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Career Momentum

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Alberta Drug Treatment Courts Using Strengths to Link Individuals and Families to Employment & Training

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By: Tracey Campbell; Career Practitioner, Edmonton Alberta

Just over 12% of Canadians have a criminal record and 1 in 5 Canadians has a mental health issue. Approximately 20% of those diagnosed with a mental health issue will also have an alcohol or drug addiction. These Canadians often struggle to find and keep employment in today's competitive labour market. The Canadian justice system has seen a sharp increase in the incarceration of individuals due to drug related offences. In 1998 Drug Treatment Courts were introduced to Canada. These courts provide an alternative to incarceration through a rigorous continuum of programs and services. Participants are required to complete addictions treatment, attend judicial reviews weekly, participate in career and educational planning and then attend a full time training or employment program. Most participants spend twelve to eighteen months in the program prior to graduating. Sentencing usually consists of one day of probation.

In Alberta, the Edmonton Drug Treatment and Community Restoration Court (EDTCRC) program uses a continuum of community programs and supports to propel participants forward and enhance their quality of life. The addictions issues are met by attendance at residential treatment programs, completion of a wide range of addictions workshops offered by Alberta Health Services (formerly AADAC) and mandatory participation in individual and group addictions counselling. Individuals are encouraged to investigate their physical and mental health issues by attending appointments with medical professionals. The program provides one-on-one counselling with one of two psychologists that are contracted by the EDTCRC. Participants are referred to financial and health literacy workshops, career planning and a specialized workshop called "Criminal & Addictive Thinking" that assists individuals over a 10 week period to discover how their addictive behaviours can be changed to avoid issues with the criminal justice system.

At the heart of the EDTCRC program is career development – participants work with a career counsellor to work through the career planning process to determine realistic career and employment goals. Participants use the Alberta Learning Information System (ALIS) website to complete self-assessment exercises and create their career portfolio. Once occupations are chosen participants are assisted with learning how to use existing labour market information. Educational planning consists of using the website in concert with targeted information interviews with training providers and employers. Individuals are empowered through bi-weekly career coaching and mentorship throughout the web of professionals working with these individuals.

Alberta Drug Treatment Courts Using Strengths to Link Individuals and Families to Employment & Training continued...

Partnerships with employers in the transportation & logistics, construction, retail and social services sectors have been established to assist participants with obtaining full time employment. Participants in the Canadian Drug Treatment Court programs are also required to complete at least 50 hours of community service. The EDTCRC program assists participants with finding volunteer opportunities that will build participant's self-esteem as well as their resumes.

The EDTCRC celebrated its fifth anniversary in March of 2011, with many graduates of the program having completed certificate and diploma programs and maintaining full time employment. The court program has also celebrated eight healthy births of children born to male and female participants of the program. Participants often tell Judge Darlene Wong that the program has "saved their lives".

For additional information and resources check the following links:
[Edmonton Drug Treatment & Community Restoration Court program](#)
[John Howard Society](#)
[Elizabeth Fry Society](#)

The ALIS Website's CAREERinsite: Empowering Albertans through Self-Assessment & Labour Market Research

By: Tracey Campbell; Career Practitioner, Edmonton Alberta

Individuals with multiple employment barriers often need to build self-esteem and self-confidence. One way to do this is to empower individuals through self-discovery. Recent enhancements to the ALIS website allow individuals to inventory their interests, skills, values and personality.

Albertans can now develop their digital career plan online, step by step, by signing up to use this online tool. The Alberta Government has added a wide range of self-assessment quizzes and exercises to assist individuals with working through the career planning process. These exercises seamlessly link to occupational options and labour market information. Career professionals and human resource consultants can assign exercises and then review them with their clients. The enhancements to CAREERinsite make working through the career planning process fun and easy for both the participant and his or her career coach.

www.careerinsite.alberta.ca

Information & Support Resources for Persons with Barriers to Finding or Maintaining Employment:

By: Victoria (Vicky) Driver; Career Practitioner, Lester B. Pearson High School

NEWCOMERS TO ALBERTA

- [Calgary Catholic Immigration Society](#)
Adults: Calgary Catholic Immigration Society [assists immigrants to get into the Oil Patch](#)
Youth: [Immigrant Youth Outreach Project](#) (IYOP) Employment Counselling: Ongoing employment workshops and individual counselling to help youth gain Canadian work experience. Learn how to create a resume and cover letter, search and apply for jobs and map out your career path.
- **Centres for New Comers**
[Calgary](#)
[Edmonton](#)
- [Career Connection](#) (new website) No charge career services including Job Search, Career Planning and Coaching

