

program opening up new possibilities

Escarpment Commission jobs just what Karen and Richard needed

Karen Twitchell spent one boring summer working at a dead-end job as a store clerk, nothing very exciting for a student who hopes to be a writer, but the pay did help finance her journalism studies for yet another year.

Richard Szarek worked on inventory at a textile firm in Montreal for one summer. Once again, the job just didn't seem to match the capabilities and potential of an urban and regional planning student.

Like Karen and Richard, most summer students consider summer jobs simple means of getting together just enough money to finance their studies for another school year. School tuition, books, housing and food costs have hit students hard the past few years and each summer it's a mad scramble to raise the cash.

Students can therefore be found working during the summer in all areas of the work forces - in offices, factories, restaurants or stores doing anything and everything.

For most, the weekly paycheck is the only lure to the job. The job itself is tedious.

Yet not all students have boring, just-rake-in-the-dough jobs this summer. Some students are fortunate enough to be working this summer at a job they not only find interesting, but one that also helps them with their studies by providing on-the-job training.

Thanks to the provincially-sponsored Experience '81 program, over 10,000 Ontario students are working this summer at jobs that offer more challenge and are more pertinent to what they're studying in college or university. Above all, the work they do gives them a sense of accomplishment and the best experience they'll need upon joining the work force permanently, perhaps two or three years down the road.

THREE GOALS

Operated through approximately 25 ministries, the nine-year old program's objectives are threefold. Most importantly, it hopes to offset the high unemployment that plagues most Ontario students during the summer months. Second, it tries to provide meaningful work experience for the students to enable them to plan their careers or even give them the necessary experience they will need when it comes time to look for a permanent job. And finally, the provincial government hopes that through its program, it can assist the various ministries in providing services to Ontario communities.

Three students are taking advantage of the Experience '81 program at the Niagara Escarpment Commission offices in Georgetown and they're already reaping the benefits.

Twenty-two year old Karen

Twitchell isn't filling, making coffee or photocopying. This summer, she's using the skills she's already learned and is training them with on-the-job training. Karen is spending this summer researching and writing for the NEC publication "Cuesta".

Karen is working in the information department at the NEC doing something she not only likes but what obviously is very applicable to what she is studying. A fourth-year journalism student at Carleton University, she's spent previous summers working at a local store and a nearby conservation area.

No newcomer to Experience '81, Karen has taken advantage of it before working as a tour guide at the Ontario Agricultural Museum. Yet for obvious reasons, this job is the one she enjoys the most, even though it means a daily trip from her Campbellville home to Georgetown.

REAL CHOICE

Karen has always been interested in writing throughout high school, and journalism was her first real choice as a career. She feels that she couldn't have found a better job to suit her capabilities since "any type of writing is good practice".

With the environment and science being her main interests, Karen hopes to work later for a magazine or make documentaries on environmental and scientific issues.

Cuesta seems to be tailor-made for Karen's goals. It's an annual publication produced by the NEC, which supplies information about the commission, its works and some historical notes about the

people, places and events surrounding the Niagara Escarpment's past. Karen's job is to do research for the publication and write some of the articles that will be printed in it.

Chief information officer David Cossette says Karen's done a first-class job. He added that she has displayed exceptional talent with the historical research and the issuing of press releases.

Karen is perhaps a perfect example of the many successful students who are benefitting from their summer job thanks to the provincial program. For her, Experience

'81 has been a complete success.

Two other students hired by the NEC through Experience '81 are just as enthusiastic about their jobs which are also giving them good experience in their chosen job field. Richard Szarek and Michael Lockwood are working in the Development Control section at the NEC offices in Georgetown.

HELP OUT

The young men are using their university educations in geography to help out the NEC planners during the summer months. As part of their jobs, the two are studying permit

applications that come into the commission offices from people living on the escarpment who hope to build something on their property.

In studying the applications, the two visit the sites, and examine bylaws involved and area maps keeping in mind the commission's concern for maintaining the beauty of the escarpment and preserving the environment.

Both hope to be doing this for a living when they leave school and have found the job to be a big help in expanding on their knowledge. Richard, a third-year urban and regional planning student at Ryerson,

already has a Bachelor of Arts in geography from McGill University. During previous summers, he's worked for a textile firm doing inventory and provided recreation facilities in his home town of Montreal.

Since he plans on working in the field of planning, cartography and design once his studies are completed, Richard said this job has been fantastic for him providing him with insight and experience that he could never have gotten anywhere else.

Michael has not had the usual run-of-the-mill types of jobs that most students seem to be holding each year. The Guelph native has had a very illustrious line of summer jobs in past years. He has worked in the University of Guelph's special events department organizing concerts for four years and for the Department of Energy and Conservation as a construction worker. His summer jobs have taken him across Canada to the Yukon and British Columbia.

Yet here, more or less on his home turf, Michael has found the job that seems to suit him best. He is currently doing grad work on rural land use and planning at the University

of Guelph having already gotten a Bachelor of Arts in geography from the university.

RURAL LAND

His work at the NEC could hardly be more ideally suited to his studies since Michael is interested in the natural environment and hopes to work later in rural land use and planning. Working along with Richard, Michael can indulge in his fascination for working with the environment.

Pat Boeckner, senior planner for the NEC, said the two are really getting into the mainstream work of the commission and are adapting well to their job. With staff vacations occurring with regularity throughout the

summer months, the bulk of the responsibility lies on their shoulders.

It seems that the students aren't the only ones who benefit from the Experience '81 program. Nothing but praise has been heaped upon the students working at the NEC who the staff say handle more than their share of the workload and have been helping them a great deal.

Yet it all boils down to the students themselves. They have the most admiration for the program which was formulated to provide them with not only jobs but valuable work experience. They give it an A-plus. They not only continue their education during the summer months, they get paid for it too.



Cayley Gresswell and Dan Stewart offer tips to the Morwick family of Georgetown on how they can be safer and more prepared for pool mishaps this summer. The two students are working for the Halton Hills Recreation and Parks department as part of the Experience '81 program, to make area residents more aware about pool safety and to teach them various safety techniques. Cayley and Dan are going to various homes in Halton Hills offering free poolside demonstrations that include lifesaving techniques such as how to rescue someone who has suffered a spinal injury while they're in the water.

(Herald photo)

Pool safety: All you need to know

Backyard pool accidents are increasing alarmingly each year as pool owners aren't prepared for when the unexpected strikes. Yet poolside accidents needn't happen to area residents now that the Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department is offering a Water Safety Awareness program.

As part of the Experience '81 program offered in conjunction with the Ministry of Culture and Recreation, two students in Halton Hills are working this summer as water safety "technicians" giving area pool owners a chance to brush up on their water safety techniques and poolside safety awareness.


Cayley Gresswell and Dan Stewart are making the rounds this summer among homes with in-ground or above ground pools in their backyards to give free demonstrations. If Cayley and Dan come to your pool, they'll demonstrate first aid, artificial respiration, treatment of spinal injury and possible means of rescue. They'll also provide pamphlets regarding area pool bylaws and artificial respiration.

So far, Halton Hills residents have responded with enthusiasm to the offer of free demonstrations. Approximately 100 Acton and Georgetown residents have completed the questionnaire, with 60 displaying an interest in having a demonstration.

If your family would like a demonstration, call Cayley at the indoor pool at 677-7721 between 4 and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday.



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