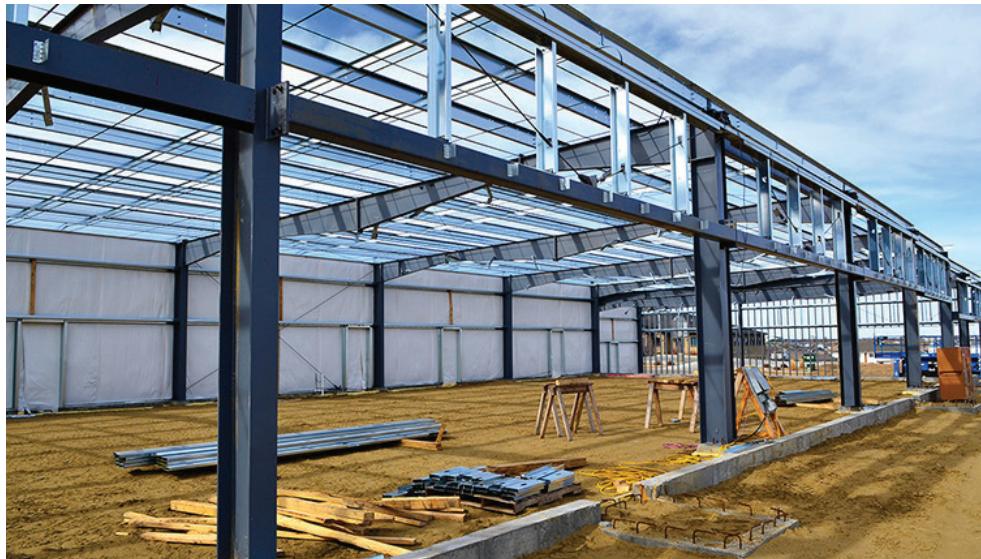
For more information and a list of employers attending the Job Fair, visit [www.tiapei.pe.ca/job-fair](http://www.tiapei.pe.ca/job-fair)



Tourism Industry  
Association of  
Prince Edward Island

# Commercial construction update 2023

by Stacy Dunn



**Sam Sanderson**, General Manager of the **Construction Association of PEI (CAPEI)** says the repairs needed after the damage caused by post-tropical storm Fiona is still a concern for commercial construction in 2023.

"Small craft harbours and shorelines were severely damaged, and a great deal of roofing still needs to be repaired."

He says 2023 is looking like another banner year for commercial construction. He lists the following large projects:

- renovations to the Daniel J. MacDonald building (which houses Veterans Affairs Canada)
- continuing renovations to Province House
- construction of the new Sherwood Elementary School
- site work is going on now for the new UPEI medical school facility
- construction of the extensive new \$100 million Mental Health Campus

Sam says Carpenters continue to be most in demand, followed by Roofers, Electricians, HVAC, Plumbers and Masons.

"PEI is not the only jurisdiction in need of highly skilled tradespeople. It's happening across Canada and around the world."

In 2022, CAPEI was named Partner Association of the Year by the Canadian Construction Association. CAPEI was recognized for its programs that bolster the skills necessary in the industry.

"Participants in our Skilled Newcomers program built an ICF foundation," Sam says. "That kind of hands-on learning creates more employability skills."

"The participants are going into project management, estimator roles, and general labour," he says. "Some are working on their engineering or architectural certifications in Canada."

All 11 participants of the most recent Youth in Trades program finished the program and were fully employed afterwards. "We have brought in virtual reality career exploration toolkits to several schools on PEI and we hope to have them in every high school on the Island this year."

CAPEI is offering the second cohort of its Discover Carpentry program this year. "Our Construction Training Centre allows for more hands-on training. Our participants are learning a lot of employability skills and are ready to go to work."

CAPEI is working with youth organizations such as 4H, Immigrant and Refugee Services Association PEI and other local newcomers' groups to promote careers in the trades.

The association now is up to 320 members and continues to work with municipalities and the provincial and federal governments to get funding for career exploration and training.

For more information, contact the **Construction Association of PEI** at **902-368-3303** or visit **www.capei.ca**

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

# New program helps women start a career in STEM occupations

by Ethan Paquet

There is a rising demand for people with skills related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and skilled trades.

The labour market has been underrepresented with women in these roles, but a program that recently expanded to PEI is working to change that.

Based in Nova Scotia, **Techsploration** provides educational programming to young women and non-binary youth in grades nine through 12 with the aim of helping them explore STEM and skilled trades careers.

