

# LEARNINGCURVES

CONTINUING EDUCATION | JOB TRAINING | LIFELONG LEARNING

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## LAID OFF? PACKAGED OUT? NOT SURE HOW TO NAVIGATE THE SCENE?

*A plethora of free services  
for job seekers, while  
transitioning between jobs*

BY JUDITH HART

As a Career/Life Skills and Executive Coach, I often meet clients in career transition who haven't had to look for a job for the past 15 to 25 years. They are called 'long tenured workers' who all of a sudden face the crude reality of a lay off (with or without severance pay) and with it a fast awakening to the fact that their skills have been either outdated, or not on par to compete with on today's labour market. Let's face it, no one has to hire anyone...we compete for opportunities, as the labour market of the 21st century. Canada is tilted towards the supply and not as much on the demand side, as in the early 80s, when I came to Canada from Eastern Europe.

Self-check is a start! However, it takes sometimes quite a journey to:

- admit that the person's skills need to be updated to 21st c. company needs
- find customized services free of charge that can help clear the confusion and empower the individual
- learn how to 'show up differently' on the competitive labour market (i.e. becoming pro-active, speak 'industry language', having a growth mindset, focusing on revamped image and more)

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## OFFICE SURVIVABILITY

BY LISA TRUDEL

What is office survivability? It is understanding that career success is not only about accomplishing your job tasks and your performance goals, it is also about relating appropriately with a group of people that you might not know or even want to know.

This is not always easy and might require a review of the following 7 tips so you can develop and improve your office survivability.

- 1) Avoid gossip: workplace gossip can cause unwanted office tension. Most of all, work productivity diminishes when you whisper behind closed doors.
- 2) Acceptance: if your boss believes something is important, treat it like it is.
- 3) Ridicule: never mock anyone. Avoid

telling jokes or stories that could offend someone even if they are not present.

- 4) Communication: understand that what you say may not be what the other person hears and what you hear may not be what the other person means.
- 5) Complaints: if you choose to whine to the boss, focus on the resolution you want instead of the details of the situation that is bothering you.
- 6) Pause: avoid speaking when you are upset. You can never unsay what you have already said.
- 7) Attitude: try to maintain an optimistic approach at the office.

Having a positive attitude can become a learned behaviour. Refresh yourself by reviewing the following 5 tips:

- 1) Start every workday as if you expect it to be a good one.
- 2) Treat yourself as if you are the most important person in your life. Believe that you matter to many people and that your time is of value.
- 3) Remember that the most important conversation of your day is the conversation you have with yourself. If you hear yourself being negative, reframe your thoughts to something positive.
- 4) Let go of frustration. When you are aggravated, ask yourself if it will matter in the future, and if not, let it go.
- 5) Learn something new every day. When you are heading home after your workday, ask yourself what you discovered about yourself or from the people or situations that either annoyed or encouraged you.

If you choose to be an employee and work in an office, make 2020 the year that you improve your personal office survivability. Your career success might depend on it.

To learn more about workplace retention, or job search, contact your local Employment Ontario Career Centre.

*This article was submitted by Lisa Trudel, Career Specialist with the Centre for Education and Training. She works at their Parliament Employment Services location in downtown Toronto where she assists unemployed job seekers navigate new career directions. She can be contacted at: ltrudel@tcet.com*



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# THE RULES OF WORK ARE CHANGING

BY LISA TRUDEL

Whether you are looking for work, trying to manage too much work, or looking forward to working less, the rules of work and the skills required in the workplace are changing.

Today people live and work longer, social media has created new technologies, and workplaces are globally connected. These changes mean that many fundamental skills needed in the past are not necessarily the most important skills required in 2020.

Twenty years ago, the Conference Board of Canada, wrote “Employability Skills 2000+” a practical outline that has been the foundation for many job seekers since it was published.

This chart catalogues skills that include what is needed to enter, stay in, and progress in the world of work. These include communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, adaptability and teamwork. These abilities are still needed, yet remote technologies and new communication tools have introduced many new skills to incorporate into a job search plan.

For example, communication now includes the ability to use constantly changing remote technologies and to be able to discriminate and filter important data and information in order to improve profitability.

Another new rule of work is understanding cross-cultural competency and supporting diversity, equity and inclusion. More Canadian organizations than ever before now have company policies that include a commitment to appreciating differences, and promoting a diverse workforce that

respects equal treatment for everyone.

If you want to find out which companies are “Canada’s Best Diversity Employers” check [www.canadastop100.com/diversity/](http://www.canadastop100.com/diversity/). This site lists the winners from their 12th annual editorial competition. This competition recognizes employers across Canada that have exceptional workplace diversity and inclusiveness programs that create work environments where employees, regardless of race, gender, disability, country of origin, or sexual orientation, can thrive.

In 2020, the rules of work are changing and if you are a job seeker, take the time to be coached by a Career Specialist so you learn the fundamental skills that are expected by employers, and so you can select an employer that fits the criteria that you want.

One of the rules that has not changed is that work is not only about an employer interviewing and hiring you. It is about you interviewing the employer so you can work with an organization that supports your values and beliefs.

To learn more about how the rules of work are changing contact your local Employment Ontario Career Centre.

*This article was submitted by Lisa Trudel, Career Specialist with the Centre for Education and Training. She works at their Parliament Employment Services location in downtown Toronto where she assists unemployed job seekers navigate new career directions. She can be contacted at: [ltrudel@tcet.com](mailto:ltrudel@tcet.com)*

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157 Carlton Street, Suite 205 Toronto, ON M5A 2K2 Advertising call: 416.923.7872

Fax: 416.923.7896 e-mail: [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com). [www.learning-curves.ca](http://www.learning-curves.ca)

# LEADING BY EXAMPLE: A SMILING SUCCESS WITH THE HELP OF FAMILY AND PERSEVERANCE

BY YVONNE VOULGARIS

Kind, compassionate, intelligent, strong, and determined.

