



TOURISM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Issue 1 - September 2009

President's Message:

I am pleased to provide Ontario tourism industry stakeholders with OTEC's premier issue of the Tourism Workforce Development update. As many of you know, OTEC (Ontario Tourism Education Corporation) has been operating on your behalf as Ontario's Tourism Human Resource and Sector Council Organization since it was formed in 1991. Originally created through the combined efforts of industry, Provincial and Federal government, OTEC was established to be the coordinating body between government, industry, associations, education and labour in Ontario. For over 18 years, OTEC's mandate, as the Ontario tourism sector council organization on the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) Board, has been to participate in the development of National Occupational Standards, professional certification, training programs and national research projects from which Ontario's tourism industry benefits. In addition, OTEC is involved in labour market development issues and provides career awareness for the sector province-wide. OTEC has established itself as a leader and innovator in the development of industry projects and partnerships serving Ontario's tourism workforce and skills development requirements; providing occupational training to 138, 000 individuals and assisting over 2000 businesses in meeting their training and human resource needs. In an effort to better communicate OTEC's work in the sector, and to recognize the industry partners who make that work possible, OTEC will begin providing bi-annual updates to our industry partners, stakeholders and supporters beginning with this review of the past year's highlights.

Victoria Lymburner, President & CEO

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

ONTARIO WORKFORCE TRAINING PROJECTS

➤ Ready to Work



- The National *Ready to Work* program is delivered in Ontario by OTEC in partnership with the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) and is funded by provincial and federal governments.
- The *Ready to Work* program is currently being offered to priority client groups through a network of 9 regional training and employment service partners across the province: Unemployed Help Centre, Windsor; Niagara Employment Help Centre; ACCES Employment, Mississauga and Toronto; KEYS Employment Services, Kingston; Georgian College, Midland Campus; National Capital Region YMCA/YWCA; HT Hospitality Training, Ottawa; and, the Career Foundation, Toronto.
- The recently renewed *Ready to Work: Tourism Careers for Internationally Trained Individuals (ITIs)*, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, is an exciting 4-week session of classroom training and industry experiences.

- *Ready to Work's ITIs* build the knowledge, skills, credentials and attitude to pursue rewarding careers in this sector and begin working toward workplace credentialing in any of 27 tourism occupations.
- There are currently 145 participants enrolled in the *Ready to Work* program, the majority Internationally Trained Individuals (ITIs).
- *Ready to Work* has helped over 1400 people get their start in the sector and a further 500 job seekers will be trained over the next 2 years.

Ready to Work Advisory Committee Members

- Tony Elenis, President & CEO, ORHMA
- Janice Smith, Director, Excellence & Recruitment, Delta Hotels & Resorts
- Ricardo Nicholas, Director, Franchise Operations, Delta Hotels & Resorts
- Leah Jack, Accounting and Human Resources Coordinator, Sheraton Toronto Airport Hotel
- Satyen Pandey, General Manager, Best Western Brampton
- Selina Louzado, Human Resources Manager, Novotel Mississauga
- Falitaa Chhabra, Sales Manager, Four Points by Sheraton Toronto Airport West
- Sarah Rousseau, Hospitality Training Centre, Unite Here Local 75
- Gillian Watters, Program Manager, KEYS Employment Services, Kingston
- Iris Kennedy, Program Coordinator, KEYS Employment Services, Kingston
- Mark Carl, Employment Consultant, Niagara Employment Help Centre, Niagara Falls
- Ella Radovan, Job Developer/Ready to Work Program Facilitator, Unemployed Help Centre, Windsor
- Marie-Eve Gendron, Director, Job Connect, National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA, Ottawa
- Sue Sadler, Director of Services, Peel Region, ACCES Employment Services
- Sunny Dhillon, Job Developer, ACCES Employment Services, Mississauga

➤ Upcoming Projects

- *Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO)*: OTEC has formed a partnership with the MNO to deliver employment preparation, placement, and occupational credentialing to Métis communities in Ottawa, Midland, and Sault Ste. Marie.
- *Mature Workers*: Toronto Training Board's (TTB) Training Opportunities Priorities (TOP) Report, January 2009, identified 35 Trends Opportunities and Priorities for Training in Toronto. The report indicated a need for new and innovative strategies to retain and/or retrain mature workers remaining in or returning to the workforce and named OTEC as the applicable community partner. OTEC will develop a pilot to prepare 25 seniors for jobs in the hospitality industry.
- *CORCAN*: OTEC has formed a partnership with the Correctional Service of Canada's CORCAN rehabilitation program to deliver tourism and hospitality employability training within Ontario's federal institutions. The program will expose participants to the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes required in tourism and hospitality occupations while providing the key industry certifications demanded by employers.

