

The Learning Curve

Adult Education and Vocational Training Newsletter

1st Edition

Multi-Cultural Day at the Hull Adult Education Centre

By Warren Halligan
Principal
Hull Adult Education

The Hull Adult Education Centre celebrated Multi-Cultural Day on November 18, 2004. This activity began five years ago as the ethnic makeup of the student population became more and more diverse. Over the years the celebration has grown in scope and context. This year was a wonderful example of the organizational skills of the student council and the coordination of the event by David Hetherington, teacher at the Hull Centre.

A lavish lunch hour meal was arranged in the gymnasium. All food donated by students and staff, illustrated the cosmopolitan makeup of the centre. Over thirty-five (35) ethnic groups and nationalities were represented from amongst the Hull Centre population. A number of students attended the event wearing their national dress.

Following the dinner, entertainment was provided by various students. This included musical and dance acts, as well as feats of gymnastics performed by a student who previously trained with the Cirque du Soleil.

The whole event was a wonderful celebration of ethnic diversity, as well as providing the opportunity for students and staff to share a common meal and relax in each other's company.

T P S at WQCC

By Ingrid de Pauw
Secretarial Studies Student
WQCC

On December 2, 2004, the Western Québec Career Centre experienced its first T P S (Tools for Professional Success) Workshops. The event was a great success.

Students were given the opportunity to attend three workshops of their choice. In all, nine amazing workshops were offered during the afternoon, including: *Ethics in the Workplace* – what you can expect in the workplace, - *Professional Etiquette* – tips for smoothing your way, *Working with Difficult People* – tips on listening and when to intervene, *Business Meetings* – how to run a meeting, and *Counterfeiting* – tips on recognizing real money, to name a few. Educators, as well as professionals from the private sector, led the workshops, sharing their skills and expertise with the students.

In keeping with the philosophy of the WQCC, these workshops allow the students to continually develop in order to reach their full potential. These positive learning experiences also enable students to better meet the changing needs of our society.



Pontiac Continuing Education Centre: New Program in a New Location

By Peter Ruppell
Principal, Pontiac, Maniwaki, Val d'Or
Adult Education and Vocational Training
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Nurse's Aid at St. John's in Campbell's Bay

The Pontiac Continuing Education Centre, based at Pontiac High School in Shawville, has expanded to include a new program at a new location. *Health Care and Nursing Assistance* is a Québec Ministry of Education program, leading to a Diploma of Vocational Studies.

The Health Care and Nursing Assistance program is being offered for the first time by the Western Québec School Board (and for the first time in English west of the island of Montreal). Twenty-one students began two years of classroom studies and on-the-job training on January 14th, 2005. Upon successful completion of the program, students will qualify as Registered Nursing Assistants with the *Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers auxillaires du Québec*.

One problem that had to be overcome before the program could begin was that the vocational facilities in the Pontiac High building were filled to capacity. The Western Québec School Board offered the Centre the use of the former building of St. John's Elementary School in Campbell's Bay. The building has been unoccupied since last fall, when St. John's students moved to John Paul II School, just up the road.

In order to have the building ready for the students to begin classes at the end of

New Program in New Location (con't)

Christmas vacation, WQSB buildings staff and private contractors worked over the holidays, moving equipment, painting and cleaning. In early January the Technology Department installed a network server and a computer laboratory. The facilities now include the classroom, the hospital simulation room, a cafeteria and a student common room, and a computer lab with high speed Internet.



Val d'Or Partnership Reaches Community

By Ruth Ahern
Education Director

Western Québec's Community Access Centre (CACI), located in the Val D'or Adult Education Centre, provides Internet access to the general public for a nominal fee.

Operational since November 2000, the CACI was funded through a partnership between Industry Canada and Adult Education and Vocational Training Services of the Western Québec School Board.

Since its opening, annual visits to the CACI have grown from 125 to more than 2500.

More than 60 per cent of the CACI users are male, with the majority falling in the 30 years and older age range. Thirty per cent of all users are over the age of 50.

Most of the CACI clientele (66%) use the CACI to surf the world wide web, while slightly more than 21% use it to access their e-mail.

ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

By H  l  ne Leboeuf
Consultant, Action Research Project

The WQSB is one of the thirteen School Boards to lead an action research project with the MEQ on the Reception, Referral, Counseling and Support Services. The subject of this research is on referral in a rural milieu. Specifically, this project is carried out in the territories served by the Pontiac, Maniwaki and Val d'Or Centres including the satellite service provided in Noranda. The main purpose of this research is to see how we can put in place a referral system in partnership with various agencies and organizations, in order to better direct adults towards educational and specialized services.

To be able to organize a referral system, we started by identifying the needs of the adult learners. We interviewed the staff as well as 34 adult students in general education and vocational training who expressed their needs in terms of services they wish to have access to, to support them in their studies. In link with the identified needs, each centre started to explore the resources available in their area. Wow! What a discovery! Not only have we re-connected with our regular partners but we created new links with new agencies and organizations. We learned more about the other services that are available close to the Centres, that we can refer our clientele to. Agencies and organizations were also introduced to our programs, which some of them didn't know about. Some of them were invited to our Centres to present their services to the adult students and the staff. A network is growing and new partnerships are beginning!

What's more, we gathered together the available services into a bank of resources which will be on the WQSB website later on. Up to now, we have listed close to 200 resources with their addresses, phone numbers, descriptions of their services and contact persons. These are useful contacts to refer our clientele to.

Action Research Project (con't)

For the Centres, it's an opportunity to open their doors to the community and to be known and recognized. We hope that agencies, organizations and Centres will eventually sit together to discuss the challenges that adult learners face, and explore the possible development of learning communities.



Sign Posts

- **The Maniwaki Adult Education and Vocational Training Centre is hosting a Service Fair April 27, 2005.** The fair will see community organizations and agencies brought together at the Centre to highlight services offered.
- **Qu  bec Adult Learners' Week takes place April 2 to 8, 2005.** Organized by the Institut de cooperation pour l'  ducation des adultes (ICEA), the week highlights the experience of learners, the many venues for learning as well as the organizations and people involved in adult education and training. Stay tuned for more news about how to get involved.
- The nine English language school boards, including Western Qu  bec, have recently completed a comprehensive five-year **vocational training strategic plan.** The plan, which was unanimously supported by the Council of Commissioners of all the involved school boards, was presented to the Ministry of Education in late January 2005.

WESTERN QUÉBEC CAREER CENTRE

Open House

January 26, 2005



By Margaret Turcotte
Principal WQCC

On January 26 from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Western Québec Career Centre held an Open House for the public and students of the Western Québec Career Centre.



During the afternoon, students attended interactive workshops presented by students and teachers, to highlight Accounting, Automobile Mechanics, Electronic Audio/Visual Repair, Home Care and Family and Social Assistance, Hotel Reception, Secretarial Studies and Travel Sales. Students and teachers found that the workshops provided valuable information on course content, entrance requirements and cost.

During the evening, a reception was held providing additional information and tours of the modern and pleasant facility.

