

TOURISM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE



Issue 5 - October 2011

Celebrating 20 Years of Success Through Partnerships



Victoria Behune and Wendy Paradis with OTEC's longest standing board members, Anthony Hopkins and Fred Lawlor.

Twenty years ago, the Ontario Tourism Education Council was formed with a mandate to strengthen Ontario's tourism businesses and destinations by enriching the capacity of the industry's workforce. In the early nineties, the council consisted of a partnership of industry visionaries with a membership representing a broad range of 40 associations, individual businesses, labour, educators, and government officials who collectively represented the eight market sectors.

As OTEC grew in the years to come, industry partnerships became key in the realization of our most important achievements. One of these vital partners is the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC). Wendy Swedlove, President of the CTHRC values this partnership as much as we do. "The strength of the CTHRC is derived largely from its network of partner organizations at the provincial and territorial



level. OTEC is our partner in Ontario, and as such, brings the views of Ontario's tourism industry to the national table to develop resources and information that benefit the tourism

workforce across the country. After 20 years OTEC remains a critical part of the tourism infrastructure in Ontario".

Twenty years later, OTEC is known throughout the province as the Ontario Tourism Education Corporation and as a leader in Ontario tourism skills and professional development training. OTEC now proudly supports over 80 industry organizations, 320 high schools, 25 colleges, 9 universities, over 100 employment and social service organizations, and thousands of businesses. Over 155,000 individuals have been trained or certified by OTEC and OTEC is committed to doubling this figure over the next 10 years. Together, we look forward to building an even stronger Tourism and Hospitality industry in Ontario by helping businesses to attract, develop and retain the very best employees.

Tourism Professional Development Champion

"Working in Northern Ontario, the importance of supporting programs that focus on the recruitment of Métis and First Nations is clear. The need to support various community oriented initiatives that promote the skill development of these groups is not only the right thing to do, it's the best thing to do. We all face a talent shortage, and the hospitality industry is no exception. The entire Delta Hotel Sault Ste. Marie team strongly supports various initiatives that not only meet the recruitment and development needs of our business, but that also create and reinforce strong ties within our community. Delta Hotels and Resorts is guided by values that are very much grounded in all that 'community' truly stands for, making our partnership with OTEC to promote the recruitment and development of Métis and First Nations an easy fit that we are proud to be a part of."

- Tara McGowan, People Resources Manager | Delta Sault Ste. Marie Waterfront



Tara McGowan (bottom right) and members of the Delta Sault Ste. Marie Waterfront team.



President's Message:



It's our 20th anniversary!

This special edition of Tourism Workforce Development Update is dedicated to commemorating two decades of serving Ontario's tourism and hospitality industry. Learning from the past provides a valuable perspective on preparing for the future. And measuring our progress over years instead of months, allows

us to understand the influence long-term trends may have on the road ahead.

Successful businesses and destinations think long-term and plan strategically. We need the same macro-level approach when it comes to provincial workforce development and human resource strategies. Consider the labour shortage projected for our sector over the next twenty years. Often referred to as a "train wreck in slow motion", this critical shortage may take a long time to affect our businesses, but when it does, there will be no quick solutions if we are unprepared.

Over the past 20 years, OTEC has been at the forefront of stimulating change in Ontario's tourism and hospitality market through new partnerships and innovative projects. In a Province representing 40% of Canada's tourism market, we believe that future success and competitiveness of our industry can be best ensured through strong collaboration and a network of engaged stakeholders.

We are proud to share the projects and partnerships presented in these updates. We hope they will provide new perspectives on the many opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation and capacity building in tourism workforce development. We look forward to working with all of you to help Ontario meet its competitiveness goals for the "next" 20 years.

Victoria L. Behune

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President & CEO



Workforce Skills Development

Meet the Employers from OTEC's Ready-to-Work Program



Elmwood Spa

"Finding the right people can be challenging. Fortunately, Elmwood Spa has had great success recruiting graduates from the Ready-to-Work Program. We will continue to rely on this pool of skilled individuals for our workforce needs."

– Caterina Colabella Bolarinho,
Human Resource Recruiter at Elmwood Spa, Toronto, ON

The *Ready-to-Work* program has been a valuable source of skilled employees with international experience for Elmwood Spa. With three graduates hired so far, the program is a great fit for this prestigious urban oasis.



Confederation Place Hotel

Gord Dalton, Manager of the Confederation Place Hotel in Kingston, Ontario, has already hired two *Ready-to-Work* graduates. He believes that *Ready-to-Work* is making an important contribution towards his long-term vision of creating a workplace that welcomes and supports new Canadians with international experience, while enriching the high standard of service to which the hotel aspires.



UpSkill Training Status Update



OTEC and the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), in partnership with the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council

have just launched Phase 1 of UpSkill Essentials to Excel, a national project that helps to determine the return on investment hotels can expect when they commit to essential skills development programs in the workplace. In June 2011, OTEC hosted an UpSkill Instructors Workshop for over 28 participants from across Canada. The workshop provided the training necessary to enter the workplace and customize workforce training according to specific hotel needs. Over 15 housekeeping room attendants have completed Essential Skills Assessments and are preparing to begin training at hotel properties in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. An additional 285 hotel employees will be trained over the next year.