"Our goal is to reach young women before they choose high school math and science courses," says **Emily Boucher**, Executive Director. "We want to ensure they have the knowledge and experience required to make informed career decisions before they enter post-secondary studies."

In 2001, Techsploration expanded to Newfoundland and Labrador. Recently, their National Expansion pilot program brought programming to Ontario and PEI.

"Kinkora Regional High School is our first Techsploration PEI school. We are thrilled to have the PEI Business Women's Association as our presenting partner. This pilot/expansion has been made possible with the financial support of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency."

Students and schools on PEI interested in participating in the **Techsploration** program are encouraged to reach out to **Emily Boucher** at **Emily.boucher@techsploration.ca**

For more information, visit **www.techsploration.ca**

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



Kinkora Regional High School is the first school to participate in Techsploration on PEI. Submitted photo.

## Free

# WORKPLACE SKILLS SESSIONS

COULD YOU BENEFIT FROM BETTER EMPLOYEE RETENTION OR BECOMING A STRONGER EMPLOYEE?

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jhirobar@gov.pe.ca

902 670 8622

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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

\*Sessions are open to the public\*

# An entrepreneur continues family farming tradition with a signature visitor experience

by Stella Shepard

**C**ystal Burke Cheverie of Fortune is a fourth-generation farmer. She and her husband, **Trevor**, opened **Fortune Bridge Farms** in 2015. The business expanded with a roadside vegetable stand and **Toby's Farm Market** in 2020.

In 2021, **Matthew Burke**, who graduated from the Culinary Institute in 2014, joined Crystal and Trevor to open and operate Toby's Take-Out, a new and very popular food truck for the area.

The farming operation on the Veterans Memorial Highway near Souris grows more than 100 acres of turnips, carrots, parsnips, and cabbage, and sells directly to local and off-Island customers.

It's been a busy season with hundreds of visitors flocking to the farm, which offers a full line of vegetables, PEI products, a fun park, ice-cream, take-out service, a beer garden, and summer and fall activities such as a sunflower fest and a corn maze.

"We have been expanding yearly to grow into a popular seasonal location," says Crystal. "This year was our busiest summer since opening."

"The fun park includes a giant tire dinosaur, pedal trike track, a sandbox area, and a mega slide, the only one in Atlantic Canada."

The attractiveness of three acres of dozens of sunflower varieties swaying in a warm summer breeze lures tourists and Islanders. "We transformed the three acres of sunflowers into our first annual sunflower festival in August of 2022," says Crystal.

Nearby is a greenhouse with 100,000 flowers of various varieties for sale. In fall, children and adults delight in a 10-acre patch of pumpkins, squash, and gourds.

Crystal and Trevor are busy during the winter months with trimming and packaging stored root crops for market, planning for the upcoming season, and recruiting staff.

## About the staff

"We hire 10 employees for Toby's Farm Market," says Crystal. "Plus, numerous other people play an important part in the business, from the field workers to the warehouse packers."

## Hiring needs

"Work starts in the greenhouse in March. We are presently recruiting five more field workers for the 2023 season starting in April. We will be extending our season by opening in April and we hope to stay open through the fall on reduced hours."

## Community support

**Community Business Development Corporation East (CBDC)**, located at the **Rural Action Centre** on Main Street in Montague, assists in creating small businesses and in expanding and modernizing existing businesses.

For more information about **Fortune Bridge Farms** and **Toby's Farm Market**, visit [www.fortunebridgefarms.com](http://www.fortunebridgefarms.com), or email [fortunebridgefarms@gmail.com](mailto:fortunebridgefarms@gmail.com)

To apply for a position, contact **Crystal** and **Trevor** at [tobysfarmmarket@gmail.com](mailto:tobysfarmmarket@gmail.com)



Crystal Burke Cheverie is the owner of Fortune Bridge Farms and Toby's Farm Market. Submitted photo

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

"CBDC East was very helpful in informing us about their programs, what they had to offer, and ways to expand our business," says Crystal.

CBDC East provides financial and technical services to entrepreneurs. Services target entrepreneurs who require customized financing not ordinarily available from traditional sources.

"Small businesses are the heartbeat of the community," says Martina. "We help businesses to succeed and we give high priority to the advisory role of our mandate."

# The City of Summerside provides a way for job seekers to connect with employers

by Heidi Riley

**S**ummerside is PEI's second largest city, with a population of 16,000. It is home to 850 businesses employing 10,000 people. The city is working to facilitate and secure investment in the area with the goal of increasing the area's population and the number of jobs.

