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FINDING THE MONEY FOR PART-TIME STUDIES

BY JOANNE MACKAY-BENNETT

Part-time students who attend a public college or university in Ontario are eligible for financial aid through OSAP. Additionally, each college or university has its own programs to help fund part-time studies. Financial support for part-time students at Humber College or University of Toronto can be considered representative

of the kind of assistance available at all colleges and universities in Ontario.

"I'd love to go back to school but I can't afford it" is a familiar refrain. You may see nothing but a future of mounting expenses and feel the pressure to stick with your job, even if it is an unfulfilling one.

Sometimes financial insecurity prevents us from seeing the bigger

picture. We give up on what we really want to do and just plug on with our less-than-satisfying routines.

It takes courage to pursue your educational goals. Be brave! Colleges and universities have offices of financial aid that are there to help you manage the costs of going back to school by offering

CONTINUED ON 15



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STAYING MOTIVATED IN A PRECARIOUS WORKPLACE

BY LISA TRUDEL

The ability to stay motivated when looking for work has become one of the most critical skills for all job-seekers. It is as essential as knowing how to use social media to your best advantage, how to tailor your resume to specific job ads, how to communicate your enthusiasm at job interviews and how to select appropriate references.

It is not necessarily a new skill since job searching has always been demanding. Talk with any job seeker from any decade and you will hear that job searching has always been draining and frustrating but this year dissatisfaction has hit an all-time high as the reality of “precarious employment” has been statistically proven.

In February of 2013, United Way Toronto published a ground-breaking Report titled “It’s More Than Poverty: Employment Precarity and Household Well-being” which describes the rise of precarious employment and the emotional toll this reality is taking on job seekers of all ages.

So how do you stay motivated and develop a reasonable self-management strategy for your career? Here are five rules to assist job seekers despite the media attention on the word “precarious”:

Believe in yourself. Loss of work often connects to loss of self-confidence. To reframe this, use the techniques of successful salespeople and find a way to believe that what you are selling has value. When you are job searching, you are selling yourself and your experience, so convince yourself that you are selling a quality product. Self-confidence is the starting point.

Acknowledge job search time. It might take you longer than ever before to find employment. Depending on your age, your occupation, your experience, your education and your networking contacts, it might take three months or it might take 13 months. Brace yourself to expect the unexpected when it comes to time.

Become a project manager with a support team. Every job seeker is technically their own Project Manager so borrow the project management approach of never working alone and instead ensure you have a support team to assist you. Employment Ontario has over 200 “Service Providers” or Career Centres across Ontario and Career Specialists can assist unemployed job seekers with all aspects of employment preparation. When you have a team to help with your project, or your job search, you might find it easier to stay motivated and achieve the goals you are striving toward.

Stay healthy. How you take care of

yourself while you are job-searching can have a big impact on your stress level and your daily enthusiasm. Be watchful of eating nutritious food, exercising regularly and getting enough sleep. You might want to participate in a sport, yoga or simply walking more instead of driving. Physical activity of any kind can help to shift your mindset from negative to positive. A healthy body generally leads to a healthy mind.

Use well-informed and flexible decision-making skills. With precarious employment rising, reviewing decision-making strategies can assist you with your motivation. In an unpredictable workplace, using a positive uncertainty approach in addition to traditional decision-making skills can be a creative variation and might help you think-outside-the-box. For example, ask yourself:

Are you focused and flexible about what you want?

Are you able to balance achieving goals with discovering them?

Are you able to learn to plan and plan to learn?

Are you objective and optimistic?

Are you practical and imaginative at the same time?

Decisions involve taking responsibility and sometimes by reinforcing or learning alternatives, you can gain new motivation for your job search.

If you are unemployed and want to learn more motivational approaches, visit a local Employment Ontario funded Career Centre. Career experts can help you with resume advice, networking ideas and with supportive, motivational coaching which might be the missing link needed for your career planning success.

This article was submitted by Lisa Trudel, Career Specialist with the Centre for Education & Training www.tcet.com She can be contacted at: ltrudel@tcet.com

NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD STUDENTS TO START LOOKING FOR SUMMER WORK

What? You figured you would wait until the week after graduation? Or maybe you were hoping that a friend of a friend would give you a lead on the perfect summer position that offered great pay and was located at the beach. Well, if that is your plan I wish you only sunny days and plenty of SPF!

However, if you are like most students in high school and post secondary graduation often means the inevitable search for that summer job. Here are some tips to help make that process somewhat less complicated:

1. Start early. Have you ever heard the expression “the early bird catches the worm”? Well, it may have come about by a youth looking for a summer position. Many government employers start advertising in January and February. So, next year, make your New Year’s Resolution to sharpen up your resume.
2. Make a decision. Are you looking to make money or gain experience? In many cases, hopefully, you will come out with both, however, that may not be the situation in every case. Most students find that the maximum bang for their summertime buck will come from working in the service industry. Weekends + patios can mean big tips. An internship or “job creation” position may mean minimum wage but can provide an opportunity to learn valuable skills for your future career and make meaningful contacts. That being said, working in the service industry can hone great customer service skills for future positions.
3. Check out your schools career centre. If your school has a career centre, make sure you check them out early. They will have the inside track on positions – especially ones that are on campus. Many part-time campus positions can also lead to full-time jobs in the summer. Apply to your university’s research department

or the university library. A volunteer stint working in campus security may lead to a hired position in the future.

