



EARN is a community initiative led by United Way Ottawa

EMPLOYMENT  
ACCESSIBILITY  
RESOURCE NETWORK

**EARN**

## MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

July-2015

### Highlights:

Welcome to the third edition of the EARN monthly E-Newsletter!

The purpose of the newsletter is to keep you informed about what EARN and its members are working on plus what is happening in the province regarding disability and employment.

Your feedback on how we are doing is appreciated and valued. Send comments and suggestions to: [sforster@unitewayottawa.ca](mailto:sforster@unitewayottawa.ca).

### Initiatives & Events:



Specialisterne in partnership with Autism Ontario hosted a roundtable breakfast on July 20<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to 11:00am. The purpose of this session was to engage with service providers who serve clients on the autism spectrum, to learn about each other's work and to brainstorm on the challenges of finding and securing employment opportunities. Next steps will include setting up a 'forum' to begin to network & explore ideas and to engage with employers and the Ottawa community.

In addition, Specialisterne hosted an Employment Discovery Workshop for individuals that would identify as being on the autism spectrum in order to begin to build up a pool of potential candidates for upcoming jobs opportunities. For more information, check out their website at [www.specialisterne.ca](http://www.specialisterne.ca) or contact Sara Winter at: [sara.winter@specialisterne.com](mailto:sara.winter@specialisterne.com)



EARN met recently with Ingrid Argyle, Project Manager at Labour Market Ottawa (LMO). LMO is an ongoing local labour market planning initiative, funded by Employment Ontario, and is housed at Algonquin College. They work to provide partners in the community with valuable, up-to-date information on the **local** labour market. We will be collaborating on initiatives that impact the employment of people with disabilities and spoke to Ingrid about the value of Ottawa based data on labour market trends specific to people with disabilities. We will continue to participate in specific, relevant events and will represent EARN on their Labour Market Planning Committee. Check them out @ [www.labourmarketottawa.ca](http://www.labourmarketottawa.ca)



Labour Market Ottawa is looking to conduct **interviews with employers** over the summer in order to get more employer-driven information on workforce trends. The project will give employers the opportunity to share their insights on changes in the labour market; things like skills shortages, or the impact of technology on their workplace. Several employers from a variety of industry sectors will be interviewed, and the resulting information will be rolled up into a report to be shared with participants and the community.

The interviews will take roughly 45 minutes, and include basic questions on hiring trends, changes in the labour market, workplace diversity and how employment services can better work with employers.

**For more information, contact: Thomas Swerdfager**, LMO Research Lead, at **613-727-4723 X2161** or [swerdft@algonquincollege.com](mailto:swerdft@algonquincollege.com)

**Upcoming Activities:**

- As you are aware, EARN will host its 2<sup>nd</sup> Career Fair in Ottawa at City Hall on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. In August, we are taking an ‘all hands on deck’ approach as our goal is to fill 36 employer booths. If you are an EARN Employer Partner – please register! For all members, please take August to **promote, promote, promote** the event to other employers you know in your network. In the end, the more employers we have participating, the more potential job opportunities that will be available. If you would like an employer focused poster – please let us know at [mdubois@unitedwayottawa.ca](mailto:mdubois@unitedwayottawa.ca).

- You can also circulate the information via:  social media,  email, word of ,



a banner, a



billboard at an



Ottawa

Red Blacks game – whatever you prefer! Client registration information will go out in late August. Thank you for your support!



**We need success stories from our members!**

A success story could be related to a recruitment success (hire or new process), an accommodation, an individual within your organization that would like to share their story, a referral that you made that ended up in a hire, etc.

Please submit your success story to Martin Dubois by Monday September 14, 2015 at :

[mdubois@unitedwayottawa.ca](mailto:mdubois@unitedwayottawa.ca)

## Success Stories:

### UOttawa story from Julie Lavigne



uOttawa

Career and Employability Day for Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities organized and hosted by the University of Ottawa.

On February 19<sup>th</sup> 2015, the Career Development Centre in partnership with Access services of the University of Ottawa was pleased to organize and host a Career and employability day for post-secondary students of the Ottawa region. This pilot project, supported by EARN, invited students with disabilities by working with university and college representatives from the University of Ottawa, Algonquin College, Carleton University, Herzing College and the Université du Québec en Outaouais, to attend this day.

The objective of the pilot was to offer career and employment information and tools that would specifically benefit students with disabilities. Sixteen post-secondary students from the University of Ottawa, Algonquin College and Carleton University participated in the day which covered topics such as their human rights, empowerment, career development and job search tools as well as working in the government, its job application process and accommodations.