At a recent UPEI event, **Neil Moore**, Research Analyst with the City of Summerside's Department of Economic Development, talked about the many sectors operating in the Summerside area.

Neil welcomes job seekers to contact him to have a conversation about employment opportunities in Summerside. "Carving out your career path can be tough. I can help you understand Summerside and connect you to jobs that may not even be advertised."

Neil provided some examples of businesses and employment opportunities in Summerside:

**AEROSPACE:** Almost 700 employees work in companies such as MDS Coatings, Honeywell, Standard Aero, and TronosJet. "Aerospace was one of the hardest-hit industries due to COVID-19, and is now making a cautious recovery," says Neil. "There are administrative and technical opportunities at those companies."

**IT:** Hundreds of employees work in IT companies such as Fully Managed and StarPort (managed services), IO Solutions Contact Center (business process outsourcing), RadNet (radiology information systems), WorkLinks (cloud-based payroll software), Funky Finger (video game design), Maximus DeltaWare (ehealth), Mydoma Studio (application for interior designers), and BluWave-ai (energy scheduling using Artificial Intelligence algorithms). "All except one are looking for workers right now," says Neil.

**FINANCIAL:** Sharon O'Halloran CPA Inc. employs bookkeepers and accountants. "They've been looking to increase capacity and welcome interest from those with finance backgrounds."

**CONSTRUCTION:** Curran & Briggs Limited and Strategic Construction offer employment opportunities as equipment operators, foremen, project management, carpentry, and labourers.

**CLEANTECH:** Summerside Sunbank, a \$68 million 21 MW solar farm, along with the city's current windfarm, is slated to provide 70 percent of Summerside's energy needs. There are also plans for a new net-zero eco-park.

There are also many fishing, farming, and tourism businesses. "For example, the new Microtel Inn and Suites by Wyndham, located beside Credit Union Place, opened in December 2022."



Neil Moore, Research Analyst with the City of Summerside's Department of Economic Development. Submitted photo

"Summerside is growing very fast. Building permit values are more than double their usual amount," says Neil. "More immigrants are settling in Summerside than ever before. And business vacancy rates went from 11 percent in 2018 to 3 percent today."

"Many employers in Summerside are currently hiring or plan to hire soon. There are lots of opportunities here and things are always changing. Use me as your employment concierge."

To connect with **Neil Moore**, call **902-786-8562** or email [neil@summerside.ca](mailto:neil@summerside.ca)

For more information about the **City of Summerside**, visit [www.bigpossibilities.ca](http://www.bigpossibilities.ca)

# Addressing talent gaps in emerging careers such as Cybersecurity

by Gloria Welton

Emerging careers are occupations that have small employment numbers but are expected to get larger because of the growing demand.

Some emerging or developing sectors include the following:

- Digital Technology employers are seeing growth in areas such as automation and security
- Ocean Technology leaders are saying there are incredible opportunities now and many more to come. Check out the careers listed here: [www.otcns.ca/careers](http://www.otcns.ca/careers)
- Environmental sectors are experiencing growth in areas such as clean technology and energy efficiency.

The **Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC)** is Atlantic Canada's independent voice on economic issues. APEC indicated the following in a recent report called *The Future of Work in Atlantic Canada*.

"Digitalization is increasing demand for certain occupations, such as cybersecurity professionals. The growing use of the digital space for financial transactions, data storage, and data sharing has led to rising demand for cyber security experts.

"In Atlantic Canada, information technology firms and consultants are expanding their cybersecurity support capabilities. Many educational programs are available in Atlantic Canada for prospective cybersecurity professionals, but these programs are currently relatively small."

For more information about the **Accelerated Cybersecurity Training Program**, visit [www.cybersecurecatalyst.ca](http://www.cybersecurecatalyst.ca)

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



At a recent national Career Development Conference called **Cannexus 23**, two speakers talked about the growing demand for cybersecurity and a new training opportunity and certification now available.

Both speakers are from Toronto Metropolitan University:

**Rushmi Hasham** is Director of Development of the Accelerated Cybersecurity Training Programs and **Randy Purse** is Senior Cybersecurity Advisor.

Rushmi described the great challenges faced in filling cybersecurity positions all around the world.

"Within the technical community, much of the work is dynamic and changing at a faster pace than most other work, and this is creating challenges."

"Numerous issues have resulted in the talent shortage, including a limited understanding of what cybersecurity entails," says Randy.

