

LEARNING CURVES

CONTINUING EDUCATION • JOB TRAINING

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WHO'S CREATIVE?

BY ANNE MCDONAGH

IS THE REAL YOU AN ARTIST?

By Andrew Sutherland

Have you always dreamed of being an artist? Looking to change careers and get into the arts, but not sure if it's quite right for you? Many Ontario colleges offer one-year introductory programs for those with artistic inclinations who want to dip their toes into creativity, before they dive in headfirst.

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When I was in elementary school, many years ago, my worst and least favourite subject was art. Because I could not draw anything representational, my teachers made it clear that I was not artistic. I quickly drew the conclusion that if I was not artistic then I was not creative. However, recently I have come to see that creativity is much more than art, and art is much

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Who's Creative?

Continued from Page 1

more than a reproduction of a person or an object from the real world. I have also come to realize that developing our creativity as individuals and as a society has never been more important.

The theme of this issue of Learning Curves is the arts, that part of culture made up of many creative activities such as the visual arts—drawing, painting, sculpture—drama, creative writing, music, dance etc. To practice the arts is to use your creativity.

The TDSB and the Community Colleges offer many courses in the arts which enable you to express your unique view of the world. Other courses like cooking, decorating, various crafts etc. also give you opportunities to be creative. In fact, creativity is involved in most human activities; a person who invents a machine, a computer program or a new way of doing

anything is using his or her creativity.

What is creativity then if it is not confined to the arts? There are many definitions; here is one: “Creativity has to do with original and flexible thinking, the ability to pay attention to details, the ability to cope with uncertainty. Creative individuals possess a high motivation to overcome obstacles and solve problems, the willingness to take calculated risks, the desire to work hard in turn for recognition.”

Whether they are artists or engineers, creative people also have fun doing what they do. Whether painting a picture, composing a piece of music, cooking a delicious meal or designing a website, most creative people enjoy the process of creation as much as the end product. It is an experience right up there with the most satisfying human activities.

Recently developing our creativity as a society has taken on urgent importance as we seek to find our economic place in the world having lost most of our manufacturing, which until now has been the backbone of our prosperity. “Innovation” is the word used most often to describe our possible salvation, and the foundation of innovation is creativity.

Richard Florida, the director of the Martin Prosperity Institute and professor of Business and Creativity at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, is an internationally renowned economist who claims that economic growth in the future will depend upon what he calls the creative class, that is scientists, engineers, architects, writers, teachers, artists, and entertainers. These people will be the new economic

elite, and geographical areas which can attract the creative class will flourish.

Critics point out that most people do not belong to this creative class. Will they constitute a vast underclass that provides services for the wealthy, creative few?

To counter this concern Florida says, “Each and every human being is creative and we can only grow, develop, and prosper by harnessing the full creativity of each of us. For the first time in history, future economic development requires further human development. This means developing a strategy to nurture creativity across the board - on the farm, in the factory, and in offices, shops, non-profits, and a full gamut of service class work, as well as within the creative class. Our future depends on it.”

10 STEPS FOR BOOSTING CREATIVITY

by Jeffrey Baumgartner

Listen to music by Johann Sebastian Bach. If Bach doesn’t make you more creative, you should probably see your doctor—or your brain surgeon if you are also troubled by headaches, hallucinations or strange urges in the middle of the night.

Brainstorm. If properly carried out, brainstorming can help you not only come up with sacks full of new ideas, but can help you decide which is best.

Always carry a small notebook and a pen or pencil around with you. That way, if you are struck by an idea, you can quickly note it down. Upon rereading your notes, you may discover about 90% of your ideas are daft. Don’t worry, that’s normal. What’s important are the 10% that are brilliant.

If you’re stuck for an idea, open a dictionary, randomly select a word and then try to formulate ideas incorporating this word. You’d be surprised how well this works. The concept is based on a simple but little known truth: freedom inhibits creativity. There is nothing like restrictions to get you thinking.

Define your problem. Grab a sheet of paper, electronic notebook, computer or whatever you use to make notes, and define your problem in detail.

You’ll probably find ideas positively spewing out once you’ve done this.

If you can’t think, go for a walk. A change of atmosphere is good for you and gentle exercise helps shake up the brain cells.

Don’t watch TV. Experiments performed by the JPB Creative Laboratory show that watching TV causes your brain to slowly trickle out your ears and/or nose. It’s not pretty, but it happens.

Don’t do drugs. People on drugs think they are creative. To everyone else, they seem like people on drugs.

Read as much as you can about everything possible. Books exercise your brain, provide inspiration and fill you with information that allows you to make creative connections easily.

Exercise your brain. Brains, like bodies, need exercise to keep fit. If you don’t exercise your brain, it will get flabby and useless. Exercise your brain by reading a lot (see above), talking to clever people and disagreeing with people—arguing can be a terrific way to give your brain cells a workout. But note, arguing about politics or film directors is good for you; bickering over who should wash the dishes is not.

SOME CREATIVE COURSES AT THE COLLEGES

Andrew Sutherland in his article has highlighted several art programs, full time and part time at the colleges. There are also many creative courses you can take for interest through Continuing Education departments at the colleges. Adults often think of the colleges as focused entirely on work related courses, but this is only part of their programming. Though many of the creative courses are for those making a career in these fields, many can be taken for personal interest. Some courses like Photography are offered at most college but each has unique features. Check out the following programs for yourself or give a course as a special gift for a friend or family member.

