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www.edu.gov.on.ca
One-Stop – NO Wrong Door Initiative

www.ips.iwin.ca
Inventor of Programs and Services

www.211Ontario.ca
Online resource to help you find services in Ontario

www.algonquincollege.com
Applied Arts & Technology

www.sl.on.ca
A passion for lifelong learning

Eastern Ontario Development Program Announces Funding

The Eastern Ontario Development Program (EODP) is a \$10 million Government of Canada initiative that promotes socio-economic development in rural Eastern Ontario, encourages a competitive and diversified regional economy, and contributes to the successful development of business and job opportunities and sustainable self-reliant communities.

Several different program funds are available and each has its own purpose, rules, target projects, eligibility criteria and amount of available funding. These include the Community Capacity Building Fund, the Local Initiatives Program, the Business Planning Initiative, the Skills Development Fund, the Youth Internship Initiative, and the Access to Capital Program.

Renfrew County

Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation recently announced that they are now accepting proposals for the Eastern Ontario Development Program (EODP).

A total of \$576,000 has been allocated to Renfrew County for a range of different grant opportunities. In all cases, the proposals must be submitted to the Community Futures office by **September 15, 2006** (please check with local office) and the projects completed and related funds expended by **March 1, 2007**.

For more information about this funding opportunity, contact the Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation at 613-735-3951 or visit their website at www.rccfdc.org

Lanark County

In Lanark County, Valley Heartland Community Futures Development Corporation has been allocated close to \$575,000 from the EODP. John Doherty, the organization's executive director was quoted in Business Today - August 2006: "This funding is important since it will allow Rural Eastern Ontario communities to continue aggressively pursuing economic opportunities so they can take charge of their own economic future."

Valley Heartland is currently accepting applications for all of the programs listed above. Please keep in mind that each program is time-sensitive and has an application deadline. Because of the high demand that is expected for all programs, you are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

For more information about this funding opportunity, contact Valley Heartland Community Futures Development Corporation at 613-283-7002 or visit their website at www.valleycfdc.com

New Action Centre Helps Former MBI Workers

When Smurfit MBI closed its doors for the last time in June of this year, help came to the 139 laid off workers in the form of a new Employee Action Centre.

The Centre is funded by the federal government, by the provincial Ministry of



Former MBI employees volunteer their time to help others explore career options.

Training, Colleges, and Universities, and by the company itself. The Action Centre provides information and resources about other job opportunities, vocational retraining and educational options, resume and job search information, and life planning and needs assessments. Employees can also access information about other community services or organizations that may be helpful in managing the transition and the stresses of the plant closing. As well, employees have computer and internet access, and photocopying and faxing equipment to use.

A volunteer committee of eight MBI employees chaired by David Buske and a hired co-ordinator, Bonnie Schryer, operate the Action Centre for the rest of the laid off workers and their families. The Centre is intended to help those affected by the layoffs to find alternative employment, or, in some cases, more schooling, apprenticeships or retirement.

Another function of the Centre is to provide support and networking opportunities to the workers and their families, many of who have been employed at Smurfit MBI for many years. Smurfit MBI was a corrugated container manufacturing plant that had been in production in Pembroke since 1954. The company has had many owners over the years. Sometimes, whole families and many generations were employed with the company. The rate of pay was high for the area and many of the employees came directly from school to be trained on-site. As a result, there are a number of highly skilled, motivated, experienced employees who are now available for work.

The Action Centre is located at the Knights of Columbus Hall at 170 Ellis Avenue in Pembroke and is open from 9am - 4pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays. For more information, call 613-732-9981.

Labour Mobility: Getting Ready for Short Handed Economy

The Globe and Mail ran a story in their newspaper, describing the plight of 300 laid off mill workers in Stephenville, Newfoundland. Part of that story also explained how Alberta, due to the oil boom, is desperate for skilled machine operators, millwrights, and other skilled labourers.

The federal and provincial governments decided to turn the Stephenville problem into an opportunity. **Labour Mobility** – which describes migration of workers from one area to another, was to bring workers from the East to fill the jobs in the West.

The short-term plan in Stephenville was to organize temporary jobs in the oil fields for the laid-off workers, send them there for a couple of months at a time, then bring them back home to spend their downtime and their money with their families in Newfoundland.

The downsides for Newfoundlanders who move to Alberta are many:

1. Employment conditions
2. Lifestyle in the West
3. Expensive real estate
4. Disruption of families

At the other end, employers in the West are suspicious about the temporary arrangements set up by Easterners to maintain their lifestyles back home. They are only obligated to work for the required 17 weeks before they can ask to be laid-off, apply for Employment Insurance, and move back home.

The city of Fort St. John, BC figures it needs to hire at least 3,000 people to keep the oil, gas, agriculture and forestry industries in the area running strong. Recruiting drives are being organized in Newfoundland and other parts of the Maritimes. Other jobs, such as restaurant and bar servers, hotel workers and unskilled employees are also in demand, but these jobs cannot pay enough for migrants to move from other locations.

