

JUMP START

.....A CAREER



CO-OP NEWS

Fall 2012

Keeping the Learning Real

By Gale Harild, Curriculum Administrator: Community-Based Education

How do I best present the concepts outlined in the curriculum course expectations so that my students retain the knowledge? How do I ensure that my students understand the reason for, the meaning of, and the relevance of what they are studying? How do I meet the individual learning needs of my students in order to keep them engaged in the learning process? How do I keep the learning real for my students? As professionals, these are just some of the questions that challenge teachers as they reflect upon their practice. It is by exploring and testing strategies / concepts / theories that teachers hone their craft as they co-learn with their students. Contextualized learning is one such proven concept.

"Contextualized learning is based upon the theory that students (learners) learn best when they can process new information or knowledge in such a way that it makes sense to them in their own frames of reference (their own inner worlds of memory, experience, and response). This approach to learning and teaching assumes that the mind naturally seeks meaning in context, that is, in relation to the person's current environment, and that it does so by searching for relationships that make sense and appear useful.

Studies show that most students' interest and achievement in math, science and language improve dramatically when they are helped to make connections between new information (knowledge) and experiences they have had, or with other knowledge they have already mastered. Students' involvement in their schoolwork increases significantly when they are taught why they are learning the concepts and how those concepts can be used outside the classroom."

As quoted from the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD)

In Ontario, the [Specialist High Skills Major Program \(SHSM\)](#) draws upon research to outline a program where students get to self-identify a specific pathway within an industry / business recognized sector while meeting the requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Within each pathway, students have an opportunity to explore and demonstrate the learning of the curriculum expectations through the sector focus, both within and outside the classroom. For example, in a construction sector the math teacher might consider contextualizing identified math expectations through the delivery of Contextualized Learning Activities (CLA's) that call upon the mathematical principles required in calculating the rise, run and length of roof rafters. This makes sense to the student who is also doing some practical training, through their Co-op program, as an industrial designer. By contextualizing courses, teachers of the required credits, such as English or mathematics, gain insight into the relationship between their subject and the sector thereby enabling them to help the SHSM student make connections between the course work and their sector of interest.

Samples of Contextualized Learning Activities are accessible on the [Ontario Educational Resource Bank](#)

For more information regarding SHSM program offerings in YRDSB please visit: <http://www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/shsm>

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2011/2012 Outstanding Co-op Students



Alexander Mackenzie HS

Jodie Marier-Dixon
Elysse Wevers Lehman

Aurora HS

Megan Giniotis
Mariah Kuhn

Bayview SS

Shirley Cao

Bill Crothers SS

Meghan Fyall
Taylor MacFarlane

Bur Oak SS

Geleena Bueno
Anthony Chu

Dr. G. W. Williams SS

Zoe West
Eric Willcock

Dr. John M. Denison SS

Lahiqa Dhukai
Harinder Sumal

Emily Carr SS

Trancy Ho

Huron Heights SS

Giovanni Barilla
Philippa Dillon-Fordyce

Keswick HS

Steven Clark
Melissa Howlett

King City SS

Matthew Baker
Alannah Vanderburgh-Oakley

Langstaff SS

Hinna Hafeez
Ekaterina Rudkovskaya

Maple HS

Sahithya Balakumar
Kayla Chau

Markham District HS

Tori Brown
Emily Turner

Markville SS

Jeremy Kwok
Chelsea Wang

Middlefield CI

Jascigan Jeyakumar
Sarthak Shah

Milliken Mills HS

Ranushini Uthayaranjan
Wing Zeng

Newmarket HS

Kalina Charnock
Stephanie Rivard

Pierre Elliott Trudeau HS

Calli Li
Felix Mo

Richmond Green SS

Eric Ly
Chalissa Maraj

Richmond Hill HS

Martine Ghazouli
Michael Xie

Sir William Mulock SS

Terralyn Cable

Stephen Lewis SS

Dima Botov
Alona Dehtyar

Stouffville District SS

Atiyah Bagha
Liz Beasse

Sutton District HS

Victoria Etherington

Thornhill SS

Kassandra Clermont
Stephanie Zrihen

Thornlea SS

Carma Steenkamp
Stephanie Wong

Unionville HS

Clara Lo
Wynn Yau

Vaughan SS

Samantha Dobski
Maria Theodoropoulos

Westmount CI

Corey Forster
Amanda Singer

Woodbridge College

Giselle D'Souza
Musoddig Shariff

Adelina Cozma, Co-op Student, Bayview Secondary School writes...

