



Summer Company

2007 YEARBOOK

www.summercompany.ca

BE YOUR OWN BOSS



Have you got what it takes to run your own business?

Here's a chance to be your own boss this summer. If you're an Ontario resident 15 to 29 years old and returning to school in the fall, then Summer Company is for you.

It's an Ontario government program to help you start up and run your own business. For successful applicants, there's advice, guidance and financial support—not to mention building enterprising skills that will last a lifetime.

If you're interested:

- Think up a good idea for an independent business in your community
- Research and write a business plan. Your local Summer Company program provider can help you with this.
- Complete your application, including your business plan, on-line at www.ontario.ca/summercompany

For more information, or to find your nearest Summer Company program provider, call 1-800-387-5656 or visit www.summercompany.ca.

You could be your own boss this summer. But don't delay, because spaces are limited.



The Summer Company Experience

Ontario's economy is driven by entrepreneurs and small business. In fact, 99 per cent of all businesses in our province have fewer than 500 employees. Entrepreneurs are creative, take risks and generate new opportunities for Ontario domestically and abroad.

Since the Summer Company program began in 2001, high school, college and university students from all areas of the province have taken part. Operating a wide range of businesses reflecting a variety of interests and pursuits—from swimming camps and cafés to personal training and website development—participants have worked hard, taken advantage of unforeseen opportunities and overcome unexpected challenges.

The stories that follow represent just some of the many exciting ventures that young Ontarians launched last summer. Those profiled here—and all the other Summer Company participants—are to be congratulated for their effort and determination. Clearly, they have what it takes to become tomorrow's business leaders and contribute to Ontario's growth and prosperity.



Abeer Al-Azzawi
Queendom Hijabs

OTTAWA

Abeer encountered many inconveniences with her hijab and knew many Muslim women had similar problems. Being proactive, she decided to produce custom hijabs to meet different individual needs. Through her company, Queendom Hijabs, she offered a variety of funky and functional hijab designs, including an innovative athletic line.

Described as “extremely self-sufficient and a go-getter” by The Entrepreneurship Centre, her local program provider, Abeer applied her creativity and dedication in marketing her company. Thinking

‘outside the box’ enabled Abeer to alter her business strategy when she faced challenges getting her products into retail establishments. She switched her focus to e-commerce and started using the internet to attract customers in the international market. She even took the initiative of attending an import/export seminar provided by the Canada Border Services Agency.

There’s no stopping Abeer now — she plans to continue working on her growing business as she returns to school.



Jessica Boaro
Lights...Camera...ACT

POWASSAN

Jessica’s theatrical experience began at a very young age, and she wanted to provide an opportunity for youth in small towns to explore and share and their talents, as well as grow as individuals. Lights...Camera...ACT held one- and two-week theatrical sessions providing fun and educational performing arts enrichment programs in Northern Ontario. The unique combination of games and activities helped develop self-expression, boost confidence, and inspire imagination.

Over the summer, Jessica found out that things don’t always go as planned. Entrepreneurs go through ups and downs, and need to adapt to different situations. “Each camp I ran taught me something new about either the area or how I can change my program,” she explains.

Jessica had an amazing summer and, with parents asking if she will be returning, she hopes to continue to run Lights...Camera...ACT for years to come.

DESERONTO



Jason Bremner
JB's Wood Products

Jason had thought about turning his woodworking hobby into a business, but without Summer Company, he says, "I probably would have worked elsewhere and continued doing wood as a hobby." Jason jumped at the chance to be a part of Summer Company and took advantage of the mentoring and support offered. Not knowing how to write a business plan, Jason sought support from his local program provider, Enterprise Quinte, and launched JB's Wood Products.

Creating specialty wood products, such as tables, wine racks, cutting boards and bowls for sale at area markets in Belleville, Picton, Napanee and Desoronto, Jason

learned many new skills over the summer. His greatest lesson? That time management and business planning are critical to success. With one successful season completed, including requests for custom orders from prospective clients, Jason plans to continue to run his business in the future.

SUDBURY



Joel Clarke
Clarke Landscaping

Clarke Landscaping provided sod- and stone-laying services to the new housing sector of Sudbury. Joel's business focused on providing high-quality customer service at low prices.

