

THE ONTARIO BUSINESS REPORT

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Young entrepreneur helps companies navigate the world of e-business



Adrian Salamunovic knows all about being a young entrepreneur. At 24 years of age he's working hard on his third business, Navasys Inc., an e-business consulting company based in Ottawa.

"We call ourselves e-business architects," says Salamunovic. His company works with management teams of predominately high-tech companies to develop a strategy for conducting business electronically. This

includes digital marketing, systems integration and determining how to best generate return on investments. "We construct the e-commerce blueprint that works best for the company, then we build the Website that fits," he said.

With customers such as CrossKeys Systems Corporation, a division of Newbridge, webPLAN and GSI Lumonics, Navasys is developing a reputation as a company of internet-savvy strategists that gives its clients an edge in a technological world.

Salamunovic has a degree in marketing, and combines that with his business experience and technological knowledge acquired on his own. "I started reading about the Internet quite early in the game," he said. "That enabled me to position myself as an expert before there were many people doing what I do."

Navasys opened in May 1999, and Salamunovic has high praise both for the Young Entrepreneurs Program and for the Royal Bank, which had start-up funds in his hand within a matter of weeks.

Today, with four employees working with him on a sub-contract basis, sales in the

six-figure range and, as a virtual company, very light infrastructure to support, he has high hopes for the future.

"This is a growing market, an estimated \$40 billion market, and there are huge opportunities for companies like ours," Salamunovic said. He plans to eventually move towards wireless Internet technology similar to that which powers mobile devices like Internet enabled cell phones. He would also like to move towards developing technology that

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Young Entrepreneur says age should not deter young people from being their own boss

At 22 years of age, Heather Hill is already making a name for herself as a successful young entrepreneur. With two stores up and running, one in Fergus and another in Barrie, she is a retailer who knows what she wants.

"I started my first store because I saw a niche in the market in Fergus," said Hill. "It's a pretty small town and I felt they needed a store that catered to teenagers."

Essential Soul Imports sells items from Mexico, Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines, including clothing, hammocks, home décor items and musical instruments, such as African drums. Teens can purchase beads and make their own jewelry on site, and Hill sells her own jewelry creations as well.

Hill opened the doors to the Fergus store in May 1998 and the Barrie store 18 months later. Each 1,000 sq. ft. store is located on a main downtown street. She fills the stores with merchandise found through gift shows, suppliers who approach her directly and suppliers who travel abroad regularly.

Hill did her homework before opening her first store. "I took a small business self-help program in Guelph and they referred me to the Ontario government's Young Entrepreneur Program," she said. "I wrote my business plan, had an accountant help with cash flow forecast and from there I was able to negotiate the loan."

She used the loan to renovate the building and to purchase inventory.

"The first store did well and the plan was to open a second one when my mom retired and could help out," said Hill.

"The store in Barrie presents more of a challenge because it's in a bigger centre and there is more competition."

And her advice to other young entrepreneurs? "Don't let people discourage you because you're young," she says. "People are always coming into the store asking to speak to the owner or manager, never considering it could be me. But it comes with the territory, and it doesn't change the fact that I am my own boss."

Hill hopes to take her experience of owning and operating retail stores, and move into the wholesale market in the future. She said, "I've learned a lot about customer likes and dislikes as well as trends, and I'd like to eventually supply other stores like mine."

Youth Opportunities Ontario connects young people to jobs, training and business opportunities

If you want to work, we want to help." That's the motto of Youth Opportunities Ontario, a program that is helping thousands of young people find jobs.

"Our goal is to give young people the hand up and the tools they need to get that important first job," said Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Dianne Cunningham. "It's often the first step in building a gratifying, self-sufficient life and contributing meaningfully to our society."

Youth Opportunities Ontario promotes six programs. The Ontario government is investing \$217 million to help more than 213,000 young people find the services and training they need to get jobs.

Job Connect: Eighty per cent of job openings are never advertised. Job Connect helps young people and adults out of work and out of school gain the knowledge and skills they need to get and keep the job they want. Job Connect helps young people write résumés, links them with job leads and helps them

access on-the-job training. It is the government's way of helping make the job search a little easier. More than 90 per cent of the young people who have participated in Job Connect say it helped them get a job.

Ontario Summer Jobs: There are more youth summer opportunities than ever before. This program provides a range of services to students including job search and self-marketing services, helping students create their own job by setting up their own business and helping them connect with summer jobs in government.

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program: This is an opportunity for students in grades 10 to 12 to train as registered apprentices while enrolled in school. The program lets them complete their Ontario Secondary School Diploma, while hours worked on the job are applied to journey person certification.

Young Entrepreneurs Program: This is a partnership between the government and the Royal Bank that teaches young people aged

18 to 29 to be entrepreneurs, and provides start-up loans for those who want to launch their own business.