My Co-op experience has been highly rewarding. I feel very fortunate to have worked as a Neuroscience Research Assistant at **The Hospital for Sick Children**, one of the world's foremost paediatric healthcare institutions, dedicated to advancing children's health through the integration of patient care, research and education.

Not only did I have the unique experience of working towards my own research project alongside a team of neuroscientists, but I was also given the opportunity to participate in conferences and other studies. I initiated and discussed ideas through meetings, developed proposals, software training programs and experiment stimuli, recruited volunteer test subjects, conducted experimentation using the latest brain imaging technology, analyzed data using software packages and presented study findings to laboratory members. I have enjoyed engaging myself in these activities and through them I have explored an exciting and emerging scientific career path that meets my interest. I have developed a great passion for neuroscience and I am motivated to become a neurosurgeon and scientist. I am confident that the knowledge and skills I have strengthened during the Co-op placement will provide me with the competitive edge to achieve my goals.

Neuroscience Research Assistant



STUDENT VOICES

By Rahwa Reda, Co-op Student, Langstaff Secondary School

Entertainment Industry



I completed my Co-op placement at a talent agency called **The Characters Talent Agency**. The job of an agent is to find jobs for their clients, help their clients learn the various skills needed to land the job they are auditioning for, negotiate with businesses and organizations on behalf of their clients and to make sure that their clients are well paid for their services or endorsements.



Some tasks I performed were:

- *Updating résumés* - When clients played new roles in movies or television shows, my job was to update their résumés.
- *Submitting breakdowns* - Breakdowns are listings of roles that are available for new television shows or movies which are sent to talent agencies so that agents can get auditions for their clients.
- *Reading scripts and writing coverage* - One of the most challenging tasks I had to do was reading movie scripts and writing a two page detailed synopsis of the script. The synopsis is looked at by agents who will then decide if they want to read the full script. I also had to write a comments page commenting on elements such as the plot, characters and theme.
- *Editing contact info* - I learned to use a customized computer program called InEntertainment. On this program, I can search names and information of all the clients from the company, edit client information and add new contacts.
- *Filing* - Daily tasks included filing the breakdowns according to the type of production: feature films, television series, TV movies, theatre and pilots.

I was interested in working in the entertainment industry and I thought that by doing a Co-op placement at a talent agency I would learn a lot about that part of the business. I gained a lot of knowledge from Co-op. It gave me an opportunity to further develop my employability skills that will help me in the future. It was a great experience and one that I will never forget.

By Trancy Ho, Co-op Student, Emily Carr Secondary School

Vaughan Health Campus of Care



During my Co-op experience I was able to pick up skills as well as knowledge which has helped me decide on my future career path.

I was able to learn to be open to changes, encouraging others during tough times and always being positive and respectful. In addition, during my time at the placement, I was able to learn numerous tools on the computer which will help me advance in the marketing field, as I will be utilizing them in creating many promotional items. Some of the tools included the snipping tool, the crop tool and Adobe Illustrator. By learning these I have become more interested in creating even better promotional items than the ones I have created in the past. I have realized that I should continue to pursue the career of marketing in order to express my creativity.

Employability skills that I can now discuss with confidence at my next interview would be that I am a very organized, creative, efficient and a hard-working individual. I am an individual who values each experience and brings forward new ideas to the table. With this, I know that I will create success in my future.

By Terralyn Cable, Co-op/OYAP Student, Sir William Mulock Secondary School

Early Childhood Education

My Cooperative Education journey began in grade 11. I started with a 2 credit placement at **Crossland Child Care Centre** where I learned all about Early Childhood Education. I wanted more experience and to improve on my skills and I had the opportunity to do this through 2 more 4 credit Cooperative Education placements at **Crossland Public School**. My passion has been to work with children for as long as I can remember, but if it weren't for Co-op, I wouldn't have realized all of the different careers available to me.

