



For Immediate Release

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TWO INNOVATIVE WORKFORCE STRATEGY PROJECTS AIM TO SOLVE LABOUR ISSUES IN ONTARIO REGIONS

OTEC & ORHMA to expand and enhance workforce development efforts in 9 destinations across Ontario.

Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC) will continue its leadership efforts in bringing an innovative sector-based partnership planning and research process to several Ontario tourism regions over the next year. In partnership with the Ontario Restaurant Hotel Motel Association (ORHMA) these projects will enable stakeholders including regional tourism organizations, employers, educational institutes, employment service providers and workforce planning boards to develop collaborative strategies at the local level that align training with the skills needed by businesses.

OTEC has received funding to support regional partners in helping connect job seekers at all skill levels, including entry level candidates, to the training they need to access jobs, improve workforce performance, reduce turnover and to enable the tourism and hospitality sector to grow and compete in the new economy.

Building on planning sessions conducted across the province in 2017, OTEC will lead this project to address four strategic priorities: Foster an Environment of Focused Collaboration & Coordination; Develop a Reliable Talent Pipeline for Employers; Secure Opportunities for Jobseekers Lacking Transferrable Skills and Experience; and Enhance the Industry Image.

Victoria Behune, OTEC President & CEO states that *“Over the decades, OTEC has focused on creating sector-focused workforce solutions involving collaboration and partnerships to support the labour and skills needs of Ontario’s tourism and hospitality industry. These projects uniquely bring together employers, employment training and employment service providers towards progressive labour market research and regional workforce planning initiatives”*.

Launching in 9 destinations including Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the Lake, Thunder Bay, Quinte West, Gananoque/Brockville, Kingston, Windsor, Kitchener Waterloo, Toronto these projects are designed to provide valuable research, leverage innovative new workforce technology, and to integrate locals skills

and competency training with employment and training networks. This will help identify entry points and career paths within the sector for candidates irrespective of transferable skills or experience and to evaluate the effectiveness of this model.

"We have been working in partnership with OTEC for several years to develop a set of solutions that will connect job seekers and employers at all levels and enhance our productivity and competitiveness. This initiative will enable us to reach industry stakeholders across Ontario with a comprehensive strategy for addressing the labour and skills shortages affecting our industry." Tony Elenis, President & CEO for ORHMA.

Initial Project Partners for these pan-provincial workforce development initiatives include:

- Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association
- Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
- Regional Tourism Organization 9
- Tourism Northern Ontario
- Tourism Partnership of Niagara
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- KEYS Job Centre
- Unemployed Help Centre of Windsor Inc.
- Regional Tourism Organization 4
- Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin
- Learning Enrichment Foundation
- Thunder Bay LEPC
- Niagara Job Gym
- Conestoga College
- Magnet

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About OTEC

OTEC is an Ontario-based independent, not-for-profit training, consulting & workforce development organization that delivers high quality, creative and branded solutions for the development and growth of a professional, skilled workforce. It is the leading source support for communities to build workforce capacity and for companies to attract, retain, and develop high performing employees and become Employer of Choice organizations. OTEC is the premier source for Customer Service training and strategy development, Tourism Ambassador training, leadership skills training and certifications and education products and services for tourism, hospitality and service oriented organizations in a wide range of industry sectors both nationally and internationally.

About ORHMA

The Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association (ORHMA) is the largest provincial hospitality association in Canada. With over 4,000 members, representing more than 11,000 establishments across the province, the ORHMA is uniquely positioned to represent the issues that most impact your business.

ORHMA represents the industry's interests at both the Provincial and Municipal levels of government. Through our specialized in-house government relations experts, our provincial Board of Directors and our local Regional Boards, the Association provides pertinent and timely advice on industry-specific issues to politicians across the province. The Association's dedicated and professional Membership Team provides ORHMA members with meaningful cost-saving programs and unique educational services.

ORHMA is dedicated to fostering a positive business climate for Ontario's hospitality industry, while providing value-added services to its members