Rural Youth Jobs Strategy: This program is designed to help rural youth prepare for a good job close to home. Rural internships provide youth with practical work experience, including in the field of information technology. Mentorships teach them entrepreneurial and leadership skills.

Ontario Internship Program: Beginning in May 2000, the Ontario government will again offer 100 internships to young people and recent graduates. An internship gains the intern valuable work experience in the Ontario public service. It lasts two years with three eight-month rotational assignments.

"Giving our young people a good education, including job-preparedness and skills training will benefit us all," said Cunningham. "The more opportunity youth have to find jobs and create jobs, the more our businesses will grow and the more Ontario will prosper."

Shooting for the top

I was in a store buying props for a shoot, and I heard an ad on the radio talking about loans for young entrepreneurs. I wrote down the number and called," said Janet Bailey of Janet Bailey Photos.

It was just the boost she needed. Bailey, 25, was juggling a part-time job, acting as an assistant photographer and freelancing part-time as well. Her goal was to be a full-time photographer, fulfilling a dream she had since she first became interested in photography at age 16. However, making the leap was difficult with little extra money and even less free time.

"I attended the seminar for the Young Entrepreneur Program, took the course, wrote my business plan and negotiated the loan," said Bailey. "With photography you need a cash flow, because you don't usually get paid right away. It's a comfort zone, to be honest, but it was also very important to starting my business."

Bailey lives and works in a 1,500 sq. ft. studio in the photo ghetto on Carlaw Avenue in Toronto. Her main focus is editorial photography and her work has been seen in *Chatelaine*, *Money Sense*, *Shift* and the *National Post*, among others. She is also an accomplished fine art photographer and holds an annual exhibition profiling her travel shots and other creative work.



Photographer Janet Bailey's work has been seen in *Chatelaine*, *Money Sense*, *Shift* and the *National Post*.

"I always knew I wanted to be my own boss. I like the idea of making my own hours and running my business as I choose," said Bailey. "I also like the challenge. You may just support yourself, but you also have the chance of making it really big."

After studying at the Nova Scotia College of Art and the Ontario College of Art, Bailey did her market research on the job. As a photographer's assistant she worked with several photographers and spent time learning about their work, as well as dealing with clients, meeting art directors, asking a lot of questions and generally keeping her eyes and ears open.

Since officially opening Janet Bailey Photos

last May, Bailey is glad she took the step. She encourages others to do the same. "It's a really positive experience," she said. "There are a lot of people out there with great ideas. And sometimes all they need to take the first step is the dough."

Bailey foresees continuing to build her business through word-of-mouth and repeat business. She sends out creative mailers that have a handcrafted element to them and they have been quite successful in attracting new business.

She sees photography as a lifelong growing process and acknowledges that enhancing

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VIEWPOINT



Welcome to our special Ontario Business Report on "Youth Entrepreneurship."

For hundreds of years, the entrepreneur has played a vital role in the world's economy. Every major invention has come from a germ of an idea, as these individuals looked beyond obstacles to opportunity.

Entrepreneurs are more important than ever in the fast-paced, knowledge-based world of today.

The Harris Government knows that in order for Ontario to continue to be a leader in economic growth, to continue to create more jobs, to continue to compete in a global economy, we must also continue to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit.

That is why we've worked hard to cut taxes and reduce red tape and put into place the economic conditions that will help new ideas, and new businesses, flourish.

In Ontario, we already have a highly-skilled and well-educated workforce. Flexibility, innovation and imagination are just as important. Our government is working hard to create excellence in our education system, so students can meet their full potential. We are investing in research and development. And we strongly encourage innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit.

Many young Ontarians are recognizing entrepreneurship as a legitimate career choice.

Our government, in conjunction with the Royal Bank, is helping them get a good start through our Young Entrepreneur Program. These budding entrepreneurs complete a business course, develop a business plan, invest start-up capital of their own, and are eligible to receive a start-up loan that sets their new business on the road to success.

In this issue, we have profiled several young Ontario entrepreneurs who have accessed this program. They have each set individual goals and are developing successful businesses. They are to be commended for following this time-honoured path.

Young entrepreneurs, small businesses, large businesses – and all the people who believe in hard work and pursuing their individual goals – are the reason I am so very optimistic about Ontario's future. I am not alone. Economists are saying that this year, our province will lead the rest of Canada in economic growth. The latest economic forecasts also say Ontario will lead the G-7 countries in economic growth.

We have made tremendous progress. I look forward to seeing continued job growth and expansion, and even more entrepreneurial opportunities, in Ontario's future.

Al Palladini
Minister of Economic Development and Trade



Entrepreneurs wanted

"The Young Entrepreneurs Program assists young Ontarians start their own businesses," said Economic Development and Trade Minister Al Palladini. "Our government recognizes entrepreneurship as a legitimate career choice, and we want to give a helping hand to those innovative young people who wish to strike out on their own. They are often the ones who will set the pace, and create the new jobs, of the future."

The Young Entrepreneurs Program was developed by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in partnership with the Royal Bank.

