

# RIDING THE WAVE

Joint College Academic Upgrading, Job Connect  
Apprenticeship Training Event  
June 4, 5 & 6  
Durham College



Training Event Report

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of the Riding the Wave joint training event for college Job Connect, Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship and Employment Assistance Services programs was due to the hard work, creativity and commitment of many individuals and groups. The joint Conference Committee would like to acknowledge the leadership provided by the following:

Dan Goldring	Executive Director	Job Connect College Sector JCCS
Louise Turcotte	Chair	Heads of Apprenticeship Training HAT
Lynne Wallace	Executive Director	College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading CSC

We would like to thank Durham College and particularly Jeanette Barrett for hosting this event. The welcoming environment started with the sign at the entrance. The helpfulness of all the staff we encountered throughout the event set the tone and promoted a positive atmosphere. We would particularly like to thank the following: Sara Hawkins the photographer who so ably recorded this historic event, Catherine Fitzgerald and Nefretiri Deonarain the student assistants who herded us all to each venue and made sure everything ran smoothly and above all Barb Knox , Jeanette's assistant, who anticipated and addressed every possible complication before it even happened! Durham's To Do list was completed to a level of excellence which made the organization of the conference appear effortless. No wonder Jeanette abandoned high heels for running shoes!!

Marla White, Administrative Assistant for the CSC, once again displayed her exceptional organizational skills. Registrations were processed, documents produced and payments processed with her usual attention to detail.

The CSC Executive, Odette Regimbal, Jeanette Barrett, Leolyn Hendricks, Janet Gambrell, Andrea Leis, Sandi Hennessey, Deb Grier and Barb Glass cheerfully volunteered to produce name tags, organize workshops and write thank you notes. Thank you to Barb for so ably completing the task of Master of Ceremonies.

Thanks also to Donna Hall, Mike Bauer, Janet Ashford and Kim Lutes-McKay from Job Connect who provided advice and support from the inception of this initiative to its successful completion.

A special thanks to the Conestoga *team* who so ably and unselfishly shared their strategies and templates for developing individual college editions of Employment Ontario. A special thanks to Dieter Klaus for gathering and organizing the materials for web posting.

We would also like to thank all the workshop presenters for volunteering to share their expertise. The evaluations clearly indicate that both your level of knowledge and willingness to share were recognized and appreciated. Thanks also to the many people who volunteered to facilitate the workshops making sure introductions were made, timelines were kept and evaluations collected.

Thank you to Minister Bentley, Assistant Deputy Minister Kevin French and to the four Regional Directors, Robert Dupuis, Peter Armstrong, Sherree Mahood and Barb Simmons, for taking the time to provide updates on Ministry directions. For many participants this Ministry involvement was the highlight of the training event.

Thanks also to Linda Franklin, CEO of Colleges Ontario, for her inspirational message and to Leah Myers, President of Durham College, for personally greeting and congratulating the participants.

The organization and execution of this training event is a model for how Employment Ontario programs can work together for the benefit of everyone. Thanks to Dan, Lynne and Louise for ensuring the excellent participation from all programs. A special thanks to Dan for ensuring such a high level of Ministry participation and to Louise for helping to assemble the conference packages. Thanks to Lynne taking on the organization of this training event with her usual attention to detail and for writing the final report.

Thanks to Tracy Hine at the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD) for her assistance in ensuring that everything is posted on the web.

Finally, congratulations to everyone who attended this training event. All organizers can do is create the opportunity for learning and sharing. After that, it is up to the delegates to make it successful through their participation – and you definitely did just that!

Riding the Wave was exhilarating, stimulating and fun. Just what a day in the surf is supposed to be!!

## **INTRODUCTION**

This training event grew out of the joint college provincial working group established by Heads of Apprenticeship (HAT), College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC) and Job Connect College Sector (JCCS). The primary purpose of this committee is to provide support to colleges as Ontario moves forward with the implementation of the objectives of Employment Ontario.

The committee was directed by their constituents to accomplish two objectives in 2006-2007. The first was to produce posters and brochures in both French and English promoting College Upgrading, Job Connect and Apprenticeship. The second was to organize a joint training event. Both tasks were accomplished in record time and with a high degree of excellence. The collegiality and cooperation which everyone demonstrated has resulted in improved networking and sharing provincially, regionally and most important internally.

