

Labour Market Information BULLETIN

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Fall/Winter Edition, 2017



Photo: www.lanarkcountyparamedicservice.ca/

The Labour Market Group of Renfrew Lanark is pleased to present our 2017 Fall/Winter LMI Bulletin.

Jobs, Jobs and more Jobs!!
The Future of Manufacturing Forum

Full-time permanent employment? Check. Good wages? Check. Job security? Check! Are we talking about the 1950's? Gone are those days in Canada.

Or are they?

The simple answer is no and this is not some utopian version of the world of manufacturing in highly industrialized nations in the present day. You know - the countries where manufacturers have moved their operations because of the cheap labour?

This. Is. Right. HERE. NOW. And this is definitely NOT imagined or "fake news". This is a direct reflection of the current workforce shortage in Renfrew County and it is so acute that some local manufacturers have had to turn down profitable work orders due to lack of workers. So now what? Aren't there a number of people in the county that would knock over their grandma for a permanent, full time opportunity that pays well? Absolutely. But this is simply not the case if you have a skilled or technical trade certificate. These skills are in high demand throughout



**Forum participants engaged in discussion.
October 26, 2017**



The Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark held The Future of Manufacturing Forum at the Clarion in Pembroke, Ontario in October 2017.



Forum Facilitator, Erik Lockhart of Queens University. October 26, 2017

- Huge and expanding base collaboration opportunities
- Enhanced training for trades training
- Diversity policies newcomers ->
- Labour force issues
- Productive relationships and industry
- A comprehensive within County
- All empty positions

Renfrew County 2016-2017 are Professional, Scientific and Technical Services and Manufacturing with average earnings being \$75,825 and \$52,637 respectively and we simply do not have the workforce to backfill the recent retirees. With an aging workforce and youth out migration, the problem will only worsen. Population growth is vital for economic growth and stability and according to the most recent Statistics Canada research, people 45 represent 40.6% of the whereas those 15-44 only represent 34.1%. Renfrew County's youth population is not sufficient enough to replace older workers.



Canada and, if you possess these skills, you can make a great living.

Here in Renfrew County, local manufacturers report having a great deal of difficulty filling trades and technical positions with over 50 per cent of applicants lacking the specific skills or credentials. Despite deindustrialization being a trend, manufacturing is still a major source of employment and an important contributor to the region's economy. According to the EMSI analyst tool there are about 4,000 manufacturing jobs in Renfrew County. In June of this year, Matt Lemay – Program Manager for the Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark – applied for a grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) highlighted some of the reasons the situation has become serious enough to affect our local economic growth and overall living standard. Declining fertility rates, an aging population, limited attraction of newcomers, and youth outmigration are some of the reasons this problem is and will remain an issue. Having proposed a solid strategy that would engage employers, educational institutions, government agencies, municipalities and youth, the Labour Market Group was awarded the funding and so the project began.

Gathering information prior to the meeting would provide important basic information regarding the exact nature of the issue as experienced by local employers. When asked the question which positions are hardest to recruit and hire, 68% of survey respondents reported difficulty hiring trades, 45% have difficulty hiring technical workers and 50% also have a hard time filling management and professional positions. In some cases, it takes up to a year to fill these vacancies. The fastest growing industries in

Can industry, education and government work together to turn this around? That was the hope in gathering nearly manufacturers, economic development officers, employment experts, and educators from across the county for a first ever, one day kick off to what will hopefully change this troubling trend. What was clear from the start is that this community cares about this issue. Deeply. After a warm welcome from Pembroke Mayor, Mike LeMay, Keynote Speaker, Dr. Ryan Gibson – Libro Professor in Regional Economic Development at the University of Guelf – not only energized the room but expertly set the tone for the day asserting that “rural communities have been centres of innovation before innovation was trendy..” and are “resilient as hell”. Despite the fact that urban population growth far exceeds rural – urban centres are highly dependent on rural communities and rural strengths are often overlooked. Dr. Gibson made the message clear. If we need to solve a problem, we can't wait for anyone else to do it. By looking at local assets and capitalizing on all our available resources, taking action immediately is the key. “We need to look at place-based strategies to facilitate our futures.”

Enter Erik Lockhart - Associate Director of the Queen's Executive Decision Centre and our facilitator (read Taskmaster) for the day. From the moment Erik arrived at the Clarion, he meant business. With 2 laptops per

table, Mr. Lockhart utilized “group decision support technology” over the next five hours that captured every group’s priorities, assets and decisions on the main screen. From there, every manufacturer, service provider, and educator became a collaborator and the solution to the hiring problem began to take shape.

After a tireless amount of prioritizing and cooperation, it was clear in the feedback: “Excellent start to solving a recognized issue – need to keep the momentum going” said one participant. Going from working independently to really approaching this as a county team, many were ready take his problem head on. “We need to move forward with a plan.....The only way to change the actual condition is to do the actions.”

