



CO-OP NEWS

Spring 2010

YRDSB Skills Challenge

By Linda Alati, Curriculum Consultant-Pathways...

Congratulations to all YRDSB Skills Challenge participants! On March 11, 2010, over 100 high school students from across the Region competed in one of 16 skills-based contests. The following schools with Specialist High Skills Major programs, Maple HS, Huron Heights SS, Thornlea SS, Richmond Green SS and Stephen Lewis SS, hosted contests that recognized and showcased their SHSM specialization. A dedicated team of teachers organized the contests and collaborated with community partners to provide students with the opportunity to engage in a valuable and rewarding authentic learning experience.

Excited and a bit anxious, the student competitors represented their schools' commitments to skills-based education and inspired others to be the best they can be. They showcased their skills, talents and classroom learning while building confidence and experience in a personal area of interest. With the support of their teachers, students prepared for this event and rose to the occasion! Students competed one to one in contests such as Carpentry, Graphic Design, Prepared Speech and Auto Service Repair. Others demonstrated their commitment and skills in team contests such as Homebuilding, 2D Animation and TV & Video Design.

All students showed grace and determination under pressure and were recognized for their efforts with a medal and a Certificate of Participation. Winners of the YRDSB Skills Challenge will represent the school board at the Ontario Technological Skills Competition (OTSC) in Waterloo, May 17-18, 2010. Gold medalists at the OTSC go on to compete the latter part of the same week at the Canada Skills Competition in Waterloo with the potential to advance to the World Skills Competition in London, England 2011. Good luck to all competitors advancing to the next level of competition!

By Sue Smitko, Teacher, Richmond Green SS and Job Interview Contest Co-Chair...

On March 11, 2010, six eager high school students entered the first ever Job Interview Contest as part of the YRDSB Skills Challenge. Prior to the interview date, students submitted a cover letter and a résumé for their respective job selection. Final results were based on the completeness and accuracy of the cover letter and résumé, as well as on communication, job readiness and interview skills that each student demonstrated during the face-to-face interview.

A special thank you to the judges of this competition, Richard Cunningham, President and CEO of the Markham Board of Trade and Darlene Klemchuck, Markham Branch Manager of Adecco Employment Services, who brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to their role of interviewer and judge. As part of the adjudication process, Richard and Darlene offered valuable feedback to each contestant.

At the awards ceremony, all of the students commented on what a success the day had been. Congratulations to all of the contestants, with special congratulations to the first gold medalist in this contest, Shezal Lalani of Richmond Green SS. Best of luck at the Ontario Technological Skills Competition, Shezal!



Skills Challenge Job Interview contestants, (L-R): Kyle Wong, Durika Sivaparan, Sindusa Wignarajan, Shezal Lalani, Thivea Nagarajah, Simon Ng

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

♦Student Voices	2-4
♦Placement Recommendation	5
♦Developing Skills for the 21st Century	
♦Dual Credit Accelerated Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)	6
♦International Cooperative Education Program (ICE) to Ecuador	7
♦Co-op Student /Journalist The Georgina Advocate	8

STUDENT VOICES

By **Abbas Alibhai**,
Co-op student

Sir William Mulock
Secondary School

Surgical Day Admissions (SDA) Assistant



My Co-op placement was at **Southlake Regional Health Centre** in the Surgical Day Admissions (SDA) area. I had the most phenomenal experience while working in this area and gained many new skills that I know will be very important in my future healthcare career. During my time there, I was offered experiences that far exceeded my expectations. I was allowed to observe several different surgeries. Going into the Operating Room (O.R.) was the best learning experience of my Co-op placement. I saw the preparation needed for surgery and also the follow-up process after surgery. One of my daily tasks was to help patient flow in the area go faster and check patients in.

As a Co-op student, you play a very big and vital role in the SDA area and after the first couple of days, you will become part of a great team and you will see what true teamwork is like. I believe that this is a great placement for those who are interested in the medical field. It will be a true eye opener and I am sure you will see many more careers that you never knew existed. A piece of advice I would give to another Co-op student going into this area...is not to be afraid of asking questions - you will get so many more opportunities for learning!

By **Gemerdine Maravilla**,
Co-op student

Dr. John M. Denison
Secondary School

Accounting Clerk Assistant

I completed my Co-op placement at **Colonial Chevrolet**. I worked as an accounting clerk during my stay there. My tasks included posting accounts payable to journals, checking messages through email and phone, sending faxes and photocopies of documents, filing, reconciling statements, ordering office supplies, making phone calls and reconstructing forms. I enjoyed working in the accounting field as it is something I would like to pursue in the future. I especially enjoyed the month end process as it was exciting and there was always something new to learn. My favourite task at the end of each month was reconciling the gas log.

