

# Jobs available in food service

The job market is still a tough one to crack on 1986, but there are a few exceptions, and food service supervision (formerly home economics) is one.

In a unionized, urban hospital a new graduate can make between \$21,000 and \$23,000 with the salary usually lower in smaller institutions.

A recent graduate, Astrid Strader of Mississauga, considers herself lucky, though not untypical. While gromming for graduation exercises, she received a surprise phone call. The next week, she was counselling diabetics and heart patients at St. Vincent de Paul Hospital in Brockville. The hospital staff had assessed her during an in-service training period.

Says Linda Reasbeck, Head of the Food Service and Technology Section at Kemptville College of Agricultural Technology, "Seventy per cent of the graduates find employment within four months after graduation. Others may have part-time employment, by choice in some cases."

The Food Service Supervisor's course is offered in three locations: Kemptville, Centralia and Alfred, the latter the only French speaking college run by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Enrolment in courses at the three colleges is low considering the opportunities. In 1985, there were only 182 people in all the programs. The problem stems in part from the need in the past decade for home economists to update their image.

When the first class in an Ontario diploma program graduated in 1922, the courses were designed to prepare girls for housekeeping duties and rearing a family. Probably, they were adaptations of the cookery and housewifery courses developed in Great Britain.

Unlike those early courses, the ones today are career-oriented. Students get a taste of personnel management, along with an emphasis on nutrition education and experience with therapeutic diets. In fact, some of the good employment news is directly related to these areas. In 1984, provincial legislation required most nursing homes to have a fully qualified food supervisor.

Over the last five years, the colleges have had to reckon with a second force among the student body, the second career student. These are mature people, some of them grandmothers, who have wanted a new career or found their old training unsatisfactory or their skills unsellable in the marketplace. Since 1975, an increasing number of men have been invading the field.

What kind of people are employers looking for? Marg Milne, Head Supervisor at the Queensway-Carleton Hospital in Ottawa and a graduate, is in charge of two cafeterias and 22 people.

She likes to hire people who will get the job done. "I look for maturity, stability and a flair for cooking.

"I want someone creative, someone who can turn a tomato into a rose," she said.

The work can be difficult. Marilyn Maughan who is a Supervisor for the

Kingston Psychiatric Hospital, says her greatest challenge has been to meet the needs of patients suffering from anorexia nervosa, a condition characterized by a refusal to eat. Her job: to make the food as attractive as possible. "You must serve them in little bits," she said.

Opportunities exist in research as well. Karen Champagne works for the Food Advisory Division of Agriculture Canada as a lab technician. Part of her job is to test new recipes under the direction of a home economist.

There's also the chance of an exotic job — like the one Joan Mitchell had. As an assistant food consultant on Bruno Gerussi's 'Celebrity Cooks', she found herself "baby sitting" Charlie Farquaharson's Rhode Island Red.

"It was a terrific conversation piece," she said.



*Lillian MacLeod, a 1986 graduate, works in the cooking lab at Kemptville College.*