George Brown College
Jewellery-making: George Brown’s program is famous.
Fashion: Pattern Drafting is one step up from home sewing but an essential course in fashion design.
Acting, Film and Video Production, Screenwriting—are you interested?
Culinary Arts including Cake Decorating or Baking; how about the Art of Cookies?
Interior Decorating: how about Small Space and Budget Decorating?
Visual Arts also includes Sculpting and Cartooning,

Humber College
Comedy: for those with stand up talent
Puppetry: one of a kind, the only course in all the colleges.
The usual Drawing, Painting etc.
Acting,
Interior Design,
Digital Design and Animation.
Floral Design
Gardening; How about Urban Agriculture and Edible Landscaping?
Photography

Sheridan College
Interior Decorating
Photography
Creative Writing
Floral Design
Jewellery and Beading
Guitar

Seneca College
Sewing for the home; How about decorative cushions?
Interior Decorating for Personal Applications.
Floral Designs.
Acting: lots of acting courses.
Computer Graphics
Drawing, Jewellery, Photography
Scrap Booking
Cooking; How about ‘elegant’ desserts?
Home Landscaping

Centennial College
I could not resist this make up course though we have not included other esthetics courses: Global Bridal Intensive Make Up: Bollywood, Egyptian and Chinese Belly Dancing and Samba
Digital Illustration
Recording Arts
Screenwriting for Film and Television

Durham College
Landscaping Your Home
Pen & Ink and Watercolour Wash
Painting: How about Mixed Media Fur and Feathers? Painting birds and animals.
Photography
Sewing,
Digital Design, Animation
Decorating Basics

Well, there are plenty of courses to choose from. Aren’t we fortunate to be surrounded by so many opportunities to exercise our creativity?

INSIDE:



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College is at the heart of it all too.



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Register now for winter classes at coned.georgebrown.ca

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Cuban Literature (4 weeks)

February 10 to March 31

THURSDAYS

Law and Order (4 weeks)
The Jury System (4 weeks)

SUMMER

To be confirmed

TUESDAYS:

Aboriginal Studies II (4 weeks)
Empire of the Word (4 weeks)

To be confirmed

THURSDAYS

Social Action and the Environment II
(8 weeks)

Registration for the winter courses will take place in January.

If you are new to the program, phone Anne
at 416 762-6180 for an appointment.

If you have already participated in the program, e-mail
learningcurves@hotmail.com or phone Anne at the above
number and indicate what course or courses you want to take.



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FUNDING OPTIONS ARE ABUNDANT FOR CAREER COLLEGE STUDENTS

By Laura Bailey

With the new year almost upon us, now is the time to start thinking about post-secondary education and begin training for the career you want. Going to a post-secondary institution can be a challenge, and finding the right college or program leads to finding the resources to make it happen.

The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) offers loans while Second Career funding pays for retraining; these are some of the ways students are getting funding from the provincial government to complete their studies. Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) also has funding available for retraining injured workers in Ontario.

"Career colleges have delivered about half of the training under the Second Career program," said Paul Kitchin, executive director of the Ontario Association of Career Colleges. The provincially funded program helps laid-off workers gain skills training and find jobs in high-demand careers.

The hands-on, intensive programs available at Ontario's private career colleges are often of shorter duration than public colleges, making PCCs a popular choice for people interested in getting back to work as soon as possible.

"Career colleges have long been hailed for their intensive, hands-on training," said Kitchin. "We provide focused education that instills the practical skills necessary for success in the work place."

There are many private career colleges in Ontario who are OSAP designated, which means students in programs at that college are eligible for student loans from the government to fund their education. With no interest or repayments required until after graduation, OSAP is one of the best options available to students.

Additionally, there are many bursaries, grants, contests, awards, government and bank loan options available to students looking to help fund their education at a private career college.

Bank loans or lines of credit often offer low interest rates during the study period, where no payment on the principal of the loan is required. These loans can also offer periods after graduation where interest-only payments continue. Visiting a bank will help students understand the types of loans available and what might work best for their personal need.

Some funding options require students to pay back a portion or all of the money loaned, such as OSAP and bank loans, but students can now use the web and other resources to find programs and awards with no payback requirement giving students a low-cost or no-cost education.

College sponsored scholarships

Grade Learning is hoping prospective students will like them on Facebook for a chance at one of five scholarships the private career college is offering. People who "like" the

Grade Learning Facebook page can then apply for scholarships of \$5000, and share with friends to increase their chance of winning.

Speaking about using the social media platform to give away scholarships, Grade Learning CEO Michael Bateman said, "It was a way for us to build our Facebook presence, to attract individuals that have a need for retraining."

"Think of how often people are on Facebook and get nothing from it. It's just a social place to be. With this it's a nice opportunity," Bateman said.

This new generation of promotion will allow more people to hear about and share the scholarship with a variety of friends, in turn giving them the chance of funding their own education.

"The idea is an individual can produce their own scholarship almost," Bateman explained. "If they apply for the scholarship and direct people to the Facebook page, they give themselves a good shot at getting a scholarship."

BTH Education in Mississauga is another private career college offering a helping hand to students. BTH Education offers a bursary for full tuition coverage and 75 percent tuition coverage to students interested in the IT Engineering Diploma.

"We are offering these bursaries in an effort to build up and contribute to the community and city that we operate in," said Louis Barnard of BTH Education.

Students can visit the college website and apply using the bursary application form.

Other career colleges may offer scholarships to students interested in attending their schools. For more information students should contact the colleges directly.

External Scholarships and awards

There are many websites geared towards connecting students to specific awards. Studentawards.com, MySchool.com, ScholarshipsCanada.com, and WorkInfoNet.ca are just some of the websites available to students looking for awards, grants, bursaries and scholarships. Students can also contact the financial aid office at their prospective career college and inquire about scholarship opportunities.

Links

Private Career Colleges in Ontario - ontario.ca/PCC
Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) - osap.gov.on.ca
Other government education funding options - www.canlearn.ca
Second Career - ontario.ca/secondcareer
Workplace Safety and Insurance Board of Ontario - www.wsib.on.ca
Laura Bailey is the Media Communications Coordinator for the Ontario Association of Career Colleges.



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THE BEST GOVERNMENT ARTS GRANTS

By Andrew Sutherland

Whether you're an established artist, trying to explore new directions, a mid-career artist, who wants to develop new skills, or an emerging artist looking to create a new work such as a film or an installation, there are thousands of public grants available to Canadian artists.

"For forty years now, we've had the mandate of supporting arts for the benefit of all Ontarians," says Geneviève Vallerand, communications coordinator for the Ontario Arts Council (OAC).