Rushmi says their research was inspired by the severe cybersecurity talent shortage across the country. "We have explored some of the root causes, which has resulted in a new approach to talent development."

The **Accelerated Cybersecurity Training Program (ACTP)** at Toronto Metropolitan University is an intensive seven-month program that allows students to earn three globally recognized cybersecurity certificates, to engage in career mentorship with experts, and to build connections with employers in the cybersecurity industry.

Initially the program was offered tuition-free to eligible candidates thanks to the support of the Government of Canada, Rogers Communications, and Royal Bank of Canada.

"The program takes individuals with no competency in cybersecurity or technical backgrounds, moves them through a very rigorous program, and connects them to a career," says Rushmi.

"Since 2020, the program has trained and certified 468 cybersecurity professionals, and we have been able to help fill 261 cybersecurity related jobs in Canada."

To connect with **Rushmi Hasham**, email [rushmi.hasham@torontomu.ca](mailto:rushmi.hasham@torontomu.ca)

To connect with **Randy Purse**, email [randy.purse@torontomu.ca](mailto:randy.purse@torontomu.ca)

## Employment opportunities with RBC

by Heidi Riley

**RBC** is Canada's largest bank. On PEI, over 100 staff work out of four branches and an RBC Dominion Securities office.

RBC offers a range of career opportunities. "New employees most often start in one of two paths, depending on their experience and education," says **Kaye Kelly**, Community Manager.

One path is for a Client Advisor, previously known as a Bank Teller. In this part-time role, they take care of transactions for clients, educate them in digital skills like online banking, and handle transactions such as wiring funds or purchasing bank drafts.

"We have a culture of helping people learn and develop, and they often move on to other more complex roles," says Kaye.

The other stream people are hired into is the Banking Advisor role, which is full-time. They take on some front-line customer service, and also meet one-on-one with clients to provide services such as opening accounts, arranging loans and renewing investments. People hired for this role often have a university degree or college diploma. They also must have a license to sell mutual funds, which involves taking a course through Canadian Securities Institute.

### Hiring needs

"Our hiring needs are continuous," says Kaye. "We often give priority to our own internal employees who are looking for other roles but we hire externally as well. We hire people who have worked at other financial institutions or in customer service industries, and we also hire many newcomers because they come with lots of experience." They also offer co-op and summer opportunities for students.

"Customer service experience is the most important quality I look for," says Kaye. "If I see a resumé with lots of education, that's good, but I want to see how you have applied it.

"If you worked in fast food or in a volunteer role, that is customer service. I will want to know how you delivered more than the customer was looking for.

"A university degree in arts, business, or science shows your ability to understand complex things," says Kaye.

"However, a degree is not mandatory. We also hire people who stayed home to raise their kids and want to come back into the workforce. I look at their education and previous work experience to see if their skills can transition to banking. They must be able to handle the pace of change and enjoy dealing with customers.

"Many people looking to be hired as a Banking Advisor come to us with the mandatory mutual fund course completed. Some are hired as a Client Advisor and study for their mutual fund license because they have aspirations to change roles."



From left, Monika Wang, Kaye Kelly, and Hailey Zhu work at RBC in Charlottetown.

### How to apply

"LinkedIn can be a powerful tool when looking for work," says Kaye. "I respond to every job seeker who messages me through LinkedIn. I keep resúmes on file and will refer to them when a hiring opportunity comes up."

Visit [www.rbc.com/careers](http://www.rbc.com/careers) to set up a profile, upload your resumé and search for job openings across Canada.

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



# Meet the new Client Engagement Officers with WorkPEI

by Stacy Dunn

**W**orkPEI is a job board managed by provincial government staff within the Department of Economic Growth, Tourism, and Culture.

Recently, WorkPEI hired two new Client Engagement Officers who are available to help employers and job seekers get the most out of their experience using WorkPEI.ca

**Danielle Conklin** and **Chelsey Compton** are both Client Engagement Officers. The purpose of their role is to lead client engagement activities for employers, job seekers, industry associations, sector councils, secondary and post-secondary schools, and other organizations for WorkPEI.

Danielle and Chelsey can be found at public information sessions, job fairs, career development programs, and other industry events, educating and training clients about the WorkPEI.ca website.

Danielle has a Business Administration diploma and a Certificate in Human Resource Management from Holland College. She is currently studying online part-time at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) to obtain her Bachelor of Business Administration.

"My previous work experience has mostly been in the restaurant industry since I was about 16. I worked at a few restaurants in the private sector, the last being Boston Pizza, where I worked my way up to a manager," she says.

