

Passport to Prosperity is an initiative to promote the benefits of school-work partnerships, recruit employers to partner with schools, and provide resources to facilitate these partnerships, for the benefit of employers and high school students.

Six Ways to Student Success

Businesses will soon have access to new, young employees with more industry experience, training and certification straight out of high school. This summer, the Ontario government announced the Six Ways to help students graduate, as part of its commitment to reach every student. In addition to the recently announced Student Success Teams, Lighthouse Projects, and Grade 8-9 Transition Programs, the government is offering three programs that expand students' school-work opportunities:

Expanded Co-op Credit - Students can now earn two compulsory high school credits towards their core 18 through hands-on work experience.

Specialist High Skills Major - This new program lets students "bundle" courses to prepare for specific academic or skilled careers.

Dual Credit Program - Students can earn credits and put them towards both their high school diploma and their postsecondary diploma, degree, or apprenticeship certification.

reach every student

In particular, these three ways create more opportunities for students to customize and explore their interests and skills through co-op and apprenticeship programs. For employers, this means students will be better equipped for the job market, with more of the valuable skills that employers need in their workplace.

September 2006 marked the launch of the Specialist High Skills Major pilot program in 27 school boards. The program will allow students to focus on the postsecondary destinations (work, apprenticeship, college, and university) that match their interests and skills, by earning high school credits in the workplace, skills training centres, and the classroom. The Specialist High Skills Major offers students bundles of courses that count for credit toward their high school diploma. Course content was developed jointly with industry.

This year, the Specialist High Skills Major is being piloted in five sectors: arts and culture, construction, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality, and primary industries (agriculture, forestry, landscaping and mining). Specialist High Skills Majors in more industries will be available next year.

Ontario is broadening the boundaries of traditional education and employers and students will reap the benefits. Businesses will now be able to hire young employees with more knowledge and skills learned on-site. Young employees will also have more of the right industry-recognized certifications straight out of high school. Through the co-op and apprenticeship programs, employers will be able to build strong relationships with students as potential employees who they know have a strong interest in their field.

To learn more about the Ontario government's new educational initiatives for high school students visit www.ontario.ca/6ways.



A co-op student helps her veterinary technician supervisor trim a patient's nails.

2006 Employer Champion Profile: Reid's Heritage Homes

Sector: **Construction**

Years of Involvement: **4**

Reid's Heritage Homes is a major home builder in Ontario and a visionary in recruiting skilled trades people. They are also the recipient of a 2006 *Passport to Prosperity* Employer Champion Award.

On average, Ontario's trades people are in their mid-fifties. As they retire, new, qualified replacements will be needed. To meet the increasing demand for skilled workerd, Reid's Heritage Homes highlights opportunities for students to participate in college programs and apprenticeships in the construction industry.

Reid's Heritage Homes offers high school students several programs including:

Build a Home Program/Cooperative Education – Students earn three credits per semester by framing a house from start to finish. Reid's provides the students with safety training, safety equipment and transportation to the job site.

Career Talks – Reid's representatives give in-class talks about the construction industry as a career option.

Worksite Visits – Students are provided tours of the worksite, from a safe distance, and hear career talks from the home builders.

The Way to Work Mentoring Conference – Representatives from Reid's provide advice to interested students at a conference for students planning to work directly after graduation.

Apprenticeships – Reid's connects students with opportunities for apprenticeships in the construction sub trades.



Jon Hamovitch (right) co-chair of the Provincial Partnership Council, congratulates Tim Morrison (centre) and Frank Mantler (left), both of Reid's Heritage Homes on their 2006 *Passport to Prosperity* Employer Champion Award.

Reid's Heritage Homes is also an industry partner in the new Specialist High Skills Major pilot program in Ontario.

Ministry of Natural Resources Invests in Students

Twenty-eight Grade 9 students were treated to a smorgasbord of career options at the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Peterborough facilities during the twelfth annual *Take Our Kids to Work* day.

MNR is one of hundreds of employers across Ontario that hosted thousands of students on Wednesday, November 1 for *Take Our Kids to Work* day. Those employers are key partners in the program which allows students to job-shadow a parent, relative or volunteer host and experience first-hand some of the career options that will be available to them.

MNR has been hosting students for several years and each year, organizers try to improve on the previous year's event. The result is a fast-paced and full agenda that encourages students to experience the many careers available to them at the ministry.

This year, students made maps of the physical features in MNR's courtyard to learn about cartography and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Students witnessed animal autopsies (necropsies), and learned about controlling and eradicating rabies in Ontario, monitoring wildlife species at risk, licensing, surface water monitoring, forensic DNA, robotics, and renewable energy options, as well as MNR's own youth programs.

Students completed hands-on projects throughout the day and heard about the experiences that shaped the presenters' careers. Students ended their visit by shadowing their parent or sponsor in his or her own section.



Grade nine students learn about Ontario's species at risk during the Ministry of Natural Resources *Take Our Kids to Work* day.

"We have so many career opportunities at MNR," said Karen Gowanlock, Acting Communications Officer for the Youth Programs Office. "It's exciting to think we may have opened a career door for a young person to a job they might not have known existed. We're very proud of the work we do and seeing the students' interest renews the energy we have for our work. Each staff sponsor accompanies a student during the day, and honestly, they get as much out of the program as the students."

For more information about starting or expanding your participation in the program, visit www.takeourkidstowork.ca. If you are interested in coordinating workplace visits or other school-work programs for high school students throughout the year, visit www.obep.on.ca.

Offering high school students work experience provides employers with an opportunity to gain and understand the different work habits and expectations among generations of employees. In this four-part series, **n-gen People Performance Inc.**, a performance consulting company, explores how employers can achieve greater organizational performance by improving processes and people management strategies across the generational divide. For more information, see www.ngenperformance.com.