The program helps young entrepreneurs, ages 18 to 29, obtain a business loan of up to \$7,500 to start a business in Ontario. To be eligible they must also be able to contribute 30 per cent of the loan amount requested to the business.

In addition to financial assistance, the program provides a business-training component consisting of 12 hours of training. This training is delivered by many of the Business Self-Help Office/Business Enterprise Centres throughout the province.

The training component consists of two parts.

Part 1 is a two-hour introduction to entrepreneurship that outlines the opportunities and challenges of being a business owner, including assessing their own business idea.

Part 2 consists of 10 hours of business planning. Young entrepreneurs learn about developing a business plan, sales strategies, legal and financial considerations and business financial planning.

On completion, clients can apply to a Royal Bank Business Banking Centre for a Young Entrepreneurs Program loan.

The goal is simple. It is to help give young entrepreneurs the start they need. And to help them navigate the road to small business success.

Venturing forth as a student entrepreneur

Opening a hot dog stand. Operating an in-line skating school. Making and selling harps. Setting up a swimming lesson company.

These are each summer businesses set up in Ontario, owned and operated by student entrepreneurs.

"Our government puts a great deal of emphasis on job creation. We are ensuring better economic conditions through lower taxes, reduced red tape and generally by removing barriers to growth," said Al Palladini, Minister of Economic Development and Trade. "We want businesses to invest, to grow, to compete and to create jobs in Ontario and we are pleased to give our youngest entrepreneurs, our students, a hand up through our Student Venture program."

Since the government was elected in 1995, there have been more than 3,000 jobs created with the help of Student Venture loans.

These young entrepreneurs essentially create their own jobs by starting and operating their own businesses. Students aged 15 to 29 can apply. They are eligible for Student Venture loans of up to \$3,000, provided by the Royal Bank and guaranteed by the Ontario government. The loan is intended to support a business during the summer months. After that point, businesses can remain in operation indefinitely.

Khalid Janmohamed set up Custom Solutions Computers last summer specializing in assembling, operating and repairing computers. "I was able to find information on how to register for Student Venture through the Ontario government Website and learned how to get a permit to open a business," Janmohamed said. "Without Student Venture, I would not have been able to get this excellent experience."

Janmohamed, 18, is still operating his business today but has slowed it down as he attends his final year of high school. He is planning to attend the University of Waterloo in the fall and take computer engineering, after which he hopes to work as a professional engineer and ultimately

return to running his own business. He says, "I would strongly suggest that other teens open their own business."

The Student Venture application is actually the framework of a business plan. The application forms are available from business studies teachers, campus placement offices, Business Self-Help Offices/Enterprises Centres of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Business Banking Centres of the Royal Bank and Human Resources Centres of Canada for Students.

Upon completion, students take the application to a participating branch of the Royal Bank. Loans are available from April 1 to June 16.

From these small beginnings, great things can happen.

A prime example is Paige Sillcox, owner of Cookie It Up in Aurora. Sillcox obtained her Student Venture loan several years ago when she was a student at York University. Her goal was a career in advertising so she thought if she could develop, package and sell a product it would look good on her résumé. After a summer making and selling cookies, she decided she liked operating her own business too much to give it up.

Today, Cookie It Up operates from a 4,500 sq. ft factory and employs as many as 14 people during the busy season. Sillcox sells more than 20 different kinds of gourmet cookies, both individually and packaged, to stores including selected Loblaws, Timothy's Coffee shops in Ontario and Quebec and independent grocers, as well as stores in the northeastern United States.

"The Student Venture program was great for me. The fact that I got the loan, gave me confidence to really pursue my business," Sillcox said. "The literature that arrived with the package was helpful and I referred to it as I was growing and reassessing and juggling my projections. Also knowing there were people I could phone was useful. The program was a very good resource."

To find out more about the Ontario government's Student Venture program call the Training Hotline at 1-888-Job-Grow or visit the Website at www.youthjobs.gov.on.ca

Tourism award winner shares aboriginal history in our nation's capital

Turtle Island means North America. In the aboriginal legend of creation, it is believed that this great mass of land was created on the back of a turtle that rose up from the ocean. It is also the name of the aboriginal tourism company started by Trina Mather, 27, in partnership with the Odawa Native Friendship Centre.

Operating for the past two years in Ottawa, Turtle Island Tourism provides aboriginal cultural experiences for tourists visiting the national capital region. It offers full interactive programs for events such as the Canadian Tulip Festival and Winterlude, as well as aboriginal programs for school groups, conferences and special events.

Visitors can enjoy drumming and dancing demonstrations, story telling, teachings about medicines, birch bark canoe building, woodcarving and Inuit programs of games and singing. Arts and crafts are also made and sold. "Winterlude is neat," Mather said. "It gives us an opportunity to offer a program that focuses on the north and outdoor winter activities such as snowshoe making."

