

# LEARNING CURVES

CONTINUING EDUCATION • JOB TRAINING

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## ARE YOU READY FOR THE CAREER LATTICE?

BY LISA TRUDEL

Recently while viewing [www.womenofinfluence.ca](http://www.womenofinfluence.ca), I read an article titled "A Changing Workplace: From Corporate Ladders to Corporate Lattices". This is the concept that in order for organizations to increase productivity, employers need to retain talent and attract the best workers. This is done by allowing employees options to develop and grow instead of using the traditional ladder approach. The career lattice is the belief that careers are no longer linear, or one dimensional, and instead zigzag beyond the 9 to 5 desk.

The expression "career lattice" is not new. I first read about it in the 1998 book "Career Intelligence: 12 New Rules for Work and Life Success" by best-selling Canadian author Dr. Barbara Moses.

In this book and others, Moses encourages

job seekers to become "career activists" and to take personal responsibility for the future. She states "Jobs have been replaced by project work, outsourcing, contract work and short-term assignments. The career ladder has been replaced by a trellis where people zigzag between work, education, leisure and volunteer time."

It is all about thinking lattice not ladders, and tracking career progress by the work you do, instead of your title or level. Moving sideways is the way to gain depth, manage your career and become better at what you are already good at.

However you perceive the expression "career lattice", it is important to understand that the Canadian workplace is not what it used to be and high-achieving companies are now using innovative best business practices to be competitive.

Some of these pioneering best practices include offering options for when, where and how employees do their work. For example, some employees are allowed to work from home or they are rewarded with autonomy to work on projects that are naturally interesting to them. These types of choices have been proven to increase productivity, foster an inclusive workplace, improve employee retention and drive overall happiness.

Accepting the career lattice model might not be easy for employers or employees. For employers, it requires leadership originality and imagination to look towards the future. For employees, it requires an understanding of what are often called "soft

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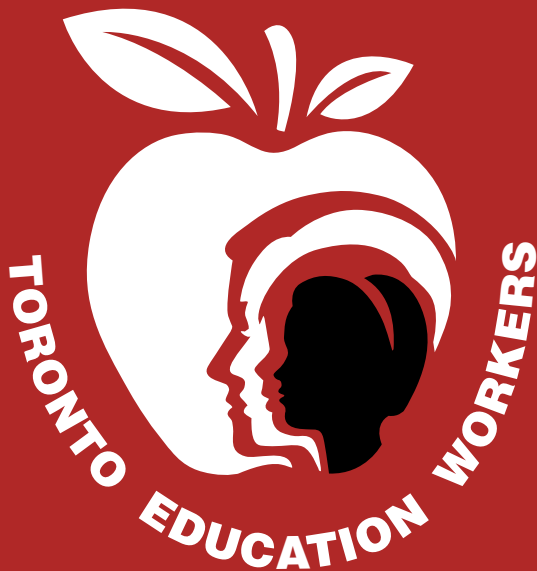
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# WHO we ARE



## EDUCATION MATTERS

Not all of our members are employees of the TDSB. Our newer members include employees who work for the Viamonde French School Board, the Bloorview School Authority and at various early education/daycare centres across the GTA.

Toronto Education Workers (Local 4400) is made up of approximately **12,000** **EDUCATION WORKERS** who primarily work for the TDSB (Toronto District School Board).

At the TDSB alone, there are over **400** <sup>JOB</sup> **CLASSIFICATIONS** and over **1,000** **WORK SITES.**

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# THANK YOU ANNE McDONAGH!

Almost 15 years ago, Anne McDonagh responded to an ad that we had placed for a project in adult education run by the Workers' Educational Association. She had just retired from a career teaching for the Toronto District School Board and volunteered her services. There was no retirement.



As editor of Learning Curves, Anne was responsible for its content and oversaw the work of dozens of writers. She wrote dozens of carefully-researched editorial columns too, all of which dealt with issues that Anne cared deeply about. Many of her articles are posted on our LC websites: [www.learning-curves.org](http://www.learning-curves.org) and [www.learning-curves.ca](http://www.learning-curves.ca)

The lives of ordinary people were her beat – people whose lives had been stalled for one reason or another and for whom going back to school offered a second, or third, chance. She remains a passionate advocate for the rights and responsibilities of all Canadians.

That Anne remained editor of Learning Curves for 15 years, as well as a writer of compassion and conviction, is not only a testament to the strength of her personal and journalistic ideals, it is crucial to this newspaper's success. (Learning Curves is truly a publishing miracle. About to start its 18th year, it now has a print run of 20,000 and is delivered to over 700 sites in Toronto and across the GTA).

We may be saying good bye to Anne in her capacity as editor of Learning Curves but, thankfully, not as a contributor. She will also continue in her role as Vice President of the Workers' Educational Association –

the publisher of Learning Curves – and as an active participant in University in the Community, a humanities program for adults that the WEA initiated in 2003. Please visit: [www.universityinthecommunity.ca](http://www.universityinthecommunity.ca)

As co-members of the WEA Board of Directors, it has been our privilege to work with Anne on the Board, on Learning Curves and on University in the Community. Thank you, Anne, for your sound advice, your patience and your steadfast commitment to the mission of the WEA.

With this issue, we welcome our new editor, Deborah Visconti. Like Anne, Deborah believes in the liberating power of education and can personally attest to how going back to school can positively affect the course of a life. We look forward to another long and meaningful partnership!

With heartfelt thanks from the Board of Directors of the Workers' Educational Association of Canada,

Wendy Terry, President; Gerard Nuberg, Treasurer; Patsy Bruff, Rumana Khalifa, Elizabeth Merchant, Andrew Oliver, Deborah Visconti, Mina Wong.

# WELCOME DEBORAH!



to take responsibility for my own life and the commitments I had to others. I made the difficult decision to invest in myself, applied and was fortunate enough to be accepted at University of Toronto as a mature student. I continued to work full-time and took 1 or 2 courses in the evenings each year, while raising 2 wonderful sons. Some years were more challenging than others, which rendered me unable to take a course, but I never gave up and always went back! Taking those courses - the reading, the lectures, studying and writing gave me a new perspective not only on myself but also on the world around me.

**H**ello everyone! My name is Deborah Visconti and I would like to introduce myself to you as the new editor of Learning Curves. I'm really looking forward to the opportunity to contribute my energy and personal experiences to Learning Curves because adult education is a subject very near to my heart. When I was in my early thirties, I found myself facing many difficult life challenges which left me feeling ill-equipped to handle. I realized that only I, myself, could bring about change if I wanted it, and I needed

Over the years, going to school became part of the fabric of who I am. The university was a constant positive model for me and I was very proud to be part of that community. U of T was, and continues to be, the embodiment of the unlimited possibilities which are available to all of us. After almost 20 years I am very proud to say that I graduated with an Honours BA and am now considering pursuing a Masters degree. There is so much more I still want to learn and every day is a new day.

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# ARE YOU READY FOR THE CAREER LATTICE?

BY LISA TRUDEL

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skills" or "self management skills".

These skills can be difficult to quantify because they are intangible, and are generally learned through life experiences rather than through academic education. To help understand the "soft skills" needed in the career lattice workplace model, instead of a career ladder model, here is a summary of 4 essentials:

Understand cross-cultural communication:

This is more than respect, appreciation of cultural diversity and the business etiquette of a firm handshake. It is being aware of socially acceptable behaviors and the importance of a friendly smile, and small talk, to establish rapport and build relationships.

Appreciate the importance of adaptability and flexibility:

In today's workplace the ability to assume multiple work roles and to be able to cope with the stress of changing circumstances is vital. It also includes being open to different ways of doing things and to finding ways of being cautious and watchful on your own behalf by identifying and preparing for opportunities instead of expecting someone else to guide you along the way.

Value customer service:

Whether you work on the front-lines with the general public, or only deal with others via email or the phone, the ability to anticipate and distinguish the needs of customers with an attitude of helpfulness, and that friendly smile, is part of being a company ambassador. An upbeat outlook is a soft skill that innovative employers want and seek out when selecting candidates. Often candidates are chosen because of personality, instead of academic credentials and technical competence.

Recognize work and life balance:

Sometimes employers will ask this behavioral-based question at job interviews:

"Once in awhile it might not be possible to get everything on your to-do list done. Tell me about a time your responsibilities got a little overwhelming. What did you do?"