Olga Saade found PTP on her journey towards entering the field of dentistry so that she can carry on in the profession she worked in and loved in El Salvador.

Having left fearful and troubled times there, she arrived in Canada in February 2015 knowing only five words: yes, no, he, she, and you.

Some adult learners experience fear and apprehension when returning to school, often afraid that their communication skills will be found wanting and they'll be misunderstood, especially if past experiences in new surroundings have dictated this to be an expected result.

Olga arrived quiet and soft-spoken, but with a laser-like focus on accomplishing all that she needs to. Fear has not held her back in the least. In fact, leaving no opportunity wasted, she has found an unexpected confidence and has thrown herself into any available learning situation offered at PTP. In a short amount of time, she has achieved recognition for completing an Office Basics course, as well as gaining her Food Handler certification. She volunteers in PTP's coffee shop, run by and for the students, and she even dutifully assists with training new volunteers. In class, she is an inquisitive sponge, taking

no learning opportunity for granted.

She says of PTP, "This school is amazing for me. It helped me a lot. I am more comfortable now. More confident. I love this school very much. I've learned many things."

And she does all of this with humbleness and modesty.

Sometimes people who have lost a way of life they're accustomed to and have to start over again, in a new country no less, arrive with bitterness or sadness, which can often impede strides forward. What makes Olga amazing is that she just accepts the reality of needing to start over and she does so with gusto. She worries about wasting time. She wants to move forward as efficiently as possible.

Olga worked as a dentist in El Salvador for 14 years, and it's a profession she loves. The support and love of her family is key to her perseverance and success.

With encouragement from her kids and her husband (who is working towards the same goal), she dove right into researching the necessary requirements and took action.

She started with ESL classes and then moved onto upgrading her math and English skills. When asked what her next steps are towards her goal, she is clear. Once she is finished at PTP, she plans to enter the Dental Assistant program at George Brown. While they recognize her transcripts

from El Salvador, she needs to improve her math and English skills before writing the entrance exam, which is how she ended up at PTP. She will enter the industry and learn how to navigate the Canadian nuances of dentistry so that she can move forward to becoming a dentist here. She plans to attend the Golden Target Training Centre, which is for international health care professionals.

"I want to be an example for my kids. In life, we have to have education because it's the key to having success. It's important for me. It's important for them. If my kids don't see my effort, they might not want to go for their goals."

She carried this spirit with her into PTP, and she is a positive influence and example for all of those around her. She has a work ethic and mindset that makes her a success in all aspects of life she strives for.

For Olga, success can know no bounds when strength of character and family are the motivating factors.

Smiling, she says: "My husband and I are encouraging each other. The goal is very far, but we know that one day we will reach it."

And the glint in her eyes leaves no doubt that this will happen.

*\*Editor's Note: Steven Trussler, the PTP student last featured, has since successfully achieved his GED.*



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# LEARNING TO LISTEN: HOW JOHN MURPHY BECAME A BETTER TEACHER

A SHORT STORY BY MINA WONG

John Murphy has always been proud of his loud voice and intricate ideas with elaborate arguments, but more importantly, he enjoys giving people advice solely based on his own opinions.

However, being a complex thinker has not meant successful relationships for John. In fact, many people have avoided him. Even when John's wife, Shirley raised this subject with him, he would dismiss those who kept their distance as "silly people with silly ideas".

Privately, Shirley knew John was a poor communicator even with her and their teenage daughter, Emily.

Nevertheless, when John became Dr. Murphy in mathematics last year, he was awarded several handsome research grants. He was also asked to teach classes at the university that gave him his doctorate.

An art instructor herself, Shirley believed teaching to be more about listening than talking. She asked, "So, John, can you get along with students not much older than Emily?"

John was gruff and decisive: "Everything will be fine if they will just listen to me."

Discreetly, Shirley and Emily said a prayer for him before his very first class packed with late teens in first year Math. Their understanding was that John was teaching four classes of Math 100 each week.

Not to Shirley's surprise, John's first week of classes did not go well.

During the very first meeting with every group of Math 100 students, John delivered an hour-long lecture with slides in dim light. When students raised their hands with questions or comments, John would stop them: "Shh – I am still talking."

After turning the lights back on and announced he was ready for questions, John was befuddled that many students had left. When some approached him, "Professor Murphy, I wonder if ...", John would cut them off with a bewildering lecture that left them stunned and speechless.

To his colleagues, Dr. Murphy's first week was simply a disaster.

Department Chair, Janeth Sharma received almost a hundred complaints from MATH 100 students about John: "Terrible listener, talks too much", "Zero interest in students", "He shuts us up when we ask questions", "The slides are pages of the textbook", "Dr. Murphy rambles on even when we try to talk with him", and "Murphy -- king of monologues" were among students' distressed messages to Janeth.

She met with John first thing Monday morning in the second week: "John, we can support you to be a better teacher, but you need to start listening to students."

Although Janeth was John's supervisor, he still tried to cut her off with the theory that his students did not want to attend classes. But her ultimatum was loud and clear: "John, learn to listen and communicate or ship out."

She knew many mathematicians who were good teachers even if they did not have John's accolades.

Still, to be fair-minded, Janeth found out more about John: he liked to hear his own booming voice; he had little patience for conversations; he always assumed he had perfect answers when they could be peculiar ideas or eccentric arguments; he also liked to advise others even when he was not asked to do so.

That evening, John lamented to Shirley and Emily: "Janeth says I'll lose my job unless I start listening to people. How do I do that?"

Without missing a beat, Emily took her stand: "How do you do that? Dad, it's not rocket science! Just stop talking and give other people a chance to finish first! Just try that."

"Bravo", thought Shirley of their courageous girl, but said calmly: "John, Emily has a point."

Since then, John has genuinely tried to improve his listening skills. He has also attended communication workshops, and more notably, he has managed to keep his teaching job.

