

For Immediate Release:

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OTEC's Ready to Work Project expands to 6 regions across Ontario

OTEC, Ontario's tourism and hospitality training and human resource organization announces funding from the Ontario Government to prepare internationally trained professionals for careers in tourism and hospitality.

OTEC's nationally recognized "**Ready to Work**" program is an employment training and bridging program that helps internationally trained professionals transition into Ontario's tourism and hospitality sector. The project is being funded by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, and is being delivered in partnership with 5 Employment Services organizations in 6 Regions across Ontario. Over 100 graduates from the pilot program, conducted two years ago, successfully integrated into the workplace, and Adam Morrison, OTEC's Director, Project Development says that, "at completion of this current project, more than 300 professionals should find employment in various occupations suiting their career objectives. This funding allows OTEC the ability to deliver this well-regarded program to the communities that need it most, and will ensure that well trained individuals are available to the employers wishing to tap into this workforce".

The "**Ready to Work**" program has now prepared over 1400 individuals for careers in this sector over the past 12 years, and employers indicate they value the fact that individuals come trained and prepared to join their businesses. Within this program, participants graduate with five credentials – Tourism Essentials, Service Excellence, WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System), Smart Serve, and NFSTP (National Food Safety Training). They also have the opportunity to pursue on-the-job credentialing in any of 27 tourism occupations. Participating employers have access to Diversity Training and other OTEC management training programs to help them integrate these highly skilled candidates.

Vicki Lymburner, OTEC's President & CEO explains "that a project of this size will assist the industry in these 6 "key" regions, at a time when inevitable labour shortages will impact their ability to hire skilled employees.

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OTEC recognizes that without the support of the Ontario Government assisting under-employed professionals to become trained and to gain access to jobs in the sector, employers are missing out on the opportunities presented by this workforce of the future.”

If you are an internationally trained immigrant wishing to enroll in this program, or an employer who is interested in hiring a graduate, contact the OTEC partner in your region.

Mississauga and Toronto - **ACCES Employment**
Niagara Falls - **Niagara Falls Employment Help Centre**
Windsor - **Unemployed Help Centre**
Kingston - **KEYS**
Ottawa - **National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA**

For further information contact Adam Morrison, Director, Project Development at OTEC; amorrison@otec.org or 416-622-1975 ext. 236.

About OTEC

OTEC is an independent, not-for-profit training and human resource development organization which has evolved from the 2005 consolidation of the Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC) established in 1991, and Customer Service Excellence Corporation (CSEC) established in 2001. Originally formed through a partnership with industry, government, labour and education to offer training programs, standards, certification and employment development programs for the tourism and hospitality sectors, the organization continues with these mandates, but has expanded to provide an extensive range of “Customer Service & Management” training programs for a variety of sectors and clients.

OTEC is also Ontario’s representative on the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC), the national sector council for tourism, funded by Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC), and is the tourism sector council organization for the Province of Ontario representing the labour, skills development, training, and human resource issues of the sector.

For more information on OTEC’s products and services please go to:

www.otec.org

OTEC

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