Following notes and observations taken by the organizers of the day as well as feedback received from students and presenters, the day was deemed a success! The Career Development Centre is therefore pleased to offer the day once again to its students and fellow post-secondary institutions of the region for the upcoming school year on November, 11<sup>th</sup> 2015. In addition to offering students career and employment information and tools, an alumni of the University of Ottawa who has a disability will share her or his career and life story to encourage students in their future pursuits.

## Susan's Updates:

- We have 104 contacts entered into our Outreach Tracker so far this year and more than 75% of them are employers. Outreach to prospective employer and community partners is continuing over the summer.
- A presentation at Pinecrest Queensway Community Health Centre will take place on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The audience will be job developer/employer liaison front line staff; they have access to employers and EARN has access to a large talent pool of job seekers with disabilities. We plan to explore how we can partner together to benefit EARN participants and to assist local employers to fill positions with talented job seekers with disabilities.

## Welcome New Members:

- Service Provider Resource Group – Canadian Hearing Society <http://www.chs.ca/>
- Service Provider Resource Group – Specialisterne Canada [www.specialisterne.ca](http://www.specialisterne.ca)
- Business Leadership Network (BLN) - Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/>
- Remember the CHOCOLATE CHALLENGE!!

## Upcoming Events:

- Thursday Sept 17<sup>th</sup> - “Career Fair Bootcamp” Learning and Networking event
- Friday Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> - Career Fair 2015
- Thursday Nov 26<sup>th</sup> – EARN Member Appreciation Night from 7pm - 9pm
- Proposed: Nov 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> event for jobseekers - Exploring Entrepreneurship

## In the News:

- A great article from the U.S. regarding workplace accommodations. This study presents national estimates comparing accommodation requests and receipt as reported by individuals with and without disabilities. Their conclusion? As employers voice concerns about the additional burden of employing individuals with disabilities (under new regulatory requirements, U.S. ADA), their findings highlight that **95%** of individuals requesting an accommodation were people **without** disabilities.  
<http://bit.ly/1K4k25v>
- The Ontario Chamber of Commerce has launched a grant program, the *Abilities Connect Fund*, aimed at encouraging employers to leverage an untapped talent pool to meet their skills requirements but also to provide early workplace experience for students and recent graduates with disabilities to help improve their employment outcomes and career trajectory. Employers can receive up to \$20,000 in funding to hire and train staff (students/recent graduate) as well as purchase workplace assistive devices for their employees (any employee, does not need to be a new hire or student/recent graduate) up to \$3,000. Visit:  
<http://www.abilitiesconnect.ca>
- Great success stories from SAP Canada and Starbucks in Vancouver. Another reason why inclusion in the workforce makes great business sense. Real work for real pay and high retention, employee engagement. Sounds like a win win! “Robert has never been late or missed a shift,” Dodge said. “He usually arrives half an hour early. He is also a morale booster. When I work with him, I like to make him laugh. “We have so much fun together.” Visit:  
<https://www.biv.com/article/2015/7/inclusive-hiring-helps-companies-reap-business-ben/>
- “Sheltered workshops present a significant systemic barrier to inclusion ...” That’s how this article about a case before the Ontario human rights tribunal begins. It concerns a Sarnia man paid just .46 cents per hour for his work. The author, Keenan Wellar, asserts that this case has broader implications than the need to pay minimum wage, it’s about dignity and inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities. To read his full piece visit:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/grp/post/1801055-6027489637008752643>

## Upcoming Meetings:

### Steering Committee

- Thursday September 3<sup>rd</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> from 9am-11am - TBD

### Joint Working Group

- Tuesday September 15<sup>th</sup> from 9-11am

**Note:** Monthly meetings for the Steering Committee and the Joint Working Group (Employer Leadership Group and the Service Provider Resource Group) will be on hiatus until September 2015

## Final Comments:

Stay tuned for our next edition, coming your way in August. In the meantime, please let us know of any initiatives or information from your respective organizations that you would like to share...and we will!

## United Way/EARN contacts:

- **Susan Forster:** [sforster@unitedwayottawa.ca](mailto:sforster@unitedwayottawa.ca)
- **Martin Dubois:** [mdubois@unitedwayottawa.ca](mailto:mdubois@unitedwayottawa.ca)
- **Kelly Mertl:** [kmertl@unitedwayottawa.ca](mailto:kmertl@unitedwayottawa.ca)