Ain’t that the truth?

Take a look at next steps in the outcomes as established on October 26th. We all look forward to the possibilities for a much brighter and more lucrative future.

For everyone.



ARTICLE BY:
HELLEN LAVRIC
PHOTOS BY:
SHAUNA KENNEDY
THE LABOUR MARKET
GROUP

NOVEMBER 3, 2017

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The Future of Manufacturing in Renfrew County



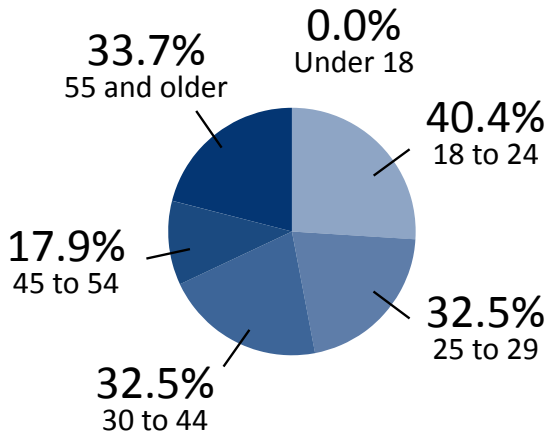
think we've got an opportunity to fix things. To enhance



Dave Lemkay
Renfrew Industrial Commissioner
of the institutions that we need them to cooperate and



AGE BREAKDOWN OF LEARNERS



**Total Number of
Learners served:**

140

**Total number of Learners that
have completed LBS programs:**

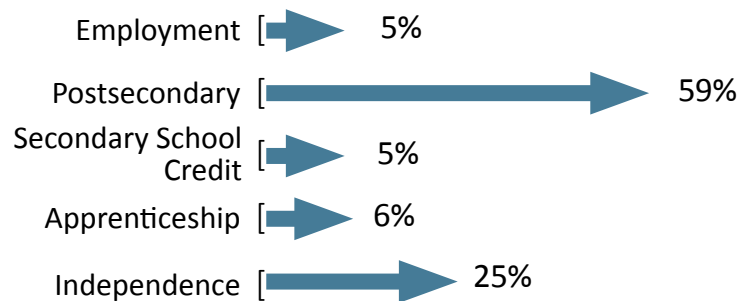
88

N.B. Current Statistics based on information gathered from 66% of the Literacy and Basic Skills service providers in Renfrew County. The LMG continues to make every effort to gather information from all service providers in order to provide the most accurate information.

31% of learners were employed upon exit of Literacy and basic skills services, **53%** went on to other training/education.

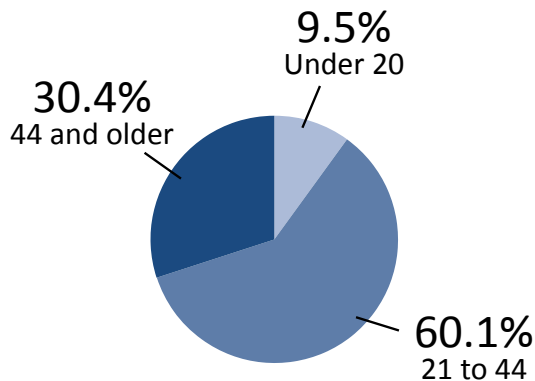
27% of learners accessing Literacy and Basic skills programs have a grade 12 or less education.

LITERACY & BASIC SKILLS LEARNER GOAL PATHS



Current Statistics were not available from some organizations due to the Ontario college teachers strike. The LMG continues to make every effort to gather information from all service providers in order to provide the most accurate information.

AGE BREAKDOWN OF CLIENTS



On average, **33%** of clients accessing employment services have a College education and **6%** have a university degree.

877 clients have exited assisted services, of those exits **73%** are employed and **12%** are in training.

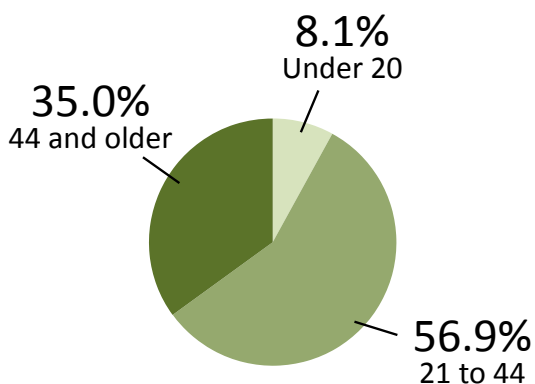
24% of clients in training services are Second Career clients.

Total number of people that have utilized their local employment services resource centre from July to September 2017:

786

N.B. Current Statistics based on information gathered from 75% of the employment service providers in Renfrew County. The LMG continues to make every effort to gather information from all service providers in order to provide the most accurate information.