YOUTH

- [MotiveAction](#) Training & experience for youth in the automotive industry
- [Calgary Construction Association Youth Employment Program](#)

OLDER WORKERS

- ALIS Resources:
Guide for Midlife Career Moves: PDF or print copy from [ALIS](#)
Changes and Transitions: print or PDF from [ALIS](#)
What Works: [Career Building Strategies for Older Workers](#)
- [Reinvent Your Career by Upgrading Your Skills](#) – Calgary Herald article

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- [Champions Career Services Calgary](#)
- [Employabilities](#) (Edmonton)
- [Excel Society](#) (Calgary and Edmonton) Resources for Persons with Disabilities in Alberta (not all about employment) but includes agencies in addition to the ones highlighted for WTW

WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- Women in the Trades
Calgary [Vermilion Energy Training Centre](#)
Edmonton [Women Building Futures](#)
- Calgary [Imm igrant Women's Association](#)
- Edmonton [Changing Together](#)

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

Do not rely on anecdotal information that you receive from friends or family. You need to check current labour market information as part of career planning and decision making. The work seeker needs to realize that LMI is merely a snap shot of what is known now and predictions for the near future. It is only one tool; unless the downward trend is persistent, using today's statistics could lead someone to a false conclusion.

Information & Support Resources for Persons with Barriers to Finding or Maintaining Employment cont....

EXAMPLE:

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Work Sector: Many people have concluded that ICT is not a 'hot' career sector. It is true that the ICT sector was overpopulated with workers as recently as 2009, but it has had a phenomenal turnaround that is predicted to continue for several years. This is a recent report from the ICT sector council with the [Alberta Outlook](#).

PRINT RESOURCES

Available in Service Canada Centres and/or [ALIS](#) e-products:

- *Workability: What you need to get and keep a job*
- *Job Smart: Tips for Staying Employed*
- *Welcome to Alberta Information for Newcomers*
- *The Easy Reading Series: Several different publications or news tabloid style documents for clients and counsellors or educators*
- *What Works Career Building Strategies for People from Diverse Groups including: Ex-Offenders, Older Workers, Youth, Immigrants, and Persons with various types of disabilities*

Who is Tristram Hooley and Why Should I Care?

By: Karen Lamothe; Manager, Outreach and Delivery Services, Advanced Education and Technology

Tristram Hooley, PhD works at the University of Derby and thinks about education, career, politics, music, and a range of other stuff. This is how he introduces himself on his [blog site hosted by Posterous](#). Well, who really is Tristram Hooley?

He is the Head of the International Centre for Guidance Studies, and a NICEC Fellow, in the UK. Tristram took a trip to Canada this summer and spent some time touring Alberta. Not just to experience the majestic landscapes we have to offer, but to learn about our career development services for adults, career services/classes for high school students and some research projects through our universities.

On his blog, Tristram has posted his findings of our career development profession and services within Canada and Alberta, as well as providing some comparison to the UK system. So take a few moments and read his postings as they will provide you with a lens on our system from an outsider's perspective. Some good reading starts with his [Presentation on my Canadian trip to iCeGS associates meeting](#) and moving on to [Harvey Krahn](#) and his research project at the University of Alberta. The articles are on [the second page](#) starting with a [Norm Amundsen](#) story and continue with findings in regards to Alberta's career development field.

As I read Tristram's blog it helped to solidify a broader understanding of the career development field across Canada. But it also illustrates how disjointed we are, the various systems and professionals, from government, academia, secondary education and private industry. Only by having all the facets come together to enhance our profession at all levels will we be able to find better acknowledgment and respect for the career development field.

An Exciting Time to be working in Careers & Advising

By: Margo Dilger, Program Director, University of Calgary Continuing Education

In the past year or so I have been fortunate to attend two key career conferences across Canada. In January, I attended for the first time, the CANNEXUS conference in Ottawa. Beyond the -40° temperatures, the event was a huge success, and it was great to meet practitioners and organizations from across the country who are dedicated to helping individuals meet their full career potential. Previous to that, I attended the CACEE conference in Halifax in 2010. Again, a great event put on by dedicated volunteers to showcase what is happening with career educators and employers doing hiring across our campuses.