The organizing committee chose as their theme Riding the Wave because it seemed the perfect metaphor for the current educational environment in Ontario. There is growing awareness in the college sector of the importance of non postsecondary programming to achieving the goals of a well trained workforce able to adapt to change. There is also increased focus from government on these programs. Programs can either be “swamped” by the increasing demands and attention, or they can learn to “Ride the Wave” to reach their full potential.

## **THE CONFERENCE**

Riding the Wave was designed to assist program managers in the four program areas most directly involved in achieving the goals of Employment Ontario: College Upgrading, Job Connect, Pre/Apprenticeship and Employment Assistance Services. There were opportunities to

- A. Hear directly from decision makers from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
- B. Attend information sessions to learn more about Upgrading, Job Connect and Apprenticeship
- C. Participate in workshops presenting innovative practices and future directions

## CONFERENCE RESULTS

### PARTICIPATION

A total of 130 people attended the conference. All 24 colleges were represented.

**College Upgrading:** 61

**Job Connect:** 38

**Apprenticeship:** 21

**EAS:** 5

**Other:** Institutional Research - 2

Ministry Delegates – One from the Colleges Branch and one from the former Skills Investment Branch

Regional Network - 1

*The complete list of participants including their email addresses is available on the web site.*

### OVERALL CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

Participants were asked to rate specific elements of the conference as well as the overall conference itself by using a four point scale. The possible choices were;

**1 = Agree Strongly, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, and 4 = Disagree Strongly**

For purposes of reporting satisfaction, 1 and 2 together are considered satisfactory/successful while 3 and 4 together are considered unsatisfactory/unsuccessful

To provide balanced feedback, the evaluation form asked participants what they like best and what they liked least about the conference. In addition, space was provided for “other comments”.

Of the 65 participants who completed the Overall Conference Evaluation form an impressive 59 or 91% provided written comments.





## Networking

*Comments indicated that networking is a primary reason why people attend training events, and they intend to maintain these contacts once the event is over.*

Wonderful networking opportunity

An opportunity to reconnect with JC colleagues and establish new LBS contacts

Deepened contacts with those I knew only slightly

Great job and I look forward to the future emails.

Useful contacts and info on referral possibilities

The networking was tremendous - helped to feel “belonged” and to understand best practices.

I would have liked to see more organized activities to encourage networking.

I am definitely looking forward to working in my community with AU and

Apprenticeship and educating other college personnel in various programs.

Timing was excellent! Both sessions and time of the year for this conference

## Direction

**I gained important information about new directions and developments in the field.**

	Upgrading	Job Connect	EAS	Apprentice	Other
<b>1</b>	<b>18 ( 58%)</b>	<b>10 (63%)</b>	<b>6 (60%)</b>	<b>1 ( 20%)</b>	<b>4 (100%)</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>13 ( 42%)</b>	<b>5 ( 31%)</b>	<b>4 (40%)</b>	<b>4 (80%)</b>	
<b>3</b>		<b>1 ( 6%)</b>			
<b>4</b>					

**Overall Summary**

**98% Satisfactory/Successful**

**2% Unsatisfactory/Unsuccessful**

## **Direction**

*The conference organizers were particularly interested in the responses to this question because this was a primary focus of the conference – preparing programs to effectively adjust to the changing Ontario educational environment. Clearly the participants are more informed and appreciated the high degree of Ministry and Colleges Ontario participation.*

Enjoyed hearing from all the opening speakers who seem to have a vision that change is needed over time.

Very helpful to have Regional Directors there.

Interesting to get government input above LBS level

Presence of the Minister was very valuable.



## Accommodation

*Comments clearly support hosting such training events at a college location, and it is clear that Durham College was an outstanding venue.*

Outstanding food – comfortable rooms

Beautiful campus

Excellent meals and accommodations

Residence great.

Excellent!!

Great food every day – lots of choices

Dinner at Windreach Farm especially good.

Meals were excellent and accommodations were good.

Site, accommodation and meals were great.