Co-op taught me all about employability skills and creating effective résumés, cover letters and portfolios. This class was truly my favourite part about high school and has given me the opportunity to learn, grow and experience the occupation I'm interested in from behind the scenes. I am very grateful for Co-op, my teachers and each of my supervisors, and will remember this class for a life time.



STUDENT VOICES



By Sahithya Balakumar,
Co-op Student,
Maple High School

What Cooperative Education means to me...

My Co-op placement was at **York Central Hospital in Recreation Therapy: Long Term Care**. I have learned a lot about the health care field, and have met many wonderful people.

My supervisor, Sarah Cooley, was always there to provide me with assistance and guidance and was very supportive. In the past, I was petrified of speaking in front of people, but now I have more confidence because at my placement I had to speak in front of large groups of people on a daily basis when leading exercise group. Sarah's patience and support helped me gain the confidence I needed to lead exercise group.

I worked with various individuals such as the other recreation aides, PSW's (personal support workers), physiotherapists, and so forth. Working with all of these people has taught me that teamwork is crucial when working in this type of environment. Each individual has their own tasks and responsibilities, and when all the staff members do their part it makes everyone's life a lot easier.



Sahithya (L)
and her supervisor,
Sarah (R)

I have a greater appreciation for the people I worked with. Whenever I was able to lend a helping hand, I did so. I assisted the PSWs in the dining room, assisted the physiotherapists with circuit exercises, and helped conduct programs with my supervisor. By taking part in their daily routines, I have come to learn that they are super busy and very hard working. It has been a pleasure working with them.

"I have learned an ample amount from being a Co-op student, and I will never forget this experience"



By Stephanie Zrihen,
Co-op Student,
Thornhill Secondary School

The magic of Television!

Imagine...

- waking up everyday to go work on a live show
- meeting amazing new people everyday
- getting the opportunity to learn a new job everyday
- working in a field where tons struggle to find a job
- being in control with everyone listening and waiting for your order

Can you imagine it?

I am a grade 12 Co-op student and my placement was at **Rogers TV** in Richmond Hill. Everyday I was given the opportunity to learn a new position / role. Positions I have had the opportunity to learn include: VTR, Audio, Graphics, Floor Director, Teleprompter Operator, Green Room Attendant, Camera Person and more. The reason I took Co-op is because I wanted to gain experience in the Television Production field and also to see if this is really the field I want to go into.

Co-op has taught me so much more than I ever expected to learn. In the past couple of months I have learned to always pay very close attention to detail no matter what position I am in. I also learned how a studio runs and what to expect in the future, and to *always* keep one ear on the show and one ear on your director so you can always keep on top of everything. I have developed an extensive knowledge of all the positions required on set.

"Since taking Co-op I have decided on my career path. Taking my Co-op placement at Rogers TV was the best decision I have ever made ... make it your best decision too!"



STUDENT VOICES



By Emily Turner, Co-op/OYAP Student, Markham District High School



My Co-op placement was at the **Prairie Girl Bakery**, a high-end specialty cupcake shop in the financial district of downtown Toronto, near Union Station. My placement involved preparing icings from scratch, preparing cupcake batters from scratch, filling cupcake pans, baking the cupcakes in the large rotating oven, de-panning cupcakes, scaling ingredients to be used later in icings and batters, and preparing ingredients. I learned about much more though, than the obvious baking skills. My exposure to this work environment gave me insight into workplace culture and team-building and morale-building skills. On a personal level, my placement helped me better understand the baking industry and the reality of the day-to-day business that would be involved in opening my own bakery one day.

My purpose in taking Co-op and participating in this particular placement was first of all to achieve the hours of bakery experience required for admission to the Culinary Institute of America in New York, which has now been confirmed. My second objective was to gain insight into both the industry and in particular the job of a pastry chef, which is the traditional career route taken by a graduate of the Institute's Bachelor of Baking and Pastry. I came to the conclusion by the end of the year that while I was still very much interested in the Baking and Pastry field, I wanted to eventually become something other than the traditional pastry chef. As a result, my Institute advisor has committed to help me seek an externship placement at a U.S. media outlet for next Summer, rather than using the externship for the traditional bakery placement. This will allow me to further explore the alternative career route of Food Stylist.