What the employer really wants to know is, if you have a work and life balance. For example, do you beat yourself up for things that did not work out, or do you remind yourself of your successes? Can you live comfortably with parts of your life that are less than perfect, or are you struggling for everything to be 100%? Employers like to hire employees who have stress management plans, who set realistic expectations and who get along with others.

All 4 of these soft skills are needed in a workplace that is a career lattice. Are you ready to be part of it?

If you want to find out more about soft skills and what employers are expecting from candidates, contact the Centre for Education & Training Employment Services ([www.tcet.com](http://www.tcet.com)) and ask to speak to a Career Specialist or attend a job search workshop. Learning the difference between career ladders and career lattices could change the results at your next job interview and shift you from a candidate to consider, to the candidate that gets the job!

This article was submitted by Lisa Trudel, Career Specialist with the Centre for Education & Training. She works at their Toronto Parliament Services location and can be contacted at: [ltrudel@tcet.com](mailto:ltrudel@tcet.com)



# RICHES FOR THE POOR

BY ANNE MCDONAGH

The Workers' Educational Association of Canada (WEA) has been a champion of free, public education for adults since its beginning in 1918. In 2002, a WEA staff person came across an interview with Earl Shorris in an old Harper's Magazine (1997). Shorris, who died in 2012, was a social critic and author who founded the U.S.-based Clemente Course in the Humanities. The article was a catalyst for the WEA to reignite its long held belief in the value of a humanities/ liberal arts education for ordinary people, and had had many years delivering such programs. The Clemente Course reaffirmed the conviction that well-educated people make wise and good citizens and can change society for the better. These are beliefs WEA has shared since its inception. In the summer of 2003 WEA launched University in the Community.

Riches for the Poor, published in 2000, is Shorris's argument for a humanities education as a weapon in the fight against poverty. ("Riches", by the way, are the humanities.) He intended the book to be an academic examination of poverty in the United States. However, in doing his research he visited prisons, and in Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women in Westchester County, N.Y., he met long-time inmate Viniece Walker, who completely changed his theories about poverty. Walker explained to him that poverty was not so much the lack of money as the inability to reflect that made and perpetuated poverty. The poor do not have much opportunity for reflection as they live in a constant state of

anxiety. Moreover, the humanities are taught primarily to well-off American students in college classrooms. Therefore, Shorris reasoned, if the poor were given a chance to reflect on their own lives and on the world around them and learned how others in the past had lived, perhaps they would be able to change their lives. If given the opportunity to study the humanities, the poor might become engaged citizens and more contented human beings. The changes they would make because of their study of the humanities could have a profound effect on them, on their communities and eventually on society as a whole.

At that time (mid 90's) and still today, conventional wisdom maintains that the way to help the poor out of poverty is to teach them a skill which will get them a job. However, Shorris contends, to teach only skills is like building a house without a foundation. Skills training by itself leaves the learners vulnerable because they have not developed the thinking skills a student of the humanities has had to develop. It is not that work skills are not important, but they are not a route out of poverty and do not empower people as the humanities can. In Shorris's obituary in the New York Times, journalist Paul Vitello wrote:

"While education policy has leaned in recent decades toward giving students work skills, Mr. Shorris's idea was to teach what he considered the ultimate skills: reflection and critical thinking, as taught by the humanities. If the multigenerational poor are to make the leap out of poverty, it will require a new kind of thinking — reflection," he wrote in 1997. "And

that is a beginning." The study of the humanities, he said, is "in itself a redistribution of wealth."

The obituary continues, "Since 1995, the program has been introduced in about 20 cities around the country [U.S.], as well as in Canada, Australia and Korea, according to administrators of the Bard College Clemente Course in the Humanities, which oversees the project. In groups of 20 to 30 students per course, several thousand (10,000 according to Bard College) have tackled the program's rigorous readings and explications of Aristotle on logic, Plato on justice and Kant's theory of morality.

"By Mr. Shorris's own account, the enterprise has scored many wins and many losses. Some students were inspired, some were not, some died of AIDS, and some — like Moise Koffi of the Bronx, who described himself as drifting toward poverty before taking the course 10 years ago at a community center in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. — went on to earn a bachelor's and graduate degrees."

The Clemente Course in the Humanities offers the disadvantaged a 10-month curriculum of philosophy, history, art, literature and logic. The classes are usually at night, four hours a week. The program is free, and books, carfare and babysitting are provided.

Earl Shorris received a National Humanities Medal, presented to him in 2000 by President Bill Clinton."

In Canada there are ten free humanities courses, including ours, University in the Community (UitC) which have been inspired by The Clemente Course in the Humanities.

## NINE REASONS TO STUDY THE HUMANITIES

1. The humanities help us understand others through their languages, histories and cultures.
2. They foster social justice and equality.
3. They reveal how people have tried to make moral, spiritual and intellectual sense of the world.
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5. They teach us to deal critically and logically with subjective, complex, imperfect information.
6. They teach us to weigh evidence skeptically and consider more than one side of every question.
7. Humanities students build skills in writing and critical reading.
8. The humanities encourage us to think creatively. They teach us to reason about being human and to ask questions about our world.
9. The humanities develop informed and critical citizens. Without the humanities, democracy could not flourish.

(from Science in Balance curt-rice.com)

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# JOLI’S FIRST COLLEGE SEMESTER

*A short story by Mina Wong, November 2015, with permission from Joli Nelson, Toronto.*

Several winters ago when I taught sociology as a bridging course, Joli was among thirty pre-health students in my class. During self-introductions, Joli mumbled shyly, “I’m Joli Nelson, from Jamaica.” Someone asked, “Are you from Kingston?” Turning beet-red, Joli frowned. “No, near Ocho Rios. Not too many people know it.” A young man said, “Oh, I know Ocho Rios. It’s full of tourists!” Surprised someone knew her hometown, Joli blinked, and smiled. Her first day in college ended up bittersweet because although her student loan was late, friendly classmates encouraged her to stay in school. Since Joli had no textbook, she asked after class if she could borrow mine for just an hour. “I’ll bring it back to your office, I promise”. When Jolie returned my book, I took the opportunity to ask about her studies. “What attracts you to food management?” Her reply was fast and clear. “I like working with food. It nourishes people. I made tropical drinks back home.” Jolie was the middle of three girls whose single mother, Helen had named her daughters ‘pretty’ in Italian, French, and Spanish. “For someone with no education, mom loved languages.”

Sensing my intrigue, Joli continued: “There’s Carina, me, and Bonita.” I also wanted to know how she had come to Toronto from Ocho Rios. “So did you move here with your family?” Joli’s story was one of four courageous women living in a tiny shack, and whose livelihood was a simple juice stand. “I had a son at seventeen before I finished school. My mother almost threw me out, but she gave me a second chance, and we raised Baron together.” Showing me a picture of bright-eyed, seven-year-old Baron in school uniform, Joli planned to bring him to Toronto as soon as she could. She added: “It’s been lonely here with nobody, but if I study hard and work as a dietary technician, I can raise Baron here before he gets too big.” Inspired by Joli’s resolve, I wanted to know even more. “So how did you decide to come to Toronto?” Joli turned wistful. “Baron’s father went to work for an uncle in Canada, and promised the boy and I would join him later. But after a year or so, we lost track of him. I could make juice forever, but I convinced my mom if she could mind Baron, I would make something of

myself in Toronto, and maybe find his dad.” However, reuniting with her boyfriend in Canada without correct information proved even harder than earning low wages. While sharing a basement room with several women who were cleaners, Joli soon joined them scrubbing washrooms for cash. When not cleaning, Joli was making plans. “I thought about Mary Kay cosmetics, but that needed a lot of start-up dollars. So, I sold Avon with a roommate.” “My roommate was taking beautician courses. I saw tons of programs in her college calendar, but no way I could pay non-Canadian fees. I had to get my papers real quick.” Still only nineteen, Joli kept cleaning, and selling Avon for four more years, until she heard from Immigration that her application was being reviewed. Rosy with pride, she shared her most pivotal moment in Canada: “A week after my birthday last year, I got the permanent residency card!” That afternoon as streets outside were lighting up, Joli said before leaving my office, “Canada has been good to me. I told Immigration I wanted an education to work in hospitals. Someone

listened and gave me a chance.” Over that winter semester with endless sub-zero days, Joli never missed a class. Helen must have raised her daughters to be strong women who would not give up easily. Whenever Joli felt discouraged by the demands of college courses, she would seek help from professors, tutors, and peers. She set high benchmarks for herself in sociology, just as she passed all her bridging courses. One warm April day when final exams were over, Joli brought fruity drinks to share with me. “I wanted to tell you this all along. I could make these drinks blind-folded because my mom and I made them every day. We got fresh fruits every morning and pressed them, added ice chips or coconut milk. In Canada, we call them slushes and smoothies for ten times the money. Funny, eh? My mom’s stall is called a juice bar here!” Being witty was Joli’s way of showing me she had crossed another bridge, and was one step closer to graduating from food management. I was very proud of this young woman with such determination to succeed in her education and career, and to eventually raise her son in Canada. Mina Wong is a teacher of adult education who enjoys celebrating her students’ achievements using their own stories.