A year later, John seems more patient with others, and tries to let them talk before giving his opinion. To help him with the bad habit of cutting someone off, Shirley will prompt, "John, did so-and-so just say such-and-such?"

Shirley's cue is often enough for John to pause, listen more, and talk less. Instead of presuming his advice is gold, he will try to restate what someone has said. From interpersonal skills workshops, he has also learned to ask, "Is that what you mean?"

John's improvement has not escaped Janeth's scrutiny. She is happy that mentoring him early in his teaching career is paying off, and that with steady progress, he can be a successful Math professor in her corner. She is definitely pleased that John has learned to have conversations instead of just monologues.

At home, John also communicates better with Shirley and Emily. Sometimes, they still prompt him to hear information fully before answering, but both agree that through learning to listen, Professor Murphy is now a more pleasant family member to live with.

# READ WITH ME

BY MICHELA GITTENS

*'Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.'* —Joseph Addison

I love to read which is surprising because when I was younger, you could not pay me enough to pick up a book. I discovered my love for reading in my teen years but oftentimes, it took a back seat to everything else that was happening in my life. Last year, I challenged myself to read 12 books. This year however, I neglected to prioritize this essential self-care activity and once again it fell to the wayside.

As this year is coming to an end and I think about all the things I want to accomplish next year, prioritizing reading is at the top of my list. Reading for me can be an escape, transporting me to a different time or exposing me to a culture I would not have otherwise experienced. It gives me perspective, insight, new ideas, encouragement and advice. Reading has also helped with my imagination and by extent improved my creativity.

Adult learning does not have to only be centered around academics and career progression. Adult learning can be in the form of reading for recreational purposes and personal growth. There is much to learn from an autobiography by The First Lady of the United States

or a fiction detailing injustice and the effects it can have on a person's life.

I encourage and challenge you to explore reading as a form of self-care and just in case your excuse is "I don't know of any good books", in the famous words of Issa Rae "I got you!"

I have decided to curate a reading list for a few reasons: to make informed recommendations for you to take the trial and error process out of finding a great read as well as to challenge myself to keep reading no matter how busy life gets.

Below is a list of a few of my current favourites, all of which are available at the Toronto Public Library. I hope you enjoy them as much as I do. Look out for my next recommendations in the Spring Issue.

- Born a Crime by Trevor Noah
- Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng
- Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- Educated by Tara Westover
- An American Marriage by Tayari Jones
- Becoming by Michelle Obama
- The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas
- We're Going to Need More Wine by Gabrielle Union

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# BRIDGING THE GAP, SEEING THE PERSON BY CARTER HAMMETT

Since its inception nearly two years ago, *Epilepsy Toronto's unique Bridge the Gap ambassador program has reached thousands of participants while promoting epilepsy awareness and helping ambassadors develop skills deemed essential for workplace success. Here's how it happened.*

When we think of something that's "heavy" we tend to often think of the dictionary definition of something that's of "great weight" or "difficult to lift or move."

Living with an invisible disability like epilepsy can be perceived, metaphorically at least, in much the same way.

"Heavy" is also the chosen monicker of rap artist-turned-inspirational speaker Steven Salguero.

Salguero 33, is one of several ambassadors attached to Epilepsy Toronto's inspiring ambassador program, Bridge the Gap, which pairs skilled facilitators with volunteer speakers who share their personal stories with employers and community agencies in a variety of settings. The stories put a human face on an invisible disability while helping the speakers develop new skills which in turn can be applied to future workplace opportunities.

"Growing up in the Jane-Finch community, I made a lot of bad choices in life and dropped out of high school early," says Salguero. "My mother, seeing that I was so lost took me to our home country, Ecuador. It was a trip that completely changed my life. Over there I got into a severe car accident that left me in a coma. I had to go through brain surgery which resulted in a speech impediment, acquired dyslexia and not being able to understand what feelings were. I was also diagnosed with epilepsy and then had to go to rehab for a couple of years."

Recently, Salguero began turning his

life around, finally deciding to complete high school. He's currently enrolled at Seneca College studying acting.

It's stories like this that have permeated workplaces for the better part of two years now, showing audiences that it's not only possible to live with epilepsy and its related conditions, it's possible to flourish with them too. Ultimately, the program's goal is not only to "put a face on epilepsy" but to create deeper meaning for potential employers wishing to diversify their workforce. By creating a "three-dimensional networking" experience for recruiters who can feel more confident and motivated to reach out to an untapped workforce. The process works cyclically as well: ambassadors develop valuable communication, networking and esteem-building abilities within workplace settings, which increases confidence of what skill sets they offer employers. In short, it's a win-win for everybody. (NICOLE: I struggled a bit with this, but what do you think of this graph? Better? We don't really address partnerships in the article either...)

The message, we hope, makes heads of corporations, HR managers and small business owners all think twice about any bias they may have in hiring a person with epilepsy. We hope that after hearing facts about epilepsy in the workplace, combined with meeting these inspirational members who live with seizures, these people will be more open to giving a person with epilepsy a job and a chance at a better future. Having our ambassadors deliver these messages not only has greater impact on the recipients but offers our ambassadors much needed workplace experience; skill building public speaking, adult education and presenting; increased comfort in a workplace setting,

and increased self-esteem. (You can change whatever you like...but I am suggesting that we round out or expand a bit what it means to have these messages in the workplace... i.e. gives ambassadors experience, skills, confidence, AND teaches to employers, staff, hr managers to be more open to hiring and accepting persons with seizures in the workplace )

"It's been an honour and a privilege to be part of a program where we get to educate people, dispel myths and misconceptions and share our stories," says public education coordinator Angini Mohammad. "It's been a complete joy for me to work with the ambassadors. I've seen the transformations in them and I'm so proud of them. I look at our work as a collaboration and I've developed close relationships with my ambassadors. We're a team."

To date, that team has grown to include 34 ambassadors who collectively have reached over 4200 people across 230 presentations at agencies and corporations that include TD Bank, Humber College, Toronto Police, University of Toronto Rotman School, The National Yacht Club, The Retail Council of Canada, The Central National Exhibition (CNE) as well as various and assorted community health centres, and non profit service providers across the city.

