

# Bursary helps students pursue further education

by Patricia Roy

**E**ast Prince Youth Development Centre (EPYDC) recently granted bursaries to four youth from the centre who are pursuing post-secondary education.

“Funding for the bursaries was made possible through profits generated from the Job Fair, an annual event since 2000,” says Team Leader **Lila MacIsaac-Buchanan**.

EPYDC was established in 1996 and has been a permanent fixture in Summerside since then. The centre sponsors many youth programs and provides help to youth age 15 to 30 who are no longer in the school system. They also partner with **Adult & Community Education** to help students achieve their employment goals.

## \$400 Bursary winners

**Danny Moisan** plans to take Heavy Equipment Operator training at **JVI Provincial Transportation and Safety Academy** in January. “Lila helped me get through the paper work in order to be eligible to take the course. This bursary will go toward my student loan.”



**Laura Mulligan** came to the centre through Parent Power, a six-month employment-related program for single parents. She has been enrolled in the **Child and Youth Care Worker** program in Charlottetown since September. She says the bursary will help her with travel expenses, tuition and books needed for the program.

**Bradley Cullicutt** is also enrolled in the **Child and Youth Care Worker** program. His goal is to become a youth worker in the school system. The 10-month course also involves three months of on-the-job training. “The bursary will go toward tuition.”



**Geri-Lynn Ferguson** went to Holland College Adult Education to receive upgrading. She hopes to be accepted into the **UPEI Bachelor of Science Nursing** program.

For more information, call EPYDC at 436-2815 or visit [www.epydc.org](http://www.epydc.org)



# Calling card helps to secure short-term employment

by Heidi Riley

**Catherine Ronahan** often works for organizations on a short-term contract basis. To ensure continuous employment, she spends quite a bit of time networking with people who could be potential employers. Instead of arming herself with resumés for the initial contact, Catherine has a much more effective way to market her skills and experience.

## Calling card

When she was working as an employment counsellor in Charlottetown, she attended a workshop for career coaches. The workshop gave her training that she used with her clients, and she has applied that advice to her own job search.

“One of the ideas that came from the workshop was to make a calling card listing your skills and experience,” says Catherine. “I designed a card that I pass out to people I talk with at meetings and volunteer events.” She also attaches her calling card information to her e-mails to remind contacts of her skills and abilities.

## Finding work by building relationships

Catherine attended UPEI and earned a Bachelor of Science degree and majored in Mathematics. While in university, she worked in the student residence. “That time was really important to me,” says Catherine. “I learned so much more than academics. Living and working in residence taught me about human relationships, communication, community life, and about lifestyles and cultures different from mine. My time was focused on building friendships and work relationships.

“I didn’t realize till years later that everything in life is based on relationships. I find work through building relationships with people.”

## Her journey

After her years of studying and working at UPEI, she was not sure what she wanted to do. She decided to go to Guatemala, where she lived with a family and attended language school to study Spanish. “I loved Guatemala,” says Catherine. “I loved learning about the culture, the language, and the indigenous people. That experience set me on my path of going overseas again.”

Next, she connected with an organization called LAMP (Latin American Mission Program) and traveled to the Dominican

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**Catherine Ronahan uses a calling card to promote her skills and experience.**



Republic, where she spent five years doing community development work, dealing with racism and discrimination, community health, violence against women, and capacity building with micro-entrepreneurs.

## Overseas experience leads to jobs on PEI

Her experiences in Latin America and her ability to speak Spanish qualified her for a position with the **PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada**. She became the organization’s first Employment Counsellor. In total, she worked and volunteered for that organization for seven years, and thoroughly enjoyed working with new immigrants.

Even though she is now going in a new direction, Catherine is continuing her involvement in community development organizations. She has volunteered or done paid work for such organizations as **Women’s Network, Food Security Network, LAMP, Cooper Institute, National Farmers Union, Friends of Mohamed, Saint Mary’s University, CUSO, East Prince Women’s Information Centre, International Friendship Association, and Red Cross**.

“Every experience, whether it is paid or volunteer, builds my skills, and one contact leads to others,” says Catherine.

“Besides having the strengths and skills to do a job, being passionate about my work is very important to me. Having steady work and benefits is not as important to me as having work that is fulfilling, challenging and appreciated.

“My family and friends are a huge support. I surround myself with positive and encouraging people and try to be the same for them.”

## Future plans

Catherine is considering starting her own business, and has already taken the first steps by attending a training course.

