

JUMP START

.....A CAREER

Spring 2008

CO-OP NEWS



SPECIALIST HIGH SKILLS MAJOR “REACH AHEAD” OPPORTUNITIES

By YRDSB Community-Based Education, Pathways Team

The Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) is a Ministry of Education approved program, enabling students to customise their high school experience and further their interests in a particular field while working towards their diploma. Part of the SHSM program requirement is for students to participate in “reach ahead” learning opportunities where students are able to experience first hand what it is like to work or study in the area of interest.

For students going to the workplace or apprenticeship, a good starting point is the **YRDSB Fast Track Student Conference**. “Reach ahead” learning opportunities include workshops on preparation for the world of work, apprenticeship information, finding jobs and resources, and entrepreneurship. Students also participate in a special presentation on life skills to help them prepare for and create the future they desire.

If a student’s pathway is that of the apprentice then the **Accelerated OYAP** “reach ahead” opportunities allow students to earn high school credits, register as an apprentice, complete part or all of their Level One Apprenticeship schooling in a specific trade, and earn hours/demonstrate competencies towards their apprenticeship. Accelerated OYAP students are also eligible for various financial incentives and grants.

College bound students have an opportunity to participate in college tours and **dual credit courses** as part of the “reach ahead”. Students take college courses on campus or online and receive both high school credits and college credits for each college course successfully completed.

University bound students have opportunities for “reach ahead” through university tours and **Advanced Placement (AP) courses**. AP courses are recognized by many Canadian and international universities with credit for first-year study. They allow students the opportunity for enriched, intensive study in one or more subjects of interest and strength.

Additional training and sector specific certifications are requirements for all students enrolled in the SHSM program. These include but are not limited to First Aid, CPR, and WHMIS certifications for all SHSM students. These opportunities are put in place to give students a “leg up” into the specific destination pathway.

All of these “reach ahead” opportunities are part of the **contextualized learning** developed within the SHSM programs and signify to the employer or post-secondary institution that SHSM students have had an opportunity to go deeper in their learning in a specific business or sector. It is important to note that regardless of the destination pathway there are appropriate “reach ahead” opportunities for all. It takes strong community and industry partnerships to make “reach ahead” opportunities a reality. It is through these experiences, that collectively, we ensure that our youth are well prepared for the 21st century workplace.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Recipe for Career Success	2
Student Voices	3/4/5
Exploring Opportunities Program (EOP)-Construction	6
International Cooperative Education Program (ICE)	7
Parent Letter	8

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SHSM PROGRAMS SEE:

<https://bwww.yrdsb.ca/C5/C5/HighSkills%20Major/default.aspx>

A new Recipe for Career Success

By John Sommers-Flanagan, Ph.D., and Rita Sommers-Flanagan, Ph.D.

John Sommers-Flanagan, Ph.D., and Rita Sommers-Flanagan, Ph.D., are the authors of numerous books on parenting and other issues. John is a clinical psychologist in independent practice, assistant professor in counselor education at the University of Montana and a mental health consultant. Rita is a professor of counseling and director of women's studies at the University of Montana.

From Website: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/content.asp?contentid=281>

Here's a career success recipe best followed loosely, with lots of tasting and stirring along the way.

- Take one part family legacy (maybe your family has deep roots, genetically derived giftedness, a lot of land or something that shapes family and thus career identity);
- Toss in a cup or two of talent or skill (make sure this is the real thing; simmer over low heat for a few years of lessons or adventures);
- Separate the personality from the interests and whip up the interests until stiff and set them aside (they may be better as hobbies than full-blown careers, but they don't have to go away);
- Stir in the personality (this can be a pivotal ingredient-handle with approval and care);
- Take a pinch or two of parental wishes, and keep adding it to the mixture until the mixture seems to want to pinch you back;
- Add in whatever resources and opportunities you have lying around your kitchen, house, yard or workplace;
- Fold in the whipped-up interests;
- At the last minute (or as soon as you notice it), stir in anywhere from one to 10 cups of uncertainty, mystery, spirituality, cultural calling or whatever else seems to percolate up from inside your child;
- Let the whole thing sit for a while, or let it move around; it may need to stay home and do odd jobs, go to vocational school, college, Europe, Job Corps or somewhere else before it's really a discernable dish.



In the end your children's career decisions are more than any equation or recipe can capture. We wish you the best in this complex task - and don't forget to check in with your child's school counselor.

STUDENT VOICES

What Cooperative Education means to me...

writes Lan Thai, Co-op Student, Maple High School

Being a part of the Co-op program has been a great experience. I chose to take Co-op as a way to help me decide on my future career path and whether or not medicine was for me.

I learned from being placed at **Humber River Regional Hospital** in Surgical Ambulatory Care that my tolerance level to surgeries was better than I assumed it to be. I learned that the nurses and the physicians are very nice people, and are willing teachers who have no problem answering questions that I had about patient conditions or about different tools or procedures.