Audience feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with responses indicating an increased awareness of epilepsy and seizure first aid. Hearing the ambassador's personal stories has helped humanize people's perception of epilepsy as well.

The experience has had a positive impact on ambassadors too, with almost all of them confirming the development of new skills including public speaking, marketing and organization among others. The great majority

of ambassadors have also reported an increased awareness and confidence in managing soft skills too, including time management, commuter anxiety and task completion. Some, like Salguero, have become inspired to strike out on their own, conducting inspirational seminars at public schools, while others have channelled their skills into newly-acquired part-time jobs. Finally, the experience has helped foster a sense of community by taking ambassadors out of isolation and being full participants in a cross-functional team that assumes ownership over their outreach strategies.

"The Bridge the Gap program has been a wonderful experience for me," says ambassador Shonet D'Souza. "It offers me the opportunity to use my training and public speaking skills to educate people about epilepsy, especially in the employment market. This program has helped me meet so many people advocating for the cause including epilepsy warriors like myself who are thriving in the community."

It's a sentiment echoed by "Heavy" Salguero.

"Once I got better I wanted to do something positive with my life so I got involved with different forms of art. Although I'm diagnosed with epilepsy, I encourage people to not give on their dreams. Whenever I have a seizure, I pick myself up and move forward. My life story shows that you can make change and progress no matter what you go through. If I can do it, anybody can do it better than me."

To book your presentation or for more information on Bridge the Gap, please visit Epilepsy Toronto's web site, [www.epilepsytoronto.org](http://www.epilepsytoronto.org) or contact project coordinator Angini Mohammad at either 416.964.9095 or [angina@epilepsytoronto.org](mailto:angina@epilepsytoronto.org)

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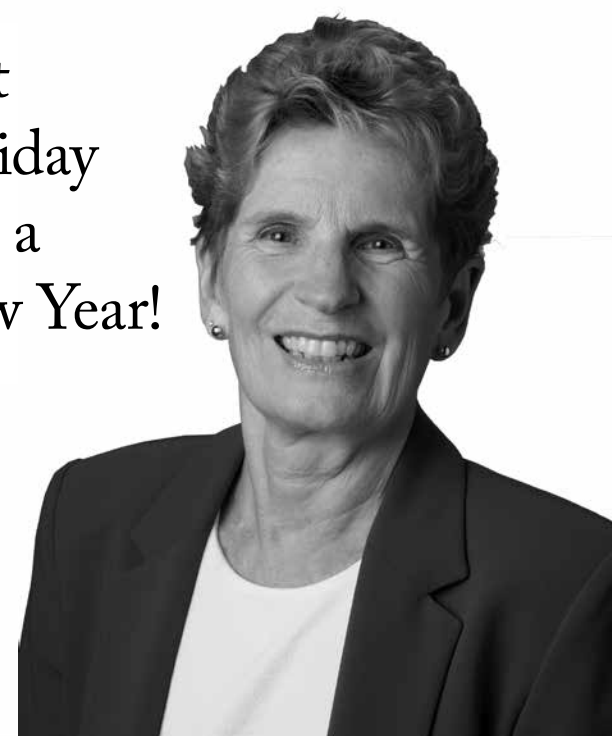
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Sheridan's Data Science certificate is a perfect example. When Sheridan officials noticed companies investing heavily in analytics and making more data-driven decisions, it took less than six months to create a program in response. Within two years of the Data Science certificate's launch in 2017, it's already become one of Sheridan's five most popular Continuing Education programs.

"It used to be that statisticians and computer scientists were separate entities, but data science

has brought these two worlds together to provide career-advancing opportunities," says Marcela Velez-Pulgarin, Associate Director of Sheridan's Continuing & Professional Studies (CAPS). "That's the main thing about continued education, the ability to have a quick turnaround when we see an opportunity. I've never seen a CAPS program grow as quickly as this one."

Part of the explanation for the program's rapid popularity is because Sheridan was ahead of the curve, remaining the only college in the Greater Toronto Area to offer a Data Science certificate. Monitoring industry trends and job postings helped the College identify the growing demand for skilled professionals who can gather and analyze small to large amounts of data, but having instructors who also work in the field was especially valuable.

"It's never been easier to get a large volume of data, but never harder to have people who can give meaning to data and transfer data from information to business knowledge," says Sheridan Data Science instructor Simon Sun, who also works as a senior manager for CIBC. "Our Data Science certificate really helps to minimize the structural gap between industrial demand and academic preparation, in terms of both theoretical statistical modeling knowledge and hands-on experience of the most popular big data tools."

In addition to courses about advanced statistics, analytics, big data, modeling, business problem analysis and data exploration, the Data Science certificate also allows students to do an applied project — something Sheridan is looking to offer in as many CAPS programs as possible.

"Although we don't have internships or co-ops, we're starting to embed applied learning, whether it's partnering with organizations or asking students to bring in their own real-life cases," Velez-Pulgarin says. "The goal is to have you take what we taught you and build something together with us, receiving advice from people who are already experts in the industry."

The Data Science certificate is just one example of how Sheridan's Continuing & Professional Studies programming continually evolves to meet industry needs. The College also launched a Digital Marketing certificate earlier this year, and Sheridan is currently evaluating the demand for courses about blockchain.

For more information about all of Sheridan's Continuing & Professional Studies programs, visit [caps.sheridancollege.ca](http://caps.sheridancollege.ca).

## KEEP LEARNING

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# GRADUATING WITH CUOL: ONE STUDENT'S JOURNEY THROUGH SCHOOL ONLINE

BY BIANCA CHAN

When Tammy Scrivener finally decided what she wanted to study in university, she was a little older than most students at Carleton University.

"I had always wanted to be a lawyer, but by the time I got to university I was 42 and I was not doing law school," Scrivener says.

