

Introducing students to employment options in trades and technology

by Gloria Welton and Heidi Riley

TRADES AND TECHNOLOGY

Q: How do you find out about career options?

A: Talk to people in various jobs to get an inside look



That is what **Career Options PEI Day** was all about. The event was held in November as part of National Technology Week events that are held across the country. Here on the Island, high school students were bused to UPEI to take part in interactive learning sessions hosted by over 30 organizations.

“This is the first generation where there are more jobs than graduates,” says **Colin Affleck**, President of **Skills Canada PEI**. He encouraged students to keep pursuing education and to consider trades and technology as career choices.

“There are many technician or a technologist careers where you could make a starting salary of \$15 to \$25 per hour, and it goes up from there,” says **Stephen Gould C.E.T.**, from the **Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists of PEI**.

“An event like this will help you think about what you want to do when you finish school,” says **Dr. Michael Mayne**, Deputy Minister of the **Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning**. “Talk to your school counsellor and talk to people who do the jobs you are interested in. This will help you zero in on the choices that are best for you. Everyone has a role to play in our community, and we need you here on PEI.”

Career Options PEI was coordinated by Skills Canada PEI, the Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists of PEI, Youth Apprenticeship-Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning, and the PEI Association of Sector Councils.

  For more information about **Skills Canada PEI** and how you can enter the **2009 Provincial Skills Competitions**, call **566-9352** or visit www.skillscanada.pe.ca

For more information about **PEI's Youth Apprenticeship Program** and how it can help you get a head start on your trades career, call **Paula MacKay** at **368-4463**.

For more information about the **Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists of PEI**, call **892-8324** or visit www.acettpei.ca

Marshall Noye

Marshall Noye, Grade 12 student at **Westisle High School**, won a gold medal in the Canadian Skills Competitions held in Calgary in May 2008. “In grade 10, I won silver in the provincial competitions for **Outdoor Power and Recreation Equipment**,” says Marshall. “It was such a great experience that I entered again in grade 11 and won gold. This will be my third year competing and I can't wait.



“I have decided to continue in trades and work towards becoming an **Electrician**. I already have 110 hours towards an Apprenticeship. I hope to enter the college program. I know I will earn back any money I invested in training when I'm working in the trade.”

Right now Marshall makes a bit of money by fixing lawn mowers, dirt bikes, and snowmobiles. “I like the work but I want to get into a trade that is in demand and that pays well. I am thinking about going out west after college but I know I will want to come back eventually.”

Fashion technology



“I'm hoping to find student sewers who are interested in entering the **PEI Skills Competition**,” says **Karyn MacPhee, Wardrobe Mistress at the Confederation Centre of the Arts** (right). “PEI has never competed in Fashion Technology at the Skills Canada competitions. I am willing to work with students to help them hone their skills and prepare for the event. Because there is no sewing training available on PEI, there is a need for experienced people to pass on their skills to the next generation.

“Sewing skills have declined because it's cheaper to buy something new than it is to make it from scratch. It's hard to find experienced sewers in Canada. On PEI, much of the demand is seasonal. Summers are busy with weddings, graduations, and costumes for theatre productions. The money is good, but unfortunately, the season is short. I traveled for years to go where the jobs were.



“Although there is a seasonal nature to this career, I work all year. When I'm not at the Confederation Centre, I work at my own business making gowns, costumes and tuxedos for sale and rent. There is a bright future for sewers, seamstresses, and tailors, and there is a demand for their skills. There are not many younger sewers coming up the ranks, and those working now will face retirement soon. I'm the youngest sewer at the Confederation Centre, and I'm starting my 38th year there!”



Construction

At this booth, students were encouraged to put together a series of pipes in the fastest time possible. “Construction isn't all hammer and nails,” says **Phillip McInnis**, from the **Construction Association of PEI**. “You need to have good planning, math and computer skills.

Construction Managers, Foremen, Plumbers and Electricians are only some of the areas that have a high demand for workers.”



  For more information, call the **Construction Association of PEI** at **368-3303** or visit www.capei.ca

  For more information about the **Provincial Skills Competitions**, call **Skills Canada PEI** at **566-9352** or visit www.skillscanada.pe.ca

Video Game Design

“It’s great to see the job opportunities in video game design on PEI,” says **Thane Bernard** (right) grade 9, **East Wiltshire Intermediate School**.

“I’m here to give students a taste of what video game design is all about,” says **Fred Irving**, instructor, **Game Force Designer’s Bootcamp**. “It’s important to get students interested at a young age so they can pick their courses accordingly. This is a hot career right now. Video game companies on PEI are looking for more designers.”

After-school programs for grades 7, 8, and 9 students offered 2D game design instruction. There are plans to offer 3D game programming to high school students in the near future.



For more information, visit www.techpei.com and click on **Game Force Designer’s Bootcamp**.

Medical Laboratory Technologist

Jonathan MacDonald, grade 10, **Bluefield High School**, checks out some human tissue samples. “I like Science, and this field seems to be pretty interesting,” says Jonathan. “I could see myself doing a job like this some day.”

Medical Laboratory Technologists **Carolyn Kamphuis** and **Michele Perry** say that up to 85 percent of a physician’s diagnosis is based on laboratory testing. “We are desperate to attract more people to this field,” says Carolyn. “Our population is aging, and will therefore require more medical care, increasing the need for the testing done by medical laboratory technologists. By 2016, 50 percent of Canada’s medical lab technologists will be eligible to retire and we won’t have enough new recruits to replace them.”

“Medical lab technologists are the third-largest healthcare profession, after doctors and nurses,” says Michele. “This profession requires a two- to three-year diploma program. Training is offered at New Brunswick or Nova Scotia Community College.”



For more information, visit www.peismt.org or www.csmls.org

Aerospace



“We need to give students more exposure to jobs in Aerospace,” says **Willard Horne**, Executive Director of the **PEI Aerospace Human Resource Sector Council**. “This is a hands-on opportunity to work with real equipment that is used in the **Aircraft Gas Turbine Engine Repair and Overhaul Technology** program at Holland College.”

For more information about careers in Aerospace, visit www.aerospacepei.com

Sue Lefort from **Tube-Fab Ltd.** demonstrates a device that can insert liquid through a hole so tiny that it does not break a balloon.

“We make tools and devices for all types of applications, including for aerospace, in industrial settings, and in the medical field. This is not production line work - it’s much more specialized.”



Visit www.tube-fab.com

Trucking

“I have thought about trucking as a career,” says **Derek MacDonald**, grade 12, **Morell Regional High School**. “This event is a great chance to learn about the trades jobs that are in demand on PEI.”

“There are great careers available in truck driving and in other parts of the trucking industry,” says **Brian Oulton** from the **PEI Trucking Sector Council**. “For example, you can make a good living as a truck mechanic on PEI, and that job is in high demand.”

JVI Provincial Transportation and Safety Academy let students try out their driving simulator. The simulator evaluated the students’ performance when facing real-life situations that could happen on the road, such as ice, wind, blown tires, or failed brakes.



For more information, visit www.jvidrivertraining.com

For more information about the PEI Trucking Sector Council, call **566-5563** or visit www.peitsc.ca