"In recent months, we've seen real evidence that speaks to how highly Ontarians value the arts, for the strength and livability of their communities."

An October 2010 survey commissioned by the OAC showed that 95% of Ontarians believe that the arts enrich their quality of life, and 89% percent believe that if their community lost its arts activities, it would lose something of value. To that end, Canadian consumers spent as much as \$22.8 billion on cultural goods and services in 2003, an amount that is greater than spending on tobacco, alcohol and gambling combined.

Both the Ontario and Federal governments offer a wide selection of artists' grants for practicing artists in a variety of disciplines such as music, visual art, theater, and new media. Last year, the Ontario Arts Council awarded 51.8 million dollars in grants, and the federally-funded Canada Council for the Arts awarded 146.1 million dollars to individual artists and arts organizations.

Your first grant application can be a bit intimidating, and to get the most out of the program there are a few things you should know to make it easier.

Before you start, it's important to know if you qualify as an artist. Both the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts have similar criteria to determine if you can be considered a practicing artist.

You must be recognized as a professional, practicing artist by peers who are working in the same field. You must have completed basic training in your chosen field; it can be formal or informal. You must also have spent a significant amount of time practicing your art; for example, you've been painting for a few years or have spent several years studying dance or composing music. If you can talk about your practice and your art, you are probably an experienced artist. Finally, do you seek payment for your work? It doesn't mean you have to earn a living solely from your art, but you at least seek an income for it.

In addition to these criteria, each program has specific requirements depending on what grant you're applying for, which is why it's important to know what you want to do, and where your project fits. You may feel that your project could fall into many categories, or is an interdisciplinary piece.

"People ask where their chances will [be best], but the reality is that there is probably only one program that their project will fit in," says Christian Mondor, an information officer at the Canada Council for the Arts.

"A program officer will situate your application and take a look at what you're proposing and say something like, 'Oka, well I think this is the best program for you, this is the best fit for your needs and interests,'" says Geneviève Vallerand.

Start your application early, don't wait until the day an application is due to give a call to an information officer for additional clarification; they're there to help and can guide you in the right direction.

"If you as an artist give yourself a three or four week lead time and connect with the program office you're applying to, you can

get sufficient feedback that will make your application as strong as possible," says Vallerand.

Once you figure out what grant you want to apply for, the real determining factor in qualifying will be how you fill out your application. It's important to spend plenty of time working with the application; the OAC recommends you start with a rough draft to help you organize your thoughts. Write in your own voice, and show what's unique about your project, your artistic practice, or the geography or culture related to your art. Focus on the artist's statement. Think about why you make art, what inspires you and your goals and aspirations. Give a complete description of your project, who your intended audience is, and why your project is important. Also provide a detailed budget. According to the OAC, there's no such thing as too much financial detail.

Along with your application, you'll need to send support material, which will depend on the grant you are applying for. If you practice many art forms, send samples of your work that are the most relevant to the type of grant application you are preparing.

Applicants are reviewed by a jury made up of their peers.

"Artists who have expertise in specific areas, visual arts, dance, and theatre, they're the ones that come together as a group and make an assessment based on the field of submissions," says Vallerand.

"Every jury is unique and is really the corner stone of our granting." Last year out of the 9,634 individual applicants to the Canada Council for the Arts, 2,347 individuals received grants. At the OAC of the 6,592 applications submitted to the OAC, 3,490 were successful.

"In most cases it's not because the individual isn't meeting the eligibility criteria although there is a set of standards they need to meet; it's not about what they're doing, but about our budget limitations," says Vallerand.

At the OAC the most commonly applied to are grants for popular music, writer's work in progress and emerging visual artist grants.

"There is an increasing pressure on the programs with new technologies, the ones that make it easier for artists to reach their audience," says Christian Mondor.

"For musicians we have a program that will help them develop a promotional website, for their band or ensemble. We do the same for visual artists."

For creative grants, you can only apply for one per fiscal year if you're an emerging artist, says Mondor. If you're an established artist, in different disciplines, you can apply for different projects. However an artist might be able to apply for a writing grant and also apply for a travel grant to go and receive an award.

Or a musician can apply for a career development grant and later apply for a touring grant, provided the grants don't double up the funds for a period of time.

Considering the staggering number of Ontarians who see an inherent value in the arts, there have never been more opportunities for Canadian artists to succeed and not only fulfill their creative dreams but also have an impact on their communities.

"The arts and creative sectors don't only have an inherent value," says Vallerand. "It's been proven time and time again, that the economic contributions of the arts are significant to Ontario's prosperity."

For more information about the types of grants available, check out:
www.arts.on.ca/
www.canadacouncil.ca/

Andrew Sutherland is a Toronto based freelance journalist.

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Seneca
Yorkgate Campus

IS THE REAL YOU AN ARTIST?

By Andrew Sutherland

Continued from page 1

and Design where students learn about the three attributes of colour, hue, value and chroma, and explore colour relationships based on the colour theories of Josphe Itten, and Henry Munsell. Fundamentals of Web Design introduces simple program coding and teaches students the basics of building a personal promotional website. For more info check out www.georgianc.on.ca/programs/AADF or email program coordinator Amy Switzer - aswitzer@georgianc.on.ca

Jazz Performance: Intro to Commercial and Jazz Music: Humber College

Humber Jazz has a stellar reputation, and many Humber faculty members have won Grammy and Juno awards for their music. This one-year performance-based program includes weekly private lessons, small group ensemble performances and the opportunity to study with some of Canada's finest jazz musicians.

Intro to Commercial and Jazz Music will help you acquire the knowledge, skills and theory that form the groundwork of commercial and jazz music. The program also gives academic qualifications to those who are interested in continuing their education in undergraduate studies.

