

CAREER

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Work Education Programs Open New Doors of Opportunity

by Jeannie Armstrong

SP Creative Features Editor Saskatoon StarPhoenix

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Students currently in high school and elementary grades are looking forward to a future of unprecedented career opportunities.

Many Canadian industries, including transportation, aviation, communications, agriculture, mining, energy, tourism and manufacturing are experiencing labour shortages due to market expansion and increased activity.

Exacerbating the labour crunch is the fact that many professionals and tradespeople from the baby boomer generation will be retiring over the next decade. Critical shortages are predicted in many occupations, ranging from electricians and carpenters, to transport operators and train engineers, to nurses and medical laboratory technologists.

With so many options to choose from, many young people are finding it difficult to narrow down their choices and decide on a career path.

Work education programs offered by the Saskatoon Public School Division are an effective and practical way for students to explore different workplaces and develop a better understanding about the career development process.

Anna Fornal, Work Education Coordinator with the Saskatoon Public School Division, says that between 500 to 700 students are expected to enroll in work education programs this coming school year.

"Work education programs are offered at all eight of our collegiates," says Fornal. "It's a credit course which follows curriculum established by Saskatchewan Education."

Work education programs differ from one high school to another. "At our regular stream collegiates, we offer Work Education 10, 20 and 30 programs. Through Grades 10, 11 and 12, the courses progress through awareness, exploration and experience. We also offer work education programs to some of our

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CONNECTIONS



special needs students. Those credits are called Work Experience 18, 28 and 38," says Fornal.

"We also have work education being combined with other subject areas. At Nutana, we combine work education with construction or fine arts in an internship configuration. In some schools, like Aden Bowman, we have work education combined with sciences and technology," says Fornal.

Through the Integrated Work Education program at Aden Bowman, senior science students have an opportunity to gain practical skills and experience in the area of biology. The students work in lab settings alongside scientists conducting research in genetics and biotechnology.

Marian Graham Collegiate has established an integrated work education program called the Outdoor School project. For an entire semester, students spend the majority of their classroom time in an "outdoor school" setting, exploring the province's forests, prairie and urban areas. Many learning activities are focused on environmental science and conservation. During the semester, students obtain credit for English, Biology, Geography, Physical Education and Work Education 20.

For students who want to directly enter the workforce from high school, the City Park Alternative Program delivers extensive hands-on work experience in the community. Employability is a major focus of the program.

The programs offered at all eight collegiates are coordinated through the Career Work Education Offices of the Saskatoon Public School Division, based at City Park Collegiate. "We deal primarily with teachers, and help to arrange for work placements at approximately 1,500 business partners in the community. These opportunities range from entry level skills to extremely skilled positions," says Fornal.

Work education programs were originally established to assist special needs students in moving forward into the workplace after leaving school.

"Today, work education programs are for every student," says Fornal. "We feel that work education offers every student opportunities in the community. We have opportunities at the University of Saskatchewan É at convenience stores É at trucking firms É in accounting firms. Wherever the world of work is, we want our students to have opportunities," says Fornal.

Boundaries that can limit students' workplace opportunities include safety and confidentiality issues, says Fornal. "They can't go into operating rooms, for example, or ride along with paramedics. Students aren't allowed to work without supervision, and placements are usually matched to individual students' skills and abilities.

Classroom studies help students to analyze their skills and abilities, to prepare a resume and to present themselves professionally during a job interview.

"Our students are well prepared, and many of them find a form of employment after they complete the program. Of course, we want our students to consider all career paths, not just the one to the world of work. We want them to be wide open to all opportunities, including those offered through attending university, community college or Kelsey," says Fornal.

While the work education program offers students an opportunity to gain generic skills and workplace experience, the Youth Internship Program is designed to provide specific training to students who have demonstrated a definite interest in a particular industry.

Available only to Grade 12 students, the Youth Internship Program blends in-school education with work-site

experience. Students are matched with industry partners who provide 200 hours of on-the-job training. The students must complete in-class studies specifically related to the training needs of their industry partner.

"The Internship Program is for students who are already focused on a particular career in the trades or technologies," says Bill Pennefather, Youth Internship Coordinator. "They have done the course work that is necessary, and are heading along the lines of an apprentice. Then we match them to an employment situation. There's a lot of effort spent in finding the right placement for students. We often try to open doors that aren't normally open to our work ed students."

Unlike a work education student who is still exploring career options, youth interns have already made their career decisions. "They're not searching; they know where they're going," says Pennefather.

All students who complete the Youth Internship program graduate with certificates in WHIMS and many receive training in First Aid/CPR, says Pennefather. "This is something that many employers are looking for."

