

Following your passion is key to employment satisfaction

by Patricia Roy

Job Search

From the time **Robert Meek** had his first contact with computers at age 16, he has been in a whirlwind of learning. Robert has learned and continues to learn about different aspects of computers, from hardware to networking to software.

“For years I worked mostly as a labourer or whatever jobs I could find, including house painting, maintenance, and farming,” says Robert. “I learned a lot about computers and how they work on my own. This basic knowledge helped me get a job in a computer store a few years ago.”

“However, when the business slowed down after I had been working there for just six months, I was laid off. That was when I realized that finding and retaining work in the IT field would require more formal training to upgrade my skills to industry standards accepted by employers. The problem was that I could not afford to take the necessary training to acquire the work that I wanted to do. So I was forced back into work I could find outside the Information Technology field.”

Injury provides opportunity for formal training

A work injury five years ago provided an opportunity for Robert to retrain. But Robert says the path to make his dream come true was not always easy or clear. With the help of counsellors at **PEI Career Development Services** in Summerside, Robert was able to make the choices that would lead to a better career for him and his family.

Being able to retrain close to home was of upmost importance for this single dad. “The **Academy of Learning** in Slemmon Park offered the program I was looking for,” says Robert.

During his studies, Robert received certifications in:

- CompTI A+ Certified Professional IT Technician
- CompTI Network+

Robert is currently pursuing certification in:

- CompTIA Security+
- CompTIA MSCA

Advice for those thinking of post-secondary training

“Start by asking a lot of questions about what is available and don’t give up,” says Robert. “You may have to do a lot of documentation, especially if you’ve been injured, but it is worth the effort. My one regret is that I didn’t take this training earlier.”



Robert Meek made a career change after a workplace injury and retrained to become a Computer Analyst.

For more information about programs available at **The Academy of Learning**, call 436-9889 or visit www.aolpei.ca

Information for students looking for summer work

submitted by Craig Abbott, Labour Market Analyst, Service Canada

Job Search

Spring is once again in the air and thoughts for many students are turning away from school and towards finding a job for the summer. Here is a brief look at some of the federal programs and services available for students.

Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP)

This is a federal program that many federal government organizations use to hire students during the summer. The purpose of FSWEP is to match students’ skills with work experience that relates to what they are studying. It is open to full-time students who plan to return to school full time in the next academic year.

Many federal departments and agencies such as **Parks Canada**, **Service Canada**, and **Veterans Affairs** (to name a few) hire students through FSWEP. To apply to this program, simply visit www.jobs.gc.ca and complete the on-line application. New campaigns begin every year and federal jobs can be staffed at anytime, so apply soon.

Service Canada Centres for Youth (SCCYs)

For students who require help in their job search, to complete a résumé, or to get labour market information, the **Service Canada Centres for Youth** will be open in early May. The SCCYs are staffed by Youth Services Officers who are themselves students. These positions are just one example of the type of jobs staffed through the FSWEP program. A Service Canada Centre for Youth is a great place to start for any student looking for work. To find the nearest SCCY, visit www.servicecanada.gc.ca.

Student Job Bank

Employers can use the Service Canada job bank to post job opportunities for students. Job orders are posted on the student job bank website, with orders usually starting to come in shortly after the SCCYs open in May. Visit www.jobbank.gc.ca to view the jobs available in your area and be sure to check back often.

A great website with information for students and youth is www.youth.gc.ca. The website features various information about programs and services and covers topics such as jobs, education, money and careers. Also, for more general information on career choices check out www.pei.jobfutures.org.

There are many different programs and resources available to students; the key is knowing where to look. These resources provide great starting points. Don’t forget that many jobs are still obtained through word of mouth, so make sure you let your friends and family know you are looking for work and you may find a great job for the summer!



If you have any questions, contact **Craig Abbott**, Labour Market Information Analyst, Service Canada Summerside, at 432-6850 or e-mail craig.abbott@servicecanada.gc.ca or

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