For more info check out <http://creativeandperformingarts.humber.ca/music/music.html> or email program coordinator catherine.mitro@humber.ca

Performing Arts Preparation: Sheridan College

If you know your future is on the stage, you just don't know which stage it is yet, try it all with this one-year program at Sheridan. Students gain first-hand experience in a variety of disciplines like acting, singing, dance, as well as stand-up and sketch comedy. Courses include voice and music where students learn vocal techniques through

a series of progressive practical exercises, discussions and rehearsals, culminating in an ensemble performance; movement and dance through ballet, where students develop strength, flexibility, stamina and coordination and learn the fundamental approaches to movement using repetition and the complexity of movement sequences. In the technical and design career course, they learn about the technical production aspects of performing arts, and how to interpret and analyze the production requirements for a variety of live performances.

For more info check out www.sheridaninstitute.ca/ or email program coordinator Mark Melymick: mark.melymick@sheridaninstitute.ca

Media Foundation: Humber College

The Internet age and the waves of new media that have come along with it are now crashing down on anyone who wasn't born with a mouse planted firmly in their hand. Get a handle on the basics of the new media at Humber. The Media Foundation curriculum includes courses in film studies, website development, basic photography, public relations, journalism, media writing and audio production. Students learn how to use HTML, JavaScript, Flash, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, InDesign, and Final Cut Pro on both Mac and PC platforms. Students also learn about the variety of career options in the media, and are given the opportunity to test their interest and aptitude in these areas.

For more info check out <http://programs.media.studies.humber.ca/mediafoundation>

Or email program coordinator Robert Richardson: robert.richardson@humber.ca

For further information about the application process, or to learn more about Ontario colleges check out www.ontariocolleges.ca

Art and Design Foundation

Program: George Brown College

Want to explore your options in the art and design field to prepare for further study, or looking to strengthen your portfolio? The Art and Design Foundation program offers courses in design, drawing, colour theory, digital design, photography and art history. The art showcase lecture series brings top creative talent into the classroom, exposing students to the many career opportunities in the design field. The program even sponsors a design competition where students work with the support of local organizations to create a work of art, then the work is displayed in a local exhibit space and is open to the public for viewing.

For more info check out: www.georgebrown.ca/Marketing/FTCal/gas/R104.aspx Or contact the program coordinator Pamela Barnett: pidahosa@georgebrown.ca

There are also plenty of part-time programs available for the artistically minded.

SENECA COLLEGE:

Certificate in Theatrical Performance: Courses include Fundamental Acting Technique, Workshop on Scene Study, Improvisation, on Camera Acting and Techniques and Introductory Voice Training for Film and Theater.

Special Effects Make Up Artistry Certificate: Courses include Glamour Makeup, Fashion Makeup, Airbrush Makeup, Character Makeup, Theatre Makeup, Film & TV Makeup and Production Work and Script Analysis.

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE:

Recording Arts Certificate: Courses include Intro to Audio Recording, Digital Audio Recording, Midi and Programming, Music Theory and Arranging for Production.

Digital Publishing Certificate: Courses include Graphic Design Fundamentals, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and Image Processing, Intro to Adobe Indesign, Band Design and Development.

DURHAM COLLEGE:

Graphic Arts Certificate: Courses include Adobe Illustrator, Digital Imaging, Digital Photography, Drawing, in Design, Layout and Design, Prepress Production and Typography.

Interior Decorating Certificate: Courses include Basic Drafting, AutoCAD for Interior Decorating, History of Furniture, Colour Theory, Decorating with Light, Perspective Drawing, Illustration and Presentation, Materials and Finishes, Decorating Basics and Business Practices.

HUMBER COLLEGE:

Creative Advertising Certificate: Courses include Intro to Advertising Strategy, Creative Advertising Practices, Art Direction and Copywriting, and Portfolio Development.

3ds Max Modeling and Design Certificate: Courses include 3ds Max Interface Design, 3d Modeling, 3d Animation, 3d for Texturing and Lighting and 3d Rendering And Output.

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Independent Filmmaking Certificate: Courses include Digital Cinematography, Digital Video Editing, History of Cinema, Screenwriting, Video Production, Directing Actors for Screen, Production and Design Story Boarding.

Digital Photograph Certificate: Courses include Architectural Photography, Power of Light, The Art of Night Photography, Business Photography, Fashion Photography, Food Photography, Nature Photography and Wedding Photography.

COURSES FOR CREATIVE SELF-EXPRESSION AT THE TDSB

By Wendy Terry

One very affordable way to explore your creative side is to take one of the General Interest courses at the Toronto District School Board. The Calendar, Learn for Life, lists hundreds of courses being offered for the winter term. The courses are also on the website www.learn4life.ca. Classes begin in January and registration is open now.

Here are a few courses from Learn for Life that will help you express and develop your creativity. Under Art, there are beginner courses in drawing and painting at six different locations across Toronto and my favourite is at Overland Learning Centre Drawing for People Who Can't Draw. If you are not a rank beginner there are art courses for all levels and in all materials and forms. These include sculpture, metal work, acrylic, water colour, egg tempura, pottery, landscapes, still life, and portraits. For the more craft oriented there is a course on Collage and Assemblage at Central Tech. Our editor, Anne, has made collages from magazine clippings, which framed make lovely pieces of art in her living room.

Creative writing courses are available under Communications. You can learn how to craft a story or write your memoirs. I often think every person's life is like a story and to write it down for the next generations is a wonderful gift. For

instance, my Aunt Ethel wrote about growing up on a farm on Manitoulin Island in the 1920s.

In the Computer section of the calendar courses in graphic arts applications are listed. Check out Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and Fireworks for drawing, art and graphic arts applications and Flash for animation. Ask your kids to buy Digital Photo Album and Digital Video for Christmas this year and next year you can give them an album or a movie that tells your family story. One student I know made a digital photo album from his old slides of a three year camping trips that he and his wife took in their 20's to Australia, Asia, Europe and South America.

The Crafts section of the calendar lists classes in beading, jewellery, stained glass and many more. Mimico Adult Learning Centre offers award winning and well-known courses in weaving, wood carving and sculpture. A new one for me was Bunka Shishu, Japanese embroidery which is a seniors' day time course. Then there are the traditional knitting, crocheting and calligraphy crafts.

