

## Project Report

Though the formal activities of the *Taking Action!* project are coming to conclusion, the collaboration efforts at colleges among staff in Employment Ontario sponsored programs and services continues! With a clear focus on improving student and client outcomes, college staff continues to step up efforts to share information, resources, ideas and tools.

### **So how did *Taking Action!* Assist These Efforts?**

- ✓ More than 500 college staff from Job Connect, Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship and Employment Assistance Services, as well as allied service areas, participated in 21 college based events designed to promote discussion, sharing and action items.
- ✓ A customized college newsletter was distributed to staff at each of the 21 colleges which held events

- ✓ Four regional events held in November 2009 with 140 participants. Obtained input from frontline staff and program managers to develop the referral protocol, self assessment checklist, and web survey
- ✓ Developed both a referral protocol and a self assessment checklist and distributed them in English and French to all 24 colleges
- ✓ Conducted a web survey and distributed results to 24 colleges, in French and English, with the help of clients at two EO service providers
- ✓ Distributed three bulletins in French and English to all 24 colleges
- ✓ The leadership of Lynne Wallace, Dan Goldring and John Sillberg, and the financial support of the Employment Ontario Network Development Fund made this project possible

## EOIS? CaMS? - Get Ready!

Laurie LeBlanc, Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Training Division, MTCU, recently provided this update in a letter to service providers:

“The ministry has been developing a new Employment Ontario Case Management System (CaMS) to support the administration and delivery of Employment Ontario programs and services. The first release of CaMS will support the delivery of the new employment services model, as well as ministry delivered programs such as Second Career, Job Creation Partnership and Self Employment Benefit. The Case Management System is scheduled to go “live” to service providers in August 2010.”

The CaMS online orientation course is now available! To access it, go to the EOPG website (eopg.ca), click “New Postings”, then click the link next to “March 19, 2010”. Once you are at the CaMS online orientation page, be sure to bookmark it in your browser!

The intent of EOIS is to provide one integrated system for Employment Ontario. EOIS is made up of a number of components that will work together. The Ministry will be reviewing additional Employment Ontario programs for future EOIS development. The current Apprenticeship Application will, at some point, connect with the other EOIS components; but this is not yet in the scope of planned resources. Check the EOPG website regularly for updates on EOIS.

## Conestoga College’s Pathways to Apprenticeship Chart - Check It Out!

Have you ever tried to explain the pathways to apprenticeship to an interested client or prospective student? Conestoga’s EO staff worked together to develop a helpful tool for anyone interested in an apprenticeship. This interactive chart is available on Conestoga’s website and depicts the various pathways to apprenticeship at Conestoga.

To access the chart, go to <http://www.conestogac.on.ca/fulltime/ta/appposterinteractive.pdf> or simply click [here](#). Note that you may click on any box in the chart for more information. Neat idea, Conestoga!

## Communication - What are the best choices?

Regular and ongoing communication has been a constant request of frontline staff and a constant theme of our work together. Many college leads reported that simple internal email distribution lists have significantly improved the communication process within their organizations. These comments were reflected in the feedback from many of the college events.

Other colleges are using additional tools to increase awareness and provide regular updates. Some colleges, like Seneca, are exploring ways to use existing platforms like Blackboard as a tool for resource sharing, information updates, news and events. Others, such as Niagara, are using an internal blog to foster communication among departments and staff.

### Here are some simple tools:

- Regularly scheduled in-person meetings - weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly - whatever suits the situation and what you are trying to accomplish
- Informal, unscheduled in-person meetings
- Email distribution lists to convey updates, events, new programs and initiatives, and to request assistance, ideas or resource sharing
- Electronic platforms - Blackboard, WebCT or other learning management systems to share information and resources
- Blogs - to share information and resources, and allow readers to provide direct feedback

## ACE Distance Increasingly Popular with Apprenticeship Students

- √ The CSC began to collect data in February 2010 to identify the profile of students who have chosen to further their education through ACE Distance. Analysis of the data indicates that:
- 55.7% are between the ages of 25 and 44
  - 48.1% are employed
  - 40.8% have completed their OSSD
  - an additional 19.6 % indicated they have a college or university education

- √ The survey results indicate that this client group has already started to enroll in significant numbers as shown below:
- 7.6% identified that they are participating to qualify to register as an apprentice or participate in a Pre Apprentice program
  - 7.2% are participating in ACE Distance to refresh their skills before attending in-school training
  - 1.3% are upgrading their skills before writing the C of Q exam

ACE Distance is ideal for those seeking an apprenticeship or for apprentices who want to maximize their in-school and C of Q success.