AGE BREAKDOWN OF CLIENTS



On average, **21%** of clients accessing employment services have a College education and **7%** have a university degree.

456 clients have exited assisted services, of those exits **61%** are employed and **12%** are in training.

24% of clients in training services are Second Career clients.

Total number of people that have utilized their local employment services resource centre from July to September 2017:

460

N.B. Current Statistics based on information gathered from 100% of the employment service providers in Lanark County.



Medium Density Fibreboard is the ideal substrate worldwide for lamination, painting, mouldings, and flooring. MDF is an economical substitute for plywood and solid wood. Architects and designers know the flexibility and durability of this composite panel and specify it for commercial, public, and residential applications.

Statement of Commitment

Pembroke MDF Inc. is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for all stakeholders including our clients/customers, employees, job applicants, suppliers, and any visitors who may enter our premises, access our information, or use our services. As an organization, we respect and uphold the requirements set forth under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005), and its associated standards and regulations.

Pembroke MDF Inc. understands that we have a responsibility for ensuring a safe, dignified, and welcoming environment for everyone. We are committed to ensuring our organization's compliance by incorporating accessibility legislation

into our policies, procedures, equipment requirements, training, and best practices. We will review these policies and practices annually, as organizational changes occur, or in anticipation of compliance deadlines. In addition, we will strive to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in a timely and effective manner.

Providing an accessible and barrier-free environment is a shared effort, and as an organization, Pembroke MDF Inc. is committed to working with individuals upon request to make accessibility for all a reality. For more detailed information on our accessibility policies, plans, and training programs, please contact Human Resources.

Current Openings:

- **Emission-Environmental Support**
- **Industrial Electrician**
- **Windows Desktop Support Specialist**
- **Third Class Operating Engineer**
- **Controls and Instrumentation Supervisor**
- **Controls & Instrumentation (C&I) Technician**
- **Technician – Maintenance Planner/Coordinator**
- **Machine Operator**
- **Finishing Technician**
- **General Application**

Contact Human Resources at:
careers@pembrokemdf.com
613-732-2381



www.pembrokemdf.com

Click to view on **vimeo**

Pembroke MDF



JOB POSTING:



Contract Position Available: Soft Skills Solutions Master Trainer with Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board

Master Trainer Job Description

Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board (SMWDB) is looking for dynamic leaders to become the master trainers in Soft Skills Solutions as independent contractors.

Soft Skills Solutions is a skills training program developed by SMWDB for Employment Ontario Service Providers and Educators as well as other employment and training organizations to help individuals learn and highlight the skills that are expected in today's workforce.

The master trainers will market and co-ordinate facilitator training sessions with host organizations within their designated regions.

The master trainers will deliver the Soft Skills Solutions facilitator training program in accordance with the objectives and guidelines to ensure that all new trainers are prepared to deliver Soft Skills Solutions to individuals.

Designated Workforce Planning Board Areas

EAST 1000 Island Region East Central Eastern Ontario Lanark, Renfrew Ottawa Peterborough, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland, Haliburton	NORTH Algoma District Far Northeast Nipissing, Parry Sound Northwest North Superior Sudbury & Manitoulin
CENTRAL Toronto Durham Region Peel, Halton York Region, Bradford and West Gwillimbury Simcoe, Muskoka	WEST Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford Bruce, Grey, Huron, Perth Chatham-Kent Grand Erie Hamilton Niagara Sarnia Lambton Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin Windsor-Essex

For additional details, please consult the interactive map at:

<http://www.workforceplanningontario.ca/local-boards/find-a-local-board.htm>

Terms of Position:

This is a one-year contract position with the Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board. The contract is renewable contingent on satisfactory performance and continuation of the Soft Skills Solutions program by the Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board.

UP Skills for Work

The Training & Learning Centre is offering a series of FREE workshops with a focus on soft skills.

Register by January 9th, 2018.
Space is limited.

The program is designed to help learners develop core employability and workplace skills.

It is a series of free workshops with a focus on soft skills, which are increasingly identified as important by employers across a wide variety of sectors. The program was developed in collaboration with employee assistance programs and skills development organizations to identify what abilities were most in demand and is entitled UPSKILLS for work. This program was developed by ABC and our Instructor will be trained to deliver the workshops.

Friday, January 12 from 10 - 12: Motivation
Friday, January 19 from 10 - 12: Attitude
Friday, January 26 from 10 - 12: Accountability
Renfrew County - Eganville - Literacy and Basic Skills



**Please call 613-628-1720
(Toll-free 1-800-387-4712) to register
or email trainingandlearningcentre@gmail.com**

**The Training & Learning Centre
227 Bridge St, Eganville**



Canadian Nuclear
Laboratories

Laboratoires Nucléaires
Canadiens

JOB POSTINGS

CNL to 'ramp up' hiring of science and technology staff

Canada's national nuclear laboratory announces plans to add nearly two hundred research personnel to support growing demand for nuclear science and technology.

Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL), Canada's premier nuclear science and technology organization, announced today its plans to hire nearly two hundred additional research staff over the next three years to accommodate the company's anticipated growth in nuclear science and technology services. The hiring will be carried out to support CNL's Long-Term Strategy, an ambitious 10-year plan that will position the organization as a global leader in nuclear science and technology, during which CNL's research staffing is projected to grow by more than 20 per cent.

"Over the past two years we have looked very carefully at our capabilities, our skill sets and people and identified those areas in which we are uniquely equipped to respond to global challenges in health, in energy, in climate change," commented Dr. Kathy McCarthy, Vice-President of Research and Development with CNL.

"As CNL enters this period of organizational growth, our biggest challenge will be to augment our high-calibre research and development team, build strength in new capability areas, and effectively replace those who are planning to retire."

CNL is working through a period of significant transformation, highlighted by an investment of more than \$1.2 billion over ten years to modernize the facilities and infrastructure at its Chalk River Laboratories. The revitalized site will support the nuclear research needs of the Government of Canada and evolving science and technology needs of the Canadian and global nuclear industry, and is designed to spur commercial growth as the company transitions to alternate areas of work. CNL intends to pursue a

variety of new technologies and services as part of its transformation, including the deployment of small modular reactors in Canada and the use of hydrogen to decarbonise the country's transportation sector.

"We are seeing strong growth in the delivery of commercial work, and we are reaching into new markets in nuclear services. As we continue to grow we're going to need the right personnel to build on this momentum, and help us carry out this work," explained Corey McDaniel, Vice-President of Business Development and Commercial Ventures.

To prepare for this change, CNL has established a human resources strategy that identifies workforce requirements and builds a roadmap to navigate these shifts in employee resourcing, including staffing changes related to the closure of the NRU research reactor. For 60 years, NRU has enabled cutting edge research and life-changing medical radio-isotope production; CNL has made it a priority to retain, retrain and redeploy the approximately 400 personnel who will be displaced by the closure of the reactor in March 2018.

"With the pending closure of NRU, CNL has worked hard to ensure that the employees who work in the reactor have a range of career options, and are able to make the decision that best suits their individual needs. To date, over 95% of those employees most immediately affected by the closure have been retrained and redeployed, or accepted offers to explore new career paths following the reactor closure," added Esther Zdolec, Vice-President, Human Resources. "As we transition the facility into a longer term 'storage with surveillance state' additional staff

will become available for redeployment across CNL.”

Overall, the combination of increased research staffing, organizational changes from NRU, and voluntary departures and attrition is expected to result in over 800 vacancies that CNL will need to fill over the next three years.

“CNL is growing its science and technology activities, and we need to align our capabilities with the needs of our customers and with our long-term vision for CNL; that starts with having the right people in the right jobs, doing the right work. We are working hard to attract new talent, and grow and retain the talent we have here already with the aim of repositioning the company to better serve the needs of our customers,” adds Mark Lesinski, President & CEO.

For more information on working at Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, to review the HR Strategy & Plan or to apply to vacancies, please visit www.cnl.ca.

About CNL

Canadian Nuclear Laboratories is a world leader in nuclear science and technology offering unique capabilities and solutions across a wide range of industries. Actively involved with industry-driven research and development in nuclear, transportation, clean technology, energy, defence, security and life sciences, we provide solutions to keep these sectors competitive internationally.

With ongoing investments in new facilities and a focused mandate, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories is well positioned for the future. A new performance standard reinforced with a strong safety culture underscores every activity.



Canadian Nuclear
Laboratories

Laboratoires Nucléaires
Canadiens

CNL

OCTOBER 23, 2017

Access the original release:

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www.cnl.ca

ONTARIO PROVIDING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE

Applications Now Open for Multicultural Community Capacity Grant Program

Ontario is providing more opportunities for newcomers and multicultural communities to succeed, with a new grant program focused on promoting diversity and reducing barriers to inclusion.

Laura Albanese, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, was at Frontlines Toronto today to announce that the province is now accepting applications for the new Multicultural Community Capacity Grant Program.

The program will support community projects that advance diversity and reduce barriers to inclusion, while providing opportunities for newcomers and ethno-cultural communities to participate fully in the civic, cultural, social and economic life of Ontario. Projects will be selected for their ability to:

- Increase intercultural awareness and understanding
- Enhance civic engagement and social connections
- Improve social and economic integration of newcomers and vulnerable groups such as refugees and newcomer women and youth
- Empower women, for example by providing opportunities for leadership roles

Supporting diverse and inclusive communities is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

Background Information

Multicultural Community Capacity Grant Program

<https://news.ontario.ca/mci/en/2017/06/multicultural-community-capacity-grant-program.html>