## THE ARAB COMMUNITY CENTRE OF TORONTO

BY ELIZABETH MERCHANT

The Arab Community Centre of Toronto (ACCT), whose Head Office is located in Etobicoke and has been providing services for over 30 years, aims to be inclusive of both Arab and non-Arab communities with assistance to those new to Canada with settlement and social services in many languages in addition to Arabic, including English, French, Punjabi, Russian and Dutch. There are a variety of programs and services offered at the ACCT such as help with legal issues, personal finance, connections to community organizations, job search, volunteer placement and services for youth. There is also a wealth of educational information for the adult learner. “We offer Canadian Citizenship Exam preparation classes, English conversation circles, and basic computer skills,” explains Zena Al-Hamdan, Programs Manager at the ACCT. “We also offer various information sessions for our seniors’ support group, Urdu-speaking group, [and others]. These information sessions address a spectrum of issues ranging from the

basic such as banking, credit.....to very specific such as health related topics for seniors to parenting workshops for newcomer parents.” In addition to programs and services, there are also many exciting and interesting events that take place throughout the year that anyone can take part in! “The ACCT hosts a number of community events that bring in community members, newcomers, and local businesses together to mark events such as Canada Day, Mother’s Day, etc., to showcase the diversity within the Canadian Arab community, such as our latest national dress fashion show and to raise awareness of newcomers’ issues. Another highlight is the popular Annual Picnic, held during the summer months.” The ACCT works in partnership with many community groups and city programs to serve various communities. For more information and useful links please visit the ACCT’s website: [www.arabcommunitycentre.com](http://www.arabcommunitycentre.com)



## The WEA needs a new Board member!

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

### Your duties will be:

1. To attend 4 meetings a year
2. Help promote WEA programs to the broader community
3. Contribute ideas around topics such as programming, fund raising etc and help implement them
4. Serve on sub-committees as the need arises.

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](http://www.weacanada.ca).

WEACANADA.CA



# BOOMERS BUILD MUSCLE AND BONE AT WESTERN TECH



**W**hat do we call ourselves - Boomers, Zoomers, seniors, retirees, older adults...? We struggle to come up with a name that encapsulates older but active in order to contradict the image of older and ill. The reality is active seniors far outnumber those who are not.

Whatever name we come up with, we are one of the largest demographics to move through society since the end of WWII. In education we drove the expansion of high school education as teenagers, part-time degree programs in the seventies and eighties as we worked and learned, then the second career retraining programs of the past few years as globalization wrought so much change to our work lives. Now, the growing learning for learning's sake courses of today is fueled by those of us transitioning into retirement.

The Toronto District School Board's Learn4Life program is one the best places to see our demographic, active and learning. On October 29th, I sat in on the Looking Fit Feeling Strong class at Western Tech which is held Thursday nights for one and half hours.

In this incredibly well-equipped gym, seniors and younger ones worked out using weight training machines and dumb bells of all shapes, sizes and weights. The teacher, Beverly Coburn, told me this room was equipped by one of the Western Tech teachers who solicited equipment donations. Not the most up-to-date equipment, but still very good and this gym is better equipped than most high schools.

Beverly, herself a senior, helps students improve their posture, muscle strength and bone density.

She has taught since 2008 and had always been physically active, in the Iron Man and Triathlon competitions.

It was inspiring to watch the women and men go through the diverse workout. It was paced to give frequent breaks as students moved from one device to another. All the students I talked to were proud of their progress- though a little out of breath.

At \$70 for seniors, for 11 weeks, this class is more affordable than a gym membership or hiring a personal trainer.

Beverly also teaches a Bone Density course in the TDSB Learning4Life Program which follows the new Guidelines for Osteoporosis Canada for exercising to improve bone density and bone loss.

If you go to the Learn4Life.ca web site and check the Fitness and Wellness section you will find pages of programs to help you stay fit, Aerobics, Nordic Pole Walking, Pilates, Tai Chi, Yoga, Zumba and more. A one night course on Foot Fitness for \$9 at the seniors discount caught my eye. Have a look.

While you are at it look at the other programs in Art, Computers, Crafts, Dance, Food, Games and Hobbies, Handiwork, Languages, Music, Sewing, Sports, Theatre, Film and TV and others like Business and Finance and Communications.

Registration for the Winter Term started November 18th and classes start the second week in January. So register before the holidays and think about buying a loved one a course for Christmas.

# UITC STUDENTS RESPOND...

**S**tudents in University in the Community's fall program spent the term learning about historical and contemporary aspects of Canada's Social Policy. They were asked what changes in policy they would expect/hope to see with the new federal government now in place. Here are the responses of two students.

In commenting on what changes in policy we might see on the international scene, S. Centritto writes:

- ☐ An enhanced peace keeping role
- ☐ Better equality protection for Canadians
- ☐ Higher gender equity representation in the government
- ☐ Reduction of inequality (wage disparity)
- ☐ Increased support for multiculturalism
- ☐ Accelerated acceptance of refugees into Canada ( implementation is in progress)
- ☐ Easier access to government information

For A. Kerr, universal childcare benefits must remain a priority for the Liberal government:

One of the issues of the 2015 election platform was the universal childcare benefit. Childcare is a social policy which should be implemented to support parents and their children. Some of the provisions within the Child Care Act are aimed at safety and security for the care of children. Parents have to apply for a subsidy to help supplement the cost of daycare fees.

Universal childcare benefits have been offered by the federal government since 2007. They are a subsidy for daycare or other forms of childcare. It is a social policy issue that

never gets enough funding. There are always promises about making it better, but it remains the same. Perhaps the government keeps evading the issue because they do not want to be responsible for a daycare policy that might fail?

However, there is a call for a universal childcare policy across Ontario to support disadvantaged families. Subsidies are only given to families who have jobs or attend a school/training program. Parents who need help for an emergency, or a place to leave their children for a short time, are not given priority. The government says that a universal system is expensive.

A National Childcare Program was recommended by the 1970 Royal Commission on the Status of Women. This program needs to be improved by policy makers. Parents need childcare but everyone does not necessarily require the same type of care. Some parents may need part-time care instead of full-time. Some may need care during the evening and not during the day. Parents who work at nights are not given the same benefits. A one-size-fits-all approach does not provide for the needs of low-income families.

A universal childcare benefit is vital for parents to raise healthy families and to help build a solid, vibrant community. It will promote more social inclusion for working parents and help them develop relationships with other individuals/families. When parents have accessible, affordable childcare, the returns on the investment are great. Positive involvement in the labour force and financial independence for families are two of those valuable returns.

## Learning Curves wants your writing.

**If you have written poetry or a short story, share it with us and our readers. For further information or to submit some writing, email us at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com)**

*Priority given to previously unpublished work of new writers.*

**LEARNING CURVES**  
CONTINUING EDUCATION • JOB TRAINING

# CUSTOMIZATION

BY WENDY TERRY

In the Fall issue of Learning Curves we helped our readers survey the community colleges calendars and websites to find programs and services that would help you customize what they offer to your unique background and needs. You can find this article on line at [www.learning-curves.org](http://www.learning-curves.org) or in the Fall issue [www.learning-curves.ca](http://www.learning-curves.ca). We continue this survey with the two colleges we did not have space to do in the Fall issue, **Sheridan College** and **Durham College**.