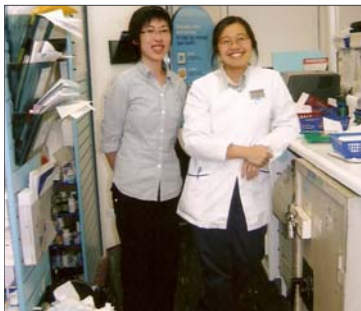
Through my placement I was able to develop several skills that will definitely help me in the future. I now know that I want to become an Accountant and will take courses that apply to accounting and hopefully obtain a diploma. Overall, my experience with Cooperative Education and my placement at Colonial Chevrolet was an unforgettable one.



By **Annie Ma**
Co-op student

Milliken Mills High School

Pharmacy Assistant



(L-R): Annie Ma, Placement Supervisor

My interactions with Pharmacists in my daily life are very minimal and I only know the job of a Pharmacist through descriptions of careers on the Internet. I originally thought that the career of a Pharmacist would be chemistry-based, placing more emphasis on the medication portion of the job instead of the customer interaction aspect. From my Co-op placement at the **Shoppers Drug Mart - Pharmacy**, I can see the tasks of a Pharmacist that weren't described from websites, for example: paperwork, meetings, and patient counseling and interaction. The workload that Pharmacists take on minimizes the trouble that the patient has to undergo and I was not able to fully appreciate this work until now. There is an entire procedure that the prescription must go through followed by numerous checks to ensure the safety of the patient taking the medication. This experience allowed me to truly appreciate the work of a Pharmacist and the efforts to care for a patient's well-being.

STUDENT VOICES



Maple High School students reflect on their Co-op experiences...

What Cooperative Education means to me?

By Sarah Khalil, Maple HS Co-op student / Teaching Assistant

I know that having my placement at **Teston Village Public School**, and especially in a grade 3 class setting, has positively influenced a few important character traits. Patience is sometimes hard to keep and it is especially difficult in maintaining when children are so dependent. For instance, assisting the children daily and having to keep a positive attitude in front of them has, in effect, made me a better individual by strengthening my interpersonal skills. As well, one very important fact I have learned through this program is to always manage time effectively in and out of the classroom.



This experience is also very interesting, because where I am a teacher authority in one setting, the reverse happens in the latter part of the day and I become the pupil. Since I am exposed to both life as a student, and a teacher assistant, I have come to realize, appreciate and respect the work teachers do. Teachers are the ones who determine what kind of learning environment is best for the students, to help them reach their full potential in the future. It is teachers who are the basis of where tomorrow will lead society.

Cooperative Education is an extremely beneficial school program as it gives students the opportunity to decide whether the career path they have chosen academically applies to them individually. The program is also very appealing, because by completing a small amount of hours each day it can accumulate to a lot of hours of experience in a chosen field. Cooperative Education has given me invaluable experience that can only be obtained through such a program. **I would recommend Cooperative Education to all students who can show dedication, remain persistent and wish to know what career path is best suited for them.**

.....

How has your Cooperative Education experience changed you?

By Sara Arya, Maple HS Co-op student / Lawyer Assistant



My Co-op experience has changed me in ways I never thought it would. I feel that I have become more responsible and I have become better at setting my goals. I know now that I do want to pursue a degree in English at university, and follow my dream of going to law school and becoming a lawyer. I know that getting into law school is very difficult and competitive, but as long as I continue to work hard, then nothing can stop me from achieving my goal. My work habits have also changed for the better, knowing that I only had a few hours each day to do many tasks helped me work more efficiently and faster at my Co-op placement. I felt that **Bianchi Presta Law Office** was a great workplace and somewhere I could see myself working at in a couple of years. My Co-op experience has changed me because I have become a stronger person. As I became more familiar with my tasks I worked more independently and relied less on my co-workers to help me or

tell me what to do. My Co-op experience has also changed the way I treat and talk to other people; I am more comfortable and more out-spoken communicating with people I don't know very well. For example, when clients came in and had an appointment to see someone, I became much better at greeting them and talking to them. I feel that I became more of a professional and I became a better worker not only at this Co-op placement, but also at my part-time job and at school. The skills that I learned at Bianchi Presta Law Office will help me through my entire life. **It doesn't matter what I decide to become; I will always need to have good communication skills and people skills!**



STUDENT VOICES

**By Meera Chandrabalan,
Co-op student, Middlefield C.I.
Placement: Honeywell**



Brief company description:
Honeywell is a huge company that manufactures many different products. The location that I work for specializes in home water control solutions, specifically the Zone Valve, which is a valve that controls the flow of water or other fluids.