Quick Facts

- Ontario will invest \$6 million over two years through the Multicultural Community Capacity Grant Program to support community projects, with \$3 million available in 2017-18.
- Ontario is investing more than \$110 million in 2017-18 in programs and services to help newcomers and refugees succeed, and to promote diversity.
- Projects must take place between November 1, 2017 and March 31, 2018.
- Incorporated not-for-profit organizations and individuals representing unincorporated not-for-profit organizations focused on immigrant and ethno-cultural communities have until August 1, 2017, to submit a project proposal. The program has two streams: one for individuals representing an unincorporated not-for-profit organization, with available grants between \$1,000 and \$3,000, and a second stream for incorporated not-for-profit organizations, with available grants between \$3,000 and \$8,000.
- Ontario is supporting dozens of multicultural grant recipients through the Ontario150 Community Capital, Community Celebration and Partnership programs. Go to ontario.ca/150 to learn more.

“This program will help local organizations promote diversity and break down barriers to inclusion in communities across the province. In Ontario, we all benefit when everyone has the opportunity to take part in civic, cultural, social and economic life. I am proud to make this announcement here in York South-Weston. With our support, organizations will help to build strong and diverse communities where everyone can fully participate in our society.”



Laura Albanese
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
MPP York South - Weston

MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION
JUNE 27, 2017
Access the original release:

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APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR ONTARIO’S **MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM**

Grants range from \$1,000 to \$8,000

Non-profits in Ontario that support newcomers and multicultural communities will have an opportunity to provide more support through a new grant program.

The provincial government announced Tuesday, June 27, that applications are open for its Multicultural Community Capacity Grant Program.

“This diversity makes us stronger and more successful as a province,” said Laura Albanese, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and MPP for York South-Weston. “However, we must also recognize that many of our diverse communities continue to face barriers to inclusion that must be overcome to ensure everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of life in Ontario.”

The program will support projects that address civic engagement, social connections, education and empowerment, women’s empowerment, and capacity building and partnerships. Eligible non-profits could receive a grant between \$1,000 and \$8,000.

Stachen Frederick, executive director at Frontlines Toronto, said she welcomes the program and it’s a step in the right direction to help newcomers, but more needs to be done.

“This is about community projects, but it doesn’t talk



Laura Albanese, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and MPP for York South-Weston, (right) shakes hands with Margaret Bhan, before announcing that applications are now being accepted for the province’s new Multicultural Community Capacity Grant Program at Frontlines Toronto in Weston on Tuesday, June 27. - Justin Greaves/Metroland

to some of the pieces of some of the actual support that is needed for individuals,” she said. “So lack of housing, food ... employment ... the government needs to help with some of the employment services in these communities to get families connected and really integrated.”

For more information, visit ontario.ca/page/multicultural-community-capacity-grant-program

INSIDETORONTO.COM
BY AARON D’ANDREA
JUNE 27, 2017

Access the original essay:

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Employers, we need your input...

2017/2018



Your Workforce. Our Future.

The **Employer One Survey** will provide Renfrew and Lanark County Businesses, service providers and educators with valuable insights into local skills and human resources requirements. It is designed to collect information from employers on a range of labour issues, such as recruitment difficulties and current and future skill shortages.

The results will assist your community to accurately respond to your business needs.

- Identify & expand opportunities for growth
- Plan for the future
- Get customized workforce profiles for your organization immediately
- See regional results
- Ensure Renfrew and Lanark Counties have an efficient workforce



The **Employer One Survey** is unique due to its focus on our rural regions. Predominantly, the data available covers a greater geographical area and does not directly reflect our regions and industries. This is your opportunity to participate in a locally based employment survey.

To view Survey Results from the 2016/2017 Employer One Survey, please visit our website at:
www.renfrewlanark.com

Each participant will be entered into our Participation Raffle Draw for a chance to win:

- Business Profile Video
- iPod Shuffle
- \$100 Restaurant Gift Certificate



To complete the Survey online, please visit:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6C6MHY5>



**EMPLOYMENT
ONTARIO**

For more information, please contact us at:
renfrewlanark@gmail.com

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Employer One Survey Renfrew & Lanark County
2017/2018



- ANIMAL PRODUCTION
- REAL ESTATE
- FOOD SERVICES
- HEALTH CARE SERVICES
- CROP PRODUCTION



www.renfrewlanark.com



GRADUATES IN THE ECONOMY

HIGHLIGHTS

Over the past 25 years, the rising level of skills sought by Ontario employers has led to a drop of 400,000 jobs for young adults (ages 25 to 34) without post-secondary credentials, offset by new jobs for those with credentials. The decreases have occurred in every sector. The largest percentage drops are in industries such as manufacturing, accommodation and food services.

In leading advanced economies, employment rates for young adults without post-secondary education are now typically 25 percentage points lower than for post-secondary graduates.