Continue – affordable, right context, get to see other colleges

Excellent lunches – Thanks

Excellent site. Accommodation was great – quick check in, clean, spacious rooms. Meals were fabulous – lots of variety

*The only negative observations centered around the fact that presentations and workshops were not centrally located. However in true college spirit the positive side of this was also identified.*

To hold the conference in **one** area of the college would be preferred.

Classrooms too widely dispersed. Try to keep location in one area. We had great guides though!

Long walks are good for us even if we hate it at the time.

## Outcomes

Overall the training event met my needs and/or expectations

	Upgrading	Job Connect	EAS	Apprentice	Other
<b>1</b>	<b>19 ( 61%)</b>	<b>12 ( 75%)</b>	<b>6 (60%)</b>	<b>4 ( 80%)</b>	<b>4 (100%)</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>12 ( 39%)</b>	<b>4 (25%)</b>	<b>4 (40%)</b>	<b>1 (20%)</b>	
<b>3</b>					
<b>4</b>					

**Overall Summary**

**100% Satisfactory/Successful**

**--- Unsatisfactory/Unsuccessful**

## Outcomes

*The overall comments leave no doubt that the participants recognized that this is the beginning of a new phase in the delivery of programming and that this conference definitely will help them to meet the challenges this involves.*

Wonderful beginning to a new era in combined PD and networking

Definitely exceeded expectations

Very good first attempt at organizing a conference of this size!

Excellent conference

Very valuable to have 3 sectors together.

Very worthwhile!

Wonderful job. Thanks

Excellent and diverse areas to learn new things and enhance my existing skill base.

It **more** than met my expectations. It was flawless.

For a first attempt, this event was exceptionally well organized. Great job!

Excellent – very smooth. Big thank you to Lynne and Jeanette

Definitely, I have come away with a great understanding of AU/AP/JC and how they are all connected.

I was hoping to hear more about how Job Connect is going to be working to assist dropouts

Let's do it again in 2 years

Received a lot of good materials

## What did you like best about the training event?

*The diversity of the responses to this question really indicates there was something for everyone at this conference. Participants identified the significant level of Ministry participation as a plus as well as the choice of workshops. Networking both cross college and within college staff was also highlighted. The conference organizers are particularly pleased with the evidence that participants appreciated the detailed planning that went in to achieving the goals of the conference, and that they achieved an excellent “activity flow”.*

## Ministry and Colleges Ontario (ACAATO) Involvement

Hearing from Minister Bentley, ADM Kevin French and Regional Directors x 5

Separate time with our regional director was great. X 4

As a first time joint event, I thought it was excellent to have so many high level speakers to bring their own messages, but also to see our commitment first hand

The variety of workshops; the high level of knowledge/ decision makers as key note speakers e.g, Kevin French, Linda Franklin

MTCU messaging from many levels.

Presence of Minister and Regional Directors – good to hear from all in plenary. (very different styles!!!) and then to have break out groups by region.

Having the Minister and ADM hopefully highlights commitment to improving EO.  
Hearing about new policies/changes from the upper management perspective.  
Presentations from different Regional managers – interesting to receive info on 4 different areas (similarities and differences)  
High level politicians and public servants speak to us  
Having direct contact with MTCU staff and hearing about where they are in the process  
I liked hearing from “our leaders” and you certainly had all of them here. Minister Bentley seemed to know exactly what we do and how valuable it is for MTCU; Linda Franklin gave some insights into what the Colleges plans are and let’s hope that plans include us in a BIG way; meeting our regional rep was such a valuable experience, I don’t know how I’ll be able to relate all that happened here to my colleagues.  
Linda Franklin presentation – very energizing (X 4)  
The message that we must work together; that the many MTCU government people were there to get the message  
Opportunity to hear from the Ministry and feel supported by them

### **Networking**

Having time to speak to our LBS staff and how we can work together  
Networking (X 7)  
Networking with Job Connect, Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship  
The ability to liaise with other important areas.  
Networking with other colleges  
Networking was very positive. There were lots of opportunities to network e.g. dinner, Bar B Q.  
I found it a great networking opportunity with my own college colleagues that I don’t get to spend time with. Great discussions were generated as a result of the topics of the workshops.  
Getting to know college colleagues from other departments.  
Sharing ideas  
Great idea to include a network of contacts/listserve  
Chance to meet colleagues in different colleges and in different branches of Employment Ontario  
This is my first conference of this nature, so I really appreciated meeting colleagues from other colleges.  
The ability to interact with leaders in other colleges across the three programs.  
Networking – obtained most valuable info from networking rather than sessions  
Networking with people from other colleges and all four areas  
As a small JC office, it brought home importance of dialogue with college. Tend to be too busy to make time for that.