### ACE Notes:

- √ In order to qualify for admission to ACE Distance programming, students must first complete the 20 hour **Learn to Learn** module on-line. Registrations are accepted daily for the first three weeks of each month. Students should email Marla White-Ranger at [marlawhite75@gmail.com](mailto:marlawhite75@gmail.com) to enrol in this course
- √ Core, Apprenticeship and Technology Math as well as Physics are of particular interest for those seeking a career as a journey person.
- √ ACE Distance enrollments are monthly through the Distance Education department at each college. For more information about ACE Distance, go to [www.acedistancedelivery.ca](http://www.acedistancedelivery.ca)

## Spotlight on Apprenticeship by John Sillberg - Fleming College and Chair, Heads of Apprenticeship

There is a significant opportunity for the three component parts of Employment Ontario to work together within the system

Ontario's Community Colleges are an integral partner in the province's apprenticeship system. Each of the 24 Colleges provides in-school training in at least one trade. Most are involved with numerous trades. This represents a fairly large volume of business. In 2009, MTCU registered over 28,000 apprentices. Most apprenticeships take between three and four years to complete. There are over 100,000 apprentices in the system and many will have to undergo between 480 and 840 hours of in-school training.

Since approximately 80% of the in-school training is done by the community colleges, it is easy to see that this represents a substantial influx of students. There is significant opportunity for the three component parts of Employment Ontario to work together within this system.

Job Connect can play a significant role in connecting potential apprentices with qualified employers. They are crucial to the success of many CODA (Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship) programs. These are programs where graduates receive a College Diploma and credit for their apprenticeship – usually all of the schooling and most of the hours (through placements).

Academic Upgrading can provide significant support to those who wish to enter into the trades but lack the required academic credential. Also, some pilots have been set up with Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading to provide remediation in Mathematics and Communications while the apprentices are in school.

### College of Trades:

One of the significant changes that will impact the Apprenticeship system is the establishment of the *College of Trades*. The College will be the body that will oversee the apprenticeship system in this province. It will be at arm's length from MTCU and make binding decisions on compulsory certification and journey-person to apprentice ratios.

The process is underway right now to select the Appointments Council (eight members and a chair appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor). This is the de facto first Board of Governors for the College of Trades. They will be making a series of appointments for both the Board, for divisional and trade boards and for the roster of Adjudicators. The Board will consist of four members (two employers and two workers) from each of the four skilled trades sectors – construction, industrial, motive power and service. It would also contain an ex-officio CEO and four public members (one from the college system). All members on the Board will serve three year terms. The Board will establish four divisional boards – one for each skilled trade area. The divisional boards will consist of five members (a Board of Governors representative from that sector, two employer representatives and two worker representatives).

Each sector will be advised by trade boards, which will represent specific trades or groups of trades. At present, the intent is to have four members on each trade board (two workers, two employers). These trade boards will make recommendations with respect to issues such as ratios and compulsory certification.

Review Panels will be established to deal with the recommendations. Each Review Panel will consist of three members chosen from the roster of Adjudicators – one chosen by the Board of Governors and two chosen by the Divisional Board involved. The decisions made by a Review Panel are binding and not subject to appeal.

All persons who hold a certificate of qualification (journeypersons) or who employ journeypersons or sponsor apprentices will be deemed members of the College and will have to pay yearly dues and abide by the regulations as prescribed by the College.

## Referral Process

College frontline staff, faculty and managers are recognized for their commitment to clients and students in Employment Ontario sponsored programs and services. It is this service commitment that has prompted staff and managers to identify the need for formal referral processes among not only EO programs but also other key college contact points such as Info Centres and Student Services, and as appropriate, community service providers.

A formal referral process allows for consistently high customer service, better information for prospective clients and students and better opportunities for retention.

**Most college staff relies on “informal” processes** - perhaps a colleague or well known contact - to provide assistance, but this situation is very ad hoc, can break down easily and does not provide for consistency or staff changes.

### How to Get Started:

1. **Get all users together** - that was the consensus of the frontline staff and the colleges which developed their referral process. Include other key areas such as the **Info Centre, Registrar’s Office, depending on the situation at your college.**
2. **Develop the process**, the tools and resources as a group.