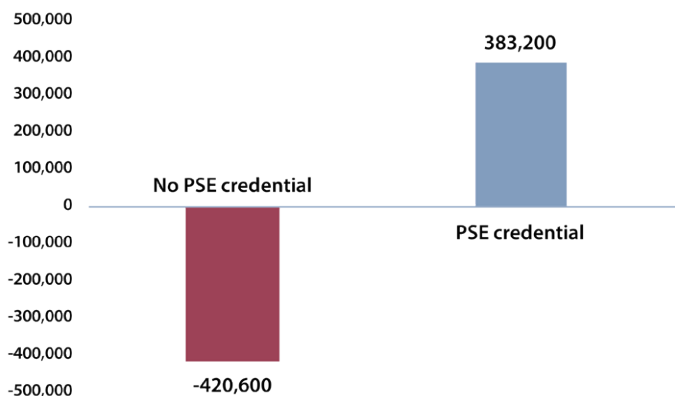
Measured on numbers of tertiary graduates only, Ontario ranks far above Europe and the United States. But when tradespersons are included, leading European countries score much higher.

European leaders are pursuing improvements in the quality of training programs as defined by employers. These include apprenticeships, technology programs and, often, adult skills training. The goal is to boost employment, sustain high exports per capita (three to six times the U.S. level) and reduce inequality compared to the U.S. and – to a lesser extent – to Canada and Ontario.

Asia is also quickly preparing for the digital economy. China, Japan, Korea and Indonesia alone have three times as many young adults with post-secondary credentials as does the U.S.

FEWER JOBS FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITHOUT POST-SECONDARY CREDENTIALS IN ONTARIO

Ontario employment change, with and without a post-secondary credential, ages 25 to 34, 1990-2015



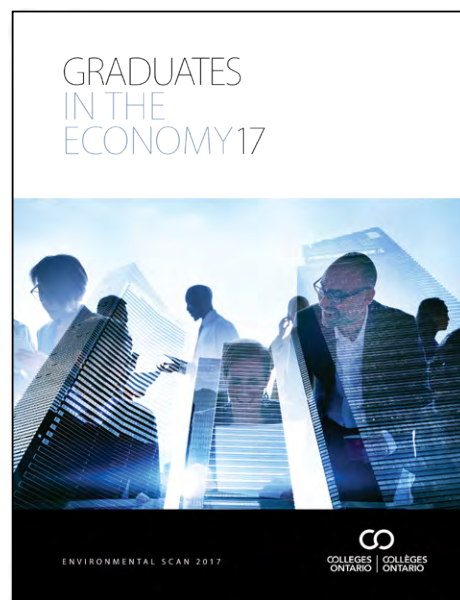
Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, special tabulation.

Within North America, Ontario's skills are a key competitive advantage. While Ontario's apprenticeship program is modest by Canadian standards, it has three times as many college graduates (per capita) as the U.S. The Ontario graduates' innovation and entrepreneurship contribute to exports per capita at twice the U.S. level.

In Ontario, access to post-secondary education continues to be a challenge for underrepresented groups, including immigrants, indigenous peoples, and those with disabilities, resulting in lower employment prospects. In addition, Canada's record in providing employability skills training for adults with low literacy levels is worse than Nordic countries, and is lower than the U.S.

Finally, employer-focused post-secondary education remains an

excellent investment for both individuals and governments.



Click to view or download the full report.



"GRADUATES IN THE ECONOMY: 2017 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN" BY COLLEGES ONTARIO

DEVELOPERS BRING RENAISSANCE TO A FADING TOWN

Pembroke, a city of 14,000 in Ontario's Ottawa Valley, was facing decline as businesses and residents fled its downtown

A pair of women stand chatting on the street in downtown Pembroke. "I hear Scott's Shoes is opening up in the Mews," says one, referring to the shopping mall across the street. "Oh, that'll be great, we need more variety," her friend replies.

The arrival of new businesses is definitely gossip-worthy in Pembroke.

The city of about 14,000, like many others across Canada, has gone through hard times in recent years. The arrival of bigbox stores and the waning of the timber trade have played a role.

Pawn shops have popped up where grocers and independent retailers once stood, and absentee landlords have allowed apartments and commercial properties to fall into disrepair. People shopped at Wal-Mart instead.

But the town once was the heart of the Ottawa Valley.

"There's a photo of Pembroke downtown when my grandmother was young, and there was a sea of people, wall-to-wall - you couldn't drive a car down the street. From one end of downtown to the other, it was thousands of people shopping," recalls Conrad Pool, a Pembroke native and the owner of Ottawa-based Sleepwell Property Management.

He and other private developers are trying to take Pembroke back to that moment. Mr. Pool's Sleepwell has invested \$6-million



Conrad Pool, a Pembroke native and owner of Sleepwell Property Management, has invested \$6-million in the town.

into renovating 16 commercial and 26 residential properties, with an additional \$1.5-million coming to complete them. Ashraf Arif and Tim Streek have also been pivotal investors in the city.