WORKPLACE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

➤ Training and H.R. Solutions



- OTEC has responded to industry demand by developing and delivering over 40 different fee-for-service training and H.R. products which are accessed by industry through a range of designated trainer programs, workshops, and on-line delivery tools.
- In 2008, OTEC began working with the EnAbling Change Partnership and the Ontario Public Transit Association (OPTA) to develop and deliver Accessibility Service Training to Ontario's taxi industry. OTEC has also been independently investing in, and delivering, the new Accessibility Excellence training program to facilitate service compliance with AODA standards.
- OTEC also engaged industry and employers to become part of the sector council Employers of Choice (EOC) program. To assist employers in attracting, retaining, and developing a competent, capable, and customer-centric workforce, OTEC introduced industry to the employer section of the Discover Tourism campaign, and the free, online employee-rated Employer of Choice survey.

➤ Service Excellence Organizations

- The “Service Excellence Organization” (SEO) designation is a way for organizations to gain recognition for demonstrating a high level of commitment to customer service.
- This year, 11 organizations achieved the SEO designation by training 100% of their managers and 75% of their front line staff in the Service Excellence customer service program. These 11 new SEOs now join an esteemed group of over 50 companies recognized for their commitment to providing every customer with the highest standards of service.

➤ *emerit* National Occupational Standards and Professional Certification



- OTEC delivers *emerit* training and certification based on the National Occupational Standards for over 35 tourism occupations to businesses and individuals employed in the industry through facilitated programs, self study, or on-line training.
- Offering certification as an employee retention/progression tool reduces turnover, while increasing employee productivity and confidence. These cost-effective and consistent in-house training initiatives bring quick results and are easy to implement.
- The *emerit* National Occupational Standards and certifications are a core training and retention tool in major properties across Ontario and the rest of Canada. OTEC works with Colleges and Universities to integrate the National Standards and also facilitates self-study for individuals seeking to develop their careers independently.

➤ Unite Here Partnership

- Unite Here Local 75, the largest hotel union in Ontario, and OTEC are working together to develop an occupational credentialing program for front-line employees at Toronto’s One King West hotel. The pilot project, launched in August, will train up to 40 Housekeeping Room Attendants to *emerit* National Occupational Standards for Housekeeping.
- OTEC and the Unite Here Local 75 hotel union are developing a partnership to link *Ready to Work* participants with unionized hotel jobs where they will complete their *emerit* National Occupational Credentialing. This would ensure that new hires can immediately begin logging workplace hours toward their National Tourism Certified Professional (TCP) designations.

➤ Novotel Mississauga

- The 325 room Novotel Mississauga has adopted *emerit* National Occupational Standards within its property and offers *emerit* Certification as a professional development and retention tool.
- Since last year, 15 employees at the Novotel Mississauga have registered for a range of frontline and supervisory level *emerit* certifications. So far, 10 employees have pursued knowledge credentialing, and 5 of them have progressed to achieve the inaugural Tourism Certified Professional (TCP) designation.

EDUCATION



- OTEC delivers service and occupation-specific training and certification to both secondary and post-secondary students enrolled at institutions across Ontario.
- 320 High Schools from 60 Ontario School Boards use OTEC’s programming. Schools include those that are involved in the Canadian Academy of Travel and Tourism (CATT) and sector-specific Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs such as Hospitality & Tourism, Business, Transportation, Arts & Culture, Health & Wellness, Information & Communications Technology, and Landscaping.
- 25 Public and Private Career Colleges and 9 Universities including key institutions such as Humber College, Algonquin College, Georgian College, Confederation College, St. Clair College, and Ryerson University also use OTEC’s resources to complement their diploma, pre-diploma, and post-diploma teaching curricula.

- This year OTEC participated in 47 presentations and 19 tradeshow to promote and raise the profile of employment opportunities and career pathways in Ontario's tourism industry.
- These efforts included delivering tourism career awareness presentations to high school students and introducing them to the National Discover Tourism campaign, an online portal, hosted by the CTHRC, which provides job seekers with information about developing careers in the sector.

RESEARCH

- OTEC worked with the CTHRC to survey 500 organizations, securing industry data for the 2008 Canadian Tourism Sector Compensation Study: Ontario.
- OTEC worked with the CTHRC, facilitating regional focus group participation for Ontario's 2009 Labour Supply/Demand Update.
- OTEC surveyed 245 businesses about training requirements and preferences in Niagara Region through the Destination Niagara Project and received responses reflecting 6777 employees.

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKER PROGRAM

- As part of the sector councils' National Temporary Foreign Worker Program, OTEC surveyed Ontario tourism businesses about temporary foreign worker demand, utilization and challenges in order to provide benchmarks and consultation to industry.
- OTEC introduced a new resource section on our website www.otec.org to guide employers considering temporary foreign workers as a potential solution to address specific labour requirements.
- OTEC engaged the industry and provided information on this resource through over 340 presentations, meetings, and communications were conducted through information sessions, tradeshow, industry events and business consultations.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OTEC'S PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



For more information or to become involved in OTEC programs please contact our Tourism Workforce Development Team

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