4. Check out www.youth.gc.ca! This site will lead you to the summer job bank along with a multitude of hiring initiatives designed to help students get support with resumes, cover letters and interviewing skills.
5. Check out your library and local employment centres. They will have information on job fairs, offered reduced rate classes on customer service, First Aid, Smart Serve and Food Handling. This is the time to add extra value to your resume.
6. Make your own job! Set up a babysitting service. Become a gardener. Offer your services as a personal shopper to seniors. There are grants available to help students become self-employed. Let your imagination run wild. If business is your thing... this could be your start.
7. Above all – don’t be shy! One of the best summer jobs I ever had was at a radio station in Newfoundland the summer of 1981. Although there wasn’t an advertised position I made an appointment for an information interview with the Program Director. Once there, I informed him that their station would be remiss in not hiring me for the summer. (Did I mention that I may have been a tad confident) I left with an ELO album (and if you don’t know what that is you can Google it) thinking I would never hear from them again. Three days later they called and offered me a job. I had the best summer a teenager could have! The moral of the story... let everyone know you are looking for work and be prepared. Have your resume ready and don’t hesitate to share.



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Gabriel Paiva

Student, Communications Certificate, and
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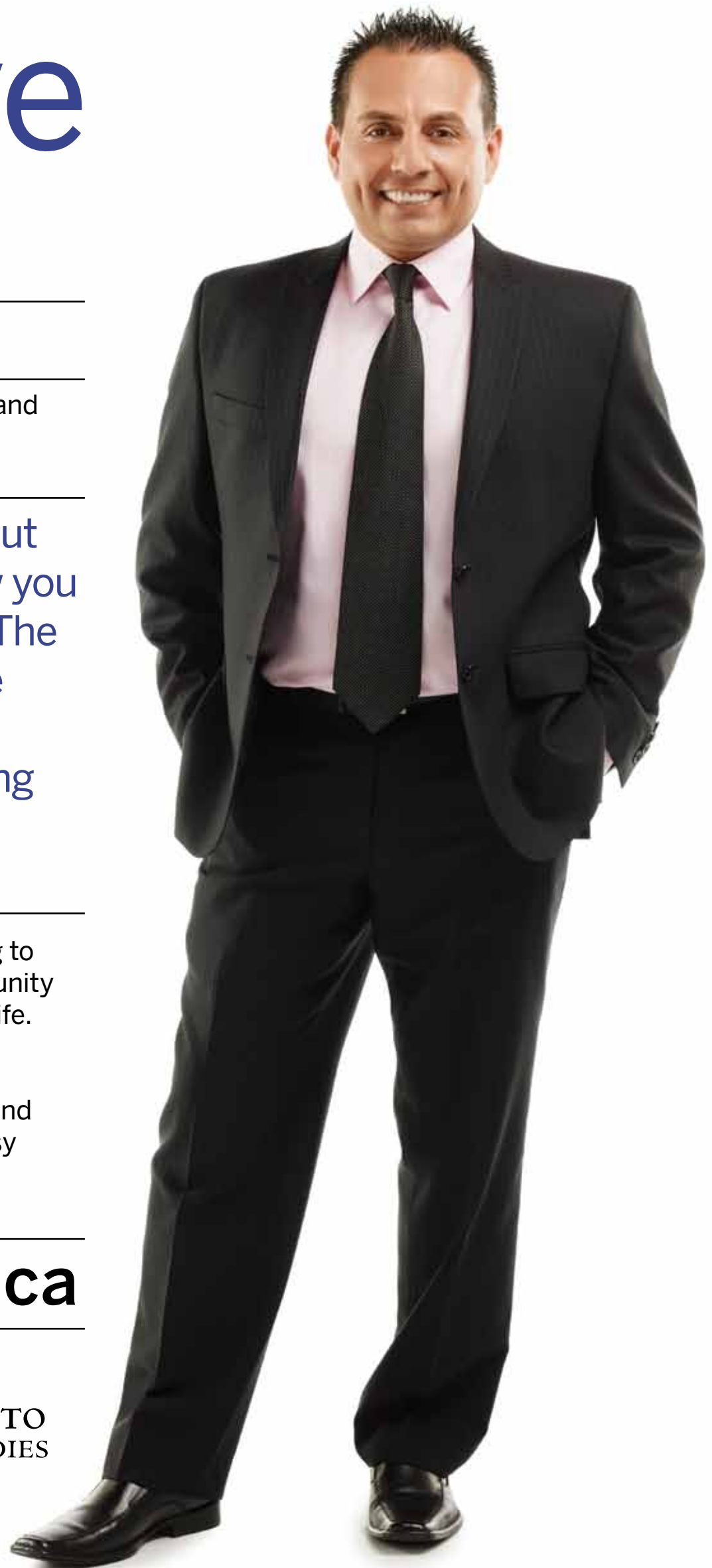
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KATHLEEN WYNNE, ONTARIO'S NEW PREMIER IS A FRIEND TO ADULT LEARNERS

BY WENDY TERRY

Ontario has never had a Premier with such deep commitment to adult learning. Consider the following about Kathleen:

She was an ESL instructor in Holland;

She has an M.Ed from the Ontario Institute for Education in Adult Education;

She was chair of the Task Force on Adult Education at the TDSB 2002.