It was at the CACEE conference where I learned of the annual awards that CACEE presents each year to new programs. Having had strong success with our new Career & Academic Advising certificate in its first year of operations, a campus member working in Student and Enrolment services put forward the program for nomination. I am very pleased to announce that the certificate was the recipient of the “2011 CACEE Excellence in Innovation Award – Technology” for its tremendous efforts in the industry based on the program’s online delivery and innovative curriculum. Congratulations to all our excellent instructors for making this happen, as well as our dedicated students who put a great deal of effort into successfully completing their certificates. Thanks also to the CDAA for its support of the program since its inception.

From research I did in 2009 to move the program from on campus to online, the need for training in the career and academic advising profession was increasing. In a previous discussion with the then director of our career centre, I learned that universities all over Canada had been hiring advisors and student service staff in record numbers to attract and retain students and improve the student experience. Similarly, centres for newcomers to Canada had also been hiring career development professionals to help foreign-trained professional transition from careers in their home countries to careers and training in Canada. In addition, high school guidance counselors were playing an ever increasing role with advising students for post-secondary study. The Career Development Practitioner position was being staffed at every Calgary-area high school. Finally, the career advisor job title had been posted on a major job website as an “up and coming career” on their list of “Top 10 Hot Careers.” These factors lead to the reinvention of the program to our fully online, participative program offered today.

There are several benefits to the online format. First, students can take the program anywhere/anytime on a computer with a reliable Internet connection. Second, the time spent each week on course work can be balanced with busy work, family and community commitments. Third, the learning experience for students is unique in that they receive perspectives from students given the program is available across the country and even internationally. Finally, intake is year-round so students can start any time the next course is starting.

New to our area of Adult Learning is the Campus Recruiting Certificate. Are you working, or plan to be working, in the field of campus or college recruitment? Do you want to be able to more fully understand recruitment and selection, career development foundations and how social media can assist you in your workplace? Do you want to turn your position from an expense into an investment for your organization? If so, our new 100-hour online program may suit your needs. The certificate hours can be fully transferred to the Certificate in Adult Learning as well as our Human Resources Certificate.

Visit our website for more details on these or any other Adult Learning programs.

<http://conted.ucalgary.ca/cal/>

Whatever Happened to...? Letter from That Guy

Have you ever wondered what happens to people as they drift in and out of our lives? Friends, acquaintances, work colleagues and *that guy/gal* who you spotted at many events but you just can't remember their name.

After spending sixteen years working as a Career/Educational/Employment/Funding Advisor in Alberta, I have now quietly become *that guy*. I originally left my home town of Manitoba back in 1995 to take a full time one year career program in Edmonton that opened my eyes to the Career Development field forever. I was lucky enough to be taught directly by people like Barry Day and Dave Redekopp who were not only brilliant at what they did, but showed me what true passion can accomplish when you love what you do for a living.

I have been blessed to have worked for many great organizations that spanned from youth at risk employment programs in Edmonton to adult High School upgrading students in Calgary. In all, I worked for five organizations that allowed me to indulge in my never ending need for variety and constant learning. For that I am thankful.

I worked with and met some of the most passionate people I have ever seen who truly want to help people make better career decisions and improve their lives. I wish I could thank each individual for their assistance, friendship, and commitment to helping me offer my clients the best advice, coaching, and information that I could. You know who you are.

As with all of us, our lives take many twists and turns and mine has taken a u-turn back to Winnipeg. I have always prided myself in the fact that I not only talk the talk, but I have also walked the walk. I have been the poor student with student loan debt. I have been the person who was willing to leave their life behind to follow their dream with only \$500 in their pocket. I have had to access Employment Insurance when times were tough. I have been that kid who left High School without a career/life plan. As Career Practitioners we talk about career decision making to our clients as a never ending process that involves constant learning and the ability to adapt to circumstances and forge our own paths. Well, here I am again walking the talk.

I have chosen to take a year hiatus from work to explore what life has to offer. I have already spent my summer renovating my new house and am currently in Victoria, BC spending the next 6 weeks finishing a book I wrote three years ago. After that, who knows?

I leave you with a recent quote that has gone viral, but in my opinion, sums up the need for Career Practitioners like ourselves... "Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life" Steve Jobs. Amen.

That Guy (Robert Shewchuk)

A journey is best measured in friends rather than miles.

~Tim Cahill