



EMPLOYMENT
ACCESSIBILITY
RESOURCE NETWORK

EARN Monthly E-Newsletter

July 2016

Introduction:

Welcome to the July 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. Please send comments, suggestions and your success stories to: sforster@unitedwayottawa.ca.

Initiative & Events:



On Wednesday, July 20, 2016 from 6:00 to 8:30 pm, our partner **Accenture** hosted a Practice Interview Session for 10 participants to learn more about effective interviewing skills and to have an opportunity to practice with Accenture's staff and interns.

The event opened with EARN and Accenture briefing each other on their prospective organizations. Accenture's presentation detailed their commitment to diversity and inclusion in their workforce, internationally as well as here in Canada. Most notable are their employee resource groups, including one for persons with disabilities.

Susan and Kelly then presented to the Accenture staff EARN's philosophy and goals as well as useful information when interviewing people with various types of disabilities.

The EARN clients were then given a presentation by Accenture and its volunteers on tips and suggestions for successful interviewing. After the Accenture presentation to the job seekers with disabilities was finished, the practice sessions began.

The format was that each participant answered one question posed by an Accenture staff member or intern and received immediate feedback. The interviewer then rotated to the next participant, asked a question and the process continued. In this way each participant received feedback on a series of commonly asked questions by several different interviewers. There was also time for participants to ask questions and the interns shared valuable tips and advice often from their own personal experience.

The practice interview session was a real success! Kudos to the participants and the service providers! Every single participant came well prepared, was dressed in appropriate attire and impressed Accenture with their skills and potential. We want to thank our Accenture representatives, **Joe Mead** and **Stuart O'Brien**, for making everyone feel so welcome. A big thank you also goes out to **Jenn** and to the **interns at Accenture** for being so gracious and hospitable and for being amazing interviewers who made the participants feel at ease and who provided constructive and balanced feedback. We look forward to future sessions! These comments from our job seekers on the event evaluations say it all:

“I feel more confident and positive about myself. I feel less discouraged by my shortcomings.”

“I learned to answer interview questions better and I look forward to exercising what I learned in a real job interview.”

“Nice and friendly people, a team I would love to be a member of.”

“You and the staff at Accenture were friendly, welcoming, open, and made me feel comfortable in a situation that often seems inaccessible and beyond my qualifications. ... The material presented was very informative, especially because I got the rare opportunity of directly hearing what a hiring manager and prospective employer look for in a candidate. Having recent recruits share their experience was also beneficial because it demonstrated to me that others go through the same trials in their job search. ... Receiving immediate feedback on my answers gave me a positive outlook on my strengths and weaknesses and improved my confidence.”

To our employer members: If your organization is interested in arranging a Practice Interview Session through EARN, please contact us. It's a great experience for your staff and contributes to EARN's mission...and you might even find the next new recruit for your organization!



Upcoming EARN and Community Activities:

- EARN “Learning Expo”: We are planning an EARN Learning Expo to take place in mid-November, 2016 at Ottawa City Hall. This event will be an opportunity for us to reach out to new employers and for EARN service providers to showcase their expertise in recruitment best practices, on-boarding and accommodation to a broad range of employers. We will start with a presentation on the value proposition of EARN, and give examples of successful EARN hires with presentations from two EARN employers. Then employers will move around the Expo with timed interviews at each service provider booth. Our goal will be to attract several new employers to attend and to become engaged with EARN. More details will follow in future newsletters and at our upcoming meetings starting back in September. Mark your calendars for November 15th and 18th. Confirmation of the date coming soon.
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Success Stories: Hydro Ottawa: 2 Successful Hires!



We are very pleased to report that Hydro Ottawa recently made job offers to 2 EARN clients as a result of a customized recruitment process. EARN acted as a point of contact for submitting applications from job seekers with disabilities from EARN service provider members.

This is an approach that allows for the participation of many service providers and their clients, and which benefits employers because there is one point of coordinated access through EARN. The competitions were for a telephone receptionist and a customer contact agent. In all 18 job seekers applied, 9 to each role. Three candidates were interviewed for each position. The successful outcome was that 2 job offers were made in July!

This was also a helpful opportunity to provide honest and supportive feedback to service providers concerning the interviewing skills of their respective clients who took part in the competitions but were selected. We send out many, many thanks to the Hydro Ottawa staff and HR personnel who reached out to EARN to conduct such a proactive and inclusive hiring process. Congratulations to the successful candidates and to Hydro Ottawa!

If your organization is interested in conducting a customized recruitment process, please contact Susan or Kelly.

Susan's Corner:



One of EARN's key strategies is to promote an "Employment First" philosophy by way of activities and opportunities to advocate and raise awareness around the critical need for job consideration for youth with disabilities. So often people with disabilities reach the age of 21 or older, having had few, if any, opportunities for an early foray into the world of work - through babysitting, a summer job or an interesting paid internship – EARN and our partners are working to change that.

The EARN initiative focuses on Ottawa, and we report on activities and events taking place in our capital and around our province. We fix our lens on employment and disability issues, and stay away from the arena of politics and partisanship. However, there is always an exception, and this month that exception came in the form of a short speech given at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia on Monday, July 25th. The speech was made by a fabulously articulate young woman with a disability, Anastasia Somoza, an International Disability Rights Advocate, Speaker and Consultant. She worked as an intern for Hilary Clinton and described herself as a 'professional'. Anastasia was responding in part to Donald Trump's insults leveled at a person with an intellectual disability. In her speech, she endorsed Hilary Clinton but she also spoke eloquently about the talents of people with disabilities and their right to dignity and participation in all aspects of our society. I am sure you will find her remarks inspiring.

<http://www.popsugar.com/news/Anastasia-Somoza-Speech-DNC-2016-42081881>

Welcome New Members!

- ➔ No new members this month. We are following up on a number of promising prospects and hope to report new members next month.

Upcoming EARN Events:

- ➔ We are working on more events for our 2016 – 2017 Calendar – stay tuned! If you have any ideas, please let us know!!

In the News:

- Here is an international story: Starbucks recently opened a store in Malaysia staffed by hearing and deaf employees. To read more go to: <http://www.eonline.com/ca/news/781492/starbucks-is-opening-a-store-with-hearing-impaired-baristas>
- An Ontario teen has won a science prize for developing the prototype for a tongue controlled mouse, an affordable future tool for workplace accommodation. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/tongue-controlled-computer-mouse-1.3677813>
- AMI This Week recently interviewed Anna-Karina Tabunar including a brief profile of EARN, as a preview to the upcoming showing of her full documentary, Talent Untapped: <http://www.ami.ca/category/ami-week-news-and-events-arts-and-culture-segment/media/talent-untapped>
- On September 14th, JOIN – Ontario Job Opportunity Information Network is holding a ½ day Employee Resource Group Symposium in Toronto. This may be of interest to employers. To find out more: <http://joininfo.ca/>

Upcoming Meetings:

EARN Steering Committee

- Thursday, September 1st, 9 to 11am

EARN Leadership Group

- Tuesday, September 13th, 9 to 11am

From the Team at



To all of you....Enjoy the summer!

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