My Co-op experience provided me with early career insight that I likely would only have achieved much later in my Bachelor's program. For this, I am very grateful and look at Co-op as the most important course of my high school career in terms of influencing my future path.



**By Samantha Dobski,
Co-op Student,
Vaughan S.S.**

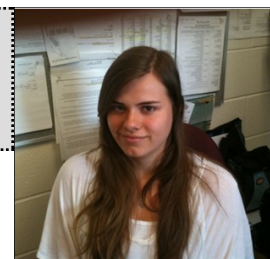
My Co-op experience was like no other. I spent my afternoons this semester working in the cytology lab

of **Mount Sinai Hospital's Pathology and Laboratory Medicine** department. I was able to work with the most amazing people who welcomed me into their lab and made me feel like part of the team.

During my time at Mount Sinai Hospital, I was able to experience things most people wouldn't get the chance to experience until medical school. First off, I learned all about the diagnosing process; I made slides for various types of specimens, mostly gynecological, as well as urine, cerebral spinal fluid, peritoneal fluid and much more. Also, through the hospital's incredible volunteer services, I got to see an ileocolic resection surgery via webcam as part of a lunch'n learn. The surgery entailed removing the part where the small and large intestines meet and then reconnecting them, and I was able to ask questions directly to the surgeon throughout the procedure. In addition, I was able to watch, up close, part of an autopsy.

Who would expect to experience all this as part of a high school course?

**By Carma Steenkamp,
Co-op Student,
Thornlea S.S.**



Some people say maturity comes with age; however, I believe it comes from a person's experiences and how they choose to act on them. Co-op pushes you to become responsible for yourself as others begin to depend on you. Time management skills such as punctuality and attendance become much more prominent in a workplace setting.

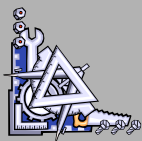
My Co-op experience came from my placement at **Johnsview Village P.S.** I did a third credit for Co-op which meant I had to learn to manage school, homework, as well as doing extended hours at the workplace. My placement has helped me to build confidence and to become a better person. I loved seeing the children each day and helping them to learn. It is true that I learned a lot of skills: leadership, teamwork and communication, but Co-op was more than that - I found a place I belonged. I am more sure than ever that teaching is the profession for me. I have new skills and experiences that look good on a résumé and I have built a portfolio, but, I have also built the motivation I need to keep going where I want to go.

Co-op was the map that got me there!

Dual Credit Accelerated Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

Accelerated OYAP programs combine the Co-op/OYAP experience with instruction at the college/training institute. It is offered in semester two and is open to students in their graduating year.

www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/oyap <http://www.oyap.com>



Joey Bufardeci and Max Mahoney, Accelerated OYAP Students at Richmond Green Secondary School, participated in the Accelerated OYAP General Carpenter program delivered in partnership with the Carpenters' Local Union 27 Joint Apprenticeship and Training Centre.



Joey Bufardeci, writes...

I chose the Accelerated OYAP program because it would allow me to get my Level 1 Apprenticeship in General Carpentry while I was still in high school. This would help in achieving my career goal sooner. The most valuable learning experience has been learning skills from the instructors at Local 27, who are accredited skilled professionals and have years of experience in the trades.

This program has been a good opportunity for me. It helped me start my journey towards a Red Seal Certification for Carpentry which is something I have always wanted to do. The program is very intense, but as long as you stay focused and work hard, it's great. So, if you don't mind doing a lot of math and are a hands-on learner, then you should apply to this program. This program is really worth it.



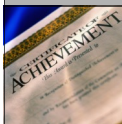
Max Mahoney, writes...

I chose to take the Accelerated OYAP program because I want to be a Red Seal Carpenter and this program will help me to succeed in my goal. My most valuable experience is learning how to use hand tools instead of power tools. I'm learning how to read blueprints, how to dress a piece of lumber using hand tools, health and safety in construction, as well as team work.

If you are interested in the trades and want to become a Carpenter, I strongly recommend taking the Accelerated OYAP program with Local 27. The instructors and environment [are amongst] the best in Ontario, and this is a great opportunity.