As a parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Training Colleges and Universities, she completed a provincial report Ontario Learns, Strengthening our Adult Education System in June 23, 2005. When I was rereading this report it became clear that many of the recommendations have been acted on while Kathleen was the Minister of Education or as a Member of Cabinet as Minister of other departments, and even the Deputy Premier. Consider the following:

An Adult Education Unit that works with both the Ministries of Education and the Ministries of Training, Colleges and Universities has been established;

High school programs up to 18 then to 21 are now fully funded which had previously been fully funded only up to 16 years of age.

Funding for ESL programs has been increased;

A Canada-Ontario Immigration

Agreement which helps foster language and settlement services for newcomers was signed in 2005;

Career Bridge programs for the internationally trained was initiated in 2006 that include Occupation Specific Language Training and Mentorships;

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner was set up in April 2007, an independent agency to make sure people (internationally trained) are treated fairly in Ontario when they apply to become licensed professionals;

A Canada-Ontario Labour Market Agreement was signed with the federal government in 2008, which better supports adult training.

The Second Career program was initiated in June 2008 which has enabled thousands of laid-off workers to retrain, from 2009 on;

The Employment Ontario Centres were reorganized in the fall of 2010 so that they are one-stop centres for adults seeking work and retraining;

The Ontario Council of Articulation and Transfer was set up in 2011 which administers ONTransfer a website providing students with information on how they can transfer credits among post-secondary programs of study in publically funded colleges and universities.

In her riding of Don Valley West, she pays frequent visits to Overland Learning Centre, one of the TDSB's largest community schools for adults which offers ESL and General Interest courses and Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office which offers LINC and computer courses.

One final hurrah, when you go to the www.ontario.ca all you have to do is put Adult Learning or Adult Education into the search engine and you are immediately into

program summaries, links and a hotline 1-800-387-5656 to help you find courses in Ontarios. If you punch in Newcomers you are immediately led to program summaries and links in the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Now that is progress—Information without drilling down through layers of organizational structure.

Thank you, Kathleen, and keep it up!



Kathleen Wynne MPP and now Premier attends wrap up event for Human Rights Week December 5-9 2011 at Overland Learning Centre, a week of events organized by Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office.

PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION A GOOD EDUCATIONAL INVESTMENT

BY WENDY TERRY

Recently, Learning Curves spoke with Sonia Nerses at Access Business College (see advertisement on back page) which offers a diploma program in Property Administration.

What do property administrators do? Basically they co-ordinate activities related to the management of buildings. If you think of all the buildings in Toronto and the GTA—apartments, condominiums, retail malls, office buildings, senior residences, commercial and industrial sites, government offices—municipal, provincial and even federal—you will see the job possibilities are endless. In fact 51% of property administrators for Ontario work in the Toronto area.

Not only is there a broad labour market, but also in the age of part-time, contract work, 76% of property administrators work full-time. The average pay per year is around \$57,000. For those researching labour markets for a Second Career application, property administrators have good employment prospects. If you also have a background in housing for older people or running a health unit, prospects are particularly good given the aging of our baby boomer population in Canada.

What qualifications do you need to take the course? According to the Employment Ontario website, you need grade 12 and some administrative skills. You may learn a lot of skills later, on the job, because often property administrators are trained on the job for the company they work for.

You can get a leg up in this job market by taking a property administrator program.

Here is what you might do in a week: hire a building superintendent; rent or lease a property; prepare a contract for a cleaning service for one building and a security system for tenants; and look after the damage deposits. Whew! You can see why property owners value their administrators. Part of the day you could be in the office, the other part on site.

Sonia detailed some of the course material at Access that would help you get a job and quickly fit in as a property administrator are customer service, human resources, business law focused on the Residential Tenancies Act, the Commercial Tenancies Act., computer software applications for administration, bookkeeping and marketing.

Your fellow students could be internationally-trained engineers, customer service workers laid off in the economic downturn, baby boomers looking for a third career and so on.

What future opportunities would there be? For one thing you can be sure of stable employment as property management is not greatly affected by recessions nor can it be outsourced. Given the size of and growth of many property management companies you could move up into more senior or specialized positions fairly quickly.

Thank you Sonia for helping me see a good labour market amongst all the unstable ones for our readers to look into.

CONTINUING EDUCATION IN THE SPRING TERM

Of the three terms, the spring term has the most varied start dates. Course starts go from mid April to mid May, unlike the fall term where most start in the first week of September and the winter term in the first week of January. Some start dates in the spring even go into June, July and August. Learning Curves has featured these courses in our summer issue for the past few years.

Some colleges still publish calendars that list the start dates and schedule (day of the week and hours) under the course description like Durham, Sheridan, Centennial and the School of Continuing Studies at the University of Toronto. So you can browse through the calendar looking for suitable days of the week, times, and start dates.

But others have gone completely online like Seneca or publish a calendar with course descriptions and refer you to a website for schedules like George Brown and Humber. Still others like the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson print a booklet with course titles offered for the term but you have to go online to get schedules and course descriptions.

Each online system has different a way to be user-friendly; for instance, Seneca's website lets you search courses by the days of the week. The Humber and George Brown calendars have text boxes throughout their calendars referring you not only to the

website for schedules but to the direct phone line for the department offering the course.

Sheridan goes the extra mile in its print calendar by inserting a section showing in which terms each course is offered. This is a big help for planning how to expeditiously finish a program of study.