Mather grew up with the aboriginal culture. Her mother is Ojibwa and her family lives on the First Nations reserve at Curve Lake near Peterborough. While she was exposed to the culture, she found that many of the traditions were starting to fade. When studying advertising at Algonquin College she attended an aboriginal tourism conference and immediately saw the possibilities in starting such a business in the nation's capital.

"I used to work with the Odawa Native Friendship Centre in Ottawa and I felt it was something I should do along with them," Mather said. "Tourism was actually quite new to me. But I knew a lot about the aboriginal culture and we developed our program based on which events allowed for the most audience participation. Then we developed a business plan and long-term goals."

Mather said they are thrilled that a primary goal is very close to becoming a reality. In May, Turtle Island Tourism will open a full-time attraction called "Turtle Island" in downtown Ottawa. "There will be a trading

post, drumming and dancing, traditional foods and story-telling," she said. "We'll be hiring about 10 young aboriginal people to work with us over the summer."

A benefit of locating in the Ottawa region is the approximately 30,000 native people within the region, as well as five local reserves.

Mather says it is gratifying to promote the culture not only to the tourist but also within the aboriginal community, "We are employing native people to do something they enjoy both doing and sharing, and we're passing on our history to both non-natives and natives."

Mather and the Odawa Native Friendship Centre

have already been recognized for their contributions. In 1999, they were the winners of the Best New Tourism Company or Product Award through the Ottawa Tourism Convention Authority.

In the future, Mather would like to build up "Turtle Island", including adding a dinner-dance theatre. She would also like to package a program that highlights the many excellent aboriginal products around Ontario and Quebec.

As for advice to the young entrepreneur, Mather highlights the need for research. "It's important to understand the market and



Turtle Island Tourism, a company started by a 27 year-old entrepreneur, provides aboriginal cultural experiences for tourists visiting the national capital region.

how to best offer your service. Also, recognize that every industry is different. For example, with tourism the window of time to reach certain markets is very specific," she said. "I would also suggest asking other people for advice. I was pleasantly surprised at the number of people who were willing to share their knowledge."

Odawa stands for meeting and greeting place. It is the original source of the name "Ottawa." Trina Mather is helping to make sure that visitors to the national capital are welcomed in Turtle Island's most traditional way.



Dramatic growth in Niagara's economy diversifies region's stren

This article is one of a series sponsored by MEDT's Office for Urban Economic Development focusing on the economies of Ontario's largest urban-centred regions.

There is dramatic growth and expansion occurring all across the province. Business is booming. The entrepreneurial spirit is soaring. The unemployment rate is at its lowest in a decade. Region after region is reporting unprecedented business growth.

Niagara is among those that are leading the pack.

From the time the government's pro-growth policies first came into effect in 1995, Niagara has exploded. In four short years its regional labour force increased by 11,400 jobs to more than 170,000 jobs. Its unemployment rate has dropped to 6.9 per cent today from 15 per cent in 1993 – with fully half of the new job growth driven by company expansion.

Consider these examples.

General Motors of Canada invested an additional \$465 million in its St. Catharines

operations in 1999. This is in addition to the \$400 million invested in a new engine line in 1998.

Magna International announced the construction of a new 67,000 square foot manufacturing plant in St. Catharines. Small- and medium-sized manufacturers in the region are also growing. Companies such as Basic Technologies in Welland, Hamill Machine in Niagara Falls and Handling Specialty of Grimsby have all expanded their operations to meet new market demands.

Business is showing that it has increased confidence in the economy and is prepared to invest across this province – with Niagara Region being a prime beneficiary.

This is due to many reasons. A recent study conducted by KPMG confirmed that the Niagara Region is a very cost-effective business location when compared to other areas in the central North American industrial heartland.

"Businesses have confidence in Niagara as an ideal location for manufacturing and production," said Alan Teichroeb, Manager of Business Development for the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation.

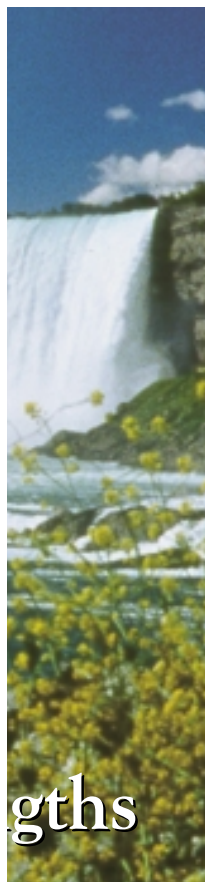
Also, Niagara itself is actively building on its strengths in manufacturing, tourism, agri-business and other sectors.

To help further increase the region's appeal, the Ontario government has made improvements to Niagara's roadways. Over the past few years, Ontario's Ministry of Transportation has spent \$387,000 on border crossings in Niagara. Also, since 1995, the government has invested more than \$212 million into improving the Queen Elizabeth Way, from Highway 20 to Fort Erie.