Joel spotted an opportunity for his services when he learned, through conversations with owners of newly-built homes, that their backyards had come without sod. He sharpened his networking and marketing skills in order to reach his new-found customer base, which resulted in a doubling of his workload. His next great challenge? Improving his organizational and time-management skills so he could fulfill his orders.

Having surpassed his sales projections and met his personal goals this summer, Joel's advice for future entrepreneurs is to do your research and, "make sure there is a market for your product or service."



Jason Colbert
Powerchord Power Washing

TORONTO

Jason started off power washing driveways, patios, sidewalks and retaining walls for his family and neighbours. When he learned about Summer Company, he thought it would be a great opportunity to start his own power washing business. Through hard work and perseverance, Jason made well over his projected sales and learned a lot through his Summer Company experience.

Jason credits his mentors for providing good tips on sales and marketing, which helped the image of his company to a great extent. He adds, "I found a very specific

target market and offered a service that was rare, at a price that was better than any other company in Toronto could afford to offer. This was the basis of the business, and with the help of the mentors I was able to advertise and sell my service." Jason's final advice to other entrepreneurs is, "Be ready for lots of hard work and SELL yourself!"



Collin Collins
Collin Collins

BOLTON

When asked what service his business provided, Collin's reply was, "EVERYTHING!" As a purveyor of odd jobs, he was willing to do almost any home improvement task within his ability, from landscaping, painting, and interlocking brick to window washing.

Collin found networking to be vital to his business. He claimed that without it, his company would have failed, as nearly 90 per cent of his clients were made through word-of-mouth references. In addition, Collin recognized the importance

of business planning and writing a business plan, as it allowed him to map out his ideas and think about each aspect of the business before implementing it.

Working for himself was very enjoyable experience for Collin. He intends to run his odd job service next summer and can "definitely see entrepreneurship" in his future career path.

GRAND VALLEY



Rachel Cracknell
Rachel's Comfort Foods to Go

16-year-old Rachel enjoys cooking and hopes to become a chef one day. This summer, she got a chance to give it a try by serving up her own fast, healthy and affordable meals. Targeting people who don't have time to cook, the meals were sold ready-for-pickup through Rachel's Comfort Foods to Go.

Rachel's cooking was an instant hit and it wasn't long before Rachel's Comfort Foods had a very loyal following, ranging from seniors seeking home-made convenient foods to busy families and customers at a local farmers market.

Responding quickly to customers' demands meant

Rachel worked long and irregular hours, but also achieved her personal goal of cooking for others all summer long!

HAY



Joseph Daunt
Nick's Fresh Picked Produce

Nick's Fresh Picked Produce sold a variety of fresh produce, including fresh-picked sweet corn that Joseph planted and harvested himself. Joseph watched over the roadside stand and picked fresh produce throughout the day for travellers and cottagers on their journeys to Grand Bend.

Joseph became acutely aware of time management and prioritizing. "It is important to plan your day otherwise it gets away from you," he explains. "Picking corn in the morning while it is still cool will keep it fresh longer into the day and then you have a slack period in sales where you can do book-keeping or other small maintenance jobs before picking more corn."

Having completed one summer, Joseph plans to continue running his business in the fall when the produce he offers will change to autumn vegetables.



Ashley Dickson
Freedom Importing & Consulting

GRAFTON

Freedom Importing & Consulting imported oil paintings from student artists in Vietnam and sold them through eBay and on consignment at two stores in the Northumberland area.

Ashley learned that, as an entrepreneur, she had to remain focused and make difficult decisions when things became tough. At first, she tried selling her paintings at a store in Belleville and at markets and waterfront festivals. "When the store was not bringing in any money, I decided to stop coming in to watch the store and focus on my online

sales," she explained. "I realized that you need to prioritize and focus on the decisions you feel good about by going with your instincts."

The decision turned out to be the right choice, and Ashley's sales were well above projections. Over the summer Ashley exceeded her personal objectives as well, and she's happy to have created a business she can continue with in the future.