Some of us miss browsing through the calendar when other courses of interest have caught our eye. For some of us not to have to go on campus to get a copy of the calendar (probably to find none are left) going online is handy. As well web sites are more up to date than the calendars which are published months ahead of the class offerings. Some find it tedious to keep drilling down from program to course to schedule only to find it is not offered this term--this is especially true for the spring and summer offerings as there are not as many courses compared to the fall and winter terms.

Whether you curl up with a calendar, your iPad or laptop to find a spring term course, the thing is spring is here and what better way to celebrate the longer, warmer days than to learn something new.

Readers should note that the Toronto District School Board General Interest courses start in the first week of April so you need to look at these right away.

Some distance education courses have term start dates, but many have monthly start dates all year long.

COURSES ABOUT ABORIGINAL CANADIANS

BY WENDY TERRY

As Canadians, it is important that we devote some time to learning about the First Nations of Canada. Learning Curves took a scan of the continuing education calendars to find courses that will help our readers learn about Canada's indigenous peoples.

Humber College Continuing Education seems to have the only college courses and enough of them for you to earn an Indigenous Knowledge Certificate of eight courses. Even if you just do the two foundation courses for interest it would be worth the investment. The courses are Aboriginal People: Culture, Knowledge and World View. You can get more information by contacting the Liberal Indigenous Cultural Values, Behaviour and Identity Arts Department at 416-675-6622 Ext.4122 or at liberalartsce@humber.ca

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the University of Toronto has extensive course offerings, and remember, you can enroll in just one course as a non-degree student without being admitted to a degree program. The foundation course is Introduction to Aboriginal Studies ABS201Y. Call Woodsworth College 416-978-4444

The Native Canadian Centre at 16 Spadina Avenue offers education programs for groups. So you could get together a group from your church, ESL program site, or worksite etc. and take the Native Canadian Bus Tour of Toronto which will show you historical landmarks illustrating the indigenous presence in Toronto. Or you can book the Aboriginal Outreach Program to make a presentation in your community. You will learn about the traditions and teachings of Indigenous Nations. This presentation "brings Native people out of the history books and into a contemporary context moving away from common stereotypes and misconceptions." Call 416-964-9087

The Native Canadian Centre recommends visiting the Toronto Public Library at 10 Spadina Avenue which has an excellent Native Peoples Resource Collection.

Distance Education Laurentian University 705-675-4897. If our readers know of more courses please tweet, facebook or email us. At @learningcurves1; learningcurves-WEA; learningcurves@hotmail.com

SUMMER JOBS FOR YOUTH

www.toronto.ca/employment - City of Toronto website highlighting summer jobs with the Toronto Public Service

www.toronto.ca/parks - Year-round and summer jobs with the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation.

www.cybf.ca - Canadian Youth Business Foundation - A private-sector funded nonprofit organization that helps unemployed and underemployed youth (18-29 years old) create their own employment through entrepreneurship.

www.firstwork.org - Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres (OAYEC) - OAYEC supports the development and delivery of youth employment services in Ontario. Visit this site for research, news, events and jobs related to youth employment.

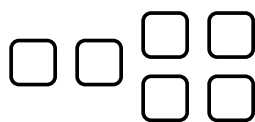
www.ontario.ca/summerjobs - Ontario Government Summer Jobs Programs - Advice and summer job programs for Ontario youth.

www.onwin.ca - Ontario Skills Passport - Find clear descriptions of essential skills and work habits that employers want. A website run by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

www.jobbank.gc.ca - Youth Employment Initiatives - A Service Canada website providing information on programs that will help youth make the transition into the labour market, such as the Youth Internship Canada program.

www.youth.gc.ca - Youth Resource Network of Canada - This national website gives information on self-assessment, job search techniques, self-employment and job opportunities for youth.

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THE REAL LABOUR MARKET

BY ANNE MCDONAGH

In the last ten years, I have written several articles for Learning Curves on the labour market, specifically on where the jobs are or likely to be in the future. Although I warned that no one can predict the future, I felt fairly certain that some of my predictions were on the mark. While many of the factors affecting the labour market that I mentioned were true and remain so, I did not see the significance of some of the major changes that have taken place in the workplace over the last several decades.

I did not foresee the recession, which has had a profound effect on the availability of jobs although I should have, since the capricious nature of our economic system seems to generate downturns at least once a decade. The other major factor, which I paid little attention to, was the increasing gap between the rich and the poor.

If you are looking for work now or in the near future, you should be aware of these factors which affect the job market. And the hangover from the recession, the gap between the rich and the poor, and the reasons for both, have had and continue to have a profoundly negative effect on the labour market.

As individuals there is little we can do to fix the economy, but as a job seeker you will be better prepared to deal with what the ‘market’ throws at you if you understand it, how it is affecting you and your neighbours and what you can do to mitigate its worst features.

The first fact to acknowledge is that overall the number of jobs available in North America is decreasing because of offshoring, Canada’s lack of competitiveness in world markets and technology, specifically robots taking the place of human workers and by far the major reason for the decrease in jobs. Right off, you are at a disadvantage compared to a job-seeker twenty-five years ago.

Another major disadvantage for today’s job seeker is the lack of job security. The “job for life” seems to have become a model of the past. Much as we might like to revive this model, the workplace has altered so much it would take a very firm political will to overturn the last twenty years of business practices.

According to a recent, reputable report by McMaster University and the United Way of Toronto, it’s more than Poverty: “Barely half of people working in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton areas have permanent, full-time jobs that provide benefits and stability. Everyone else is working in situations that are part-time, vulnerable or insecure.