These improvements are helping the region in many ways, including within the tourism industry.

Today, investment in tourism is occurring at an unprecedented rate. New hotel construction and the expansion of existing properties are reshaping the Niagara Falls skyline. Tourism operators throughout the region are upgrading and expanding their facilities like never before. Several businesses are venturing into the world of marketing for the first time by offering products or promotional packages as an incentive to visitors.

Those who have recently visited Niagara Falls or Casino Niagara or one of the many



excellent wineries in the region know first hand how popular they are with visitors – and their numbers are growing.

In 1996, there were 9.6 million visitors to the Niagara Region. A recent Conference Board of Canada/Canadian Tourism Research Institute study predicts that as many as 19.7 million tourists will visit the Niagara Region in 2002 – and these visitors are expected to add a total of \$2.2 billion to the economy.

More visitors means more jobs. By 2002 tourism-related employment in the Niagara Region is expected to represent 25 per cent of the local labour market – up from

15.8 per cent in 1996.

The investment market also reflects these job trends. In 1996, tourism-related investment and construction was \$204 million. Over the next 20 years, investment is expected to increase 10 times, to \$2.8 billion, resulting in the creation of 24,000 new jobs.

In fact, last year alone, Niagara issued an estimated \$160 million in building permits, up from \$75 million in 1996.

Recent major investments include the \$23.5 million Niagara Under Glass project in Lincoln, the \$6 million Niagara Gateway Welcome Centre in Grimsby, a new 27-hole, 300 acre Iron Bridge International Golf Club and a new \$8 million winery at the Peller Estates Winery.

The international appeal of Niagara has been greatly enhanced by the growth of its wine industry. Many local wineries operate their own restaurants, leading to the unique “Niagara cuisine”. Thanks to a growing schedule of special events, Niagara’s wine country is quickly becoming a year-round destination. During the summer months, visitors to the area are also taking the time to play at one the region’s 32 golf courses.

The gaming industry is another catalyst that has helped fuel the Niagara economy.

With more than 3,700 employees, Casino Niagara is one of the largest employers in the region. Last year, Casino Niagara helped contribute to the creation of 6,000 direct and indirect jobs in Ontario.

This year, construction is expected to start on a new \$500 million casino and hotel complex. The recent addition of 1,200 slot machines to the Fort Erie Race Track has also contributed to the industry by revitalizing a century-old institution and helped to create 246 full-time and 94 part-time jobs.

Additionally, proximity to major Canadian and U.S. markets and state-of-the-art technology is fuelling the growth of Niagara’s lucrative greenhouse industry which generates \$250 million in annual sales and employs more than 3,000 people. “The range of product is expanding from the traditional floral stock to include high-yield vegetable products such as tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers,” says Tony Thompson, a greenhouse industry consultant with the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation.

The future looks very bright indeed throughout Niagara. Opportunities abound.

Those wanting to invest in a highly dynamic and diverse economic region are encouraged to look closely at the Niagara Region.



Tourism growth in the Niagara Region has been so positive that recent studies indicate an increased investment that will top \$2.8 billion in the next 20 years.



Niagara Business Facts

- Niagara is home to more than 850 manufacturing firms with a strong location-export advantage.
- Recent studies estimate that, over the next two decades, tourism investment in Niagara could exceed \$2.8 billion and create 24,000 new jobs.
- Niagara is emerging as a top location of choice among high-net-worth individuals 45 years or older.
- A recent study commissioned by Human Resources Development Canada projects 26,000 new jobs will be created in the Niagara Region over the next five years.
- The economic impact of Casino Niagara includes millions of dollars in payroll and spin-off benefits to the business community.
- The region has more than 250 greenhouse operations, covering 1.5 million square metres under glass. Niagara greenhouse operations generate one quarter of Ontario’s total greenhouse production. In 1998-99, Niagara’s greenhouse industry generated more than \$250 million in sales and employed more than 3,000 people.

Putting a stamp on the future

Imagine receiving a birthday card. Now imagine receiving one personally designed by a friend or family member, designed with special thought and coloured with artistic flare. Think how that would make a good experience even better.

Jennifer Herzog knows this first-hand. Owner and operator of Distinctive Stamp Designs, she designs and manufactures decorative rubber stamps. Currently with 250 designs, and new ones coming out regularly, she makes stamps that feature Native American art, snowflake clusters, flowers, special sayings and more.

Herzog, 25, first became interested in decorative stamps when working in her mother's store, Scribes' Nook in Waterloo. The store sells stamps, fine paper and accessories to make cards. When she finished university, she felt there was significant opportunity in stamp-making to warrant starting her own business.

"Most of the manufacturers of rubber stamps are in the United States," said Herzog. "We knew there was a niche for Canadian-made stamps."

Herzog heard about the Young Entrepreneurs Program through a representative of the Royal Bank while taking an entrepreneurs training course in Waterloo. She had developed a business plan that, in fact, won a business plan competition, and her loan was approved.