Description of my responsibilities:
I have been doing various tasks at Honeywell to help with the implementation of 5S in the workplace. 5S originates in Japan and is based on 5 words: Sort, Store, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain. I did a lot of work related to 5S in the Metals Department. I set up shadow boards for the tools that are used on all the machines and made floor markings for the machines, material carts and other equipment. I am helping with the Zone Valve Line Balancing Project, which is changing the 5-person line to a 6-person line.

What I have learned:
I have learned a lot about lean manufacturing which is what many engineers are learning now, and what future engineers will have to know, because most companies are starting to follow it.

My favourite experiences at work:
My favourite experience is working with the team of engineers. They are a very nice group of people and are very helpful and encouraging.

How Co-op has helped me:
Co-op has really improved my confidence level and communication skills. I am very happy that I decided to take this course because it has been a new and different experience from all my other high school courses. It enabled me to observe the career that I am thinking of pursuing.

Advice to future Co-op students:
I would recommend Co-op to all students. I would especially recommend it to students who have never had job experience, or to those who do not have a clear idea of what they would like to do after high school. Also, a perception of most students is that Co-op is mostly for people who are not going to university after high school, because these are the students who learn better with hands-on work. Even though university-bound students mostly learn through lectures and books, it is also important for them to get some relevant work experience. They should know what their chosen career will be like before applying to a university program that may not even be the best choice for them. I would also tell future Co-op students to always ask questions when in doubt and to build a good relationship with their supervisors and co-workers.

**By Sinthujaah Nadarajah
Co-op student, Middlefield C.I.
Placement: Ostaco 2000 Windows Inc.**



Brief company description:
Ostaco is a manufacturing company of customized windows and doors.

Description of my responsibilities:
Creating balance sheets, time cards, mailing cheques and invoices, filing, month end statements, material requirement planning (MRP), faxing, photocopying, trial balances, income statements and sales analysis.

What I have learned:
An accountant's job is a very important one. They must be precise as they are the ones who can tell whether a company is making or losing money. Aside from the duties of an accountant, I also learned that it is very important to be patient, to be able to work with others, and to be able to locate information using the appropriate technology. You also have to be willing to learn continuously and be able to work independently most of the time.

My favourite experiences at work:
The day I got to go and see the manufacturing plant was one of my favourite experiences. I got to see the products the company creates and how they are made, and the massive sizes in windows and doors that I have never seen before.



How Co-op has helped me:
Co-op has helped me have a great experience in Accounting and helped me understand and learn the different kinds of duties of an accountant along with the employability skills needed. Co-op has also taught me how an everyday workplace in the real world is - businesses have to meet deadlines and they cannot procrastinate and be irresponsible as time is money.

Advice to future Co-op students:

- Be assertive and willing to learn everyday.
- Talk to your supervisor and let them know if you feel like you are not being given challenging or 'fun' jobs.
- Make sure to do all your class work on time; keeping up with your class work will guarantee your stay in Co-op!

A Placement Supervisor Recommendation



Wendy Seal, Grade 1 Teacher, Stonebridge Public School, writes...

It is a pleasure to highly recommend Christina Lin. As a Co-op student from Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School, Christina worked in my Grade 1 classroom at **Stonebridge Public School**.

In her role, she worked with individual students, small groups and the entire class. Christina adapted quickly and easily to the dynamic and diverse nature of my grade one students. Duties were undertaken with diligence, professionalism and confidence. On numerous occasions, Christina showed great initiative when she completed tasks that needed to be done without being asked. Her problem solving skills were excellent. She independently searched out information needed to complete tasks.

Christina contributed greatly to a positive learning environment. Her natural communication skills fostered excellent rapport with students and staff. When working closely with small groups of students, Christina's teaching style allowed the students many opportunities to express themselves and she listened attentively to their views. She consistently gave pertinent feedback about student's progress and was very sensitive to their needs.

Within the school, Christina showed great interpersonal skills. She helped out in the office and with a lot of different teachers. She quickly built up a reputation as being a responsible hard-worker who showed great attention to detail and time management.

Christina's enthusiastic personality has enabled her to work well with staff and students. I have really enjoyed working with her and would highly recommend her for future job opportunities.