The patients at the hospital permitted me to observe their check-ups and surgeries to help me learn more about medical procedures. The orthopedic technicians taught me about fractures, how to read x-rays, casting positions and on occasion allowed me to help them cast patients. I am grateful to the nurses, physicians, orthopedic technicians and patients for the knowledge they helped me gain over the course of my placement at the hospital.

I obtained people skills by interacting with the nurses, physicians, and patients, and also obtained teamwork skills because the environment at the hospital requires you to be a team player and be able to work with others. I have proven to myself and others that I was a reliable member of the team. I have more confidence in myself now. I was seen as an individual with potential and made many new friendships by being involved in the Co-op program at Humber River Hospital.

Cooperative Education helped me learn about my future career in the medical field and more specifically about the field of orthopedics which I found quite interesting and a possible future career goal to pursue. Cooperative Education is an opportunity to learn about the real world and grow personally and intellectually. High school students should consider taking Co-op, it's a fun experience!



"A Student Thank-you"

Dhishna Chaudhary, Co-op Student, Maple High School
writes to Fazia Belnaus, Clerical Associate
at Humber River Regional Hospital-Surgical Day Care



Thank you for the wonderful and memorable Co-op opportunity within Surgical Day Care at **Humber River Regional Hospital**. I appreciate the great deal of time and effort you have taken to be my Co-op Supervisor. It was due to the caring, enthusiastic and dedicated approach of the staff and you that made my Co-op experience a valuable one. You all were great role models and demonstrated a positive attitude towards my questions and concerns. You and the staff also easily forgave my mistakes and taught me the correct way to carry out the task with a smile.

By working with you, and the entire Surgical Day Care staff, I have developed many important skills and have gained knowledge that I will carry with me for a long time. While working with you and the nurses, I have learned to work effectively in a team setting and co-exist with other team members. I have also developed communication, problem solving and decision-making skills by interacting with patients and their family members. Furthermore, I have become more familiar with the health care environment and its various departments. Moreover, I have had chances to learn about several procedures, such as colonoscopies, as a result of your continuous initiative. Also, I now have knowledge about various surgeries, for instance, laparoscopic cholecystectomy, hernia repair, gastric bypass surgery, abdominoplasty, nasal surgery, varicose vein and cataract removal.



I could never have gained such knowledge and experience if I was reading a textbook instead of being in a hospital. This "hands-on" Co-op experience has allowed me to realize the dedication and effort it takes to be a surgeon. In the future, this experience will play an important role when I will apply to a medical school. Overall, it was a great pleasure to work with you all. Thank you, Fazia, and the Surgical Day Care staff for this opportunity and your continuous support. I appreciate it!

STUDENT VOICES

**By Emma Leach,
Co-op Student, Sir William Mulock SS**

**Placement: Southlake Regional
Health Centre - Cancer Clinic**

This semester, I have been fortunate to experience the amazing Cancer Clinic at **Southlake Regional Health Centre**. As a student in this environment, I assist the nurses in any way I can and serve the needs of the patients. My regular tasks include spiking the IV bags needed for the day, labeling blood specimens and sending them to the lab, bringing patients in from the waiting room, stocking supplies, and assessing vitals.

In relation to my academic background in science, my placement allows me to use my knowledge of macromolecules when discussing how nutrition affects cancer patients with the dietitian, see biotechnology applications (accompanying a patient to an ultrasound) and understand how diversity plays a role in medical treatment.

My best experience was when one of the patients I had become close with, "graduated" her chemotherapy and was finished her treatment. These positive experiences keep hope in the clinic and demonstrate the determination and resilience of the human soul. My Co-op experience has influenced my desire to work in the health care field and be an active part



of improving the quality of life for others. I hope that I will now be more prepared to enter the workplace and feel confident in choosing a career I enjoy.

**By Jeannie Yeoh
Co-op Student, Sir William Mulock SS**

**Placement: Cotton Ginny - Visual Display
Assistant/Fashion Merchandiser**

For my Cooperative Education Fashion Placement I was placed at **Cotton Ginny** to further extend my knowledge of fashion design. Cotton Ginny was a great environment to be in; everyone got along well and the staff was willing to help me.



There was never a dull time at Cotton Ginny. When nothing major was happening at the store, I would always be found folding and organizing the clothes on the tables, or hanging and restocking the merchandise on the floor. Throughout this semester, I was able to gain experience from many different events that were held at Cotton Ginny, such as a fashion show, store change up (everything in the store was moved) and sale events. I have to say that the fashion show was the best part of my Co-op placement. I got to experience the development of a fashion show; starting with the idea, then choosing the outfits for the models and lastly, creating a spot for the runway.