"It's a great program to have," Herzog said. "If you're a young entrepreneur you don't have a lot of collateral and the banks look upon you as a risk. Young Entrepreneurs gives young people the capital they need to start a business."

Herzog invested the loan in machinery and built an office in back of Scribes' Nook. She designs the stamps with aid of a computer, clip art (non-copyright) and a sister who excels in fine art.

New designs take about one week to manufacture and often take into account

upcoming seasons and holidays. Stamps retail from \$4.50 to \$15.00.

Herzog plans to expand in the future and look for new clients when the time is right. "There is still so much to do at this one location and many more designs to develop," she said. "But I know the time will come when I will want to explore those untapped areas."

Herzog emphasized the importance of a solid business plan and said it helps a young entrepreneur to know their business inside out.

"Becoming a young entrepreneur was second nature to me because I grew up in an entrepreneurial family," she said. "It's a lot of work but I enjoy the fact that it's all up to me."

"When someone says they like my stamps or a customer comes in and asks me if I have any new ones, that's great," said Herzog. "It makes me feel good knowing that people enjoy them."

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Young entrepreneur helps companies navigate the world of e-business

his company will be able to sell many times over.

"I spend a fair bit of time on market research, collecting data and information on more futuristic technology," he said. "It's very important to keep up to date on where the market is going." Salamunovic

plans to open other businesses in the future and believes that eventually one will go public, or at the very least grow to national or international size.

Salamunovic gives seminars, including at the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation, as a key way to promote his business. He also

depends on referrals and positive word-of-mouth from clients.

Salamunovic recalls several high points in his businesses, but says a defining moment was bidding on the development of the Website for one of Canada's major law firms. "I was in a white t-shirt and a pair of shorts and made a presentation in competition with

several top notch companies. I gave my best pitch and got the contract. That was very satisfying," he said. "Probably the second high point was when I got my first cheque. I took a photocopy and framed it. It's still on my wall."

Salamunovic has the following advice for young entrepreneurs. "Three words. Go for it. You can overanalyze and overthink and scrutinize and be scared and all those things are normal. But once you take the leap you'll figure it out and make it work because you'll be running on pure adrenaline and wanting to make it happen. So just go for it!"

And the name Navasys? Salamunovic says it's loosely based on navigation systems and the idea that Navasys helps companies navigate this new world of e-business.

Salamunovic himself is sailing along just fine.

Visit the Website for Navasys, Inc. at www.navasys.com



Adrian Salamunovic uses speaking opportunities, like this seminar at the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation, as a way to promote his business.

Building a better future as a young entrepreneur

Robin Speke and her partner Thomas Klein had heard that the small town of Rockwood, north-east of Guelph, had a thriving creative community. So they drove to Rockwood, intending to visit some of the shops and artisans that populate the area. By chance, they passed a farmhouse advertised for rent, with a good-sized workshop out back.

Before you could say “contemporary furniture design,” Speke Klein was in business.

Specializing in high-end furniture made predominantly with North American hardwood, they design and create their own line of furniture as well as accept individual commissions.

Speke, 29, a native of Toronto, was living in England and working at an art gallery when she decided to take a two-year program at Parnham College, an academy tailored to furniture design and woodworking. There she met Klein and together they decided to return to Canada and set up a business designing and making furniture.

“We do very modern pieces that are clean-lined and very minimal,” says Speke. “We really try to set ourselves apart through our European design style.”

Speke says their shop is scaled for prototyping with the capability of producing a piece of furniture from start to finish. For pieces they want to produce in quantity Speke Klein can approach a manufacturer having already tested the design.

They cater to a high-end and very specific market, primarily individuals who are interested in art and design. Speke says they also knew that in order to access this market an effective marketing plan was vital.

“We mostly financed the business through our own savings and with help from our parents. We knew we needed extra funding to help in marketing, but it was very difficult to get a grant,” said Speke. “Then we heard about the Young Entrepreneurs Program and it really fit the bill in terms of giving us that extra help.”

Last February, they began to market their products after taking six months to prepare their business. The Young Entrepreneurs loan helped them finance large mailings and attend various trade shows. In May, Speke Klein is participating in the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York.



Thomas Klein (left) and his partner Robin Speke used their Young Entrepreneur's loan to finance the marketing of the furniture they design and build.

“We have been very encouraged by the response to our work, but we also know that since the market is so specific we need to broaden our base and find other centres to promote ourselves,” said Speke. “We’re hoping this trade show will help open up the market in the United States.”

Speke says they have prepared a business plan specific to expanding and exporting. While she foresees Speke Klein remaining a small business, she would ultimately like to sell their work worldwide.

“As we grow, it will ideally be on the design side. We want to do more research and prototype work,” said Speke. “Our goal is to be really innovative in our approach to furniture design.”