The Labour Market of 2006 is certainly telling us a chilling story:

- Governments will soon have to rewrite the rule book for immigration, retirement, and finding a way to connect the aboriginal unemployed with the Canadian economy
- 'Experience required' was once the mantra for job ads, but employees are turning that around with demands for training – a key recruitment strategy for worker-starved businesses
- Not only is Alberta feeling the crunch. Rural Eastern Ontario – Renfrew and Lanark Counties in particular, are also recognizing that skilled-trades workers are becoming scarce. It appears that in both rural areas Carpenters and Millwrights are in demand.

Get ready for the short-handed economy!

YouthWorks = Success!

One of the trends identified by the 2005 Trends, Opportunities, and Priorities Report, was the continued struggle by many of the young people in rural communities to find meaningful employment. The youth in rural Eastern Ontario need a boost to become productive community members through provision of community-based programs.

In an effort to supply solutions to this ongoing dilemma, St. Lawrence College has spearheaded a program called YouthWorks.

The YouthWorks program, run out of the Smiths Falls Campus of St. Lawrence College this summer, is an adaptation of last year's YouthLinks program. YouthWorks is aimed at those 16 to 30 years old, out of school, out of work, and not on Employment Insurance – a segment of our rural population that is steadily increasing in numbers and challenges. It focuses on providing key work and survival skills while daring the students to realize their own potential.

One of the key differentiators of YouthWorks, is that the students are paid an actual wage while attending the course. This not only helps with short-term personal finances, but perhaps more importantly teaches them responsibility and accountability. As in any job, lateness and absenteeism are not tolerated, and the students are docked pay or are asked to leave the program when they do not conform to the rules of working.

Throughout the 12 week course, the students are introduced to several resources to help them with personal pressures: anger management, suicide intervention, coping, and communicating. As well, they are given the opportunity to obtain certification in WHMIS, First Aid, CPR and Smart Serve. All add great value to the individual, and the individual's resume.

Local employers and trades people were invited to speak to the students, giving them an opportunity to ask questions on the highs and lows of their careers, gaining valuable practical insight into the job market. This also promoted networking among the students and potential employers – sparking relationships that may one day open doors for both employer and employee.

Positive reinforcement combined with a stringent interview process created the teamwork environment, laying the groundwork for success of the program. Out of 80 applicants, 50 were interviewed, but only 20 were selected based on their openness and willingness to change their current lifestyles. This was the first time that 100% of the participants were successful in completing the course.

The final end result is to get these youth up, out the door and back to work or school, which has already been demonstrated. Before the course of 2006 had ended, two participants were hired for seasonal work, another has relocated to start at a facility in her chosen career as a personal support worker, and many others have gone on to further their education through alternate schooling, upgrading & college courses.

Arnprior Pfizer Plant - Close by 2008

Pfizer Inc. is planning on closing its manufacturing operations in Arnprior by the end of 2008. The plant employs about 195 people and produces several leading brands of pharmaceutical products including Viagra, Reactine, and Visine.

The plant has been in production in Arnprior since the 1950s, but recent changes in corporate direction have seen the company close or divest more than 30 plants worldwide. An excess of overall global production and changing manufacturing needs are cited as the primary reasons for the planned closure. The company is hoping to sell the plant to another pharmaceutical company as a viable working concern, but if that is not possible, the plant will shut down.

The loss of so many high-paying manufacturing jobs would have a huge economic impact on the community although local officials are optimistic a buyer will be found. Pfizer Inc. is the third U.S. Corporation to leave the Arnprior area in the last few years. Both of the other closed plants were eventually sold to other organizations.

Service Canada: Labour Market Bulletin; First Quarter 2006

An overview of the Kingston/Pembroke Area, including Arnprior, Brockville, Carleton Place, Gananoque, Kingston, Pembroke, Perth, Prescott, Renfrew and Smiths Falls.

Highlights:

- Bell Canada laid off 256 people when Kingston call centre closed
- NuComm in Brockville announced 200 call centre positions
- Procter and Gamble in Brockville announced 80 new jobs
- Hart, a new retail outlet in Arnprior, hired 40 people
- Forty-five people were laid off from Hershey in Smiths Falls

This information was obtained from;

<http://www1.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/on/offices/0601lmb/kingston.shtml>

Lanark and Renfrew Counties Labour Market Working Group

Lanark County

Linda Pond – Coordinator
25 William St. West, Smiths Falls, ON K7A 1N2
Tel.: 613-283-8477 – Fax: 613-283-5820
Email: lpond@sl.on.ca

Renfrew County

Pat Wolfe – Coordinator
315 Pembroke St. East, Pembroke, ON K8A 3K2
Tel.: 613-735-4700 – Fax: 613-735-4739
Email: wolfep@algonquincollege.com

<http://www.algonquincollege.com/RenfrewLanarkWorkforce/index.htm>