Best of all, everyone was willing to help me in one way or another and I had a great semester working and learning at Cotton Ginny. I feel that the skills and experiences that I gained will help me in the fashion industry.

STUDENT VOICES

Bringing Home the Bacon...

By Samantha Kovach, Co-op Student, Keswick High School

Placement: Public Relations Assistant

Grade 11 Keswick High School Co-op Student, Jeff Collins, has taken on the Co-op position as a "Cook's Assistant" at Triple G Catering located on the Queensway in Keswick.

"I love food. I love to work with it, and I love to eat it!" - Jeff Collins

Jeff's duties include preparing hot and cold foods, baking, catering, going to the sites and delivering the food, for example weddings, birthday parties and much more. Another duty that Jeff takes on is of course doing the dishes and cleaning up messes.

"I love Co-op. I have learned more about myself since I started my Co-op here. It is a job that requires personal skill and the ability to experiment. I love going to the sites to deliver and serve the food, but I definitely hate doing the dishes."

- Jeff Collins

Dave Holland is the owner and creator of Triple G Catering. It began in 1992 as a restaurant and grew into a catering shop. Triple G provides catered food all across York Region. He thought there was a need for fantastic food so he opened his business in Keswick.

"I think that Co-op placements like this help to make our community a better place because it gives students the opportunity to see what the working world is really like." - Dave Holland, Owner of Triple G Catering

Jeff is enjoying the Co-op experiences and is on his way to becoming a chef!

"I have future plans of going to George Brown College and become a magnificent chef! Food is so awesome!" - Jeff Collins



Pictures By:
Kelsey Robichaud,
Keswick HS Student
whose interest is photography
and offered to assist Samantha
by taking pictures for the story.



EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (EOP) CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM - Richmond Green Secondary School

What an Excellent Group!

By Ryan Neale, Alternative Education
Department Head, Richmond Green SS.



This semester we had an unbelievable group of students from the region. This group of eager young men were all interested and energetic about the skilled trades but were unaware of how to get into a trade. As the semester progressed they changed from a group of individuals with specific skills into a well oiled machine that was capable of tackling any job that came their way. In fact, the boys started creating products that the teachers in the local area began to want. They took the existing plans for Adirondack chairs and modified them to our own RGSS Muskoka Chairs.

It has been a pleasure working with these students as they all showed endless initiative and really matured as time passed. Some of the students are moving on to start apprenticeships, others pre-apprenticeship programs, while others are returning to school to prepare for the future.

Felix Tsang's story...



Greg Pyke's story...

This class has been a great experience. You get to work with a great organization, Habitat for Humanity. Working with Habitat for Humanity gave me a new found feeling for the word "teamwork". It is very important because in this class you need to work as a team - looking out for each other.



This class has been great because we got to go to different kinds of unions like Local 27 for carpenters, and the boilermaker union. This program pointed me in the right direction for my future. The teachers have been great. Our class has been wonderful because we, as a class, have built trust with each other. We look out for each other

when we are at the placement. Mr Tucker, our Tech Teacher, has been really nice to us, letting us work in the wood shop. Mr Neale, our GLN teacher, likes to give us time in class so we can get our paperwork done and have more time working in the lab downstairs.

My most memorable moment would have to be working with each other at Habitat for Humanity because Joe, our supervisor, was like one of us. He made work fun when we had our breaks. I would recommend this class for students to take because it will be a program that you will never forget.

**Students can earn an OSSD while
exploring the Skilled Trades!**

This is my second semester in the EOP course and I experienced even more. Last semester I learned how to build a shed, which would enable me to frame a house because they are all the same dimensions. This semester I actually got to frame a house, working with Habitat for Humanity.

It was an amazing experience to work on a house. I practised framing a house, putting down a floor, putting joists up (which kills your arms), and I had a lot of fun throughout the whole time working with my classmates and teachers. You would expect the teacher to stand around watching the students making sure nothing goes wrong; but, in this class Mr. Neale treats everybody as equals and with respect, but only if you deserve it, and he's right into the work as all of us are, working out problems that we had.

This class teaches you responsibility and prepares you for real life, for example; as we work, if anybody starts to act up and get out of hand, Mr. Neale would fire that person for the day and send him home. This isn't as serious as the real world but if you do that on a real job site you would actually get fired, so the class keeps you in line and teaches you responsibility on the job site. Another example is in class, with the paperwork for a course called ILC (an Independent Learning Course), which means that there is no teacher in class to push you to get your work done. Mr. Neale, does let us have time in class, but if we were slipping in getting our work done on time, he would make it a priority for us to complete it.

All in all, I would recommend anyone who likes to work with their hands to take this class; it is perfect for people who want to work in the trades. As a direct result of this program I am now in the Accelerated OYAP Electrical program at Humber College.



