



# WORK-WISE

*Keeping you current on North Okanagan's employment scene*

## Local Leads for Job Seekers

- Thinking of working at VegPro but don't have transportation? Great news: Starting June 1, Vernon Transit Route #61 will have a designated stop near the VegPro plant on Ricardo Road. Stop "R" (for "Ricardo") has its first drop from Vernon at 6:16am and its last pickup to Vernon at 5:53pm (plus a schedule in and out of Lumby). "Although full-time permanent shifts start at 6am," says VegPro's Human Resources Business Partner Jessica McHaffie, "casual or on-call workers will have the opportunity to start after 6am and take advantage of the new stop." Get on board today!



- KF Aerospace estimates in the next year to year-and-a-half it will grow by about 75 new employees.

- Bigfoot RV is growing. "We have several immediate openings," shares Autumn Storey, Human Resources, "and expect steady growth from there throughout the year." Bigfoot RV builds campers and travel trailers at their Armstrong facility, so they're looking for people who can do a little bit of everything, from electrical to carpentry to fibreglass and then some. "We're willing to train," says Storey. "For people who have the aptitude and want to learn, we're doing quite a bit of hands on training." Storey says they are hiring quickly, and are getting people to work right away. Email [careers@bigfootrv.com](mailto:careers@bigfootrv.com) to apply.



- Downtown Vernon Safeway is holding a job fair Saturday May 4 from 11am to 4pm. They will be doing interviews on the spot, so bring your resume and polish up your interview skills before heading their way.
- Maven Lane is holding its first ever Open House and Career Fair on May 9 from 6-7:30pm. They are looking to fill ECE and ECEA positions, as well as positions in their IT department. "This will be a great opportunity to explore our facility and to ask questions about education requirements and career opportunities," shares Human Resources Administrator Barb Kowalski. "Maven Lane is a great place to work," she says. "The positive energy in the hallways is contagious."



- The Canadian Mental Health Association in Vernon now offers WorkBC Services. If you, or someone you know, is living with mental health issues and is looking for work, reach out for one-to-one support today. The dedicated team can help with looking for work, prepping for interviews, starting a new job, and keeping long-term employment. In some circumstances they can also help with bus passes, gas vouchers, interview clothing, appropriate work clothing, and more – all if it's necessary to find and keep that paycheck! Give them a call at 250-542-3114 x 238 or pop in to CMHA today to learn more.

**INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT:****Early Childhood Educators (ECE)**

Early Childhood Educators are in demand. Recently we've seen listings for Maven Lane, As We Grow Preschool, Little Ark Childcare Centre, and many more in our area. Maven Lane is even holding its first Open House and Career Fair on May 9 from 6-7:30pm. "We're always actively recruiting," shares Maven Lane Human Resources Administrator, Barb Kowalski. "Our executive director has huge vision for growth."

**“** *We're always recruiting.*



At Maven Lane, they'd like if applicants have, at a minimum, their BC Early Childhood Education Assistant Certificate. This is a course that can be completed online. From there, "we always encourage our ECEAs to go on and get their ECE," Barb explains.

Okanagan College is offering a new ECE Certificate program at the Vernon campus from September 3, 2019 to August 28, 2020. An ECE Student Bursary can provide eligible students up to \$4,000 in funding per school semester. For details, visit the webpage [ecebc.ca/programs/student\\_bursary.html](http://ecebc.ca/programs/student_bursary.html).

**EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHTS:****NEW BIZ COMING TO TOWN**

In 2018, almost 200 new businesses launched in Vernon. This included everything from contracting companies to massage therapists to restaurants. It's good to keep your eye on who's new – eventually they may need employees!

On April 24, the annual Enterprize Challenge (a competition designed to give new and start-up businesses in our area the chance to pitch their business idea to a panel of judges) announced the three 2019 winners. First place went to FILL, a refill store for household and personal care products. "I am so pumped for the opportunity to reduce plastics in our community," said Teresa Sanders, who won close to \$20,000 in prizes provided by Enterprize sponsors.

Runners up were Sugarbee's Ice Cream Company, which makes ice cream from local ingredients, and The Boarding House Cafe, where patrons can choose from hundreds of board games to play over food and coffee. Keep an eye out around town!

**“**  
*I am so pumped!*



While finding work is a common path to take, starting your own business may also be a viable option. If you're unemployed, or underemployed (less than 20 hours a week), or precariously employed, WorkBC can help you with the best path to sustainable work.

## GET TO KNOW: WORKBC SERVICES

### Job Creation Partnership

One of the programs offered by WorkBC Employment Services is called a Job Creation Partnership – and there's one starting May 27.