"In 2020, I joined the provincial government as a new graduate working part-time with IT Shared Services and the Public Service Commission. In 2021, I was hired full-time by the Commission to support Health PEI staffing located out of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

"I joined the WorkPEI team in November 2022 and I am very excited and grateful for this new opportunity."

Chelsey has a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from UPEI. She is currently working part-time towards a Master of Business Administration with a specialization in Human Resource Leadership online through the University of Fredericton while working at WorkPEI.

"I have been employed with the government of PEI since 2019. I started as a student employee under the Department of Justice and Public Safety working with Community and Correctional Services as well as the PEI Emergency Measures Organization. These roles provided me significant experience working with the public.

"I had similar work experience in the private sector as a supervisor at a local grocery store," she says. "With my experience in customer service and my interest in human resources, I am excited for the opportunity to support job seekers and employers as a Client Engagement Officer."

Both Chelsey and Danielle say continuing their studies as they work full time has been beneficial.

"It's challenging," Danielle says. "I need to create schedules, set priorities, and manage my time well to keep a healthy balance. I really enjoy continuous learning and I encourage others to do it if they can. Continuous learning helps improve my quality of work and it allows me to see new perspectives, which helps me generate new ideas. I get to apply my learning to my everyday tasks."

"I find my Master's program rewarding," Chelsey says. "It allows me to work in groups with classmates all across Canada and around the world. There are a lot of opportunities to learn about the diverse ways of delivering practices in our roles."



From left, Chelsey Compton and Danielle Conklin, Client Engagement Officers, WorkPEI. Submitted photos.

Chelsey and Danielle are eager to get out to help clients learn more about WorkPEI and how to get the most out of the website. They have only just begun presentations with some career development programs such as Career Bridges and they hope to get out and educate all types of users across the Island.

If you would like to meet with the **Client Engagement Officers** or book an information session, visit [www.workpei.ca](http://www.workpei.ca) and scroll down and click **Contact Us**.

For more information about WorkPEI, visit [www.workpei.ca](http://www.workpei.ca)

Follow them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and **LinkedIn @workpei**



## WorkPEI.ca

# Nursing is a rewarding but demanding profession with many career paths

by Heidi Riley

**I**t has never been a more challenging time to be a nurse, but there have also never been as many opportunities in the profession, says **Barbara Brookins**, President of the **PEI Nurses' Union**, which represents Registered Nurses (RNs) and Nurse Practitioners on PEI.

The membership of the PEI Nurses Union includes about 1,350 RNs and 52 Nurse Practitioners. There are also a few hundred additional RNs working in management, as instructors at UPEI and Holland College, or in private long-term care facilities.

There is currently a shortage of at least 200 RNs on the Island.

Barbara says heavy workloads made worse by COVID-19 are taking a toll on nurses as they struggle with long hours, sometimes including back-to-back 12-hour shifts, and scheduling that makes it difficult to take vacation time or access educational leave.

"Between COVID-19 and not being granted the leave they are entitled to, more nurses are leaving the profession earlier than they had planned and quite a few others have dropped to part-time."

Barbara says the Nurses' Union and provincial and federal governments are working to improve the staffing and workload situations, and that nursing continues to be an important and rewarding career.

"Nursing is an amazing profession, and I am proud of the career I chose," says Barbara. "Nurses have an important role in the healthcare system. It is so rewarding to help people through their worst times and at their most stressful moments get through their health journey."

Barbara says it is an exciting time to be a nurse because of the growing number of roles available.

"You can work in acute care, long-term care, primary care, community care, home care, or mental health in long-term or acute care settings. Or you can further your education and work as a Nurse Practitioner, an educator, a clinical leader, or in research.

"You could start working in a medical or surgical unit, and as you progress in your skillset, you can move to a more acute or critical area such as Emergency, ICU, primary care, or public health," says Barbara.



Barbara Brookins, President, PEI Nurses' Union.

It can take up to two years of additional study to earn the certifications required in some areas of nursing.

"You are never done learning in any profession, especially nursing," she says. "Everything keeps changing, and nursing has become so specialized. Traditional roles in medical and surgical units are now becoming specialized, with more training available for care of the elderly, palliative care, medication, and family dynamics."

For more about the **PEI Nurses' Union**, visit [www.peinu.com](http://www.peinu.com)

To check open nursing positions on PEI, visit [www.jobspei.com](http://www.jobspei.com)

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