## Sheridan College

Sheridan now publishes a print introductory booklet to the Faculty of Continuing and Professional Studies. This is an excellent booklet. On page 6, titled Supporting Your Success they list all the services you would normally have to scan a whole print calendar to find or drill down page after page in a web site. Most of the services listed here will help you customize your learning.

First they highlight **Career Counselling** services available to registered students that will help you with program selection and career (job) search.

Second and most importantly they note that you will have access to a **Library Liaison** who is "...dedicated to supporting your research and information needs. Your Library Liaison offers workshops, and resources on how to generate research topics, use databases, evaluate the accuracy, credibility, and relevancy of websites, manage citations, and navigate the rules of copyright." It makes you want to take a course at Sheridan just to access the Library Liaison who will help you learn how to deal with the information overload challenges of studying today.

Then there is the one stop web link to "**learning assistants**" in Computer Programming, Math, English (Writing, Communication, Speaking, Editing) and Business Math (Accounting Finance, Statistics). On this link, you can book one and half hours per week, per subject,

free of charge. Such one on one help is invaluable.

Finally the **Accessible Learning Office** is described where you can get help with disabilities. Remember not all disabilities are visible ones, like being visually impaired. Learning disabilities like dyslexia (information processing problems) are often not identified in previous education experiences but you know that you have more problems than others with reversing letters, writing coherently, etc. Tell this Office your problems with learning, it is a game changer to finally be to find learning strategies that help.

Page 6 is the best.

Page 9 for those **New to Canada** is another gift. The list of **free programs**, Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC), Occupation Specific Language Training, (OSLT) and Enhanced Language Training (ELT) Canadian Workplace Culture and Employment Preparation are invaluable as you do not have to look in several places to see the full picture. Also see [newcomers.sheridancollege.ca](http://newcomers.sheridancollege.ca)

This booklet goes on to list programs and courses, where under Language, Communication and Culture I found courses that would help improve your writing, Grammar for Writing Professionals, Writing Grammatically. Page 2 notes that Sheridan courses are offered On-Campus, Online and Blended.

Sheridan also publishes a **Transfer Guide**, where it details programs from other universities

that can be given credit in your Sheridan program. This booklet is targeted to full time students and although many may be youth post high school, more and more there are adults who bring a lifetime of learning to their new studies. Such transfers can apply to courses or programs taken through the Faculty of Continuing and Professional studies. So the magic solution is, as always, to ask, in this case at the Career Centre.

They also refer you to **ONTransfer.ca** which is the Ontario guide to credit transfers between Ontario Colleges and Universities. You can save time and money by applying for credit in a new program for a course you have taken in a previous program.

Now to the [www.sheridancollege.ca](http://www.sheridancollege.ca) web site. The first thing is one of the top bars allows you to click on continuing education students so you do not have to figure out what faculty you belong to in order to drill down. Now you are in the [www.caps.sheridancollege.ca](http://www.caps.sheridancollege.ca) page and there are two choices here: Student Guide Information Centre on the top bar or in the right column click on "Do you have continuing education questions. By clicking under the shopping cart "Many ways to contact us" you get to a contacts page. Better still here they not only encourage you to "Give us a call" but also ask **Want to talk to a person? You can drop in.** (No need to set up an appointment) Later they list hours Mon to Thurs to 8:00PM and Sat morning for the Continuing and

Professional Studies Office. This is welcoming.

On this Contact page in the left column under Registration Information click on Admission Requirements, there was a clear explanation of **mature student**-grade 12 graduate or aged 19 or older. Under Fees there was a **Seniors Fee (65 and older) of \$50 for on campus courses.** This led me on a search for **Financial Assistance** as often continuing education students think there is no help for them. I first went back up and clicked on Student Guide Information. On the home page for [caps.sheridancollege.ca](http://caps.sheridancollege.ca) site. There I found those Second Career programs in the right hand column, which can fund up to \$28,000 to laid off workers but still no Financial Services office. So the best thing to do is ask for the Financial Services Office at those contact number we first found.

On the Student Guide Information Centre page found on the [caps.sheridancollege.ca](http://caps.sheridancollege.ca) home page, there is link called. Services and Resources, then a link to Student Services. <https://caps.sheridancollege.ca/student-guide/student-services.aspx> Here you find the Academic Learning Centre, Career Counseling and Tutoring. Like page 6 in the print booklet this is a valuable page.

On the CAPS home page you click on Explore Programs or Explore Courses. If you chose the Explore Programs you can choose an Area of Interest, or choose a Professional Designation (certification given by one of the Professional Associations), Credentials (Certificate, Diploma, Degree, Post Diploma) or Popular Programs. If you choose Explore courses you can simple search or advanced search by Area of Interest, keyword, delivery method, term, day of the week and campus location.

Most useful, the course lists show

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**



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**Sheridan**  
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and Professional Studies



# CUSTOMIZATION

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

what terms they are offered in, so you won't miss getting a course not knowing it is only offered in one term a year.

We are going to skip looking at the full time programs. But if your contract ends you may want to consider going full time- it will speed up getting your credentials. Ask those Contacts how to go about doing this.

### Durham College

Durham College's print Continuing Education calendar is proof that you should pick up the calendar every term as colleges are always trying to reorganize the calendar to better help you customize your learning plans. The Fall Calendar has been revamped.

We have to note also that in past when calendars mentioned browsing they might show a person curled up in a chair with a coffee and a calendar, in the latest Durham College CE Calendar they used the image of a drone. They also have a workshop in the Leisure and Personal Development section Drones-Intro to Flight. Durham is clearly helping their learners stay up to date.

Durham College has always had a section listing new courses and programs and in the Fall Calendar they have put this list on the left front inside cover page. You cannot miss what is new.

On page 3 they have listed those all important personal contacts by program area. On page 4 they actually tell you what you can find in the print calendar and what you need to go on line for. So you don't have to

shop around in the print then online to see where you can find a type of information. This is the only print calendar that we saw in our overview that helps readers with this.

Courses are coded for fast track- six week courses and twelve lessons as well as monthly take, this will help readers speed up their learning, maybe when they have a slow period at work.

And on page 5 Second Career, the Ontario government training program for laid off workers gets a full page detailing courses that are eligible as well as a phone and web link to more information. On page 68, the Ontario Job Grant is detailed, this is a program that covers employers' costs, up to 2/3rds of retraining and again a phone and web link.

So this lead me to think about Financial Assistance but to get to the information section where such information is usually listed you have to go online. So I jumped from print to [www.durhamcollege.ca/coned](http://www.durhamcollege.ca/coned) and choose "Where Do I Find?" in the left column which links to a page where Student Services are listed and under here Financial Aid.

In Where do I find? page, in the left Column under Prerequisites you are lead to **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition** application forms and credit transfer application forms. Under Admissions and Registration, you are lead to the "mature student: definition -19 years or older or those who do have have an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Here for the first time in our survey of college calendars print and on line we see GED, General Education Development listed under College Eligibility.

The **General Education Development** test gives those who did not complement high school the opportunity to get a high school equivalency certificate by doing a test.. See the Independent Learning Centre [www.ilc.org](http://www.ilc.org) and go to [www.211.org](http://www.211.org) for programs in your community that help you prepare for the test. Put GED preparation in the 211 subject search engine.

Here for for the first time we also see an information bullet about Studying as a part-time day-student. Finally upfront recognition in a CE calendar that you can go part-time in the day. Thank you Durham.

Under Admissions and Registration on this page, you can find the **Access Support Centre** for students with special needs. Remember learning disabilities that have plagued students are sometimes not identified until they go back to school and are mature enough to describe their problems with writing or reading.

The bulk of the print calendar in the Academic Section are listed by subject area of programs and under each heading a contact number. These are followed by a listing of course titles with key information listed like the price, hours and how they are offered ( using symbols) for fast track monthly intake, in-class, online etc. If you want more detailed information like a course description you need to go online. My favourite symbol was a fork and spoon crossed indicating a lunch and learn workshop.

So now we go to the on line calendar [www.durhamcollege.ca/coned](http://www.durhamcollege.ca/coned) home page. On the left column you can click on Important Information and here you will find a link to **Financial Assistance**. Also under **Audit**, an explanation that you can sit in on classes without doing the course work but it does not indicate if there is a discount, so ask.