Kylah Dobson
The Rainbow Heritage Garden

COBDEN

Using exclusively organic horticultural methods, Kylah cultivated and sold heritage vegetables, raspberries, and edible flowers carefully selected for their flavour, appearance and adaptability to local climates. Not only was her produce unique, but colourful as well. "People were intrigued by my red carrots, blue potatoes and purple peppers," says Kylah. While the unique appearance of the produce was what drew customers at first, the high quality kept them returning to The Rainbow

Heritage Garden throughout the summer.

Kylah enjoyed the book-keeping aspect of her business and quickly realized the value of updating her records on a frequent basis. She also learned the value of business planning, which helped her identify what seeds and products would be necessary to ensure she had enough produce to bring to market.

GOWANSTOWN



Jessica Docker
Famous Ice Cream

Jessica's store, Famous Ice Cream, had seven employees and sold a variety of ice cream products including milkshakes, smoothies, sundaes and more. She also offered hot dogs, chips and pop.

Jessica recommends doing lots of research before starting up. "Business planning was helpful to organize my cash flow, allowing me to set a budget and monitor my spending," she explains. It also prepared her for unexpected expenses and other bumps that occurred during the summer. And, while owning her own business "is a lot of work," she notes that it's also "worth the time and energy."

Famous Ice Cream has exceeded her expectations, and Jessica is "extremely happy with the business and its outcome."

SMITHS FALLS



Maria Fournier
The Broken Lightbulb Theatre Troupe

In its first season, Maria Fournier's traveling theatre company, The Broken-Lightbulb Theatre Troupe, performed a comedic play based on four of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies. The play was well received in communities and venues across Eastern Ontario, and featured in various local newspapers.

Maria quickly learned that attracting audiences was a key factor in making her business a success, and like many entrepreneurs, she used trial and error to identify the best way of doing it. She says she was also "very fortunate to have had excellent coverage in the media. At the end of the summer, when I was putting flyers up for our last

show, everywhere I went people had heard of us." Having spent this summer "earning money working my dream job," Maria is excited about continuing her business next summer.



Richard Greaves
DO-IT-ALL Contracting

DO-IT-ALL-Contracting offered a variety of different services such as roofing, carpentry, landscaping, lawn care, lock stone installation, and minor residential construction.

As the summer progressed, Richard's leadership skills were put to the test when he encountered the problem most entrepreneurs dream of: an oversupply of work. Understanding that he couldn't do it all by himself, Richard hired good workers whom he respected and who respected him. He learned that a business owner who respects his employees will get the most out of them. "Make sure you have good

LIVELY

employees because no matter how much work you get, if you don't have the manpower, the job will not get done on time, which could lead to a bad reputation," he advises.

His first summer enterprise has encouraged Richard to consider entrepreneurship as a career option as he returns to his post-secondary studies.



Christopher Heron
Perfect Touch Painting

Perfect Touch Painting offered interior and exterior painting services to London and surrounding areas. Employing two other painters, Christopher and his team painted several homes and condominium complexes over the summer.

Christopher surpassed his sales expectations and credits his ability to get referrals and network as keys to his success. "I pride my business on great quality work," he explained. "Making a large network of business contacts [was] invaluable [to] the future of my business."

LONDON

Christopher learned about book-keeping and financial management, and acknowledges that he "gained a much better understanding of payroll." Christopher is eager to build on his entrepreneurial success this summer by identifying new enterprising opportunities in the future.

LUCAN



Brittney Jones
Lick It! Ice Cream & More

17-year-old Britney knew that ice cream would be popular in the summer months. Using her experience working in the food service industry, she started up Lick It! Ice Cream & More in her hometown. Her grand opening celebration drew local dignitaries and media.

Strong market research and business planning were important to Britney's success. She selected a prime location along Main Street where beachgoers and cottagers frequently passed, and offered a place for people to sit down and enjoy their ice cream - something her competitors were missing.

Mentoring and networking also provided Brittney with important support and the recognition that "there were others making mistakes

just like you" and that "they were there to help you out." Britney saw her venture as an opportunity to develop her entrepreneurship skills, which she plans on building next summer and throughout her post-secondary education.