She laughs about her unorthodox path to schooling; Scrivener says when she was younger, like many other teenagers, she felt that school was not for her. Decades later and decades wiser, Scrivener says she thought a bachelor's degree could help her advance her career in the public service. Though, as a full time human resources manager, Scrivener's hands were tied.

"There are only so many hours in a week and I thought I couldn't leave my job to go to university," she says.

That was when she heard about Carleton's online degrees. Following her dream of becoming a lawyer, and coupling that with the psychological aspect of her current work, Scrivener enrolled to be a law major and a psychology minor at Carleton.

Completing nearly 80 per cent of her

three-year degree online, Scrivener was able to study and work part time, usually watching her lectures over lunch hour. In the fall of 2016, with the finish line in sight, she transitioned to full time school. On Saturday, Scrivener will graduate with the class of 2017.

"[Online education] was the perfect thing for me, and if I had had this 20 years ago when I was the normal age group to go to school, I probably would have gone to school much earlier," she admits.

Scrivener says she is extremely grateful that online programs, such as those at CUOL, exist.

"It has been an eye opening experience that you can actually learn online," she says.

In addition to earning her degree, Scrivener says the experience of attending school online has been beneficial. From networking within her career to having more finesse in debate and research, the skills Scrivener picked up during her online undergraduate experience are invaluable. She adds that her personal and work lives benefitted from the flexible online schedule, too.

"This kind of education really does help

you develop your critical thinking – and that's at any age," Scrivener says. "I'm pushing 47 and I'm still learning, and I'm still teachable."

One of the key things Scrivener says she learned about herself throughout her online degree is to have an open and teachable mind.

"It is very easy to get cocky, especially when you're staring at a TV screen, it can be very tempting to fast forward through a boring part," she says.

"It's not just about passing the course, but it's the degree at the end of the journey," Scrivener says. "You want to make sure when you have that, you've actually earned it."

Now, with the degree that Scrivener certainly earned, she will be catching up on some old work and delving into some new work, with the hope that her new law degree will open some doors for this new graduate.



Tammy Scrivener

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# UNIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY: REMOVING BARRIERS TO LEARNING

BY JOANNE MACKAY-BENNETT

Regular readers of Learning Curves will know that University in the Community (UitC) is an adult education program founded in 2003 by the Workers' Educational Association, the publisher of this newspaper. UitC welcomes adults who may have faced barriers to post-secondary education but who have never lost their desire to learn. Our program is not-for-credit and it is free-of-charge.

Each Wednesday evening, a group of adults from all walks of life meets at Innis College, on the St. George campus of University of Toronto. It is a time set aside for exploring and discussing a topic chosen by the students in the previous year, listening to inspiring speakers, and, whenever possible, taking topic-related, excursions.

For the 2019-2020 year, our topic is: "The Public Good: Who is the Public and What is the Good?"

What do we mean by the public good (also called the common good), you ask? In Canada, and in other liberal democracies, the term is most often understood to mean policies and services that are put in place for the benefit of everyone – those living now and those yet to be born – rather than for the enrichment of any one person or group.

The public good is a democratic, aspirational concept that goes beyond present or private interests. If you think of the public good as something close to well-being for all, you can easily understand why it is a term so widely accepted that it is rarely, if ever, debated. In fact, in Western democratic thought, the public good is often closely allied with the concept of justice.

Public space, for instance, is a public or common good. Everyone is welcome to use a public space, as long as they use it for the purposes for which it was designed. Likewise, public institutions – such as hospitals and schools – were founded on the understanding that access to their services would be made available to all.

Public health regulations, especially those that ensure the cleanliness of the air we breathe and the water we drink, provide another example of what we might include in the category of the public good.

This Fall, UitC students began the term by asking: Is the public good, a hallmark of liberal democracies, under threat from private interests? If it is, what can we do to rescue it?

We decided to focus first on how other cultures imagined the idea of the public good long before it was ever called by that name. For millennia, its spirit of selflessness and stewardship has been integral to indigenous cultures in Canada. Invited speakers spoke movingly about Inuit and First Nations' traditional cultures.

We visited an exhibit by the Isuma Collective at the University of Toronto's Art Museum called Qaggiq: Gathering Place (<https://artmuseum.utoronto.ca/exhibition/qaggiq-gathering-place/>). There, we saw visual documents of elders describing and enacting the skills of their traditional way of life. Like the younger generation who accompanied the elders in the videos, we watched and listened and learned.

When Inuit Elder, Naulaq Le Drew, spoke (and drummed, and performed!) at our next class, we learned that her traditional upbringing was based on four big laws, or malagait. These laws formed the basis of Inuit inter-relationships to each other, to all other living beings, and to the environment. The first of these laws? Working for the common good.

Two speakers who are member of First Nations communities, spoke of the teaching role that traditional values provide each one in their life today. And both described how their understanding of indigenous traditional values was a blueprint for how to address the environmental crisis.

Cynthia Wesley-Esquiaux, Indigenous Chair on Truth and Reconciliation at Lakehead University, explained how traditional First Nations communities addressed common needs with a collective response – a response that required elders to consider the impact of their decisions on seven future generations. Decisions always involved people and entities beyond the present time.

Jayne Chiblow, a researcher with York University's Indigenous Environmental Justice Project, added that according to traditional indigenous belief, everything – living, in the spirit and ancestral world, and not yet present – is connected in the vast interrelatedness of all things. Knowledge is not just something you acquire, we learned, it is given to us and with it comes the responsibility to act, to give back to your community. <https://iejproject.info.yorku.ca>

Land, the space to be and to belong, is crucial to indigenous peoples and their teachings. After attending an event hosted by U of T's School of Cities at North York Public Library, where panelists spoke about urban land use in present-day Toronto, it was hard not to conclude that in our here and now, land is a contested site between public and private ownership. <https://www.schoolofcities.utoronto.ca/>

Urban planner, architect, and author, Ken Greenberg, ingeniously wove several threads together when he spoke to us about the increasing presence of technology in public space. There are critical choices to be made as cyberspace interjects itself into public space. In a world of rapid technological invention, are we still able to conceive of something as far-reaching, and as precious, as the common good?