"We're so fortunate as a city to have people like that," says Heather McConnell, Pembroke's economic-development officer.

The city itself couldn't have shouldered the expense.

On paper, the investment seems like a sure bet. With the Petawawa military base just a 10-minute drive

away, and the Algonquin College satellite campus that opened in 2012 sitting on the city's waterfront, Pembroke has the built-in clientele to once again become a bustling centre in rural Ontario.

Mr. Pool had been looking to expand Sleepwell's business beyond Ottawa when he caught wind of another developer making investments in his hometown.

That, along with Petawawa, Algonquin College and his personal ties, made Pembroke an easy choice. Sleepwell now owns a quarter of the downtown, and the company is drawing interest and investment from as far as British Columbia.

He wouldn't say he has sentimental feelings for Pembroke, though his parents and a few friends still

live there. Rather, Mr. Pool - who left Pembroke 22 years ago, right around the start of its decline - is enjoying the challenge of improving the downtown's seedy reputation.

"Can we actually rent these units? Will people live downtown in a beautiful apartment?" asks Mr. Pool, noting that the poor quality of housing invited drug dealing and prostitution. "Can we change that [stigma]? I think we have."

When Sleepwell purchased the block where Nook Creperie is located, owner Joanna Els jumped at the chance to finally turn the storefront next door into an extension of her popular restaurant. The previous landlord didn't do much besides collect rent, she says, so dealing with Sleepwell has been a dream by comparison.

"They were really quite generous." After 122 years of operating in nearby Renfrew, Scott's Shoes is ready for expansion to Pembroke.

"I was really impressed [by Sleepwell's efforts]," says Nathan Scott, 25, the son of owners Ian Scott and Jane Galbraith. "I hadn't been to downtown Pembroke for some time, and even then you could see how it was coming alive."

Entrepreneur Stacy Taylor came to

the area in 2010 when her spouse was posted to Canadian Forces Base Petawawa. Her business, Little Things Canning Co., opened in mid-August. "It's exciting to be part of this," she says.

She, along with other merchants, are heartened to see the community rallying around their businesses to make downtown Pembroke a busier, more lively place. Sleepwell isn't the only company doing this kind of work, Mrs. Taylor continues, "but they are setting the bar and forcing others to meet it."

Next door stands Wilkies Fresh Baked Bread, which opened six months ago. "The support from the community has been overwhelming," says owner Andrew Chenard.

Down the street, a din of chatter and clinking china greet lunchtime patrons entering the Nook Creperie. The formerly mustardyellow 34-seater is now a polished restaurant with checkerboard floors, exposed brick walls and chandeliers. The next step, Ms. Els says, is to refinish the building's facade: "It's been covered in plywood, but these buildings are so beautiful underneath."

Though it is led by private investment, Pembroke's revitalization isn't just Mr. Pool's, or Sleepwell's, story to tell. Rather, the collaborative effort between private interests, local government and residents is a model for how other Canadian communities can breathe life back into tired main streets.



Joanna Els jumped at the chance to renovate and expand her restaurant, Nook Creperie

"In the next three to five years," Ms. Els says, "I think it's going to look like an entirely new town."

Pembroke City Hall



THE GLOBE AND MAIL
BY TRACEY LINDEMAN
PHOTOS BY DAVE CHAN
SEPTEMBER 28, 2017

Access the original essay:

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ALGONQUIN COLLEGE **SUCCESS STORY**

FROM 'DISH PIT' TO COOKING FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

While she may have started her culinary career scrubbing pots and pans in a hometown pub, the kitchen inside 24 Sussex Drive in Ottawa is where Brockville's Katie Brown Ardington now hangs her apron.

Brown Ardington, who has only been on the job since earlier this year, is back cooking for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his family this week, after spending last week hosting a visit from Le Club des Chefs des Chefs, whose members cook for many of the world's leaders, from princes to presidents.

The "G20 of Gastronomy," as it's informally known, is, for one thing, a chance for the chefs to be wined and dined like their bosses, but, for another, it's a chance for some of the world's top cooks to discuss food-related issues and to get to know one another so that when one of their bosses visits another's, they can call each other to learn their likes and dislikes.

And the weeklong conference was a good learning experience for Brown Ardington, who just started her new job in February and undoubtedly has a lot to learn.

"Some chefs, they cook in palaces, where I'm cooking in a renovated building," she said, as she is set up in the prime minister's official residence even though the family lives across the street in Rideau Hall. "So it's not quite the same, but the same duty."

She learned that the Trudeaus were looking for a chef through a

mutual friend, who thought Brown Ardington might be a good fit. The Trudeaus were already familiar with her cooking since they had eaten at lauded Ottawa restaurant Beckta, where Brown Ardington had been its chef de cuisine.

Instead, she had to go through three or four interviews and an extensive vetting process.