SAULT STE. MARIE



Stephan Kinach
Crew Cuts

Crew Cuts is an environmentally friendly lawn care business that only uses non-motorized reel lawn mowers and electric grass trimmers. The goal of the company was to provide lawn care services in manner that would contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and also provide the company a competitive advantage.

Although Stephan followed his business plan, he faced many obstacles he could not control, such as hot dry weather all summer. He learned to adapt to situations and modify his business plan. "It made me realize that although you may hope for a certain outcome for your business, you may not achieve

it right away," he says. Stephan says he sees entrepreneurship as a possible career choice as he pursues his ambitions to become a dentist and run his own practice.



Andrew Lafreniere
Andrew's Yard Service

Andrew's Yard Service's primary functions were lawn-mowing and trimming, but Andrew also provided assistance with odd jobs around the yard such as brush trimming, leaf clean-up and planting flowers.

In addition to sharpening his landscaping skills, the experience of running a business also made Andrew's patience, flexibility and confidence grow as well. As a result, he's "more comfortable in public relations promoting my business as I feel more at ease in approaching people." Andrew's increased confidence allowed him

IROQUOIS

to network at every opportunity, such as a business luncheon and training events.

As Andrew returns to school, he is considering fulfilling his clients' requests to remove snow from their driveways over the winter and definitely sees entrepreneurship as a career option.



Natasha Lubimiv
Magical Occasions

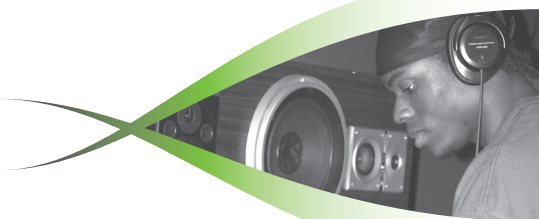
Natasha wanted to do something she loved as work, and Summer Company gave her the chance. Trained as a magician by her father when she was young, Natasha launched Magical Occasions to allow her to perform her own magic shows.

Natasha had doubts at first about being her own boss but later realized she enjoyed it. "I quickly stepped into the shoes of "BOSS" quite nicely and felt comfortable there." However, Natasha discovered the huge time commitment

PETAWAWA

required to run her own business, from book-keeping to practicing, and stresses the importance of time management. Natasha claims the experience has given her the confidence to do other things such as public speaking and theatre. She says, "if you have a great idea, run with it,...make it a business...anything is possible...there is potential everywhere, people just don't know about it yet."

BRAMPTON



Brian McIntosh
Tier 1 Entertainment

Brian's music production company, Tier 1 Entertainment, specialized in contemporary genres such as hip hop, R&B, pop and rap. Using computer-based software and a midi controller, Brian provided services such as recording, editing and mixing, and supplied instruments for his clients. The business also gave Brian the opportunity to travel to other cities and attend a music producer's event in New York City to network and promote his company.

Brian realized that, "due to the nature of this industry, I cannot expect to see great success overnight," but throughout his Summer Company experience, he was able to make many contacts and gain much-needed exposure. Brian also found the mentor

meetings were a great way to learn various business skills, such as sales and marketing techniques.

Brian continues to reinvest earnings into his company and carries on providing top-notch music services through Tier 1 Entertainment.

HUNTSVILLE



Kyle Nickason
Prime Painters

Prime Painters started mainly as an exterior painting service, but quickly expanded into interior painting as it gained the confidence of its customers. Kyle's high standards allowed the business to develop a reputation for quality and service. By the end of the summer, Prime Painters was capable of accomplishing any job, regardless of size or type.

Coming from an entrepreneurial family, Kyle was aware of the time commitment needed to make a small business a success. But he also learned the importance of time management and advertising in order to generate sales. Advertising to a wide demographic forced Kyle "to be creative in how to attract

potential customers and shed light on how effective particular forms of advertising are over others."

After one summer, Kyle says he is "confident that I have set a foundation for the next painting season which will enable Prime Painters to grow."



Cory Sage
Tropical Uther

NORTH BAY

Cory had a passion for fish and aquariums and had been thinking about starting a business in the field for six years. "After hearing about Summer Company, I was able to pursue my goal and gain some experience."