By their expansion of a concept, speakers led UitC students to understand that an idea has histories. That will be key to our continuing explorations next term!





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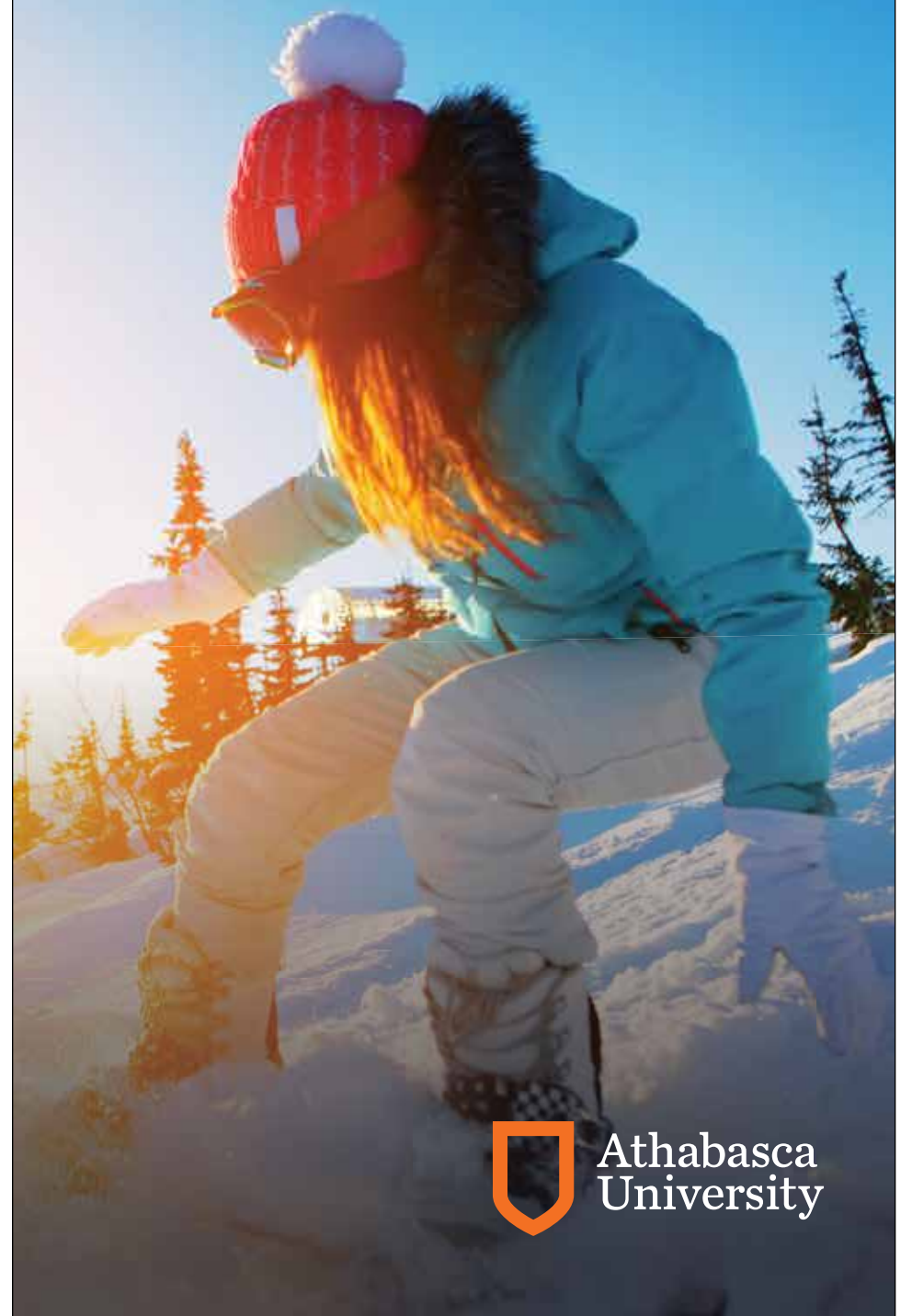
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# LAI D OFF? PACKAGED OUT? HOW TO NAVIGATE THE SCENE?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

d) understand the deeper dynamics of one's own market (trends: shrinking vs. growing industries and other important dynamics)

Often clients' current language & mindset usually don't include words such as: self-marketing, power networking, and personal branding...which used to belong to marketing products. The shift happens usually, when clients realize that absolutely no one owes them a job and we do compete for opportunities. Quite a change from even 15 years ago!

Both provincial and federal governments spend enormous amount of moneys on a plethora of programs to bring job seekers up to speed to become actually 'marketable'.

Aren't we so lucky to live in a country where laid off employees can continue to learn, upgrade their knowledge, prepare them for the next level of upgrade with FREE SERVICES and SUPPORTS of all kinds (both financial and in kind)

FREE services across the GTA  
Ontario social services structure allows any unemployed or underemployed taxpayer to take advantage of a wide range of FREE services such as:

- 1:1 job search assistance
- coaching (career, motivational, 1:1 strategic or life skills)
- free workshops in at least 10++ important areas of work/career life
- career planning and exploring various careers/fields/industries
- access world class skills testing software (i.e. IBM Assess)
- access to Canada's largest business database housing vital and detailed information on at least 72000 companies updated on an ongoing basis
- resume and cover letter trainings, reviews
- mock interviews with or without video recording to see/hear constructive feedback from experts in the field
- hiring events / job fairs to meet potential employers
- mentoring events / presentations by subject matter experts
- job development, placement and job matching
- financial supports (interview clothing, licences for eligible clients)
- re-training options (bridging, apprenticeship and Second Career programs)

Some useful links to check out for all GTA residents to find an employment center or staffing agency or executive search firms:

[www.211toronto.ca](http://www.211toronto.ca)  
<http://feat.findhelp.ca/eng/search.php>.