Here under **Seniors Citizen's Rates** you will see that there are reduced rates for in-class and on-line courses but not for the ones listed under Leisure and Personal Development and a phone number for information. This is interesting as at Sheridan you can get a senior rate for in-class but not online and there is no Leisure and Personal Development Learning. Remember all colleges are similar but different. As the boomers move into their leisure learning years and become a large market for educational providers, information about auditing, senior's discounts, and programs like Durham's lunch an learn classes will become more common. Right now, to get this kind of information you often need to ask.

Going back to the coned home page there is a Quick Find option at the top right. When you click on 1. Select an area of interest, a list of Associations pops up. Remember **professional associations** accept credits from colleges for their certification criteria and they have job banks and events where you can network for jobs. Print calendars used to publish a list of associations they have relationships with but that seems to have gone by the way, but the Durham on-line site makes it easy for you to find these associations. Thank you.

So sitting back, the ACE Academic Career Entrance courses came to mind, the ones that help you upgrade your science, math, language, computers, to get be ready for college level programs. So in the index in the back of the print calendar you can find ACE and that they are listed under Education in the Subject area of the calendar. Using the quick find tool on the website you can find these ACE courses. I tried the same search for ESL but could not find any. So remember Rule # 1 ask those contacts.



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For more information on these certificates, visit our website today.



CONTINUING EDUCATION

[www.durhamcollege.ca/online](http://www.durhamcollege.ca/online) | 905.721.2000 ext. 2667

# QUOTATIONS ABOUT THE HUMANITIES

*"The humanities teach us, incrementally, endlessly, not what to do but how to be."* – Mark Slouka (an American novelist and essayist)

*"...there [in the humanities] are meanings that cannot be bought, sold or traded, that do not decay and die."* – Lee Siegel (cultural critic)

*"I believe there is no surer path to leaping dramatically forward in your career than to earn a Ph.D. in the humanities."* – Damon Horowitz (philosophy professor)

*"The notion that every well educated person would have a mastery of at least the basic elements of the humanities, sciences, and social sciences is a far cry from the specialized education that most students today receive, particularly in the research universities."*

– Joseph Stiglitz (Nobel prize winner in economics)

*"The goal should be that everybody gets a chance to read great books and participate in the richness that the humanities brings us."* – Bill Gates (founder and chairman, Microsoft)

*"The arts and humanities define who we are as a people. That is their power – to remind us of what we each have to offer, and what we all have in common."* – First Lady Michelle Obama

*"The academic atmosphere, produced mainly by the humanities, is the only atmosphere in which pure science can flourish."* – E.W.R. Steacie (Canadian physical chemist)

*"Literary art's sudden, startling truth and beauty make us feel, in the most solitary part of us, that we are not alone, and that there are meanings that cannot be bought, sold or traded, that do not decay and die. This socially and economically worthless experience is called transcendence, and you cannot assign a paper, or a grade, or an academic rank, on that. Literature is too sacred to be taught. It needs only to be read."* – Lee Siegel

*"It is a convenient truth: You go into the humanities to pursue your intellectual passion; and it just so happens, as a by-product, that you emerge as a desired commodity for industry."* – Damon Horowitz

LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF AND OTHERS ONLINE FOR FREE THIS WINTER AND BEYOND.

## OPEN ADMISSIONS TO PSYCHOLOGY ONLINE COURSES AT CARLETON UNIVERSITY

Does this question catch your attention: "Are you interested in why people think, feel, and behave the way they do?" Who comes to mind – your boss, kids, spouse, parents, brother or sister, neighbour, yourself ...

I read this question on the web at [www.carleton.ca/cuol/2015/open-access-courses-psyc-1001-1002/](http://www.carleton.ca/cuol/2015/open-access-courses-psyc-1001-1002/)

Carleton University offers these two introductory Psychology courses, free, and on what they term Open Access. Learning takes place anytime anywhere as they are accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on the Internet.

Think of it, winter is coming on, you would like to take a course rather than downloading old movies or doing a series binge but it's cold and dark outside and you spent too much on Christmas.

Doing Psychology 1001 and 1002 curled up at home with a hot chocolate in your favorite chair at no cost would be interesting and useful. If you better understood why people think, feel and behave the way they do, think how life may change in 2016.

Later, if you took these open access courses and you decide you would like a course credit you can do so by transferring to Flex Time.

Carleton offers many ways to access their courses. Phone 613-520-4055 or email enquiries to [cuol@carleton.ca](mailto:cuol@carleton.ca) to learn more.

Just think – even in summer you don't have to pass up going to the beach to carry on learning. Just take your iPad and link up with Carleton University OnLine.



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| ■ Arts and Design             | ■ Emergency Management                   | ■ Liberal Arts and Sciences |
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## UNIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY AT INNIS COLLEGE

University in the Community (UitC) is an initiative of the Workers' Educational Association of Canada. We offer university-level education to adults who face barriers to the usual routes of access. Our classes are free-of-charge, informal and lively. UitC students think of learning as both a necessary and lifelong endeavour but they do not need credits (or grades).

One such group of students met weekly during the fall term at Innis College (on the St. George campus of the University of Toronto) to discuss Canadian social policy. Guest speakers, all specialists, shone a light on the topic from a number of different angles: its historical and institutional framework, its practical implementation and its manner of addressing timely concerns such as accessibility, privacy, food security and immigration.

Many thanks to our generous and inspiring presenters: Usha George, Barry Goodwin, Brenda McPhail, Melanie Panitch, John Pepall, Ken Rea, Cecilia Rocha and Wendy Terry.

'Topics in Canadian Social Policy: Part Two' will run on Tuesday evenings, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, at Innis College from February 2nd to April 5th, 2016.

If you would like to join us next term, our email is: [universityinthecommunity@gmail.com](mailto:universityinthecommunity@gmail.com)

If you would like to learn more about University in the Community, please visit: [www.universityinthecommunity.ca](http://www.universityinthecommunity.ca)

All you have to do is get in touch!

## 3RD ANNUAL LITERARY MOOT FUNDRAISER FOR UNIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY: JANUARY 21ST 2016

Every year for the past three years, law students at University of Toronto's Faculty of Law, along with professors and practicing lawyers, put on what has got to be one of Toronto's most entertaining and original fundraisers. It's the Literary Moot – a mock trial that takes a character from a well-known literary text, charges the character with a supposed 'crime' that fits the storyline and, after jury deliberation, seals the fate of the accused.

In other words, this is a trial that follows criminal trial procedure (most of the time) but the person charged is but a figment of your fictional imagination.

On January 21st, Iago, a nasty character in Shakespeare's play, Othello, faces criminal charges for his role in counselling Othello to end the life of his beloved, Desdemona. Other characters in the play, played by law professors who know a thing or two about the stage, will face a merciless grilling by practicing lawyers, who also know a thing or two about the stage.

Join us on January 21st, when the jury, comprised of upstanding members of University in the Community, and the judge, Dean Iacobucci, will have the final word on whether Iago walks away in chains ... or just walks away!

**All monies raised go to support University in the Community.**

**When: Thursday, January 21st 2016**

**Where: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave. (St. George subway)**

**Time: 7:00pm - 8:30 pm**

**Admission: Adults \$20.00. Students/PWYC \$10.00 (suggested).**

*O, beware, my lord  
of jealousy; It is the  
green-ey'd monster,  
which doth mock  
The meat it feeds on.*

3.3.165-171

## Time to Register for Winter 2016 Classes

### ISSUES IN CANADIAN SOCIAL POLICY: PART 2

Tuesday evenings, 6:30-8:30 pm, February 2nd – April 5th

Location: Innis College, 2 Sussex Ave. (St. George subway stop)

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# EXPLORING CREATIVITY IN THE ADULT LEARNER IT'S NOT JUST FOR THE KIDS

BY MARC MACDONALD

**A** new course in Brock University's BEd in Adult Education program will be beginning in January, 2016, that focuses on creativity for the adult learner.

Dr. Sharon Abbey, Director for the Centre for Adult Education and Community Outreach (CAECO), has spent the last couple of years researching and understanding the importance of creativity for adults.

From the outset, understanding creativity in the adult learner may seem like a marginal inquiry, but as Abbey's research progressed, she realized there was an extraordinary amount of work taking place to understand the creative process, especially as we age.