International Cooperative Education Program (ICE) to Ecuador

“So much more than just Ecuador”

The glory:

Thoughts of being in **Ecuador for 99 days** from **March to June** is what really attracts students to ICE including:

- ★ the scenery of majestic volcanic peaks, lush green vegetation, relentless surf;
- ★ the lively rhythms of Latin music and flow of the dancers that move to them;
- ★ living day-to-day in a world so different than the one you know;
- ★ the caring and warmth of the people; and
- ★ the challenge of full immersion in Spanish.

Yet ICE is so much more than going overseas!



The 2008 ICE Team - Kensington Market field trip

The unexpected benefits of preparation:

Prior to setting foot in Ecuador, during first semester from **September through January**, students participate in a retreat and monthly meetings, prepare fundraising and do coursework through distance/electronic communication. **Continuing the preparation during February**, the ICE students spend four weeks meeting together daily at Thornlea Secondary School. During February, they complete fundraising with the dinner/dance/silent auction event (which raised over \$13,000 this year), and prepare mentally and physically, both inside and outside of the classroom, for Ecuador.

From these preparation activities, ICE 2008 students expressed:

- “We have **learned so much in this course** already and we have not even embarked on our journey to Ecuador yet.”
- “The program itself, the way it is designed, is very different from the typical high school class. The assignments that we have to do are very **“hands-on”** and are **directly applicable to our day-to-day lives.**”
- “One really important thing that I have learned through ICE is better **organizational skills.**”
- “ICE has forced me to take on a lot of **responsibility** and pushed me to **develop problem solving skills.**”
- “I have learned **how to learn independently** because this course often requires you to figure things out yourself.”
- “I became more **comfortable with public speaking.**”
- “I **learned to teach a class** and create a lesson plan - I will be teaching English in Ecuador.”
- “I am aware of how to **stay healthy and safe** in Ecuador.”
- “I now **look for the other sides of issues.** I no longer jump to conclusions - I try to see where others are coming from.”
- “I gained a **greater understanding of culture** which allows me to better develop a method for approaching and understanding neighbours across the world, and my place in that world.”
- “**Assumptions should be avoided** and replaced with openness and understanding.”
- “I value **the group work** that we have done because it helps me get to know the other ICE students and have fun.”
- “I have learned through ICE **the power and value of community.** The program has pushed me in so many different ways outside of the concept of the classroom and into my community of friends, family, and more.”
- “That **I can do many things I was previously uncomfortable with.**”
- “The **importance of asking, “WHY?”** - gives me the opportunity to become a more active and reactive individual as opposed to simply accepting what is spoon-fed to me.”
- “I feel as though **I am a better citizen now.** I feel that I am aware of my surroundings and how I affect them. I am aware that negativity spreads, however “positivism” also spreads and I now try to remain positive so that I can affect others in a similar way. I value this because I believe **it makes me a better person overall**, and without ICE I don't think I would have realized that.”

To adventurously define your high school career by making your classroom a global classroom, log on to www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/ice or contact the ICE teacher at david.peacock@yrdsb.edu.on.ca or by telephone at 905-727-0022 ext 3408.



A PARENT'S LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR



Dear Mr. Hogarth,

Re: Aurora High School Co-op Program

Our daughter, Kelsey, is in the Co-op program at Aurora High School under Carol Nerling [Community-Based Education Head, Aurora HS]. Kelsey is working at the Yellow-Orange Spa in Aurora for her Co-op placement this semester and it has been a very positive experience for all parties.

As her parents, we have noticed a favourable increase in Kelsey's motivation, interest and confidence in school. The proprietor at Yellow-Orange is very pleased with Kelsey's work and has asked her to apprentice with them to become a hairdresser. She has developed a good work ethic through this experience.

We feel the Co-op program is successful for young people like Kelsey, who are more "hands-on" and task oriented in their learning style.

We sincerely hope the York Region District School Board continues funding for this program because as parents we find it very successful.

Sincerely,
Parents of Kelsey Kaminski

The Community-Based Education Team:

Gale Harild, *Administrator, Community-Based Education*

Salim Jamal, *Cooperative Education Consultant / OYAP Coordinator*

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WEBSITES:

Community-Based Education

www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/community.based.education

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/oyap

International Cooperative Education Program (ICE)

www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/ice

This issue of Jump Start/Co-op News is posted to the following websites:

YRDSB/Schools/Community Based Education/Cooperative Education/Newsletter-Jump Start a Career:

<http://www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pdfs/w/cbe/JumpstartNews.pdf>

YRDSB/Schools/Programs/Guidance Services/High School/Cooperative Education:

<http://www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pdfs/w/cbe/JumpstartNews.pdf>

YRDSB Board Wide Web (bww):

<https://bww.yrdsb.ca/C9/CBE/default.aspx>