### **Information Sessions/Cross Program Updates**

Tri sector – great initiative. Truly groundbreaking!  
4 Groups all in one room. (X3)  
There was a lot of information that I did not know before I came. I especially liked the information sessions and the workshops.

In addition to getting up to speed with what other programs are doing, I was also able to discern new developments that are occurring at other colleges in their AU programs. Chance to understand how the 3 – JC, AU and AP –integrate to provide service/support.

Learning about LBS and Apprenticeship

Worthwhile PD and would be interested in following up some of the topics. Hopefully next year program changes will be implemented and sessions would be based around these changes.

I really enjoyed learning all about Job Connect and Apprenticeship issues as well as meeting others from Academic Upgrading. For someone new to AU this was a fantastic and informative event which cleared up some questions and opened my eyes to the big picture.

“Big Picture” session helped to put things in context.

The cross functional education and overviews of other groups. Understanding the issues of EO.

Lynne/Dan/Louise updates

### **Workshops**

Variety of workshops that met my needs and understanding the vision of Employment Ontario

I was pleasantly surprised by the quality and the outcomes of the workshops.

Workshops where there was the opportunity to work in smaller groups

Excellent speakers/workshops (X3)

All of the info given in the workshops

The best practices from the other areas left me energized and anxious to implement.

The LMI workshop is hugely relevant to my role at the college, and I will definitely use the information presented.

LMI presentation was fantastic!

Anne Perkins gave an excellent presentation – nice Power Point – engaging, informative, funny delivery!

Workshop given by Anne Perkins – it was hilarious but very informative.

Anne Perkins presentation/workshop

I enjoyed the workshops. In particular the LMI workshop was fantastic and extremely informative.

Conestoga Experience

Conestoga presentation was fabulous – we need to hear more about best practices (X2)

Problem solving – great session and very valuable for our clients.

Integration and Resource Centre workshops

I enjoyed the workshops on ACE curriculum and Models of Innovative Program

Integration Practices

### **Conference Design and Organization**

Balance of fun and information

Pacing was very good. Not too rushed

The wide range and quality of speakers (X3)

Very well organized

This was a “real” joint conference.

The sessions and workshops were excellent!

Great job for the first event.

It was extremely well organized and managed very effectively resulting in excellent speakers, workshops etc

Time was not wasted. Learned a lot of valuable information that has practical applications to my job.

The relevance and manner in which the information was presented was great.

I found the entire conference to be very worthwhile.

The workshops were excellent, and the speakers were as well. I’m happy to have attended..

Integration of programs and people

Very useful information

Informal best practices

Workshops and Employment Ontario info

Getting all 4 areas together

The opportunity to learn, and I look forward to getting back to the college to implement new lessons learned

Opportunity to learn about new programs

How important it is for all of us (3 sectors) to work together and coordinate our services

Have to look within our college and make sure it works

### **Conference Venues**

The special dinners the 2<sup>nd</sup> evening – too bad it was so cold but the food was excellent, the music was excellent, supporting a non-profit agency. Great socializing happened.

Location

Accommodation and food good.

Food was excellent

### **Closing Speaker**

Great presentation. Loved the last performer , Paul Huschilt . X 4

Paul Huschilt was fantastic!!! X3

## **What did you like least about the training event?**

*The organizing committee is very pleased that there are very few areas of dissatisfaction with Riding the Wave. Many of the comments in this section are suggestions for improvement rather than criticisms of what was done. As is always the case many of the criticisms from one person were seen as positives by others. The suggestions which were provided will certainly be taken into consideration when planning the next joint training event.*

There was no least. Everything was beautifully organized; no detail was overlooked. I enjoyed the lovely campus, the fabulous meals, every speaker and every workshop.

