



WORK-WISE

Keeping you current on North Okanagan's employment scene

Local Leads for Job Seekers

- The job boards at the WorkBC Centre in Vernon are buzzing. On one day alone, we posted a record 65 new jobs. Stop by and take a peek – we're here to help!
- 40+ employers met job seekers in person April 9 at Vernon's largest annual job fair. Many were hired on the spot, others left with interviews lined up. HR reps said they were impressed with the number of resumes and the quality of candidates. For more info on the employers there, and on how job fairs can help your job search, visit www.vernonjobfair.ca.
- Lee Brenda Poirier, Employee Recruiter for Agri-Trans Services, is looking for Class 1 Drivers. "We're not replacing, we're growing!" She's excited to share that positions are both regional and long haul, home holidays and weekends.



- On March 3, Predator Ridge held a job fair to recruit a whopping 200 new staff members – and an equally whopping 150 job seekers showed up to apply. "There are still some great opportunities up here," Human Resources Manager Krista Frasz says. "We have 56 different roles including management!" She believes in offering perks to stay competitive, and here are a few she shares:



- Free golf for every employee, part-time or full-time, in any department. "I see people getting out there on their lunch break and hitting off a bucket of balls," Krista says.
- Free use of the fitness, tennis, and pickleball facilities.
- Discounts on lessons, discounts in the retail shop, and a 35% discount on all food and beverage made at Predator Ridge.
- A monthly full-spread lunch for the team, which usually feeds about 150 employees.



- Volunteering can be a great stepping stone to paid employment. The Volunteer Recruitment Fair held its first event at the Village Green Mall April 2 from 9am to 3pm. Allan Brooks Nature Centre, Archway Society for Domestic Peace, and more showed up with opportunities from pony walking to knitting to event planning.

- The first North Okanagan-Shuswap Employment and Business Fair on March 11 was a success. With 500 people through the doors, job seekers went home happy, many with new work. Almost 60 employers were recruiting, including Tolko, Fieldstone Organics, School District 83, Twilight Express, and more. You can bet they're still open to a good resume sent their way!

EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHTS:**First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)**

"The First Nations Health Authority is the first organization of its kind in Canada," shares Human Resources Recruitment Specialist Zafar Mohammed. "It acts as a liaison between First Nations Communities and Health Authorities like Interior Health."

The FNHA is currently hiring Community Engagement Coordinators, or CECs. "They are like the soldiers on the ground," Zafar explains. CECs go into First Nations communities and find out the needs: Wellness? Acute Care? Then they share those needs with the right agencies. "Each region's needs are so different, so we try to hire CECs from within the community itself".

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Community knowledge is so key.

No specific background is needed to be a CEC, but "...community knowledge is so key" says Zafar. Each CEC typically covers 35-40 First Nations communities, and he or she "...may be the first to arrive at the scene of a crisis."

As community needs grow, the need for more CECs grows. If you're interested, reach out today. Positions pay \$60,000-\$73,000 a year.

Alpine Spa Covers

"We're paying more and we're weird," laughs Alpine Spa Covers General Manager, Kari Montsion. "If you could tell people that, it would be way cool!"

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We're paying more and we're weird!

We're chatting over the phone, and Kari is excited. "We are expanding again," she says, "and we are going to be paying our employees a whole lot more. Fifteen percent more – that's more than we ever have."

Kari thinks there are other great perks to working with the company. "On any day we have about eight dogs on site," she says. Staff are encouraged to bring dogs to work, as long as they are trained and have a spot they can tuck into. "It's one of the oddities of us here," she says with another laugh.

It's more than just an oddity; it's a way to help her staff. "We have a number of people here that struggle with anxiety disorders, and having their pets with them really helps everybody feel better."

"We are also flexible with hours," she continues. "Some employees work shorter days because they have kids – we are cheerleaders of flexible scheduling." But the bottom line for Kari? "We pay more and we're weird!"

For fun: How many dogs can you find in the above picture? Email centre-vernon@workbc.ca for your chance to win a coffee from Triumph.