More than 140 college frontline staff, faculty and managers provided input and ideas into the development of the information below. Additionally, three colleges - Conestoga, Sheridan and Northern - provided feedback, insights and suggestions as a result of the referral protocols they piloted and introduced. The results of this work are summarized in the table below:

<b>Who will refer?</b>	* All staff in EO programs, other support areas	
<b>What does staff need to know?</b>	* Rationale for referrals * Basic referral protocols * Customer service standard	* College knowledge * Follow up requirements
<b>Tools needed?</b>	* Common referral form * College information * Employment Ontario program-specific information	* Contact information * Referral form * Tracking system/method

The referral protocol is intended to be a guide or template that can be used and adapted by all colleges. It includes steps to be taken, considerations, and tools that colleges can use to make this their own. It also meshes with the introduction of the EOIS CaMS (Case Management System) described on page one of this bulletin. The complete referral guide has been sent to each college lead.

## Study Skills and C of Q Preparation Materials

The CSC, as a result of their partnership with the Millwright Regional Council of Ontario and George Brown College, has a number of resources which might be of interest to Apprenticeship programs and students. We have developed templates for Levels 1, 2 and 3 Mathematics, Study Skills and a C of Q Preparation Guide.

The content is specific to Millwrights, but the templates are an excellent starting point for developing materials applicable to other trades.

For more information contact Lynne Wallace at [l.wallace@xplornet.com](mailto:l.wallace@xplornet.com)

## Meetings and Events

There are a number of upcoming events which will provide opportunities to discuss the success of our clients and students, and our ongoing efforts to partner and collaborate. Whether or not you attend one of these sessions, encourage your college's representatives/attendees to share information about the proceedings and discussions.

✓ **May 6:** The College Sector Employment Services committee will be meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup> following the provincial Employment Ontario managers meeting on May 5<sup>th</sup> in Niagara Falls. Contact the CSES representative at your college for more details.

The meetings above follow the annual **Opportunities Conference** being held in Niagara Falls this year. For more details about this conference, check [www.opportunitiesconference.ca](http://www.opportunitiesconference.ca)

✓ **May 17:** The Heads of Apprenticeship (HAT) will hold its annual general meeting in Waterloo on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

✓ **May 31 to June 2: "Hit and Myth"** -The College Sector Committee for Academic Upgrading (CSC) is hosting its annual conference in Barrie. It will feature workshops and a keynote presentation by Sarah Delicate entitled "From Compliance to Competition".

✓ **May 18-19: Student Retention Conference: What can you do to improve student retention?**

One of the most important challenges facing colleges today is helping greater numbers of students successfully complete their postsecondary education.

For colleges to retain more students and produce more graduates, they need proven strategies that will achieve significant results.

Colleges Ontario invites you to a two-day conference in Toronto that will explore these issues in detail.

The conference will include expert national and international speakers, interactive sessions, and a showcase of best practices and team approaches to supporting students.

**Who should attend?** Colleges Ontario encourages senior administrators, deans, chairs, teaching faculty, student services, institutional researchers, government representatives and others to attend this important and informative conference.

**For more details:** Go to: [www.collegesontario.org](http://www.collegesontario.org) and click the big red **Student Retention** button.

**Questions about the conference?** Contact: **Loretta Piattelli** at [piattelli@collegesontario.org](mailto:piattelli@collegesontario.org)

## Special Thanks To

The *Taking Action!* Advisory Committee members, shown below, gave generously of their time, expertise and advice throughout the project. Their willingness to serve in this capacity was sincerely appreciated.

**Lynne Wallace** - Executive Director, College Sector Committee for Academic Upgrading

**Dan Goldring** - Executive Director, College Sector Employment Services

**John Sillberg** - Chair, Heads of Apprenticeship

**Andrea Leis** - CSC rep, Conestoga College

**Barb Glass** - CSC Chair, Canadore College

**Beth Pirout** - CSES rep, St. Clair College

**Mike Bauer** - CESE rep, Niagara College

**Tina DiSimone** - HAT rep, Seneca College

**Sue Folinsbee** - Consultant, CSC

## And Last But Not Least, A Big Thanks to All of You!

As the *Taking Action!* project concludes, I'd like to thank you for your participation in this effort to continuously improve the delivery of Employment Ontario sponsored programs and services at Ontario's colleges. Your participation at a college or regional event, coupled with your input, ideas and feedback have made the work possible and the outcomes achievable. It's been a pleasure and privilege to work with you. Good Luck!

- *Bea Clark, Consultant  
Taking Action! Project*