Nothing! It was a wonderful conference. I gained a broader perspective of issues and college and Ministry directions.

## **Length of the Event**

3 days – let's think how we can do this in 2 days. Start at 10 a.m. and end the second day at 4 p.m. (This is the only thing I didn't like, although, I live locally and travel would not be a factor. The start-late, 3 day option, probably allowed greater flexibility for those traveling from a distance.)

## **Venue**

Being cold (at the Bar B Q) – couldn't be helped x 8

I enjoyed everything about this training event. However if I had to pick something I liked least, it would be Windreach Farm dinner. This is only because of the uncooperative weather; the food was amazing. Nevertheless, I could have stayed back at residence and missed the Farm.

Cafeteria for the welcome and Chris Bentley. It was too noisy/busy as staff were also setting up for lunch

The location of training rooms – very confusing.

Travelling to and from workshops x 11 (No big deal/ out of your control)

Next time include a map (X3) ( include a map for parking)

The lack of nutritional snacks during breaks in place of or to go along with cookies.

## **Networking**

Would have liked a little more networking time but it was very well organized

In a future event, some of the activities should provide an opportunity for the delegates to interact.

Although I appreciate the time dedicated to each workshop or session, more opportunity to converse with other areas for how to implement strategies

I would appreciate more time to discuss strategies by region

## **Guest Speakers**

Most sessions were not topic areas that would allow the opportunity to brainstorm. Be more interactive. Was mostly information sharing on topic areas.

The information from the Regional Directors was interesting, but I felt it wasn't that necessary to know as much detail. I think you could have left out the Plenary with the Regional Directors – go directly to regional meetings with Directors.

Plenary – with Regional Directors – would have preferred more time with “my district” as opposed to having demographics about other areas.

Facilitated regional discussions – this was an excellent idea but the Regional Director didn't seem to be prepared. His session didn't have much substance.

## **Conference organization**

Slow start

Skip the video Wed a.m. Schedule needed to be tighter

The client testimonial was unnecessary and too long. Snapshots of client successes would be more fitting.

Enjoyed the learner DVD at the end.

I would have liked a little more on Academic Upgrading. I didn't get a sense of the direction the government is taking e.g. funding etc

Relatively few opportunities to discuss AU specific concerns (curriculum) in a workshop context.

Would appreciate more interactive group sessions – gather wisdom from colleagues

I still would like an annual event for AU for practitioners and managers to share best practices and ideas. Two events would be great.

Would have liked to attend other working sessions

A great deal of information

Apprenticeship connection still weak

Paul Huschilt's performance has its value, but I don't think it should have been assigned a whole hour. His performance should have been the last on the list before lunch.

## **Workshops**

Only 2 timeslots for workshops. We could have had a 3<sup>rd</sup> slot on Tuesday morning instead of plenary session. Maybe information about the 4 regions could have been displayed on poster.

My choice of the CSC report on Strategies and Best practices workshop. I would have been just as happy to have got this information from the CSC website.

Workshops/information sessions were too short resulting in rushed presentations – on the other hand how much can one assimilate in one day!!

Not enough workshops ( only 2 breakout sessions over 3 days!!!!) To discuss and present best practices. Need to do more sharing and less lecturing.

Apprenticeship session - I would have liked to learn more about coordination between AP and JC.

Apprenticeship session was informative but would have appreciated local contacts.

How best to engage App. Offices, HOT,HAT, Trade Unions, Employers in the EO link.

Workshops needed to be more “hands on” or more of a workshop than lecture

## **Other comments**

*Many of the comments received in this section have been integrated into the Liked Best and Liked Least section of this report as appropriate. What remains are some very concrete suggestions for future directions*

## **General Comments**

Thanks for all your hard work in the planning of this conference

Thank you! I hope we continue to work more together and gather for these information exchanges.

Well done! A very worthwhile expenditure of 3 days.

Conference should be a yearly event

Hope this will be considered a yearly event for AU, JC, AP and EAS.