GET TO KNOW: WORKBC SERVICES

Project-Based Labour Market Training (PBLMT)

Dustin McGibbon had been a mechanic in Fort McMurray for eight years before he decided to move back home to Vernon. Coming home, he found it was like “pulling teeth” to find work. He turned to WorkBC Employment Services for help.

At WorkBC McGibbon heard about the Residential Insulator Program at Okanagan College. Known as Project-Based Labour Market Training (PBLMT), the program was funded by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction through a partnership with WorkBC, training institutions, and local industry leaders. McGibbon was approved for funding. 25 weeks and a handful of certificates later, he graduated into full-time work with ThermoTech, a Vernon company that provides insulation services.



"When the course came up, I had never heard of spray foam insulation. Now I have certification to be a spray foam applicator and I didn't need to pay for ticketing, it was included," says Dustin.

Call WorkBC to see if you qualify for Project-Based Labour Market Training, which has previously included certificate programs for Forest Operators, Class 1 Drivers, and more.

GET TO KNOW: WORKBC STAFF

Hallie reads science fiction, has 10 horses on her property, and teaches her kids that "it costs nothing to be kind." Here's your chance to get to know this kind-hearted WorkBC Case Manager a little better.



“ *It costs nothing to be kind.* ”

Q: How long have you been working in employment services?

A: Sixteen years now. Yikes.

Q: What do you find most rewarding about your current position?

A: Helping clients identify their long-term goals and the steps necessary to reach them. I particularly enjoy helping clients gain skills that help them achieve ongoing success in their fields of interest.

Q: Can you share something you would want everyone to know about you that we might not?

A: My family has been in Coldstream since 1891 when my great grandfather purchased 80 acres from the Coldstream Ranch and put in orchards. Most of the property is still in various branches of the family and my parents live in the farmhouse built around 1900 after the original burnt down.

Q: What is the most interesting job you've held?

A: My time spent as a Groom, looking after racehorses at Hastings Park in Vancouver.

TIDBITS

Bits and bites for local folks looking for work



TECH RECRUITING

North Okanagan businesses are getting tech-savvier:

- You can now apply to work at Home Depot by texting "Home Depot Jobs" to 97211
- Interior Health recently held an Online Hiring Fair
- British Columbia Timber Sales (BCTS) always does its first interview by Skype
- Pre-screening interviews by text are becoming a thing



TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE

KPMG recently hosted a workshop in Vernon on Preparing for Tomorrow's Workforce. According to their research, this will include millennials (20% of the workforce by 2020), older workers (people are living longer, so also working longer), and artificial intelligence (automation is replacing many jobs and tasks). Here are some take-aways for employers and job seekers.

- "We need to think: How do roles need to evolve as we continue to introduce automation?"
- "If a role doesn't evolve, it will perish."
- "Automating tasks is clearing the way for something new."
- "There is more opportunity to create carved out roles."
- "The key is adaptability and flexibility. We need to develop and learn all the time as we go."
- "This era has an opportunity for courageous leadership."
- "How do we retain a culture where people can connect?"
- "Technology is replacing jobs we didn't expect it to."



Have a fresh tip about work, employment, or business in the North Okanagan? Want a job fair or a big hiring featured? Email centre-vernon@workbc.ca to get your news in Work-Wise.



TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

'Tis the season...for seasonal work. Our region is a tourist hotspot, so it's no surprise that tourism and hospitality ramp up this time of year. I sat down with Ginger Brunner, Regional HR Specialist with go2HR, the human resource association for BC's tourism industry. She shared some insight:

- This year, there are 1,400 tourism job openings expected in the Thompson Okanagan.
- "Tourism is one of those industries where you don't need a formal education to get your foot in the door. If you work hard and develop your skills, then the opportunities for growth are there."
- "Culinary and housekeeping are the two top occupations that employers cannot find enough people for."
- "Demand continues to grow for accommodation and food service managers, food counter attendants, and kitchen help."
- "If a job seeker has little to no experience, but has the right mindset, many tourism employers are willing to train."

Show employers your commitment to growth by adding SuperHost or other industry certifications to your resume. go2HR offers many, and currently offers "Foundations of Workplace Safety" online for free. Learn more and check out their tourism-only job board at www.go2hr.ca.



Reach WorkBC Employment Services:



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