Several years of working in a pet store had shown Cory there was a need for aquarium and pond maintenance services. Cory capitalized on the power of networking by making contacts, compiling a list of clients and even securing some long-term contracts before starting his business.

Over the summer Cory's client base grew as he marketed his company beyond basic maintenance services. Because of his knowledge, he was able to provide advice and solutions to his clients, such as the treatment of ill fish, installation of aquariums, and a 'fish-sitting' service for fish owners on vacation.

Having successfully completed his first summer, Cory plans to continue to run his business after the summer.



Ryan Seeley
1000 Islands Student Painters

BROCKVILLE

1000 Islands Student Painters offered exterior/interior painting, driveway sealing and staining services. From the outset, Ryan found lots of demand and booked up his time quickly thanks to his low prices and high quality.

As the summer went on, Ryan's bookings continued to grow, boosted by positive word-of-mouth advertising. Maintaining his standard of customer satisfaction, however, was not always easy. On rare occasions when Ryan had a difficult client, he turned to his

mentor for help finding suitable solutions. Ryan learned "valuable ways in which to ease the problem and come to a solution that was positive" for all parties involved.

Thanks to this successful first summer, Ryan definitely sees entrepreneurship as a career path for him and intends to start an agriculture-based business upon completion of his post-secondary studies.

BARRIE



Lara Small
Barrie Triathlon Training Club

Lara got to share her favourite pastime with others this summer when she helped prepare athletes of all ages for the Barrie Triathlon. Her extensive background in health and physical education gave her a wealth of knowledge and experience to pass on. Through the Barrie Triathlon Training Club, she offered a 12-week training program that included swimming, biking and running workouts.

Lara understood that networking and “making connections in the community” were important for increasing the profile of her business. In her words, “a lot of the work was marketing the business.”

By summer’s end, Lara had accomplished her dual goal of increasing enthusiasm for triathlons

in the Barrie area and having the majority of the entrants from her club complete it.

OTTAWA



Paula Valencia
Valencia Jewelry

Valencia Jewelry offered artisanal jewelry, including a variety of unique hand-made necklaces, bracelets, earrings and pendants. Paula designed and crafted the jewelry with natural materials such as seeds, stones and coconut-shells imported from South America.

What was the secret of Paula’s success? For one thing, remembering that it’s “very important to keep yourself motivated to do everything in your business the best you can.” This positive outlook and motivation allowed Paula to fulfill her goals and build a successful and expanding business. With two stores already distributing Valencia Jewelry products, Paula plans to continue

expanding her business with new retail distributors and a website for online sales.



Andrew Vaughan
Vaughan Photo & Design

CORBEIL

Andrew loved photography and wanted to combine this passion with a chance to improve his design skills. Doing this as a business had been Andrew's dream for almost two years, and thanks to Summer Company, he was able to make it a reality by starting Vaughan Photo & Design.

Andrew's business offered clients both photography and graphic design services, resulting in a unique end product. Throughout the summer, Andrew booked several weddings and other events such as birthdays and family reunions. He built up his portfolio of work and

secured several freelance design contracts. His outcomes for the summer were all achieved, and while he notes that "there were ups and downs," for him, "that's what made the job fun."

Andrew hopes the practical photography and design experience and the business ownership experience he gained through Summer Company will give him an edge in the future as he continues to pursue design.



Melissa Wartman
Pages From The Past

BATH

Pages From The Past created custom scrapbooks and homemade cards for customers of all ages. Melissa recognized that many people wanted personal scrapbooks but didn't have the time, expertise or motivation to complete them.

Melissa didn't think that running her own business would take as much time as it did, and she learned a lot about time management. "I thought that I could just sit at home and scrapbook all day; I never thought about going out and getting customers, buying supplies,

delivering books, handling and managing the money I made," she explains.

Her program provider, Enterprise Centre – Kingston Economic Development Corporation, noted Melissa's "versatility and ability to think entrepreneurial at a young age" when she had to take the difficult step of changing her business plan halfway through the summer to better fit market demand.

The hard work paid off when many of Melissa's customers expressed interest in having her create scrapbooks for friends and family as gifts for the holiday season.