Christina Lin, Co-op student,
Pierre Elliott Trudeau HS

Preparing the Literate "Specialist High Skills Major" (SHSM) Graduate: Developing Skills for the 21st Century

Learning and Innovation Skills

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration

Information, Media and Technology Skills

- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) Literacy

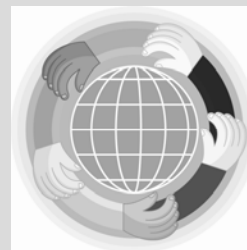
Life and Career Skills

- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Initiative and Self-Direction
- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- Productivity and Accountability
- Leadership and Responsibility

<http://www.p21.org>

For more information on Specialist High Skills Major Programming see:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/morestudentsuccess/SHSM.asp>



Dual Credit Accelerated Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

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

By Sheila Nayler, Special Projects: Community-Based Education, and Salim Jamal, Community-Based Education Consultant/OYAP Coordinator

Students from across the region continue to reap the benefits of the Dual Credit Accelerated Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program which gives them a head start on a lucrative career in a variety of different apprenticeships: Automotive Service Technician, Residential Air Conditioning Technician, Cook, Electrician, Plumber and Early Childhood Educator. In addition to earning all or part of their level one training, these senior students gain valuable hands-on work experience and credits that count towards their high school diploma.

One of our Electrical Apprenticeship students who successfully completed the Level One Apprenticeship Training at Humber College's new facility for Trades and Technology writes:

"My experience with the Dual Credit Accelerated OYAP Program has been very positive. I learned about this incredible program while I was in Grade 11 and was able to make sure I had all the necessary credits to be accepted into the program in my last semester of high school. I was able to earn my Level 1 Apprenticeship training and at the same time gain credits toward my high school diploma. This has given me a head start on my career and also has given me the opportunity to experience college life. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in this program and would highly recommend it to other students."

Dual Credit Accelerated OYAP Programs are available to all secondary students in their final semester of high school. Students must be enrolled in a full day semester two Cooperative Education course and meet specified application and eligibility criteria. These programs are offered in partnership with our Colleges/Training Delivery Agencies, The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and our secondary school Community-Based Education Departments.

Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to attend the program Open House events in October/November. Interested students should consult their Community-Based Education, Guidance, or Personalized Alternative Education teacher.



Dual Credit Accelerated OYAP Cook



Dual Credit Accelerated OYAP Electrician



Dual Credit Accelerated OYAP Plumber

20 years of success!

York Region District School Board's International Co-op Program (ICE)

David Peacock, ICE Teacher / Coordinator, writes...

This past February 19th, over 300 people gathered to provide fundraising assistance and moral support to the 15 ICE students who will be living near Quito, Ecuador from March - May 2010. The ICE 20th Anniversary Dinner/Dance/Silent Auction event raised an impressive \$13,000 to offset the total student fees required for the grade 11/12 high school students to spend 13 weeks in Ecuador, as they live with host families, immerse themselves in Spanish and undertake Cooperative Education placements in the fields of agriculture, business, education, health care or social work.

Rather than just a fundraiser, the February 19th event was very much a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the ICE Program. In 1990-91, after 5 years of diligently laying the groundwork, the first 15 ICE / Global Education students courageously pioneered the program to Thailand. At that time it was the only high school International Co-op program existing in Canada. To date over 300 YRDSB students have participated in ICE, 105 to Thailand from 1991-2001, 60 to Costa Rica between 1994-2000, and 137 to Ecuador from 2001-2010. YRDSB staff past and present, ICE alumni, and ICE 2010 students, family and friends came out to celebrate this achievement.

Alumni in attendance included inaugural members Ivan, Ross and Ruchi (ICE'91). Present were many students currently undertaking post secondary studies and training such as three Lauren's (ICE'05, ICE'09 x 2) attending Ontario universities; Robyn (ICE'99) who recently completed her Masters with on-site studies in South Africa; and Nikhil (ICE'01) who is beginning his Medical Residency in Community Health after his health clinic placement through ICE. Julie (ICE'99) and Ashley (ICE'04) were there with their Ecuadorian and Costa Rican spouses. Three of the five ICE siblings

sets of Ruchi (ICE'91) + Amit (ICE'2000), Warren (ICE'05) + Harrison (ICE'10), and Jovanna (ICE'03) + Jade (ICE'10) shared the evening, attesting to the fact that for several YRDSB families, the ICE program was definitely worth experiencing a second time via a younger child/sibling.