Under Dance, you will find that you don't have to be a performance artist to use dance for self-expression as well as exercise. Everyone can get into it and for many courses you don't need a partner. There is everything

from the Rumba to the Tango to Ballroom to Bollywood dancing. There is Egyptian Belly dancing, Hip Hop, Swing, Night Club and Line Dancing. Jack, one of the founders of Citizens for Lifelong Learning, met his second wife Alice in a TDSB dance class 22 years ago.

In the Music section, many courses in guitar and keyboarding from beginning to intermediate are offered in many locations across the city. The Harmonica Workshop in the Blues caught my attention, as my favourite picture of my Aunt Helen is of her playing the Harmonica. She puts her all into it and it shows in this picture. If you are a singer who has always wanted to try opera, check out the renowned opera courses held at the TDSB's Bickford Centre. If you just want to sing, then try Let's Sing.

Like music but not into doing it? Then under Computers there is a course for you in Digital Music, CD/DVD Creating. If your wife buys you this course for Christmas, then next year you can give her a CD comprised of her favourite songs.

Under Theatre, Film or TV, at Danforth Tech you can find a class to turn that idea for a show into reality. There are courses on cinematography, creating a TV series, producing a short film, visual directing and at Central Tech there are ones on Screenplay

Writing and Stages of Production. It has always been my idea to write a sit com about living in housing co-op. I have ample material; these courses would provide the skills.

Under Games and Hobbies you will find photography courses. Add one of these to the Matting and Framing course found under Art. Then you can give your family nicely framed portraits or pictures of a favourite family setting, a creative way to express your caring.

Under Sewing you can find classes in sewing and tailoring that would make your clothes express your one of a kind style, instead of trying to make off the rack clothing and store bought accessories express this.

In several sections there are courses to help you show your creativity in your home. Under Sewing there is one on window treatments and quilting. There is an Interior Design section in the calendar. Under Crafts there is a course on Floral Design. Under Games and Hobbies, there is a course on Gardening Design. Under Handiwork, there are courses in Upholstery, and Furniture Refinishing. Under Food there is Cake Decorating. Inviting your friend over for coffee and cake decorated just for him or her to celebrate their birthday is a creative way to show your appreciation of the friendship.

THE WORLD AT OUR DOOR

BY GRANT REIMER

On October 26, 2010, we celebrated ESL Day, a part of the ESL Week proclaimed by the Mayor of Toronto, at Overland Learning Centre. Visitors were welcomed by multi-coloured arrangements of mums and balloons.

In the auditorium, special guests, including Judy Whitfield, Supervising Principal of Continuing Education, Gen Ling Chan, Co-ordinating Superintendent (representing Director Chris Spence), Catherine Finlay and Mourad Mardikian, from the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and Trustee Gerri Gershon, brought greetings. The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, MPP and Rob Oliphant, MP also sent greetings through their representatives.

The winners of the speech contests all exhibited their public speaking skills; Janice Gillespie, Supervising Manager of Continuing Education, introduced a newly published book, "Success Stories by our ESL Students" and congratulated the learners represented in the book; Trish Carnat was awarded the "Excellence in Teaching Award" and Grant Reimer, Site Manager of Overland, was presented with the "Celebrating Excellence in the TDSB Award".

Betty May and Crispen Pedlar sang a rousing version of "We are the World" and invited everyone to visit the pavilions prepared by the learners of Overland. Guests travelled all around the world (through the pavilions), sampling tasty delicacies, watching performances and looking at the colourful and interesting displays of the cultures of Africa, South and central Asia, the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, South America, East Asia, Korea, the Middle East, Europe and Afghanistan.

The learners of Overland really outdid themselves showing off their cultures. An art display was also set up showcasing the talented seniors from our Seniors' Daytime Programs.

Everyone returned to the auditorium for a delicious lunch of international foods. All in all, the day was a fabulous success!



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A THANK YOU LETTER TO EVERYONE AT ACCESS BUSINESS COLLEGE



Please allow me to introduce myself; my name is Jacqueline Khouri. It is my honour and pleasure to be one of Access Business College graduates.

I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for the efforts of teachers and all Access staff in putting together a program that truly worked. It is true that I have many years of experience as an Administrative Executive and some background in Financial Services, but my knowledge in Accounting and Payroll were significantly enhanced through the courses I took at Access

Business College. I believe that I have spent fruitful times during my one year of study. I enjoyed a very comfortable learning environment.

I would like to thank your teachers who trained me and gave me a good introduction to Bookkeeping and AccPac. The teachers took their time in explaining every detail of the subject and gave me a taste of every situation that I would encounter in the workforce.

I was so touched with the follow-through of Access Business College of inviting an employer right on the premises of the college. The interview at the college environment made me comfortable and more confident in the familiar surroundings. I thus did very well in the interview and received the job offer. To elevate this point, I was offered the job with still two weeks to go in my course.

Thank you again to all the staff at Access Business College for all your support, your pleasant personalities and most of all the assistance in searching a job. I really do appreciate it.

Sincerely yours,
Jacqueline Khouri

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DROPPING BACK INTO SCHOOL

By: Tom Bartsiokas

It's never too late to go back to school. Just ask Alicia Woods.

At 16, this Newmarket resident dropped out of high school, and a few years later she became pregnant. To pay the rent and support her son, the single mother took a job at a coffee shop, where she worked long hours and earned minimum wage.

Serving coffee made Alicia realize she wanted more out of life. So with her family's encouragement, the 25-year-old returned to school after almost a decade to earn a college diploma and prepare for the future.

"If it wasn't for my son I probably would have never gone back to school," Alicia says. "I wanted him to know he can do anything he puts his mind to."

Alicia's decision to pursue post-secondary education led her to Seneca's Business Office Skills program, which provides students with the office skills and knowledge to meet the demands of today's workplace.

In fact, the program's curriculum is directly related to the skills needed in the current job market and includes courses in accounting, Internet and e-mail, business English, Microsoft Office, math and service excellence.