Useful links to find staffing agencies in the GTA:  
<https://clutch.co/ca/hr/staffing>  
<https://headhunters-canada.com/>

How do you qualify for FREE community employment services?  
Are you UNemployed or UNDERemployed... what's the difference anyway?

Unemployed persons, residing in Ontario (i.e. landed immigrants or Canadian citizens or international students with work permits or mothers after maternity leave trying to reconnect with work or students-graduates, persons with disabilities or belonging to minorities or racialized communities, refugees with PR card & court decisions) are eligible\* for free career/employment services offered by provincial service providers.

Underemployed means, the person is not working within her/his field of study, but in another field within a much lower stratum, than the credentials validate her/him for. Also, persons whose work hours do not exceed 20 hours/week – considered part time, or contract/project based work.

**Who are the players on the transition market? How are they different?**

When you google employment agencies/services in your area, you need to be able to differentiate between paid for private service providers vs. free, community services. There is an almost intimidating number of service providers in all GTA neighbourhoods, but the sorting gets easy once you are aware of the different business models/structures they operate based upon. There are 3 major categories that will give you services at no extra charge as they are either paid by employers/business owners or funded by either provincial or federal government:

1. Executive Search firms (specializing in mid-level, managerial positions)
2. Staffing Agencies (specializing in entry to mid-level jobs; often with industry speciality focus)

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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**CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS**

3. Employment Centers/Agencies (do not specialize in any particular industry as their clients can be from any field, any level hence if they offer job development, chances are they are networking with dozens of potential employers/business owners in their particular catchment areas)

Regardless of the goal of the job seeker/self-marketer, there needs to be an integrated 'campaign' drawn up, harnessing the power of multiple resources (such as above) in order to generate good results/offers. There is no limit as to how many Staffing Agencies a job seeker can register and build networking contacts with, as well as, how many Executive Search Firms one approaches with a resume and register with.

However, when it comes to Employment Centers/Employment Agencies that are funded by the Government, clients can only access ONE AT A TIME as these programs are run by tax-payers money hence no 'double dipping' is allowed. The idea has logic behind it: by registering only to one agency/center at a time, client doesn't take away a chance of being serviced from another client. It is only fair. However, if/when clients are not satisfied with one service provider then they are allowed to 'close their files' and open with another provider.

It is highly advisable to pick a center nearest to client's address as most of the time it will take several visits to generate results and even just to show up to the workshops, trainings or 1:1 coaching sessions or employment events that each client would greatly benefit from.

Please note: I had not mentioned (deliberately) Head Hunters in the above list as HH are focusing on clients who are currently employed and they mostly don't work with clients in between jobs. There are exceptions to the rule, of course, when a client establishes a good networking relationship or being referred by someone to a HH...but these cases are isolated and not the trend, and definitely not the rule of the marketplace.

I hope above will clear some of the confusion about the various FREE service providers in Ontario for job seekers or clients in job transition who need guidance in preparing for new employment.

*Judith Hart is an Employment Specialist, MBTI and Soft Skills Solutions® facilitator*

Poems Submitted By **Amina Altaf**

# ROSE

O sweet rose, don't look away;  
For you are the most refined and composed of  
All flowers;  
You spring happiness but with just a glance;  
Simplicity is your name, your life more simple;  
Little do you know, how much you express

# Best Friends

I close my eyes and see your reflection;  
Can't believe that I can no longer have the long talks with you wondering;  
How we agree to disagree;  
Our morning talks with tea and biscuits;  
You sat there, with a scarf over your head, holding the morning  
paper; wanting to discuss the views of the world;  
I thought the world was at my footsteps; ready for me to experience and you,  
You witnessed 4 generations; the fifth a breath away;  
You knew me, more than I knew myself;  
You knew that I would settle elsewhere;  
You wished me well and with a smile, you let me free;  
Free to find happiness as I dreamt of;  
Now, happiness is all I have because I have closed my eyes

# TELL NEW MINISTER McNAUGHTON WHAT WOULD HELP YOU GAIN THE SKILLS TO GET A BETTER JOB OR A JOB.



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# EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO IS CHANGING TELL MINISTER MCNAUGHTON WHAT YOU LIKED ABOUT THIS SERVICE.

**H**ave you ever used the services of an Employment Ontario Centre, received Second Career Funding to retrain when laid off? Have a look at the Toronto Star article listed below to see how these services are to change. If you have time, have a look at the Auditor General's Initial report and follow up to see how the evaluation of Employment Ontario services initiated these changes.

Better yet email the Ontario Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development to tell him what you liked and what you would like Employment Ontario services to offer.

See Toronto Star November 25, 2019 "Program for job seekers undergoing revamp But shifting focus from smaller agencies raise chance of U.S. for-profit bidders, critics say by Sara Mojtehdzadeh