This includes a growing number of temporary, contract and on-call positions. Jobs without benefits. Jobs with uncertain futures...”

There are many reasons for this situation in our workplaces, but it is clear that one of the major causes of the gap between the rich and the poor is job insecurity as described above. To some extent, your political ideology will affect your opinion on this issue. Figuring out how you—or sociey—can deal with it is more important than finding someone or something to blame. However, here are a few reasons—all of them interconnected—why we find ourselves in this predicament:

Globalization of trade which allows companies to locate in countries with low taxes and low (no?) labour and environmental standards

Governments too eager to please the corporations rather than their constituents

The concentration of wealth. (The World Institute for Development Economics Research at United Nations University reports that the richest 1% of adults alone owned 40% of global assets in the year 2000.)

Regressive taxation such as the GST where everyone regardless of income pays the same tax.

Our naivete in believing the “experts” that becoming a service economy would not negatively affect our standard of living

The hollowing out of the middle class because of weak labour unions.(Over the decades unions have been a strong advocate for ordinary workers and are generally credited with creating the middle class.)

Citizens not paying attention to what is happening to their world.

Above all the belief that the market somehow knows best. The market is an abstraction that supports the Darwinian world its followers have created. Its function seems to be to explain and justify a skewed value system,which makes the bottom line the only standard that matters.

Since there is little likelihood of reversing many of these factors which have created a very difficult work environment for workers and would-be workers, what can be done? Surely there are many solutions, but the one that springs to mind is to change government priorities. Government works for us, and one of its main duties is to protect its citizens from the worst injustices of the labour market. And there are many policies a government committed to leveling the playing field can implement. It can:

Provide universal daycare. Universal daycare would allow both parents in a family to work. Today daycare is so expensive, most families cannot afford to have two incomes.

Provide wage supplements to people earning up to a certain amount. Many studies have shown that a society that has less income inequality is good for everyone in that society.

Change the tax system so that everyone pays a fair share. Over the last

decade or so, the wealthy have paid less than their share. They also have the means to take advantage of every loophole.

Encourage and protect labour unions. Unions are the only organizations that can provide a counter balance to the power of the corporations.

Support education. Apart from training for the workplace, a good education enriches people’s lives and can give society a wise and informed citizenry.

Of course, these initiatives cost money, but if we want a just society, the money will be found. The money that a government spends, after all, is our money that has been collected as taxes. We have the right to tell government how we want our taxes spent. We do that when we vote and when we work for a candidate who shares our values or when we write letters to politicians or sign petitions.

We are very lucky to be living in Canada, but we must remember that it was not built by the worshippers of “market forces” but by people who knew that we are all in this together. The programs that we value like Medicare, Employment Insurance, the Old Age Pension, Canada Pension Plan were the result of the efforts of politicians like Tommy Douglas, Lester Pearson, Pierre Trudeau, Jack Layton and many other less well-known people who worked to create a fair and compassionate society and a work place that provided a living wage and confidence in the future.

If we do not stand up for their values, if we allow the insecurity of the workplace to continue and the gap between the rich and the poor to widen without some interventions, we will have dishonoured these heroes of the past and betrayed future generations.

DATA MANAGEMENT “DIVIDE AND CONQUER!”

BY ANDREI SAJENIOUK

Having been a computer instructor for about 30 years, I’ve seen a lot of frustrated students incapable of keeping their digital belongings (documents, photos, music, videos, messages, etc.) under reliable control. They are overwhelmed by the constantly growing amount of data they have on their computers. They feel like they are drowning in data.

Here is a very common situation:

“Did you download your pictures from your camera to the computer?”

“Yes, I did!”

“Then, where are they?”

“Well, obviously, they are somewhere... But I have no idea where...”

On the one hand, modern computer systems provide us with enormous power—we measure computer storage in terabytes nowadays which is about 1,000,000,000,000 characters of text! On the other hand with more power comes more responsibility. You’ve got to learn to manage and structure your storage properly.

Basically, you need a data management strategy and once you have it, there is no difference in access between, let’s say, 15 photos or 15,000 photos. Let’s clarify the most important data management terms.

FILES

Files are logically related chunks of data. Your resume, your mom’s photo, an electronic version of a book, some videos from your last trip to Cuba – as soon as they are stored on your computer, they all become files. There are two things you should keep in mind while creating a file:

Name (you are supposed to assign file name according to its content, so it is easier to find it later on)

Folder (each file belongs to a certain folder)

FOLDERS

Folders are named containers for files. Descriptive, easy-to-understand names for the folders are essential. Any folder may have subfolders. So, folders are a wonderful tool to represent hierarchical

information systems: for instance, classifying photos, you may have a folder for each year; you may divide year folders into month folders, if you still have too many photos in a month, you can divide month folders into events folders (John’s Cottage, Montreal Trip, and so on...) If you delete a folder, you delete all the files and subfolders that belong to that folder.

LIBRARIES

Libraries are named groups of folders. This concept is relatively new and it was introduced in Windows 7. Any library has a name and you can combine under the same library name a lot of folders. However, when a library is deleted, the folders that belong to that library are not affected. So, libraries work like virtual or conceptual containers, deleting libraries doesn’t delete any information on a computer

COLLECTIONS

Collections are named groups of files. Why can’t I use folders to group files? Folders are good as a basic data management tool.