Regrets that they could not attend came from across the globe: from Denmark, Spain and Thailand where Anthony (ICE'97), Kate (ICE'99), David (ICE'2000) respectively reside; from Cambodia and Jordan where Lani (ICE'04) and Mary (ICE'04) are working with NGOs; from English teachers in China (Jaclyn ICE'04) and Korea (Saralyn ICE'97), from Fiji and Mexico where Amanda (ICE'07) and Jameela (ICE'07) are taking their third year of university studies abroad; from various cities across Canada, and from Nathan (ICE'2000) and Joshua (ICE'98) residing in the GTA who were respecting religious and family traditions. The ICE alumni community has a distinct presence all over the world!

As the February 2010 celebration came to a close the dialogue, stories, hugs and laughter communicated a clear message...through the 20 years of International Co-op, the program has helped foster informed, caring, motivated and community-oriented high school graduates who find ways to have an impact on the world around them. In doing so, the YRDSB has lived up to its mission statement to "unite in our purpose to inspire and prepare learners for life in our changing world community". Thanks to all those who make International Co-op possible, and all the wise students who make this part of their high school career.

To find out more about ICE, view our website at www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/ice - Ecuador.



2003 Alumni (back L-R): Mike, Gary, Gus, Holly (front L-R): Jovanna, Maya, Terri



2009 Alumni (L-R): Stephanie, Lauren, Amelia



1991 Alumni (standing L-R): Ross, Ivan

Jessica builds her career pathway at Rutherford Construction

This article was written by Keswick High School Co-op student, Ian De Freitas, an aspiring Journalist, whose Co-op placement is at The Georgina Advocate. He writes about another Keswick High School student, Jessica Rohricht, and her Co-op/OYAP placement experience in the field of Construction. (Reprinted with permission from The Advocate, York Region Media Group)



"Having the opportunity to work first hand on a construction site has not only given me insight for my future, but the honour of working with truly skilled tradesmen who share the same passion as me. With great pleasure, I'd like to thank the Keswick High School Co-op Department and Mike Baker from Rutherford Construction for one of the most memorable experiences of my life!" - Jessica Rohricht

For most girls, working on a construction site "just isn't happening", but that wasn't the case for Jessica Rohricht. Working with **Rutherford Construction Company**, Jessica put countless hours and sweat into helping develop the 5 wing tech addition at Keswick High School. More than ecstatic to take on the opportunity, Jessica started off sweeping the floors and maintaining the building. Soon after demonstrating her devotion to Rutherford Construction through long repetitive hours of grunt work, she started installing building components to the school's new addition, and co-working with specialized tradesmen. Dry walling, building temporary windows, chipping out tile, installing trim, thresholds and tarred roof vents are only a few skills Jessica learned on the job.

Jessica has swiftly kick started her future by broadening her construction trades skills to an overwhelming degree through Cooperative Education, is currently signed as an OYAP student - Carpentry Apprenticeship, and is the first student to be hosted by Rutherford Construction Company. To add the icing on the cake, she is only in Grade 11 and plans to attend Co-op again next year to further her construction trades experience. This opportunity has helped her gain insight on her future and market herself toward carpentry. Jessica has already started her carpentry apprenticeship and plans to eventually have her own company!

"Jessica Rohricht has proven herself as an amazing ambassador for Keswick High School and the Cooperative Education Program. It was truly a pleasure to have Jessica as a Co-op student, and we look forward to seeing her again next year." - Keswick High School Community-Based Education Department

The Community-Based Education Team:

Gale Harild, *Administrator, Community-Based Education*

Salim Jamal, *Community-Based Education Consultant / OYAP Coordinator*

Steve Poste, *School-Work Transition / Technological Consultant*

Linda Alati, *Curriculum Consultant - Pathways*

Kim Taylor Reed, *Curriculum Consultant - Guidance*

David Peacock, *International Cooperative Education Teacher / Coordinator*

Brenda Pembleton, Fiona Willison, Shawna Blencowe:
Administrative Assistants

Editors: Gale Harild / Brenda Pembleton / Fiona Willison

Design/Typesetting: Brenda Pembleton / Fiona Willison

A publication of the
**Community-Based Education Office,
Curriculum & Instructional Services,
Centre for Leadership and Learning,
Education Centre Newmarket
Phone # 905-727-0022,
ext. 3429, 3433, 3438**



WEBSITES:

Community-Based Education

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

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/oyap www.oyap.com

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/page.cfm?id=SCC000001>

YRDSB Board Wide Web (bww):

<https://bww.yrdsb.ca/C9/CBE/Page%20Library/jumpstart.aspx>