"It started with the idea of why

do adults tend to lose their creativity," said Abbey. "For whatever reason it seems to atrophy, and seeing as [CAECO] is focused on adult learning, I thought, let's explore that."

Abbey's immersion into the world of the creative process and the theoretical framework that housed it began. She noticed that creativity had been studied from philosophical and psychological perspectives and offers no true blueprint as to how it can be formally assessed.

In trying to develop the outline for the course, Abbey was reminded of a Teacher Education class she lectured some years ago where she posed the question to her students of whether or

not creativity could, in fact, be taught.

Her class's response surprised her.

"They said no, you either have [creativity] or you don't," Abbey said. "I thought, if you don't think [creativity] can be taught, you're not going to even try teaching it to little kids [let alone adults]."

Now, several years later, Abbey will be looking to do what her class thought wasn't possible: teach creativity.

And although the course will require creative journaling – which could include anything from drawing with crayons to creating collages – Abbey says it will be academically rigorous.

"Each of the 12 weeks will contain a reading and discussions," said Abbey. "But,

they'll have some kind of visual challenge to complete as well. At the end of the course they'll do a summary of reflection on what it was like to tap into that creativity."

This course is being newly offered this January and the hope is that students will be looking to delve deeper into the theories of creativity and its assessment as well as its application.

"[Our creativity] is such an important part of who we are," she says. "So if you push it down you're missing part of yourself, you're not allowing that part of you to thrive and flourish."

For more information on the BEd in Adult Education please visit: [www.brocku.ca/education/futurestudents/adulted](http://www.brocku.ca/education/futurestudents/adulted)



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At BTT, training fits your schedule rather than the other way around. If your timetable prevents you from attending classes during the week, BTT offers classes on Saturdays and evenings. They also provide classes on a continuous intake basis which means that you do not have to waste precious time before getting started. Their intensive programs allow you to tailor your classes when you have the time – vacation time, a period between contracts, or just before you start a new job – rather than

having to follow a uniform (often inconvenient) schedule.

BTT offers practical job training for careers in high demand fields such as Network Engineer Specialist, Medical Office Administrator and Computerized Taxation Accounting and Payroll Administration.

Certificate programs cover a range of subjects, including Microsoft Office, (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Access), QuickBooks Course for Non-Accountants, QuickBooks Level 1 and 2, ACCPAC (Sage 300), Simply Accounting (Sage 50), SAP Accounting End-User and Excel Advanced.

BTT also provides certification at more advanced levels: COMPTIA Certification (A+, Network+, Security+ and Linux+),

ITIL Foundation and Microsoft Network Certification.

Founded in 1996, BTT is registered by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MTCU) as a Private Career College. A founding member of BTT, Ashton Persaud, has a background as a professional network engineer and his desire to help his students is evident in the many classes that he teaches himself. His hands-on knowledge both of what employers want, and what students need, is the hallmark of BTT's flexible, customized and up-to-date programming.

As Ashton explained to me, the primary goal at BTT is for "you to go back to work, confident in the practical training you have gained."

If you have been laid off and are looking

for a new career, you may qualify for Second Career funding, an Ontario government program that helps laid-off workers get back to work. You may be eligible for up to \$28,000 to pay for tuition and expenses. Call BTT at 416-483-3567 for details.

For general information about private Career Colleges, go to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MCTU) website. Click on 'Career Planning', and then click on 'Find a School.'

For specific information about BTT, please visit their website: [www.bttcollege.com](http://www.bttcollege.com) You can also email BTT at [iwantinfo@bttcollege.com](mailto:iwantinfo@bttcollege.com) or call 416 483-3567.

Better yet, drop by and visit! BTT is conveniently located at 150 Eglinton Ave. East.

**Toastmasters International** is a world leader in communication and leadership development. The members improve their speaking and leadership skills by attending one of the 15,400 clubs in 135 countries that make up our global network of meeting locations.

The main focus of Toastmasters Clubs is the development of communication and leadership skills in a very friendly and non-critical atmosphere. Soar to Excellence Club in Mississauga is one such club where visitors and members are treated with the utmost respect and patience.

New members begin their journey by giving speeches and receiving feedback. Through regular attendance at weekly meetings, members gradually improve their speaking and leadership skills through non-critical support and feedback from fellow members.

If you want to learn more, please contact us at:  
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Second Floor, Unit 201  
Mississauga, ON, L5R 3V2  
Phone: 416 970 2483  
We meet every Saturday at 10:30 am



# UPDATED: WWW.LEARNING-CURVES.ORG HAVE A LOOK!

Find articles that will help you go back to school from back issues of Learning Curves on the updated [www.learning-curves.org](http://www.learning-curves.org) site.

You can advertise on this site email [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com) for rates, specifications and schedules.

We have listed the headings and some articles you may want to check out under that site. There are many other articles to see.

**Learning in the Community**

“Elizabeth Merchant’s Learning in the Community series”  
The Japan Foundation. Toronto JFT  
This article is the first in a series, highlighting the educational aspects of cultural centres in Toronto.

**Learning Styles**

“Learning to Learn”

**Study Skills**

Data Management “Divide and Conquer”

**Credit for Work and Courses**

“ONCAT Credits”

**Make a Learning Plan**

“Wanted :Adult Online Warriors”

**Where to Study**

“So You’re going back to school”

**Career Colleges**

“Access Business College Changes Location but Not Its Heart”  
“Business and Technical Training College, Diplomas, Customized Training Both at BTT and On-site Training”

**Learning in Schools**

“Adult Learning in the GTA and Toronto Schools”

**Universities**

“Why Not U? University access for adult Learners at Ryerson, York and U of T”

**Distance Education and Online**

“Distance Education in the Summer”  
Note the programs in this overview article run year round.

**Bridging Programs**

“Bridging Program Opens Door to University”  
“ Springboard to Canadian Experience: York University’s Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Professionals”

**Learning for Free**

“New Charitable Career College Network Community Program like Working Skills, Mothercraft and Learning Enrichment Foundation”

**What To Study**

“General Interest Courses”  
“Getting your OSSD” (Ontario Secondary School Diploma)  
“Getting Creative”  
“New! Second Language Assessment Now Centralized.”  
“Courses About Aboriginal Canadians”  
“Property Administration a Good Educational Investment”  
“Personal Support Worker: A Career in Health Care”

**How to Pay for It**

“Apprenticeship Grants”  
“Ask (And You May Receive!) Finding Money for Part-time Studies”

**Work and Education**

“Toronto Workforce Innovation Group”  
“Arts Education and Jobs”

**Going Back to School**

“Are you a Parent Thinking of Going Back to School? Five Things to Consider”  
“Game Changers: Boomers in the Classroom”

**Skilled Trades**

“Earn While You Learn”

**The Job Search**

“The ABC’s of Networking”

**When to Study**

“Changing It Up: Going Back to School Full Time”  
“Register For Fall Courses This Summer”  
“Going Back to School -You Are Never Too Late” continuous intake courses, monthly start dates.  
“Spring Term Courses” Start In April, May, June, July And August”

**Career Change**

“Where To Get Career Counselling If You Work Full-time”  
“Brock Adult Education: Preparation for Many Careers”  
“Mid-Life Career Change”  
“Professional Newcomers Talk to Canadian Peers”

**For the Love of Learning**

Inspirational Stories  
“Duoli’s Story”  
“Saeed Transfers Electricians Skills From Iran to Canada”  
“Second Career at Access Business College: New Skills, New Life”

**Elcee Advice Column**

**In the news**

“Kathleen Wynne, Ontario’s New Premier s a Friend to Adult Learners”

**Joys of Aging**

**Lifelong Learning and Community Hubs**

**Editorial**

“Uncounted Adults – Toronto’s “Under-utilized” Schools”  
“Precarious Employment Threatens Adult Education”  
“Boomers To Create the Next Wave in Adult Education”  
“Why We Need Unions”

**Skills Transfer for Internationally Trained People**

“Internationally Trained Lawyers”  
“Internationally Trained Engineers”  
“Internationally Trained Computer Professionals”  
“Internationally Trained Business Professionals”  
“Internationally Trained Health Care Professionals”



# IN PRAISE OF THE TORONTO LIBRARY SYSTEM

BY JANE ROZELL

Did you know that there are almost one hundred branches in the Toronto Library System, making it the largest in North America? Were you aware that it serves a population of almost three million people and has the largest neighbourhood-based system in the world? For almost every main residential area, there is likely a library and it's probably within walking distance. There are as well, two Bookmobile Buses, one of which serves Wards Island, one of the group of Toronto Islands.