However, sometimes you need to quickly find, let’s say, many photos that belong to different folders. For example, you may visit your friend’s cottage every year. If you classify the photos by years, months and events (as we suggested), you end up having a lot of related photos stored in many different folders. Collections are to overcome this problem. Collections are used in many photo managements programs such as Photoshop Elements, Adobe Bridge, Corel Paint Shop etc. When a collection is deleted no photos are deleted!

Today computerized information penetrates all the areas of your life. it is your business; it is your private life, and it is also your fun and entertainment. Can somebody else organize your life? Of course not! The same for the data; only you can analyze it and divide it into meaningful categories and here we are –you divide and conquer!

Andrei Sajeniouk is a mathematician who has tried many things including being a programmer, a soldier, a factory worker, and now a technology teacher with the TDSB since 2003.

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ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SUPPORTS

Three organizations are working together to support Aboriginal employment: the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), Toronto Employment & Social Services (TESS), and Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training.

If you're an Aboriginal Canadian and are wondering where to find a job or how to upgrade your skills, the Government of Canada's Aboriginal Skills & Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) may be your answer.

Using an integrated approach, ASETS will link your training needs to labour market demands, providing you with training or skill upgrading and with help finding a job.

Toronto Employment and Social Services and two Aboriginal Agreement Holders who deliver ASETS, the Métis Nation of Ontario and Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training have partnered in their efforts to provide employment services, support and resources for all Aboriginal peoples living in Toronto.

The Métis Nation of Ontario's Education and Training (MNOET) Branch provides a range of programs and services that include training purchases, career counselling, employment readiness training, wage subsidies, apprenticeship

support and mobility assistance. There are currently eleven (11) regional employment resource centres across Ontario.

MNOET's mandate is to help all Métis acquire the skills they need to be successful in careers of their choice. Through our partnership with TESS and Miziwe Biik, the MNO strives to provide essential employment and training services to all clients who seek our assistance and support.

Training purchases are available to those who are unemployed, underemployed or at risk of job loss due to a diminishing job market or industry change. They enable Métis individuals to retrain by providing financial supports during the training period. Eligible programs include those that meet labour market demands, are one to two years in length and are taken at an accredited college.

Our wage subsidy, job-shadowing, and internship programs enable Métis people to receive on-the-job training by prospective employers.

The Mission of Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training is manifold: to counsel Toronto urban native people on career paths and opportunities, to work with employers to secure employment opportunities, to deliver federal and provincial training programs, working with both groups

and individuals to achieve these endeavors.

All of our services are available to registered clients. We have four Employment Counselors on staff, a Job Development Officer and extensive on-site resources. To register, please phone (416) 591-2310 to book an appointment.

Among the services we provide for our clients:

- Employment Counseling
- Assistance with cover letter and resume writing
- Computer resource centre with Internet access for job search purposes
- Employment referrals and temporary placements
- Job advertisements
- Mail out, photo copy and fax service
- Referrals to employment supports network, health and other Aboriginal agencies
- Information about living in Toronto, such as referrals to social services, health and other Aboriginal agencies
- Information about Job creation, training, education and wage subsidies
- Community Project Training
- Skills Development Training
- Off site workshops for Aboriginal, Government and other agencies who

may be interested in our services

If you are interested in receiving more information about any of the programs available through the MNO, please visit our website at <http://www.metisnation.org/programs/education--training> or contact Tamarra Shepherd, MNO Employment and Training Intake Officer, at tamarras@metisnation.org, toll free at 1-888-466-6684 x112 or within the Toronto area at 416-977-9881 x112.

For more information about the programs and services provided by Toronto Employment and Social Services visit www.toronto.ca/socialservices

For more information on the availability of these and other programs offered by Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training, please consult with your employment counselor. For a more in-depth look at what services we provide, please feel free to browse our website at www.miziwebiik.com. Our hours of operation are Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

This article is a joint submission of the Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) and the Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment Training.

Adult Continuing Education Programs for the



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Re-engagement Program - 905 438-0570 Ext. 8448
Ajax Campus 905 683-7713 & 905 626-6631
Whitby Centennial Building Campus ESL & Linc – 289 481-1226
Welcome Centre ESL & Linc - 289-481-1336
Adult Upgrading LBS Program 905 438-0570 Ext. 8444
International Languages 905 683-7713
Interest Courses - 905 683-7713

PREPARATORY CENTRES FOR THE GENERAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT TEST

In the Winter 2012 issue, Learning Curves did a feature article on the GED General Education Development Test which, if you pass, earns you a high school equivalency certificate. This test is administered by the Independent Learning Centre, which lists study materials on line to help you prepare for test and there are math and science tutors on call. However, for many students more preparatory help is needed. There are preparatory centres independent of ILC which will help you prepare. The following is a list of some of these centres.

Frontier College
Beat the Street
416-923-3591
Jane Finch Program
426-649-1746

Grade Learning
Toronto
416-482-2272

Job Start
416-231-2295

Peel Adult Learning Centre
5940 Wallace St Mississauga
180B Sandalwood Brampton
905-507-0111

Preparatory Training Centre
West Centre
5415 Dundas Street West at Kipling
416-239-7309

Seneca College
Faculty of Workforce Skills Development
Vaughan 905-417-1781 .
New market 905-898-4455 Ext 228

Skills for Change
416-658-3101

YWCA
Skills Development Centre
3090 Kingston Rd.
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If our readers know of more courses please tweet, facebook or email us. At @learningcurves1; learningcurves-WEA; learningcurves@hotmail.com

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THE WEA NEEDS NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Workers' Educational Association, which publishes this paper, Learning Curves, and is a partner in University in the Community, is looking for two new Board members who are committed to lifelong learning. We would like someone with a background or interest in journalism and someone with a background or interest in liberal arts.