Alicia says she found the program difficult at first, but thanks to the help of her professors not only did she pass all of her courses, she earned an overall GPA of 3.9.

The Faculty at the Newmarket Campus where Alicia was studying was so impressed with her work ethic and academic achievements that they nominated her to be College valedictorian this past June.

It was an honour Alicia gladly accepted on behalf of the Faculty of Workforce Skills Development and today it stands out as one of her prouder moments.

"Three years ago I never thought I'd come this far," she says. "You can pretty much do anything you put your mind to, and I learned that firsthand this past year. It wasn't easy, but I was determined."

To learn more about the Business Office Skills program, visit www.senecac.on.ca/fulltime/BOS



GIVING LEARNING FOR CHRISTMAS, SAY SOMETHING SPECIAL

By Wendy Terry

Giving learning as a Christmas gift says something special to the person you are giving it to. It tells that person that you see them as a dynamic, learning, creative individual.

Perhaps you could find a course that you could take together—quality time for sure. Many a romance has begun or been enlivened in a continuing education class or over coffee and conversation afterwards.

Need some ideas? In this December issue of Learning Curves there are lots of creative courses highlighted, art, music, photography, writing etc. In the September issue found online at www.weacanda.ca you can check out the Neighbourhood

Learning Chart and the feature article, Shopping for Courses, to give you leads.

There are other places that offer courses, like our cultural centres. The Ontario Art Gallery, the Royal Ontario Museum, the Ontario Science Centre. Even retail stores offer courses, like Home Depot in renovations, Loblaws in cooking, St. Michael's in arts and crafts. Look around your neighbourhood bulletin boards to find flyers from local artists or musicians who offer classes.

You could also give your loved one not only a course but also the time to take it. My friend Pat used to baby sit my son Russell when I was going to York

University. That was such a gift. My mom used to send me home from the weekend visit with a couple of meals ready for the microwave. These home-cooked meals were heaven-sent as I was then well-fed and better able to concentrate in class.

Maybe you could offer to tutor a friend in a required course he or she finds difficult. One of my former students, whom I helped find a job, returned the favour recently by offering to tutor my son in a Statistics course, which my son found very difficult. His gift of tutoring calmed my son and turned a possible failure into a reasonable pass.

Maybe tuition for a course is beyond

your pocket book, and you don't have time to give but you could give a stocking stuffer that supports your loved one's lifelong learning. A gift certificate for Business Depot or Gwartzman's could buy some needed project materials or art supplies. A gift certificate for Tim Horton's or Timothy's could buy that after class coffee. One from Best Buy could buy a tech tool or an enhancement for the computer that would help with on-line courses.

And one more point for giving learning; it is a green gift; it leaves a light carbon foot print.

HUMBER PART TIME WRITING COURSES GO ON-LINE

As anyone interested in creative writing knows, Humber College's School for Creative & Performing Arts has one of the best reputations for nurturing experienced and would-be writers. The part time program is offering a number of interesting courses. The following courses starting In January are:

Advanced Fiction Workshop ONLINE
January 12 – April 20, 2011
Blogging 101
January 11 – March 15, 2011
Creative Writing Kick-Start
March 26, 2011
Editing: Live!
January 13 – April 7, 2011
How's Your Colon? A Grammar Primer
January 12 – March 2, 2011
Introduction to Memoir Writing
January 19 – April 27, 2011
Writing Children's Books
January 19 – March 23, 2011
Writing Fiction 1 IN CLASS or ONLINE
January 11 – April 19, 2011
Writing Fiction 2.
January 12 – April 20, 2011

Blasting Through Writer's Block
March 24 – April 21, 2011
Creative Writing Kick-Start
March 26, 2011

No grades are given for these courses. The help you receive as a budding author takes the place of marks.

How's Your Colon? A Grammar Primer is a new course which will help you identify the hurdles of your most commonly made mistakes and learn the particular pleasure of solidly structured, coily crafted, and punctually perfect sentences, paragraphs and, yes, even letters and emails.

Also new are the two online courses. Advanced Fiction Workshop is only online while Writing Fiction 1 is online and also in class.

In Writing Fiction 1 whether in class or online, students learn and practise how to develop character, drive plot, establish setting, and train their ears to write the smart dialogue and lyric language that set fiction on fire. To identify and employ craft, the students analyze readings and discuss peer assignments, learn to mine life

experiences and imagination in exercises, and ultimately gain the arsenal of skills necessary to wrangle and shape their work all in the company of a supportive, encouraging classroom community.

The online course has several interactive components:

- The Instructor posts lectures once a week. You can read them online, print them, or download them at your convenience
- Exercises and readings illustrate each week's lecture topics
- Students post completed assignments for feedback and discussion by the instructor and class

Chats allow the class to work together via instant messaging. Transcripts are available for review if you can't attend. Technical support is available from Humber's Open Learning Centre.

As its title implies, Advanced Fiction Workshop is for writers who have worked on short stories, a novel, a memoir or creative nonfiction essays, and they're ready to polish and hone their work. The Advanced Fiction Workshop is an interactive, online, writer-centred class, in which writers

focus on improving dialogue, plot lines and thematic elements in their work in a supportive yet critical group environment. They learn essential tips on how to edit and revise in order to create sophisticated pieces of writing that will draw (and keep) an editor's attention. This is an excellent opportunity to improve their craft and get ideas on where to place their work in the Canadian publishing industry. Students who complete this course are invited to submit their work for consideration for entry to the Creative Writing Summer Workshop. If they are accepted, they will receive a 10 per cent discount on tuition.

Contact: Steve Bellamy
416-675-6622 ext. 3450
steve.bellamy@humber.ca
To register, please call 416-675-5005

Classes are held at Humber's Lakeshore Campus, at the foot of Kipling Avenue, on Lake Shore Blvd. West.
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Getting Unstuck: Blasting Through

Writer's Block

How's your Colon? A Grammar Primer

Memoir Writing

Writing Children's Books

Writing Fiction 1

(in-class or online)

Writing Fiction 2

(in-class)

EVENING CLASSES BEGIN IN JANUARY

For details: steve.bellamy@humber.ca

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BROCK UNIVERSITY ADULT ED PROGRAMS IN GTA

By Heather Junke

Brock's Adult Education programs build "a community of learners." That is what Patsy Marshall says, a Brock facilitator in the Kitchener-Waterloo region since 2001. "And it's a community, she adds, that forges relationships for years to come."