L-R: Joey and Max

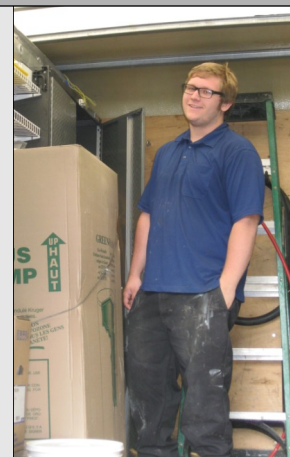
OYAP Achievement Award



Andrew Campbell was the deserving recipient of the OYAP Achievement Award at Sir William Mulock S.S. in June 2012.

During his placement at **J & S Plumbing Services** in Newmarket, Andrew became a valuable member of the team, cleaning and preparing the service trucks for the day and assisting a Master Plumber with installations and repairs. Andrew also completed his **Level 1 Plumbing Training at Humber College** during the semester, and is looking forward to continuing his apprenticeship in the skilled trades.

According to Andrew, "I learned valuable on the job experience while getting hours towards my apprenticeship. If you're looking for a Co-op in the trades, go for the Accelerated OYAP. It will give you a head start in the trade and make you more employable."



International Co-op Education (ICE)

YRDSB Summer International Co-op Program to

Costa Rica



The beginning of the trail

Breaking Ground on the 'Trail for Life'

In July 2012, 17 YRDSB students headed off to Costa Rica to live with host families and work on community development, turtle conservation, and environmental projects.



Digging the stairs



Making a trail through the rainforest

We knew we would be doing conservation work at FUDEBIOL; a biological reserve created to protect the rainforest, which in turn protects the river, which is the main water source for 6 different communities.

What we didn't know was that we would be breaking ground and building a trail through the dense rainforest to an open tract of land. This land would be the beginning of the *Tree for Life* program where locals and foreigners can buy and plant a tree in their name or in the name of a loved one. It was expected that we would only be able to build 1/4 of the trail during our time there. But, we wanted to build and complete the entire trail. So despite very hot, back breaking labour, WE DID IT...WE BUILT the ENTIRE TRAIL!



Heading out on our new trail to plant trees



Collecting rocks to support the stairs

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead
American Cultural Anthropologist
(1901 - 1978)

To mark this momentous occasion, we were honoured by being asked to name the trail - we called it the *Trail for Life*. Not only did we get to name the trail, but we were asked to be the first to walk the trail and then to plant the very first trees on the site!

To blaze a trail in your global life, join the Costa Rica Summer International Co-op program for the upcoming summer. Details found at: www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/ice - Costa Rica.



Planting the first trees

Visit Website:
www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/ice
Costa Rica Summer
International Co-op



Reflection on... Co-op Placement at the Salvation Army

By Stephanie Rivard, Co-op Student, Newmarket High School



I had the opportunity to work with the **Northridge Salvation Army** in Newmarket, as a Community and Family Services Assistant. The Salvation Army is not just a thrift store, but a second chance for so many people around the world. The different programs they offer to the community has shown me that there are many people in need.

Some basic tasks that I did were entering social assistance/food bank files into their database system, organizing the food pantry, lifting boxes of goods and toys, photocopying, filing receipts/invoices and helping at the Christmas parades and toy drives. I also set up for various events such as Anger Management, assisted with painting murals for the breakfast with Santa family event, and helped with the Mercy St. Teen Luncheon every Monday. My most rewarding experience was working at the yearly Christmas Toy Drive, where I packed toy and food hampers, packed winter coats and wrote thrift store vouchers for families in need of winter boots and snow pants.

I have so many good memories with every task that I undertook. I met some amazing people and families. I have learned many things such as: not to judge someone by their appearance; how to make the best of any situation; and, most importantly that nobody is perfect. Everybody is different, and you must learn different ways to approach troubled people or people in need. I also developed my computer and communication skills as well as my ability to implement individual projects and function as a leading contributor on various team projects within the organization.

I want to thank my supervisor, Ray, for all his support and the entire Northridge staff for taking the time to share their expertise and knowledge of the field. I also want to thank my Co-op teacher, Ms. Jones, for getting me this position and comforting me when I needed her...you were truly the best teacher I have ever had. Co-op gives you the opportunity to explore different career opportunities and lets you get out there into the real world. For anybody thinking about Co-op, I would fully recommend it.



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<https://bww.yrdsb.ca/services/cis/coop/Pages/default.aspx>

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