Often, students who complete the Youth Internship program are able to directly enter a tradeschool or work force. Employers are asked to provide the same training an entry-level employee would receive. In apprenticeship situations where the student works with a journeyman, they can obtain advanced standing.

During the past school year, 70 students completed the Youth Internship program in Saskatoon.

Both Fornal and Pennefather anticipate the Work Education and Youth Internship programs will continue to attract growing numbers of students and industry partners. "Students are really enjoying these courses and the parents are really supporting it. Our community also

gives us tremendous support through our many partners," says Fornal.

"Employers in many industry sectors in our area are already experiencing labour shortages. There is going to be a tremendous lack of qualified people in the trades over the next 10 years. For example, the average construction worker is over 45 years of age," says Pennefather. "We're trying to show students that there is a whole wide range of opportunities out there. Kids need to keep their options open and realize that tremendous opportunities exist right here in Saskatchewan."

"Every student deserves to have an opportunity to explore who they are and what they would like to be in our future. We consider our community to be a learning environment. We learn in the community, from all kinds of people, with teacher guidance and curriculum standards. This course combines learning in the community and learning in the classroom," says Fornal.

President's Message

by Anna Fornal

Welcome back to a new school year. I hope that you had a restful summer and are ready for another busy school year. I want to invite all of you to our fall conference, 2001: A Career Work Odyssey, and remind you to register soon! Registration information is included on page four of this edition of Career Connections. I would also like to encourage you to register for the one-day training in the Be Real Game. Please see your June edition of Career Connections for registration information, or call me and I can provide you with details of this registration information. Another conference well worth attending is the Career Education Conference in Vancouver, B. C. on November



23 and 24. This conference will feature training for the newly released Get Real Game for grade eleven and twelve students--something you may find useful for those new Career and Work

Exploration classes. I hope to see many of you at the spa.

Cheers,

Anna

Letters from students The Play Real Game is Played in Wilkie

submitted by Hazel Lorenz

Dear Mr. Perry,

I am a grade 4 student. I played the Play Real Game in Wilkie Saskatchewan with 29 other student. What I liked about the game was when we picked vehicles. One thing I would change is. All the talking Something I found easy was. Glueing my house on. Something I found difficult was. Nothing. What I learned is. how to be an adult.

Sincerely NZ

Dear Mr. Perry,

I am a grade three student. I played the Play Real Game in Wilkie, Saskatchewan with 29 other students. Something that I liked about the game was that you could color your neighborhood. Somethin I would change is that every person would get two jobs. Something I found easy was coloring the houses on the paper. Something I found was hard. I did not find anything hard. Something I learned how it is to be adult.

Dear Mr. Perry

I am a grade 4 student. I played the Play Real Game in Wilkie, Saskatchewan with 29 other students. What I liked about the game was everything we did. One thing I would change is pick your own job.

Something I found easy was to pick your pet. Something I found difficult was to decid things in your group. What I learned is being an adult it is pretty difficult.

SCWEA EXECUTIVE

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2001: A Career Work Odyssey



SCWEA Conference

October 4 & 5 • Temple Gardens Mineral Spa
24 Fairford Street East, Moose Jaw S6H 0C7 Telephone: 306-694-5055

Thursday, October 4

10:00 - 3:00 Be Real Game Pre-Conference Session
6:30 Registration
7:00 - 10:00 Exhibits
7:00 - 9:00 Moose Jaw Tunnel Tours (pre-registration required)
9:00 Social

Friday, October 5

8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast
9:00 - 9:15 Opening Remarks
9:15 - 10:30 Keynote Speaker
Phil Jarvis of the National Life/Work Centre
10:30-10:45 Break
10:45 - 11:45 Small Session #1 (Concurrent Sessions)
Multiple Intelligences and the Portfolio Process Destination 2020
11:45 - 1:15 Lunch/AGM
1:15-1:30 Break
1:30 - 2:25 Small Session #2
Ready for Work
Career and Work Exploration
Internet Sites
2:30 - 3:30 Small Session #3
Ready for Work (Continued)
Bridges.com Career Explorer

Registration Form

Registration fee: \$100.00

This fee includes Conference, SCWEA Membership, Thursday Social, Friday Breakfast and Friday Luncheon.

Don't delay! When making hotel reservations, please mention that you are with SCWEA. Conference rates are \$78.00-\$82.00.

For more information contact Carrie Kiefer at (306) 693-4631.

Make cheque payable to SCWEA Conference 2001.

Mail cheque and registration form to: Wayne Sawka, 31 Park Cr., Emerald Park, SK S4L 1B2

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Name of Organization/School: _____

Position: _____

I am/am not participating in the tunnel tours. Please circle one. Tunnel tour fees are \$20.00. Add cost to registration fees.

Visit Our Website!

<http://www.scwea.com>