See Ontario Auditor General's  
Report on Employment Ontario

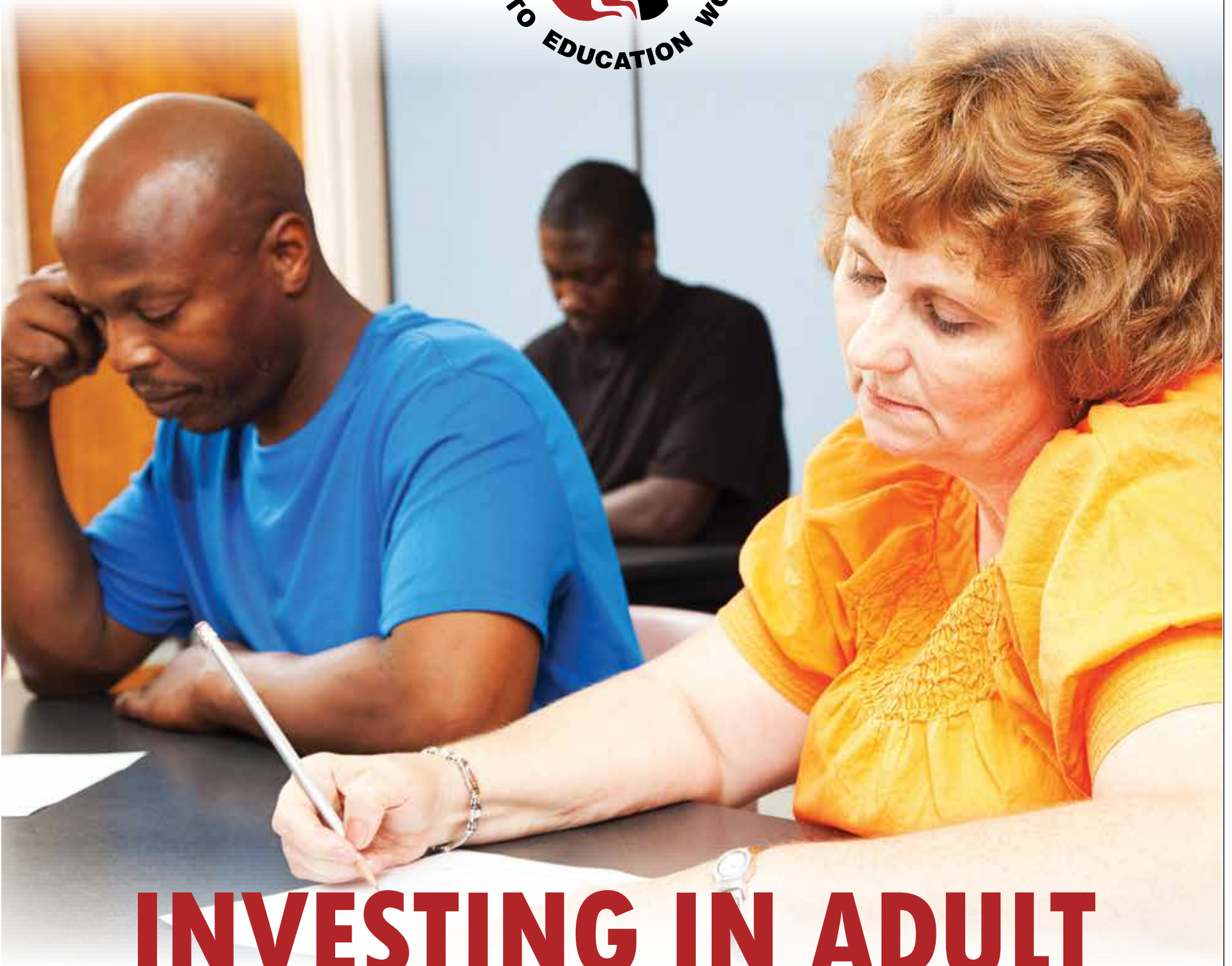


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See Ontario Auditor General's Follow  
up Report on Employment Ontario



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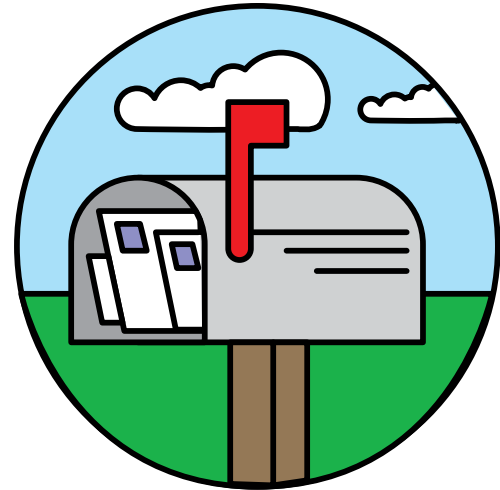
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*Dear Elcee:*

*I have been hearing a lot on the news about the aging population. I know about all the opportunities that are going to come about in healthcare but have a deep fear of anything to do with blood. As a twenty something trying to make a decision about where to focus my future... are there any career options that I can take advantage of without fainting at the sight of needles?*

*Not Into Nursing*

Dear Not into Nursing

I am like you. As a young girl I certainly considered a career in Nursing until I realised I might have to give someone a needle. I admire people in the healthcare profession but recognise it takes a very special skill set (one which I don't have.). However, I have many retired friends who are now starting second careers in the home healthcare field. They enjoy the flexibility and the opportunity to get involved in the community while supporting older seniors to live at home.

A report from the Fraser Institute published in the Toronto Sun in November 2017 stated that "The combination of Canadians living longer with the population bulge of the baby boom generation means seniors are on track to represent 25 per cent of the Canadian population by roughly mid-century compared to less than 15 per cent in 2010." \ Will that mean all of the jobs will be in the frontline healthcare industry? There is certainly, already, an increased demand and that is expected to grow. However, this is also a population that is enjoying better health and more activity than previous generations ever knew. In the early 20th century "old age" was considered anything over 50. It is expected that positions will be opening up to accommodate a wealthier, more active aging population. the travel industry will see a boost in guided trips, cruise lines and bus

tours. There will also be a greater need for construction work in home renovation and improved accessibility. Industrial design will also require experts in designing products that will accommodate people who may be dealing with decreased mobility and function. In the healthcare industry, we are seeing a greater demand for Activation Coordinators, Patient Advocates and Family Liaisons. The pharmaceutical industry will be seeking people for research and production. Massage Therapists, Hearing specialists, Physiotherapists are also specialties that will see growth as a result of an aging population. Have a look around and do a little research. When choosing a career, don't only look at demographic trends. Take into account what your interests are. Ensure that you get a strong basis in your education and keep your mind open to new opportunities to learn and grow!

*Dear ELCEE is written by Deborah Noel,  
deborahjnoel@gmail.com  
Send her your questions.*

*We value your opinion. Please let us know  
what you think about this column. Send  
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