

Sheridan College report reveals job barriers still exist for women

By LISA RUTLEDGE
The Herald

Significant barriers exist for women wanting to enter or re-enter the work force, a Sheridan College report on the education, employment and training needs of women in Halton reveals.

Halton's Social Service Department intends to use the report to further the planning and development of regional employment programs to meet the needs of Halton women trying to access the job market, said Acting Commissioner, Karen Chan.

Sheridan's Burlington Campus Chairperson and research project supervisor, Shirley Adams, said financial resources and unsuccessful training program promotions are strong prohibitors for women re-entering the work force.

One of the factors initiating the study was low enrolment rates at Sheridan College's employment and education upgrade courses, many of which target women on social assistance, said Mrs. Adams. For example, the Burlington campus offers electronic office skills, career planning, math and English upgrades.

"We have difficulty filling those program which are geared for people on social assistance," she said. "We can't get the message out there."

Based on 536 women, the four-month survey indicated women on social assistance want to obtain the skills necessary to obtain professional positions, to manage their own business or to gain secretarial positions.

However, the report also revealed that a "lack of resources is the most important barrier perceived to impede further employment or education." Forty per cent of women mentioned insufficient resources as a main barrier to upgrading education and training. Twenty per cent of those who mentioned it said poor resources were the sole reason for the inability to upgrade skills. The report also identified a lack of both subsidized and unsubsidized day care facilities.

The region offers several employment programs for women who receive financial assistance. However, Mrs. Adams explained that many of the women who could benefit from the program "are quite often the ones who tend not to be great readers" and do not fully understand the promotions.

Regional employment assistance programs such as IN STEP and ON TRACK were known to about 34 per cent of women surveyed. About 32 per cent of those surveyed knew of the Halton Board of Education's adult learning programs, 29 per cent were aware of government sponsored programs, the report indicates.

Mrs. Adams stresses the im-

Developers submit Mill St. plan

The same developers behind the proposal to build two 15-storey condominiums on Maple Avenue in Georgetown have submitted drawings to the town outlining an idea for condominium and commercial space on the site of the old Halton Hills Hydro building on Mill Street in Georgetown.

One proposal calls for the bottom floor of a development to house commercial and retail space and the top floors to be occupied by condominiums, said Tom Zupet, the vice-president of Zupet and Associates.

The other proposal calls for a similar but bigger complex that would include a parking garage at the back for town use, he said.

The town's Deputy Planning Director, Bruce Maclean, said the planning department hasn't started working on the proposal because no formal application has been made. But he did say he has had preliminary talks with the developers about the ideas.

Mr. Zupet said the company is holding off submitting a formal proposal until the market improves.

portance of the regular contact between social workers and their clients. Workers can refer welfare recipients to skill upgrading programs, said Mrs. Adams, adding that she realizes social workers have heavy caseloads.

Recruiting women to the college's courses is difficult because putting advertisements in the paper is fine but it may not be enough, Mrs. Adams said.

Sandra Welch, Halton Social Ser-

vice Supervisor of Income Maintenance, said to inform the public of available education and training courses it takes marketing methods of all types including checks, inserts and information sessions.

Women surveyed said to take advantage of a job opportunity they would need assistance in daycare, information on employment opportunities, improved job skills and higher wages and improved working hours.

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