Highly qualified facilitators, like Marshall, are leading small groups of students in classroom settings and in online forums as part of a dynamic learning experience offered by Brock University's Centre for Adult Education and Community Outreach, located in St. Catharines, Ontario.

This fall, approximately 350 learners are enrolled in the Bachelor of Education (BEd) in Adult Education and in the Certificate in Adult Education part-time programs. Courses are offered both online and face-to-face at as many as 18 locations across Ontario including the Greater Toronto Area. Currently on-site classes in the GTA include the college campuses of Seneca, Humber, Sheridan, Durham and Centennial. These students are involved in two of the longest-running adult education degree and certificate programs in the province.

The BEd in Adult Education program at Brock is unique in Ontario as it offers both first and subsequent degree options. The degree and certificate programs are designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of both aspiring and experienced educators of adults in a diverse range of academic, business and institutional settings or service sectors. The programs feature five Adult Education core courses that focus on learning pedagogies, curriculum design, work-place organization, research and critical reflection. As well, the Centre is developing a bank of Adult Education elective courses for those pursuing their degree requirements.

Shared interests in the field of adult education intersect on many levels between the students and Adult Education facilitators.

"One of the things that I enjoy most as a facilitator is the sharing and learning among participants and myself; our professional and personal growth is unbelievable," says Marshall. "It's about building a community of learners that stays intact even after the course has finished."

Brock's facilitators come from many fields and educational backgrounds. They

live in all corners of Ontario and, in the case of online facilitators, lead courses from as far away as western Canada.

Jim Williams is an online facilitator living in Saskatchewan. He believes students are involved in a transformative experience. "I love seeing the progress the learners make," he says. "I especially love it when a learner has one of those 'ah-ha' moments."

Williams is always impressed with the calibre of students attracted to the programs. "Learners who enter the ADED program are highly motivated and they bring valuable life experiences to the program," he adds.

Rob Goldberg fully agrees. He has been facilitating courses in the Greater Toronto area for several years. "These students come here with purpose," he says. "They are deliberate and very intentional students. They are dedicated to the learning."

"The personalities behind the students add value to the classroom experience. Everyone has a unique story and different perspective. The learners, after time, become comfortable enough with their facilitator and cohort to open up and share their unique thoughts. This enriches the experience," Goldberg adds.

The programs are contributing to

meeting an increasing demand for adult education specialists to work in many vocational and post-secondary settings.

"Many progressive institutions today require a degree or certificate in Adult Education for their new recruits," says Goldberg. "This education along with a portfolio of experience in the field impacts greatly upon their opportunities for career advancement."

"Some of our graduates have applied their program knowledge and practice to advance in their careers, while others move on to pursue a master's degree," says Marshall.

As for the facilitators, they are learning alongside their students. "This experience makes me better at what I do," adds Goldberg. "Each week I learn from the session topic, the readings, and from my interaction with the group of students. It makes me reflect critically on my practice."

Anyone interested in Brock University's Adult Education certificate or degree program may apply for admission to the 2011 winter or fall sessions. For more information, visit <http://brocku.ca/education/departmentsandcentres/caeco>

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For information about our courses, please visit
brocku.ca/education/futurestudents/adulted
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adulted@brocku.ca

Centre for Adult Education and Community Outreach,
Faculty of Education Brock University St. Catharines Ontario

AN ADULT EDUCATION AGENDA FOR TRUSTEES

On December 15, new and reelected trustees will have their first Board meeting since the municipal election. Some agenda items will be new but others will be carried over from the previous Board. One of those carry-over items goes back to the May 26 Board meeting and relates to adult students of whom there are well over 100,000 in the Toronto District School Board.

At the May 26 Board meeting the trustees passed the following motion: "that the staff meet with adult education administrators and staff, adult students, and trustees and report in September 2010 on existing services in adult schools, assess unmet needs, and present a report with costs on how the Board can begin to properly support the social, emotional and physical needs of adult learners." This was part B. To understand part B one must look at part A.

Observers of elected Boards would find this motion a classic example of a spur of the moment resolution, with little reflection on what the demands of compiling such a report would be and the time needed not to mention a budget. Observers of the politics of organizations would recognize it as a "we really do have the interests of adult students at heart" notwithstanding Part A of this motion. Now to Part A.

Part A was to terminate the TDSB agreement with the Toronto Adult Students' Association. Earlier, on May 5, TASA had presented data to the Program and School Services Committee showing they had served over 6,000 students in their resource centre the previous year, and over 1,000 supporters

had signed a petition; nevertheless, the Board moved to terminate its contract with TASA, against the recommendations of the Committee. The Board's problem was having severed the relationship with TASA, how would it show its support of adult students. Hence Part B.

So as any follower of the British Comedy "Yes, Minister" would know, given such a broad motion, the staff has done nothing and has not reported, perhaps hoping with the change over from the old Board to the new, Part B would be forgotten.

We hope not, as understanding the unmet needs of individual adult learners and acting to meet these is important to their success, to their children's success and to society's success.

The last time the TDSB commissioned a study on Adult Education was in 2007. The Learning for Life report was not about "how to support the social, emotional and physical needs of adult learners" as requested in the May 26 motion. It was a program review. Thus questions of what should be offered to adults and how they should be offered in order to cover costs was the focus. Nevertheless, the issues identified and still not addressed are related to the individual adult learner's needs

1. Therefore the trustees should have a look at The Learning for Life report. Copies are available on the TDSB website.

Key issues identified in Learning for Life still remain, but the report seems to have been filed and forgotten. Again observers of large organizations would recognize the tendency to focus on process over action. Despite the

thousands of dollars and months of time spent on consultation to produce Learning for Life, little money or time has been spent on actions needed to resolve the issues.