Your Multigenerational Workforce: Part 4

How to Keep and Grow a Multigenerational Workforce

In the previous article, we discussed how best to recruit the four generations. In this final article, we provide a few considerations on how to best retain and develop Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Gen Xers and Gen Ys. Retention and development includes total rewards programs, learning and development, performance management and career pathing. Below we focus on recognition, both informal and formal. If you want to keep and grow your employee groups, you have to engage them.

Everyone wants to be recognized and feel valued. Your recognition program should recognize not only tenure, but also the demonstration of results and behaviours that align with your corporate values and goals. Traditionalists and Baby Boomers who primarily grew up in a tenure based recognition process should continue to have their efforts recognized. Gen Xers and Gen Ys, who are less likely to work at organizations for 10 to 20 years, can also be recognized for the benefits they contribute to your organization through recognizing results and the demonstration of your values. Perhaps the most important aspect is the type of recognition gift that you provide. Watches, letters from the president, plaques and memorabilia with your logo, motivates only a part of your workforce. The key is to offer a wide range of gifts from which anyone can choose. Recognition programs should include entertainment vouchers, gift certificates, including MP3 downloads and time-off from work.

Mentorship programs are a great mechanism to engage all four generations, however there is a word of caution. Any formal program should not be based on the model of 'I will pick my protégé and mould them to be just like me'. The younger generations won't respond well to that approach, and the experienced generations may become frustrated because their expectations of their participation won't be fulfilled. Mentorship programs should be an agreed upon arrangement between the mentee and the mentor. Each party should clearly outline the personal benefit of participating in the process. They should also have a clear structure and process around goals and meetings. For Traditionalists and Baby Boomers mentorship programs are a great way for them to leave their legacy and put their stamp on things. For Gen Xers, mentorship allows them to continue to develop skills, and for Gen Ys mentorship allows them to get that increased feedback that they are continuously seeking.

Retaining and engaging employees is a continuous process. Your organization needs to remain constantly aware of the attitudes, values and expectations of your employee groups. By understanding what motivates and engages the four generations, you will be better-equipped to design and develop programs that will target all employees.

Traditionalists

1922 - 1945

Age 62 - 85

Baby Boomers

1946 - 1964

Age 43 - 61

Gen Xers

1965 - 1980

Age 28 - 42

Gen Ys

1981 - 2000

Age 6 - 27

Share Your Success Stories

Are you an employer, educator or student who wants to share your story about a positive and successful school-work program? We want to hear about it! Send in your successful school-work stories to chrystal.boudreau@avantsc.ca to be considered for one of our upcoming Passport to Prosperity newsletters.

Art Students Sketch out their Futures

Budding artists in Huron and Perth counties meet their mentors.



Students learn life drawing from their mentor and award-winning illustrator, Ken Nutt.

Gallery Stratford noted that student attendance at their open studio for "life drawing" increased significantly in the spring as students worked to complete the portfolios they needed for postsecondary education in the visual arts. Widely considered an essential component of an artist's education, "life drawing" trains the simultaneous workings of the eyes, the brain, and the hand and improves the skills needed to represent the human form.

So, as art students were focusing on their postsecondary education, Gallery Stratford saw an opportunity to match students' enquiring minds with masters' insight and to let students draw their own conclusions about art and visual arts careers.

As a result, in March 2006, Gallery Stratford began rePresent, funded in part by the *Passport to Prosperity* initiative and the Foundation for Enriching Education Perth Huron. RePresent was a two-part initiative run by the gallery for students aged 17 to 19 considering postsecondary studies in fine art, graphic design, animation, illustration and new media.

In part one, Gallery Stratford facilitated a panel discussion open to all students with three working artists: Tony Urquhart (fine artist and retired university professor), Mark Harris (illustrator, and storyboard and layout artist) and Ken Nutt (fine artist, and Governor General's award-winning illustrator). These community mentors donated their time to answer students' questions about education, business, technologies and the changing work environment for visual artists. The panel gave real-life insight into securing work and gallery representation.

Part two of rePresent included a series of life drawing classes with Ken Nutt that enabled students to flesh out their portfolios.

A tremendous example of mentorship at work, rePresent allowed students to learn technique and receive guidance from accomplished, working artists while advancing their postsecondary education. Ken Nutt gave back to his community by sharing his expertise and passion for art and Gallery Stratford felt an immediate infusion of excitement and enthusiasm that only teenage students can bring.

For more information about creating a mentorship program for students interested in your field, contact your local Business Education Council or Local Training Board through the Ontario Business Education Partnership at 1-888-672-7996.

Join the Campaign!

For more information about *Passport to Prosperity*, please call 1-800-387-5514 or visit the website at www.edu.gov.on.ca/passport.

For information on providing a school-work opportunity to a high school student in your community, please contact the Ontario Business Education Partnership (OBEP) at 1-888-672-7996 or visit www.obep.on.ca. OBEP is a province-wide network of 26 business-education councils and local training boards facilitating partnerships with employers and schools in local communities.

The Provincial Partnership Council and the *Passport to Prosperity* campaign are supported by the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities. Partners include the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Human Resources Professionals' Association of Ontario, Junior Achievement, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Toronto Board of Trade, Landscape Ontario and TVOntario.



The 2006 *Passport to Prosperity* Employer Resource Forum, Toronto, Ontario.

Coming Events

Friday, February 16, 2007

Partners Breakfast

Business Education Council of Niagara
Sheraton Fallsview Hotel, Niagara Falls
www.becon.org/aboutus/breakfast.html

Thursday, April 26, 2007

Who's Going to Work for you in the Next 10 Years?
Passport to Prosperity Employer Resource Forum
Ontario Science Centre, Toronto
www.obep.on.ca