Can't wait for next one! I like the idea of regional conference that would include managers and frontline to share ideas and best practices.

Thank you organizers for pulling everything together so well.

Congrats to Committee for an excellent job. We appreciate all that you have done.

A great event. Thanks for organizing it.

Great job. Congrats to the organizing committee. Let's keep it going.!

Need to have more conferences like this.

Great job with getting the government representatives

A wonderful initiative – we need to build on this and continue with tri-sector conferences. If each sector wants their conference – that could be the second half day.

Thanks All!!

Thank you for including EAS in this conference!!!!

Enjoyed it all!! Thank you so much!!

Excellent Conference!!!

Great planning and organization. Really appreciate all the time and effort to put this together!

Thanks. I think the location is fairly central – great choice.

Overall excellent conference. Thank you to the organizers.

Wonderful job by conference organizers.

Well organized

Thanks very much! Great job. Well organized!!

Good job by organizing committee. Way to go !!!

Very happy to see the Minister, ADM and Regional Directors and Colleges Ontario took our conference seriously and recognized the importance and relevance of Colleges in

Employment Ontario – we need to keep lobbying and being in their faces!!!

Great initiative. Opportunities to network. Excellent location.

Very well organized. I am quite astonished at how extremely organized the entire event has been. This includes all the well prepared signs, announcements, presenters and breaks!

Enormous amount of work that went into this is most appreciated. Well done and thank you!! The organizers did a fantastic job in organizing this conference. Well done! I am looking forward to next year.

Event was highly organized

An EXCELLENT job of organizing this Conference! I've worked on some in the past so I know how much work is involved – THANK YOU SO MUCH! As always College folks are fun, informative and great to work with!

You folks did an amazing job. Congratulations and I look forward to the next event!

Excellent conference! Historical event. Well organized – great organizing team – THANKS!

Great work Dan, Lynne and Louise

Very well organized – very positive comments

Well planned conference – Thank you very much

Organization was great – very smooth

### Suggestions

1. Let's do it again next year. Raise a challenge to quantify how far we have come.
2. I would like to see us set out some measurable outcomes for success i.e. OBS/ESL/EAS/AS/SB activity and funding within the college system. Should we be tracking by region as well.
3. Would suggest for the next time A) Continue to have Minister, ADM., Regional Directors part of conference B) Allow time for each area, JC, AU, App to break into workshops specific to their area, C) Follow by joint workshops to continue to help us learn and increase our knowledge in each of our areas D) have each region to attend a workshop to help strategically plan how to improve their working relationships.
4. Would like to see more How To's on integrating these areas. **Please note that the final report on Models of Program Integration is now posted on this website under Projects and Reports. It includes a college by college description of on-going and planned program integration activities.**
5. Need to bring more apprenticeship folks to the conference.
6. I have heard a number of people comment that the conference should have been limited to 1 ½ days – I'm glad it was 2 ½; that gave us more networking opportunities and greater flexibility for workshops – Thanx  
  
Too long – 1 ½ days is plenty. Perhaps arrive evening if more convenient but no programming, one full day, evening meal and socializing, ½ day wrap up
7. Evening at farm – a noble effort – but it would have been more relaxed if we had just had dinner in the business cafeteria again.- more informal – able to leave when you want. There would have been a better turn out which is what it is all about.

Wind Reach farm was a great location and food was excellent. The weather was unpredictable. The good thing about the weather was that we all had something to joke and laugh about. It will make for a “common memory” of the conference. I can hear us now “Remember the joint conference of 2007 remember how cold it was. Boy it was so cold that .....

8. Plan for more time to plan next steps and recommendations.
9. Help us get the information corrected on the EO website.
10. **Please note that the following requests have now been addressed on this website**  
Please post or send a list of the following:
  - 1 Conference attendees – phone#s and addresses
  - 2 PPT presentations
  - 3 Resource Web sitesInclude presentation notes, list of delegates (Please note that this is now complete )  
Please provide a full list of event participants  
Please provide a website with all workshops and presentations, PP notes Thanks
11. Clarify theme or name of the conference up front.No idea why the event was called Riding the Wave. Didn't get the connection. **Introduction to this report clarifies the conference theme and title.**