As a young entrepreneur who is living her dream, she has words of advice to others who are contemplating the entrepreneurial path. “Research your idea, write a business plan, stick to it and review it regularly,” says Speke. “Set goals and focus on those goals. It doesn’t have to mean taking over the world, but even if it is just completing five projects a year, it’s important to have something to strive for.”



Speke Klein designs modern furniture that is clean-lined and minimal, very European in style.

Minister Palladini gives commencement address to high tech graduates



In his address to DeVry Institute of Technology graduates, Minister of Economic Development and Trade Al Palladini congratulated them on pursuing careers in Ontario's booming technology sector.

Maintain your integrity. Follow your own path. Embrace change. Think outside the box. Make a difference. These were the five points of advice that Minister of Economic Development and Trade Al Palladini gave 150 graduates of DeVry Institute of Technology in the Greater Toronto Area.

Speaking at the DeVry/GTA convocation ceremony at the Ford Centre for Performing Arts in Toronto, Palladini congratulated the graduates for choosing to pursue careers in Ontario's booming technology industry. "Each of you is in a prime position to fulfil the promise of technology and win in a global economy," he said.

Palladini emphasized that the government is cutting taxes, removing barriers to growth and working hard to attract business and investment so that all graduates are able to find jobs. He also reinforced the government's commitment to innovation and entrepreneurship. "With Websites, video conferencing and e-commerce, the world is a pretty small place these days," he said. "It's important to look worldwide for opportunity and to believe in the strength of your own ideas."

DeVry also emphasizes this and keeps a close watch on contemporary developments in information technology and entrepreneurial business so it can adapt its programs and services accordingly. Peter Brown, President of DeVry in the Greater Toronto Area says that the synergy that ties information technology to the entrepreneurial spirit extends to the kind of learning developed in DeVry's classrooms and labs.

"Information technology itself and our teaching and learning process are essentially entrepreneurial and anticipate all the real world experiences of business," said Brown. "Career transition for our graduates into the new economy and new business is easy; they have already been there."

Christopher Bowen, a graduate of DeVry's Computer Information Systems program has certainly discovered this. As part of a senior project, he created an e-commerce solution for a local company. After experiencing the entrepreneurial aspect of his field, Bowen and some of his classmates have decided to start their own business and already have work lined up.

"We are doing a project with ClearNet including developing interactive Web

pages," said Bowen. "There is a lot of potential out there with e-commerce and e-solutions. We hope to access opportunities through our own business."

Bowen is part of a trend that now sees two out of every three jobs being created in the knowledge and technology-based industry.

Palladini said the Ontario government is focused on making sure the province can compete globally in this technological age. By training young people for highly-skilled jobs, connecting education to the workplace, investing in research and development and building a culture in innovation, all Ontarians will benefit through continued economic growth and the creation of new jobs.

Enrique de la Sierra, 22, was class valedictorian at the commencement ceremonies. He graduated as an engineering technologist and is looking forward to a career in biotechnology or robotics. He comments that technology has changed our lives such that it is almost as necessary today to have a computer as it is to have a car or a phone.

"As graduates we are entering a new world," he said. "It's the end of our studies, but it's the beginning of so much more."

Sierra plans to work and continue studying for the next five years, then hopes to reconnect with several of his classmates and open an electronics business, specializing in networking and engineering services. "My classmates are from South America, India, Central America and Europe," he said. "Maybe in the future, our business will cover the globe. I know it's a dream, but then again the airplane started with just a dream."

Palladini urged the graduates to always think one step ahead as they plan their careers: whether in one of the thousands of small businesses that typically create 80 per cent of Ontario's new jobs, whether in one of 1,500 multinational corporations that are currently investing and expanding in Ontario or whether they choose to be an entrepreneur and set up their own business.

For as he said to the graduates, "When you succeed, Ontario succeeds."



BUSINESS BRIEFS

Young entrepreneur gains success in Wasaga Beach

"My parents and my sister both have their own businesses. I grew up with it so owning my own business was not so much of a leap," says 20 year-old Vanessa Espadas. "I have no problem working for other people, but I also knew I didn't want to work so hard to make money for someone else. I'd rather work just as hard, or harder, for myself."

Espadas started New Age Electrolysis, a business specializing in permanent hair removal, in November 1998. She had been working as a cosmetologist at Shoppers Drug Mart, enjoyed the interaction with people and knew she wanted to continue in the beauty industry. She became interested in electrolysis and took the 600-hour diploma program offered through the Electrolysis College of Canada in Milton.

"It was always my goal when I took the course to set up my own shop," said Espadas. "The director of the college recommended the Young Entrepreneurs Program and I completed the business plan and got the loan."

She used the funds to purchase the latest equipment on the market including an electrolysis machine, sterilizer and adjustable bed.

Espadas operates her businesses within a salon setting in Wasaga Beach. She rents her own room and has access to laundry facilities, reception and phones. "Customers are already in the salon for beauty related reasons," she said. "My business has grown a lot through word of mouth."