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The WEA has provided almost a century of adult continuing education to Canadians. To learn more about the WEA, go to our website www.weacanada.ca.

WEACANADA.CA

BROCK'S ADULT ED INTRODUCES COURSES ON LEADERSHIP

By Heather Junke

Have you ever been asked to name a handful of people whom you regard as true leaders? What would your list of leaders look like?

Chances are it would include some of the usual suspects from the world of politics, business, industry, research and education, as well as sports, arts and entertainment.

Have you ever thought of adding your name to the list? It really is something to think about if you are an adult educator committed to lifelong learning says Camille Rutherford, an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Brock University.

Rutherford recently designed two undergraduate courses that focus on leadership. She teaches both of them as part of a growing bank of online electives offered through Brock's Adult Education program.

The first course introduces learners to a theoretical understanding of leadership and a variety of leadership approaches, traits and skills. The second course focuses on the application of leadership skills to specific workplace situations.

"Adult educators should consider themselves to be leaders," she says. "They influence the knowledge, practice and motivation of the learners they educate. That in turn has a direct role in helping organizations fulfill organizational goals — the criteria for leadership."

Now, getting back to that question of including your name on a list of leaders — a key assignment for students in Rutherford's introductory leadership course is to create a personal leadership mission statement.

"This course is self-reflective in many aspects," explains Rutherford. "Learners are provided with frequent opportunities to complete a variety of leadership questionnaires to assess they possess leadership strengths and weaknesses."

"Creating a leadership mission statement requires them to describe their leadership strengths and weakness, how they can address their weaknesses, the type of leader they would like to be and how their leadership skills can contribute to their professional success."

The second course lets students apply theory to practice. "The main assignment for this course requires learners to resolve a leadership problem described in a leadership case study. That involves creating a change plan that highlights how leadership can play a direct role in organizational change."

"The skills and knowledge required to complete both of these tasks can be of great benefit to adult learners in the workplace."

Brock University is located in St. Catharines, Ontario. The Bachelor of Education in Adult Education degree and Certificate in Adult Education are offered through Brock's Centre for Adult Education and Community Outreach. The degree and certificate can be taken through online studies or through site-based delivery at venues across Ontario including the GTA. Find out more by visiting <http://brocku.ca/education/futurestudents/adulted>

DEAR ELCEE



Dear Elcee is a feature in every issue of Learning Curves. Send your questions about education, training, careers, jobs to: Elcee
The WEA of Canada
157 Carlton Street, Suite 205
Toronto, On M5A 2K2

Dear Elcee

I am a recent graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. Every time I turn on the news or open a newspaper, all I seem to be reading or hearing is bad news about the job market. I keep hoping I will get a job that will make all the hard work and student debt worthwhile. Most of my fellow graduates are getting jobs as wait staff, bartenders or in call centres. Is all this education worth nothing?

Sad in Scarborough

Dear Sad

Stop listening to the news and reading the papers! Bad news makes more press than good news. Is it frustrating to graduate into an ambivalent job market? Of course it is. Is yours the first generation to face a difficult job search? Not at all. The labour market is constantly changing and evolving.

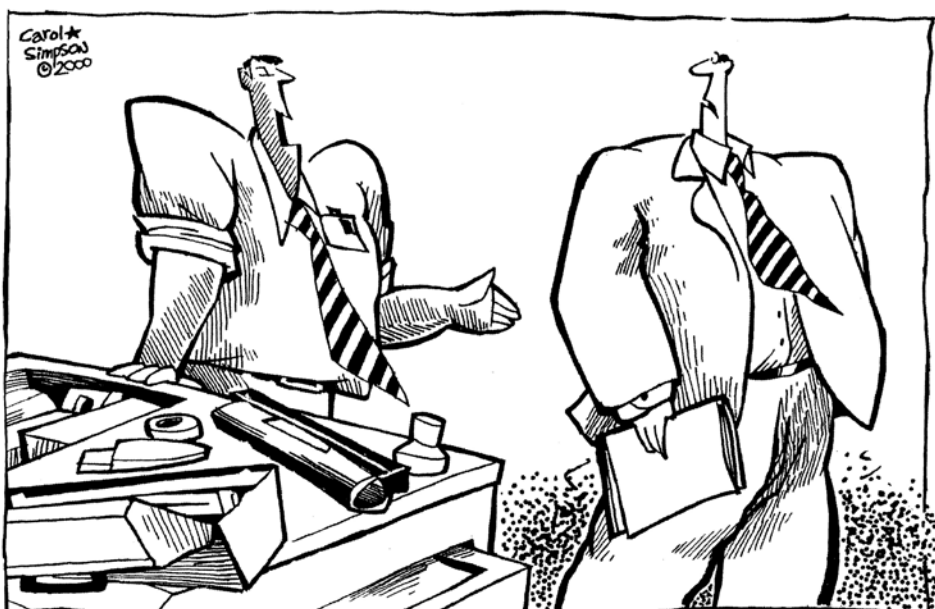
Analyse the numbers. The most recent Ontario unemployment rate is 7.7 percent. Let's turn that number around — we can also say the "employment" rate is 92.3. Certainly good enough odds to persuade one to buy a lottery ticket on.