Industry Training

New Training Programs

Essentials of Service Excellence 2011

Following the launch of the newly updated *Service Excellence 2011* workshop, OTEC is introducing *Essentials of Service Excellence 2011*. Based on a customer-centric model, this modernized version is more dynamic, engaging and interactive. Participants can look forward to a multimedia experience and many entertaining activities. Who says learning can't be fun!

Using new strategies, communication tools, and service procedures, this half-day workshop provides participants with the necessary tools to make every customer interaction a positive experience. Through a variety of activities, participants have the opportunity to practice the concepts presented. Everyone leaves with a practical resource guide for future reference.

Whether you need to orient and prepare new employees for the peak season, or motivate teams for a grand opening, *Essentials of Service Excellence 2011* is a highly effective and cost-efficient way to equip your employees with the essential skills to exceed your customers' expectations.

NEW!

**Coming in November –
Building a Culture of
Service Excellence**

Service Excellence 2011 Orientation Webinars

What can be more convenient than preparing for the transition to *Service Excellence 2011* right from your own home or workplace? The *Service Excellence Orientation Webinar* provides in-house facilitators with all the necessary tools and knowledge necessary to accomplish this transition.

Participants of this interactive and engaging 60-minute webinar receive a comprehensive orientation to the newly updated workshop, explore the customer-centric model, review changes within each module, learn how to use exciting new multimedia features, and become familiar with the re-designed facilitator guide and resources. This webinar delivers everything a facilitator needs to feel confident to deliver *Service Excellence 2011* in their workplace or region.

Training Solutions for Your Organization

Sales Excellence Workshop

OTEC's informative and engaging workshop, *Sales Excellence*, is designed to meet the specific needs of internationally trained sales professionals. The program was recently delivered to an enthusiastic and appreciative audience. Participants completed the day of training feeling more confident in their already well-developed skills and better equipped to enter the Canadian market.



OTEC team members spent the afternoon with Mike McColl, one of the Good Earth's very talented chefs, enjoying food and drink from the Niagara region.

Industry Partnerships



Welcome to Toronto - We've Been Expecting You!

May and June saw approximately 250 tourism and hospitality service providers attend "Welcome to Toronto - We've Been Expecting You!" - a series of front-line and train-the-trainer workshops launched in partnership with the City of Toronto, Tourism Toronto and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. Participants from a wide range of tourism businesses benefitted from this newly developed customer service training program. More workshops are planned for the fall.



Hospitality Human Resource Professionals Association (HHRPA) Accessibility Training

Otec successfully delivered two **Accessibility Standards for Customer Service: Helping you Comply and Achieve Accessible Service Excellence** workshops for the Hospitality Human Resource Professionals Association. These workshops, developed in partnership with the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO), provided over 40 participants with the necessary tools to ensure organizational compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), which takes effect in January 2012.



Engaging Gen Y – Tapping into Talent

Gen Y represents a valuable but unique source of new employees, especially when it comes to the tourism and hospitality industry. Recognizing a specific need in the marketplace, Otec has partnered with the City of Toronto Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) and the Toronto Workforce Innovation Group (TWIG) to offer an exciting event combining a half-day workshop with a job fair. It's a unique and holistic approach to train employers on how to manage and motivate Gen Y employees while providing potential employment access to young graduates of Otec's *Essentials of Service Excellence* workshop.



Great Spirit Circle Trail (GSCT)

Otec's expertise in occupational train-the-trainer workshops was recently extended to a group of in-house trainers from the Great Spirit Circle Trail (GSCT), who learned how to deliver *emerit* National Occupational Certification and Customer Service training. The GSCT guides, hosts and interpreters, who offer a diverse portfolio of Aboriginal Cultural Experiences in the Manitoulin / Sagamok region, will be the first client group to receive this training in the coming months.

A Look Ahead

Hospitality Workers' Training Centre

Breaking news from 60 Richmond Street East...

Construction of the Hospitality Workers' Training Centre (HWTC) has begun! Developed by UNITE HERE Local 75, representing over 7,000 hotel, food service and gaming workers in the Greater Toronto Area, the centre will feature classrooms and a training restaurant where students will learn hands-on, basic culinary, serving and bartending skills.

Hotel industry partners are also helping to make the Training Centre a success. "As employers, we are pleased to be working in collaboration with UNITE HERE on this innovative project," says Kosta Tomazos, whose company CK Atlantis manages the One King West Hotel & Residence. "This is a much needed initiative for the Toronto hospitality industry. It also has the potential to become the first of many collaborative projects between hotel management and the major hospitality unions in Canada."



OTEC looks forward to partnering with UNITE HERE and integrating *emerit* Occupational Standards and certifications in the programming components being delivered.

emerit Certification Development

In collaboration with the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC), OTEC has been working with industry and academic partners from Ontario and across Canada to develop, validate, and update a range of *emerit* standards and certification programs. Here is what you can expect next:

- Hotel General Manager National Occupational Standards
- Food and Beverage Server On-line Learning Update
- Workplace Essentials Workbook Update
- Canadian Workplace Essentials Workbook Update
- Canadian Workplace Essentials On-line Learning

Partners & Stakeholders

Special Thanks to:



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