If you live, work, go to school or own property in Toronto then your membership card is free. Everyone who is a resident of our city can also benefit from being a member of our library network, as there are programs for every age and stage in one's life. There are mother and baby programs, preschool and afterschool activities for children, and craft and movie times for families, usually on the weekend. Adults can enjoy author readings and panels on current topics. There are ESL classes for new Canadians and classes that teach computer skills or the management of personal finances, that help one plan for retirement or a change in career. The list is almost endless as is the list of materials offered: books, magazines, CDs and videos, ebooks and large print volumes as well as books in languages other than English. The best way to find out what is happening at branches all over Toronto is to pop in

to your nearest library and pick up a copy of the free magazine What's On. There's a new edition at the beginning of each quarter of the year and it contains pretty much all you could possibly need to know.

Toronto libraries come in various styles and sizes. The Reference Library on Yonge Street, just north of Bloor, is an incredible structure that always overwhelms me, just a little, with its immense size and openness and its miles of book shelves and banks of computer stations. Some of the buildings housing library branches are recycled from earlier usage, when they were banks or postal stations or other public buildings. One example is the majestic old building that is now the Ralph Thornton Community Centre. Some, like the S. Walter Stewart branch, have been enlarged well beyond their original size to accommodate a

growing neighbourhood need. There are others such as the Palmerston Branch that have small theatres on their premises and these are a godsend to acting groups looking for affordable locations where they can stage their productions.

There are branches that have spaces for screening short films on topics of interest. These screenings are almost always followed by wonderful question periods, where film makers share how and why they "do film" and the challenges they face in their profession. Other branches have suitable areas for regular art and photography installations.

It seems incredible to me that with just transit fare in my pocket, I can travel to any branch in the city and spend hours not just reading but studying, doing research, learning new skills and, of course, people watching. My favourite reason for heading

to any library is to attend author book readings and interviews. At the end of these gatherings there's almost always a time for questions from the audience. Most authors are so gracious in their willingness to answer these questions as well as sign books and chat with audience members. Each year, the Reference Library hosts major events such as Canada Reads or the Toronto Book Awards. Always these are eagerly awaited and well attended.

Whether you are a long time resident of this city or brand new, not just to Toronto but to Canada as well, the libraries of Toronto wait for you, warm in winter, cool in summer, usually quiet, yet always stimulating and energizing places to expand your world, through the privilege of learning new skills, new facts and new stories to enhance your life.

## How to Give the Gift of Learning for Christmas

### GIVE YOUR LOVED ONE

- books or a tech gadget for a course
- a coffee gift card for an after class pick me up
- give your loved one time to learn
- promise to babysit while they work on a project
- provide a few homemade meals to help save time
- proof read their papers or tutor them in your speciality

**Adults learners, tell your loved ones what would help you learn**



## Support Toronto Public Library Workers.

**Did you know that 50% of the people who work in Toronto Libraries have what is called precarious work, work that is part-time, insecure (contract), low wage, no benefits (health coverage, pensions).**

**Contact your City Councillor to tell them how important your local library and librarian are to you. Call 311 and give them your address and they will tell you how to reach your local Councillor**



# JOB SEEKERS TAKE NOTE!

## HELPFUL EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO CENTRE

### MOVING ON JANUARY 4, 2016

BY WENDY TERRY

If you live in Toronto in the vicinity of Jarvis St. and Wellesley, and have been unemployed, you have more than likely found work with the help of the counselors and job developers at the offices of JVS at 111 Wellesley St. East. On January 4th, JVS will be moving to 184 Front St., 2nd floor, at the intersection of the Front and Princess, one block east of Sherbourne St. With the revitalization of Regent Park, and the development of more condo communities, the St. Lawrence area has become a growing labour market. JVS will be able to help you get a job close to your home base.

On November 30th, I met with the JVS team. JVS takes a holistic approach to your job search. The first person I met, Irena, facilitates a four-hour workshop called "Who You Are Matters". Sometimes when we are unemployed, we try to remake ourselves to fit each employer as we move from one application to another – and we feel awkward. This workshop helps you think about who you

are so that you will feel comfortable talking about yourself in an interview. Then you set out to look for a good match between yourself, the position and your employer.

To help you find a good match, JVS Toronto provides a "Career Exploration Opportunity Workshop". Wendy explained to me how this workshop helps you become familiar with labour market research. Labour market research is a big challenge today – given the ever-changing job market and the overload of often-conflicting information on the internet. Getting help to make sense of all this would be extremely useful.

I was fascinated when Debbie, the site manager, explained how the JVS team shows clients how to use LinkedIn in order to network – a means of making contact with others who work in a field or with a company you feel a good fit with. This opened my eyes about how to approach the daunting challenge of "cold calling." JVS Toronto offers a workshop in "Networking and Social Media" to help

you make contacts through Social Media.

JVS Job Development counselors like Julia can open doors for you. They are constantly contacting employers to identify positions needed and looking through the resume of JVS clients on file to find a good fit. Then, through a job development grant, the employer is given a training incentive to offset the salary costs to help them through the first few months while you are learning the job. This service greatly increases the odds of you finding an employer. Remember many jobs are not advertised – you get the job before it hits the advertisements and everyone is sending in a resume. Just imagine what it is like to be an employer looking through hundreds of resumes. JVS Job Development Counselors help both the employer and you find each other more easily.

Recruitment events are another way that JVS Toronto makes the employer's search and yours easier. When employers come to JVS for a day, with several positions

in mind, JVS Job Counselors have already sorted through the resumes on file and have set up interviews. Think how this focused recruitment event compares to the job fairs you have been to where you hand out your resume to many employers, just hoping against hope that something will work.

Several times as I was learning about JVS, I spoke to Rosalie. She is an administrative Assistant who answers the phone and greets you at the door. Front line workers, who make the first contact with a client, are special people. They know the team they work with, and make it easy for you to get started. They make you feel comfortable.

Walking back from my JVS Toronto visit, I thought to myself that finding a job doesn't have to be so scary after all. Drop in anytime after January 4th at 184 Front Street, Suite 203. JVS is there to help you – no appointments necessary.

NEW!



**EMPLOYMENT** *source*  
Toronto Centre

## New Employment Centre opening in January 2016 at 184 Front Street East, Suite 203

### We will help you with:

- Creating resumes that will get you noticed
- Reducing interview nerves
- Finding jobs that match your skills and interests
- Accessing training for your career path

### Our free services include:

- **Resume Clinics** - build a resume that highlights the best of your work history
- **Interview Skills** - get expert advice and coaching on answering common interview questions and behaviour tips for the Canadian workplace
- **Job Search Support** - we help you to find and apply for jobs

FREE!