Don't underestimate the benefit of taking a job in the service industry. It is important to keep busy and have an income while you are searching for your dream job. More and more, employers are seeing the value of an employee who has a background in customer service. Dealing with unpleasant, hungry customers with a smile is certainly a skill one can draw upon in the future.

Volunteering is also a great way to add to your skills and network in your chosen field. More and more, employers are expecting to see community work on a resume. Try to make your volunteer work "strategic" in that the tasks you do will be transferable to your goals. If your field is teaching, volunteer as a literacy or ESL tutor. If you are looking to go into the IT field, volunteer to coach seniors to learn computer skills or assist a non-profit agency with the development of a website. The possibilities are endless.

Try temping! Working as a temporary is a great way to explore various industries and build up your connections and skills. Many agencies offer both long and short term assignments in a variety of areas.

Above all, don't limit yourself. As scary as this time may seem it can also be a great time of growth and new possibilities. Good luck!



"You shouldn't have told the employees to 'work smarter.' They all went and joined a union."

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ASK AND YOU MAY RECEIVE

CONTINUED FROM 1

a range of support packages such as bursaries, grants, loans, and scholarships.

In Ontario, financial assistance for postsecondary studies falls under the auspices of the Ontario Student Assistance Program, or OSAP:

<https://osap.gov.on.ca/OSAPPortal>. You are eligible to apply for OSAP if you are a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident, or a protected person. Money is provided in the form of a loan (which you repay) or a grant (which you don't repay).

There are 24 OSAP financial aid programs. You will be considered for all of them when you apply online as a full-time or part-time student. Among the 24 programs, you will find: support for Aboriginal students, for students with disabilities, for part-time students with dependents, or for those who qualify as a low or middle income family, as well as bursaries to help defray the costs of child care. Go to: <https://osap.gov.on.ca/OSAPPortal/en/A-ZListofAid/PRD003541.html>

What's more, if you are in need and

OSAP doesn't cover the fees related to your program, Ontario's public colleges and universities have an obligation to provide financial help. That help could be in the form of a bursary, a scholarship, a work study program, or a summer job opportunity.

Let's say that you would like to register in a part-time program at Humber College. Here's a sample of what's available. As long as you are enrolled in a part-time program, which means 20%-59% of a full time course load, you can apply through OSAP for a Part-Time Canada Student Loan (PTCSL) for up to a maximum of \$10,000.00 outstanding at any one time. By applying for a PTCSL, you will also be eligible for a Canada Student Grant for Part-Time Studies, or the Ontario Part-Time Grant.

Another resource worth checking out is www.studentawards.com. It is a free, scholarship matching service that couples your profile with a list of current and available scholarships. Note that there are awards offered specifically to part-time

students and that most awards do not restrict mature students from applying.

Students wishing to enroll part-time in a diploma or certificate program at Humber should go for details about Humber's Continuing Ed. tuition bursary. If need is demonstrated, and you have already completed 25% of your program, bursaries are available up to 30 days prior to the start of the semester.

Humber College's Financial Aid office (416 675-6622 x 4245) is there to answer your questions. One thing is certain: if you don't ask, you'll never know!

At the University of Toronto, two programs for part-timers, in addition to those offered through OSAP, can help with the expenses of going back to school.

Any student taking up to 1 credit can apply for the Noah Melz Grant. Students registering in Woodsworth College's Academic Bridging Program, for example, can apply for this grant to cover the costs of books, transportation and child care. For those thinking of taking a summer

course, applications are available in March and should be submitted by May 31st.

The Work-Study program at U of T provides students with another source of financial support. These programs are attractive because: 1) students who apply do NOT have to be OSAP eligible and 2) the program is open to all part-time, undergraduate (or graduate) students taking at least 2.0 courses. You are allowed to apply for one work study per academic year, hiring is done during the month of September, and the rate of pay is \$10.25 an hour for a maximum of 12 hours a week.

Remember that a face-to-face conversation can often save many hours of website searching. Enrolment Services is located at 172 St. George, just across from the St. George subway (416 978-2190). You can walk in and talk to someone at the front desk without an appointment.

Spring is just around the corner. Why not contact a financial aid counsellor in this season of new beginnings?

FINANCIAL SERVICE OFFICES

Ask these Financial Service Offices about Student Financial Aid for part time students

COLLEGES

George Brown College
Financial Assistance Office
416-415-5000 Ext. 2519
Try the George Brown College Assistance Fund.

Seneca College
Student Financial Aid Office
416-491-5050 Ext 22480
Try the FCET Student Levy Bursary

Centennial College
Student Financial Services Office
416-289-5300
Try Continuing Education Bursary and Part-time Day General Bursary

Durham College
The Financial Aid and Awards Office
1-905-721-3036

Humber College
Financial Aid Office
416-675-6622 North Campus Ext 4245
Try the continuing education tuition bursary

Sheridan College
Student Financial Aid Office
905-815-4060 Trafalgar

UNIVERSITIES

G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University
Financial Aid
416-975-5035
Also try The Continuing Education Students' Association of Ryerson bursaries
416-979-5193

York University
Student Financial Services
416-736-5614-Undergraduate
University of Toronto
Enrollment Services
416-978-2190

University of Ontario Institute of Technology
The Student Awards and Financial Aid Office
1-905-721-8668

University of Guelph Humber
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416-798-1331 Ext 6256



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