A JCP allows eligible organizations to receive funding to hire for positions that have a set start and end time and that support a specific project. For this JCP, the non-profit is 55+ BC Games, and the employment runs from May 27 to October 14. The three roles they're looking to fill are: Receptionist/Office Assistant, Administrative Assistant, and Warehouse and Logistics Assistant.

This isn't traditional employment in that the hours do not count towards EI, but there is a huge amount of value. "You'll get a new job on your resume, plus connected with many community players from politicians to employers, from service groups to business people," says project coordinator Jo-Ann Baker of the WorkBC Centre in Vernon. "It's great for people who lack work experience or have had a hard time finding employment in the past. This could be the foot in the door they need."



Specific eligibility applies. Call the WorkBC Centre nearest you to find out more.

## GET TO KNOW: WORKBC STAFF – LUMBY OFFICE

Carmen is one of the two friendly faces you'll see when you walk through the doors of our Lumby office. She loves her job, and it shows. Here's a glimpse into her work, her career path, and why she smiles.



“ I really believe in saying 'yes', as long as it doesn't compromise my values.

Q: What does it feel like at the Lumby office?

A: It's quiet, casual, warm and welcoming. It's quaint. It's like a mini version of the WorkBC Centre in Vernon.

Q: Tell me about your career path.

A: I started in 2004 as a receptionist at a career decision making program. From there I took professional development courses, got on-the-job training, and learned from my colleagues. Over the years I moved into leading workshops, then started helping with resumes for a youth at risk program, then moved into a youth centre as a job search advisor. Eventually I was managing an employment centre. I really believe in saying yes to opportunities and challenges, as long as they don't compromise my values.

Q: What do you do when you're not working?

A: I'm a musician – I play piano and guitar and sing.

Q: What makes you happy that you do this work?

A: I love the relationships that I get to build with my clients and hearing about their successes.

## TIDBITS

## Bits and bites for local folks looking for work



### NORTH OKANAGAN NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

The North Okanagan has plenty of opportunities to get out and let folks know you're looking for work. Here are a few regulars:

**Geek Beers:** On the last Thursday of every month (except December), about 20 techies and creatives get together at Marten Brew Pub in Vernon to talk shop. It's a meetup they call "Geek Beers". "We hang out and talk about business, coding, design, writing, tech," shares organizer Justin Jackson on [startupvernon.com](http://startupvernon.com). "It's a great place to meet other IT workers, startup folks, programmers, and local intellectuals." One job seeker went for her first time in April. "It was really good, it was really fun," she shares. "There were a lot of people there, so it was nerve-wracking at first, but they are friendly and they make a point to introduce themselves to new people. They ask if you're looking for work, and in what field. And then pretty quickly you get to talking about topics that you're really interested in. I wish it was more than once a month!"

**Business After 5:** Third Tuesday of each month, at a different Vernon business each time. This month it's May 21 at the Pickleball Depot. Call 250-545-0771 to register – \$15 for non-members, includes appies.

**Business After Business:** Meet fellow business owners and job seekers from Armstrong and Spallumcheen on the third Wednesday of each month. Call 250-546-8155 to register. This month: May 15 at Spall Storage Centre.



*Have a fresh tip about work, employment, or business in the North Okanagan? Want a job fair or a hiring push featured? Email [centre-vernon@workbc.ca](mailto:centre-vernon@workbc.ca) to get your news in Work-Wise.*



### FULLY-FUNDED CLASS ONE DRIVER TRAINING FOR ELIGIBLE JOB SEEKERS

On May 27, eligible job seekers could start on a fully-funded path to becoming a Class One Driver. Funded by WorkBC, the project is a "group-based, full-time program consisting of 12 weeks of employability and occupational skills training, four weeks of on-the-job work experience with local employers, and a minimum of two weeks of follow-up support to prepare participants as Class One Professional Truck Drivers in the Okanagan area."

The project comes from ongoing demand for drivers in our area. According to the WorkBC Transportation and Warehousing industry profile, the Thompson Okanagan is among the top three areas in BC with respect to jobs in the transport industry. Added to this, the outlook to 2021 for the transport industry indicates steady growth, with a vacancy rate of 4.3% and a retirement rate of 2.1%. These statistics indicate the need for trained drivers to replace those leaving the industry as well as to keep pace with new jobs.

Only those on EI, or who have been on EI in the past five years, or who have made \$2,000 in insurable income in 5 of the past 10 years are eligible to apply. Call the WorkBC Centre nearest you to find out more.



Reach WorkBC Employment Services:



3105-33 Street, Vernon BC, V1T 9P7



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