Espadas advertises locally, through the *Locater* and some newspapers, as well as offering a referral program where the person who refers the client gets a free treatment. She will also include flyers that advertise her business in conjunction with promotional material her parents send out from their store.

Her advice to young entrepreneurs? "Stick to it and don't lose sight of your goal," she said. "If you need to hold down three jobs and have your own business all at the same time, know that sooner or later it will pay off."

Espadas says her high point came when she finally gave up her part-time job nine

months after she started her business. "I knew I wouldn't let that go until I could support myself through the business," she said. "It was great knowing that I finally had full control over my own time and my own money."

"If you need to hold down three jobs and have your own business all at the same time, know that sooner or later it will pay off."

Espadas is a member of the Canadian Organization of Professional Electrologists and the Society of Ontario Electrologists.

Ontario Summer Jobs 2000 will help thousands of students find summer jobs

Last month, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Dianne Cunningham announced the launch of the Ontario Summer Jobs 2000 program to help thousands of young people find work experience.

"Our government continues to do more to help young people find work in Ontario's booming economy," said Cunningham. "Our summer job strategy will help young people gain essential workplace experience and contacts to help build their careers."

Ontario Summer Jobs 2000 will help at least 57,000 young people find work. That is more than twice the number of young people who found work through student summer jobs programs in 1995.

"We have set progressively higher goals for our summer jobs strategy and have consistently met them," said Cunningham. "We match student experience to employer need as well as provide numerous other opportunities to help students build their future."

Ontario Summer Jobs runs from April to September and is a \$50.8 million investment by the Ontario government to help young people ages 15 and up find work. It offers the following programs:

Summer Jobs Service: This is a free job search and self-marketing service to help young people find and keep jobs. The service also offers a \$2 per hour wage support to employers as an incentive for businesses, farms and community organizations to hire young people for up to 16 weeks.

Student Venture: This program encourages young people to create their own summer jobs by starting and operating their own businesses.

Summer Experience Program: A summer experience is available for seven weeks with Ontario government ministries and agencies, as well as with community groups. This program is also linked with Ontario Rangers and jobs offered include tree planting, clearing portages and blazing trails, maintaining parks and camp buildings and helping in fish and wildlife projects.

Ontario Government Summer Student Hiring: Jobs for up to 16 weeks are available with Ontario government ministries and agencies.

Ontario/Quebec Summer Student Job Exchange Program: Summer jobs are available with Quebec government ministries and agencies for full-time Ontario university students.

"Since September 1995, 94,400 net new jobs have been created for young people in Ontario and, in January, the youth unemployment rate dropped to 11.7 per cent from 15.4 per cent in 1995," said Cunningham. "We're moving in the right direction. Ontario Summer Jobs 2000 will help even more of our young people find that all-important summer job."

For more information about the Ontario Summer Jobs 2000 programs call 1-888-JOB-GROW or 416-326-5656. Students are also invited to visit the Website at youthjobs.gov.on.ca

Government Information Centre means less red tape and easier access to government information

In March, Economic Development and Trade Minister Al Palladini joined local officials and residents at the official opening ceremonies of the Aurora Government Information Centre.

"A fundamental goal of our government has always been to remove red tape and make

government services more accessible and convenient to Ontarians," said Palladini. "This Centre is one of several across the province that will help area residents easily find government information and access to services."

The Aurora Government Information Centre has already helped thousands of local residents. Knowledgeable staff answer questions and provide referrals when required. Services offered include on-line access to government information, directories for all services available to seniors in Ontario including applications for Ontario Drugs Benefits, information for parents on child care and access to the Ontario school curriculum, and information on community services such as shelters and home care as well as sports and outdoor activities.

Additionally, entrepreneurs can find information on starting up their own business and can register an unincorporated business through a self-serve workstation.

Minister Palladini met with several young students on his arrival at the opening

ceremonies and talked with them about starting and operating their own business in the summer.

"Creating your own business and your own job can be exceptionally rewarding," Palladini said. He handed out pamphlets outlining the Ontario government's Student Venture Program. This program gives students a hand up in starting their own business through Student Venture loans of up to \$3,000.

The Government Information Centre project began with 12 pilot sites that were evaluated in the spring of 1998. There are now 57 centres operating province-wide. Each centre provides information to the public that crosses all Ontario government ministries as well as information about public organizations. Hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"People have been saying for a long time that government should be run more like a good business, putting the needs of the customer first," said Palladini. "Our Government Information Centres are just one of the many ways that our government is doing just that."

continued from page 3

Shooting for the top

the reputation of her studio and developing her portfolio will never stop. "It's a constant effort," she said. "If I'm shooting, they are long days. If I'm not shooting, I'm thinking about what I should be doing to promote the business further."

But the rewards are evident. As Bailey says, "Every day I do a shoot that I'm happy with, it's more than enough motivation to go on."

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Comments and proposed contributions are welcomed. Please write by mail or fax.



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