### For more information:

(416) 929-4331 ext. 0

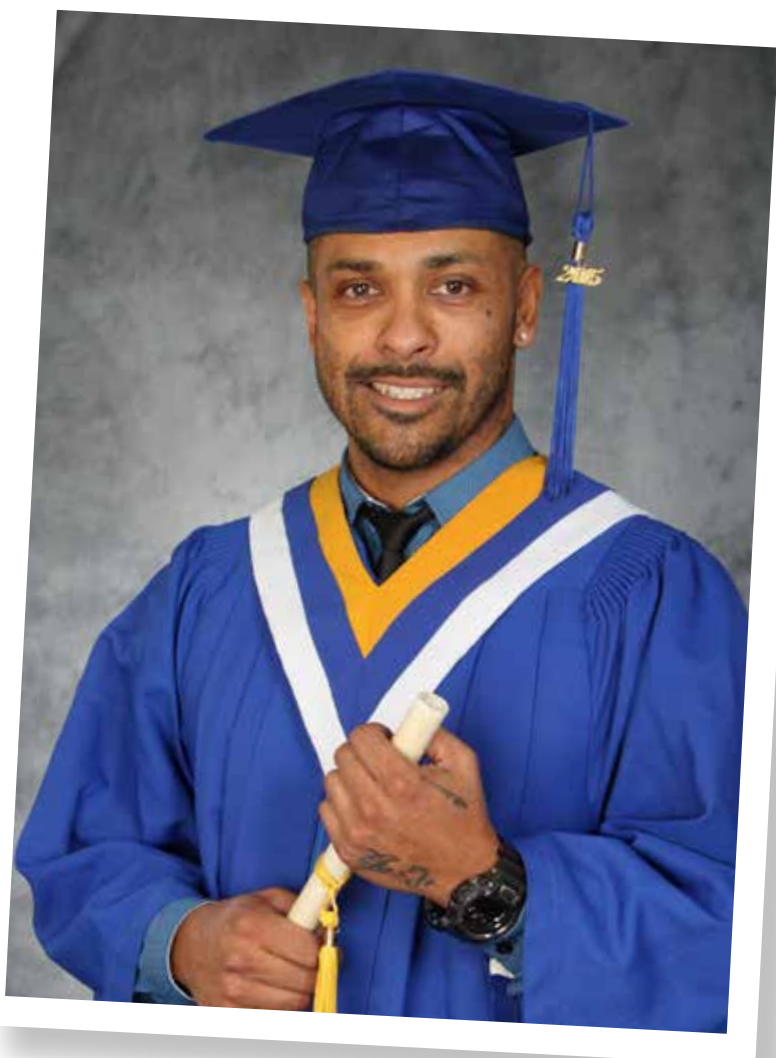
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**www.jvstoronto.org**





# SUCCESS STARTS AT TORONTO'S ACCESS BUSINESS COLLEGE



'Life is what happens when you are busy making other plans.' Today more than ever, John Lennon's famous line rings true for the growing number of adults who find themselves in the position of looking for a new career.

Christian was one of these adults. Like many he felt "a bit overwhelmed" before talking to the staff and faculty at Access. After he met them, he felt that the foundation of the college was based on "the best interests of the students." After all the success of Access depends on the success of their students

Christian described his experience at Access Business College as "a great life changing journey." This is true for many students at Access. Sonia, the college's administrator, always encourages students to think and say out loud: "The best is yet to come!"

Christian chose the Hospitality Management Diploma program which is certified by the American Hotel and Lodging Institute. Having no experience in this industry, Christian appreciated the variety of subjects covered from managing hotels, to supervising food and beverage facilities, to front office operations as well as loss prevention and security. Upon graduation, he felt confident that he had the tools and education to succeed in an industry that has good labour market prospects. Think of all the hotels and restaurants in Toronto and the GTA who would be interested to give a well trained person a job!

Access Business College is located right near the Yonge and Finch subway station and, as a career college, focuses on giving individual attention to their students' needs and goals. You don't have to worry about finding your

way around campus or remembering your student number every time you need help.

Every morning, Christian felt a "welcoming presence" from the staff, teachers and fellow students enrolled in various programs. Being greeted by name, a welcoming smile and a helping hand made for a "dynamic school atmosphere", Christian noted in his thank you letter upon graduating.

Some of his fellow students were enrolled in the Property Administrator Diploma Program an area that also ranks high in labor market needs surveys. Think of all the condos going up, all those office buildings that need countless hours of administration to keep them running smoothly.

Access offers Diploma programs in a range of in-demand fields such as Banking and Financial Services, Business Administration, Computerized Accounting and Canadian Payroll, Graphic and Web Design.

New careers require an often bewildering array of computer skills. With Access' small classes sizes, teachers are able to help students focus on the areas they find challenging. If you are proficient in one skill, they will focus in on the skills that are new for you, or the ones that you struggle to master. Such one-on-one attention is truly invaluable.

Good luck, Christian and remember that "the best is yet to come!"

*Access Business College 416-510-2739. Access Business College 416-510-2739. students' best interests at heart. And, as Halina experienced, they are like a supportive family who are always there to help and fiercely proud of their students' success.*

# 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 45 years old and really, really tired of the work I am doing (cashier). Although I enjoy the people contact I find that I would like to work in a field that has more security, is less physically demanding and offers greater intellectual stimulation. I do know that I would like to work in the healthcare field but am overwhelmed while doing research. I see certificates, diplomas and degrees but don't understand the difference. Also, if I choose to go into healthcare will I be guaranteed work?*

## Confused in Caledonia

Hi Confused!

Wow! I am so glad you wrote. It seems you are definitely giving this great consideration. Lets' try to break it down.

Degree, Diploma or Certificate... the differences are in the length of time and level of study. A degree is usually 4 years, a Diploma is one to two years and a certificate, dependant upon the subject matter, could be anything from a day to a prescribed numbers of credits completion. Degrees are obtained via University study and a Diploma through a college. Most colleges and universities have partnerships where you may be able to transfer college credits toward a university degree.

The healthcare field is very broad. Do you want to work frontline in patient care or in an administrative area? Will you be willing to work shifts? As you mentioned in your letter you would like a job that is less physically demanding. Some careers to consider may be Medical Office Administration, Optometry, Nutrition, Pharmacy or Audiology. All of these areas require a certain amount of study

but there are levels. For example, in the area of Pharmacy you can study to be a Pharmacist (a degree) or a Pharmacy Technician (diploma).

With our aging population Healthcare appears to have a "healthy" outlook in terms of the job market but don't make a decision without doing considerable research. I also highly recommend doing volunteer work so you can both gain experience and explore areas you may wish to pursue. There is a lot of labour market information on the net and here are some which may be worth visiting.

<http://explorehealthcareers.org/>

[www.workincanada.gc.ca](http://www.workincanada.gc.ca)

<http://www.canadianbusiness.com/lists-and-rankings/best-jobs/2014-health-care-medical-related-jobs>

Good luck!

*Dear ELCEE is written by Deborah Noel, [deborahjnoel@gmail.com](mailto:deborahjnoel@gmail.com) Send her your questions.*

*We value your opinion. Please let us know what you think about this column. Send comments to [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com).*

# Next-Steps Employment Centres

## *FREE services for job seekers and employers*



**Monday - Friday  
9 am - 5 pm**



- One-on-one job search assistance and career advising
- Career planning and exploration
- Workshops on job-search specific topics
- Resume review and interview preparation
- Exclusive Hiring Events/Job Fairs, job postings and other resources
- Job development and placement support
- Up to \$500 in Training Supports (if eligible)

### **Win-win strategies for Employers:**

*FREE recruitment and job matching services*

*+ Qualified candidate pool*

*+ Financial incentives (if eligible)*

### **+ Canada-Ontario Job Grant**

- ✓ Provides eligible employers with up to \$10,000 in government support per employee (current or new hire) for training costs.
- ✓ Requires employers to contribute one-third of the total costs. Flexibility for small businesses to provide in-kind contribution towards their share of the costs.
- ✓ Training to be delivered by an eligible, third-party trainer.

**Canada**



**Ontario**

**EMPLOYMENT  
ONTARIO**

Funding provided by the Government of Canada through the Canada Job Grant.  
Programs delivered by the Government of Ontario.

***For more information, contact or visit a Next-Steps Employment Centre near you:***

**Don Mills**  
Peanut Plaza  
3030 Don Mills Rd.  
Toronto  
416-395-5101

**Downsview**  
3701 Chesswood Drive  
Unit 100, Toronto  
416-395-9559

**Riverdale**  
Gerrard Square  
1000 Gerrard St. E.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Toronto  
416-396-2313

**Scarborough Rouge**  
91 Rylander Boulevard  
Unit 102-104, Toronto  
416-396-8110

**Dundas-Dixie**  
1225 Dundas St. East  
Unit 14A, Mississauga  
905-896-2233

**Mississauga  
Meadowvale**  
2121 Argentia Road  
Suite 102, Mississauga  
905-814-8406

**Vaughan**  
4585 Highway 7  
Units 7-9, Vaughan  
905-851-6551

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**www.next-steps.ca**

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**Community  
Services**



We offer a variety of programs in the  
community, and **we have something for YOU!**

For more information on our programs and services, including LINC, ESU, ELT,  
Newcomer Services, Hairstyling Apprenticeship and much more, visit  
[www.tdsb.on.ca/communityservices](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/communityservices) or email [CommunitySvc@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:CommunitySvc@tdsb.on.ca)



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