"They emphasized that they wanted to meet me and get to know my personality and that they could trust me," she said, adding that they hugged her when they told her she got the job.



Brockville's Katie Brown Ardington is personal chef to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Unsurprisingly, Brown Ardington can't discuss the specifics of the Trudeaus' daily diet, but she can say that she's not the only one interested in cooking with locally sourced, healthy food.

And, to this point, she hasn't been tasked with preparing any large, formal dinners.

"They've had a busy year," she said. "And because Sussex is under construction, we don't have the facilities to do that right now."

One of the best things about the job is that she gets to spend more time with her young family.

"My days are much more manageable," she reflected. "It's not like a restaurant, where people are eating at 10 o'clock. They're eating at a normal hour because they're a young family, too, so I definitely get to see my [two-year-old] son more, which is awesome, and my husband."

It was in restaurants, though, that she paid her dues.

Her mother, Susan, spent 18 years serving at The Isaac Brock pub/restaurant in Brockville (now known as The Union Jack pub).

Her daughter didn't necessarily show an aptitude for cooking, but both Katie and sister Stephanie knew their way around a kitchen. Mother Susan, whose father was a cook, recalled the time their 15-year-old babysitter came over to mind the kids, and she asked her to turn on the oven to cook their dinner.

"I told her to do this and that, and then she said, 'No, no, I don't know how to work the oven!' " she reminisced. "I told her, 'Don't worry. Katie and Stephanie know how to do it.' "

The sisters would always stop by The Isaac Brock after school, sit in a booth and do their homework.

"When I was a teenager, I wanted money, so my friends were babysitting and doing odd jobs," Brown Ardington recalled. "I always hung out at the restaurant after school, to have fries and gravy. I always liked being there. and I told the old chef there that I'd like to

work, and he said, 'OK, let's put you to work.'"

Before that happened, the 13-year-old proved herself to be a hard worker by going in on Sundays, when the pub was closed, fill a bucket with water and bleach, and "scrub the tobacco off the walls" of the smoky pub, she remembered with a laugh.

And then she got her first kitchen job, working in what's known as the pub's "dish pit," the bottom of the food chain in the kitchen hierarchy. She would scrub pots and pans, load and unload the dishwasher, and, if there was an unsavoury task to do, it usually fell to the dishwasher to do it.

After a couple of years enduring that job, she was promoted to prep cook, doing slicing and dicing, then garde manger, which is the "cold" station of making salads and the like, and then to fry cook. She would eventually become a server there, too. Still, despite working at a restaurant all through high school, Brown Ardington thought she could go to university, as all of her friends did, and pursue nursing, which is what her parents had encouraged her to do, at first.

Instead of going straight from high school to post-secondary school, she took a year off to weigh her options.

"It was my dad who said, 'You could become a chef. That's a career,'" Brown Ardington recalled.

Up until that point, she thought of chefs primarily as often-hefty men who told you what to do. So she started reading books and magazines

(the Food Network and its ilk didn't exist back then), and she realized becoming a chef was indeed a worthy pursuit.

"It was the enjoyment of a meal that I liked to be a part of," she said.

So she enrolled in the two-year culinary management program at Algonquin College, so she could learn not just cooking techniques ("I was the only one who knew how to clean a grease trap in my class"), but also the management side of being a chef, such as food costs and budgeting.

While school taught her the ins and outs of the "back of house," the kitchen, she also worked as a server

then during the summer season at Smugglers' Run restaurant in Ivy Lea. She worked as a server one summer, and then moved into the kitchen after her first year of college.

Hogan remembers Brown Ardington's enthusiasm when out-of-the-ordinary foods (at least back then) such as bison and venison arrived in the kitchen. She would always ask him if she could create a dinner special using it, he remembered.

"Katie would see these products and her face would just light up," he remembered. "She would always come up with these awesome ideas of how to serve it. I would just let her create the whole dish, and, more often than not, it would sell out."

While in school, she also had a part-time job working at a fine-dining Italian restaurant called Flying Piggy's, where she soon took over the making of the restaurant's desserts.

Upon graduation, she won a job at prestigious Beckta, starting as garde manger and then working her way up. When the owners opened a small-plates restaurant called Play Food & Wine, Brown Ardington was hired on as its sous chef.

She is sometimes asked back to the college to judge students' cooking, and she believes it's important for those interested in cooking to get their "hands dirty." Working in a kitchen isn't as glamorous or as exciting as it's often portrayed.

"The vision of chefs right now is that they become some sort of a rock star role because of television, they think they just have a personality and can cook," she said.

because the money was better and she had tuition to pay.

Greg Hogan, currently the executive sous chef at Kingston's AquaTerra restaurant, hired Brown Ardington years ago to work for him at the Keystorm Pub in Brockville, and

**KINGSTON WHIG-STANDARD
BY PETER HENDRA
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