The report found, for instance, that "the value the system places on Continuing Education programs was unclear and there is an urgent need for clarity." That is still the case today if you follow the current development of schools as community hubs or full service schools. There is no policy in place that mandates Continuing Education programs for adults be part of each hub or full service school.

In fact, the focus from the province for school boards is on early childhood education as a way to improve student success. This has occurred despite mounds of research that shows it is the education of the parents that affects student success the most. In Finland, often cited because of its high rates of student success, children start school at the age of seven, hardly early childhood. However, adult education is considered as important as the education of children. Since parents are the first and ongoing teachers of the child and since those parents in Finland are well-educated to begin with and continue to be lifelong learners because of Finland's policies, we can assume that they are a major reason for their children's success in school; we could also conclude that adult education is the key to student success not early childhood education.

2. Therefore, the trustees should commit the Board to adult education in a way that makes adult education as

important as children's education.


The report also found that the Adult Day Schools are "very much in need of advocates." Here adults earn a Grade 12 Diploma just as adolescents do. However, the adult program is funded at a third of what the adolescents' program is. "Meeting the social, emotional and physical needs of adult learners" is thus quite hampered. A high school diploma used to be funded equally for adults and adolescents. It was in 1997 that the Harris government created two tier funding. In fact, TASA was formed in response to this action. The McGuinty government has closed the gap slightly, but there is still a huge gap in funding between the two.

Closing this funding gap, could address two student needs identified by the Gosling report which were special education and social work. Many adults dropped out of school because of unidentified learning disabilities and/or abusive home environments. The problems or the consequences of them still need to be addressed.

3. Therefore, the trustees should advocate for equal funding for adult students so that individual student's needs can be better met. Maybe our crusading Ontario Ombudsman could be persuaded to seriously look into the two-tiered high school diploma.

The new TDSB trustees must make improving adult education a priority.







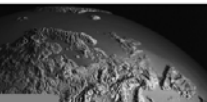
Adult learners can help by contacting their trustee to talk about what they need. Call 416-397-3000 to find out who your trustee is and how to contact him or her.



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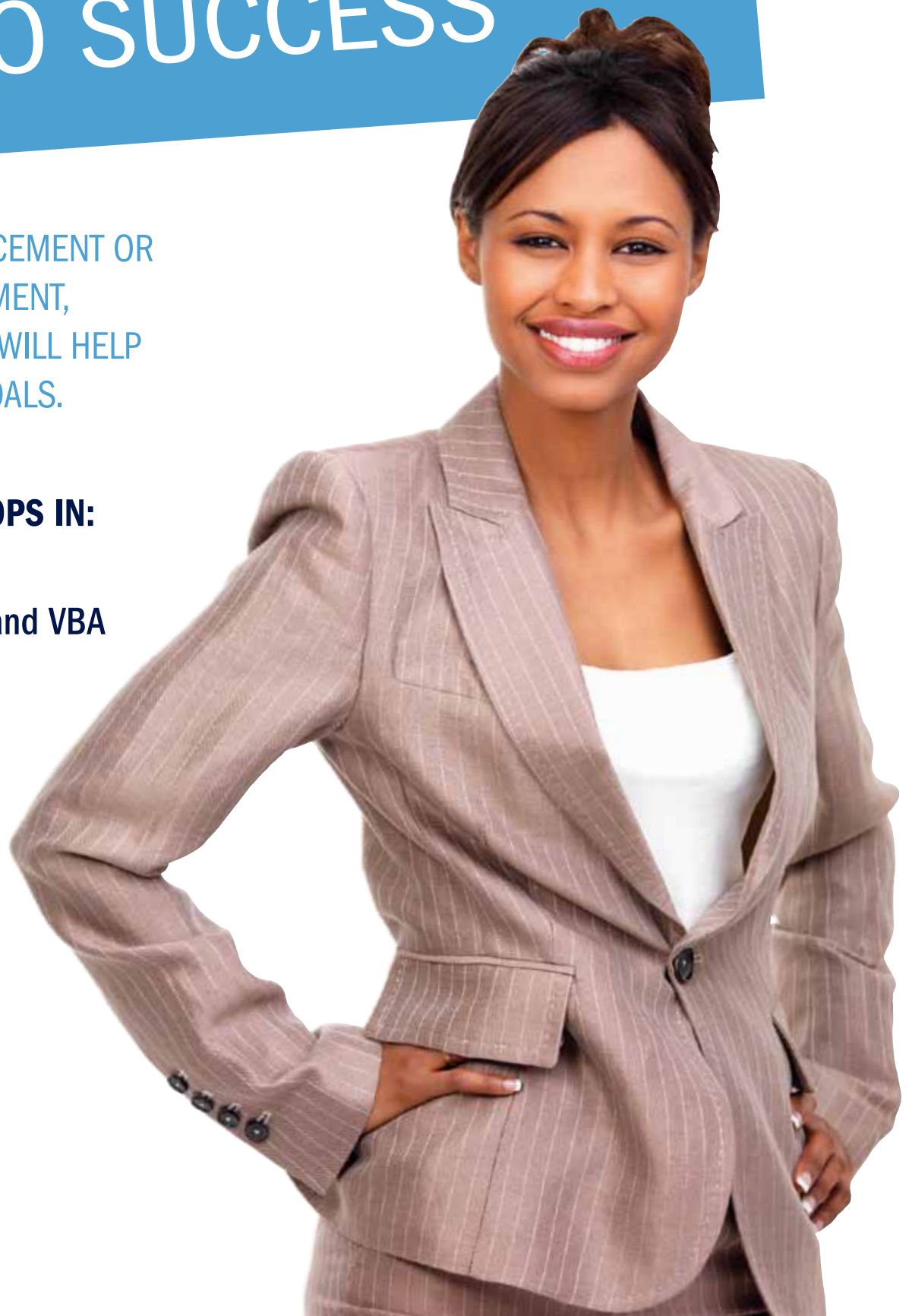
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