

Job fair opens doors for education students

UPEI education job fair opens its doors to students, with suggestions to bring resumes

By Ryan Ross

Holland College

The UPEI education job fair gives students a lot of opportunities, says the fair's education coordinator.

Basil Favaro, an education professor, is one of three coordinators from the university who helped organize the annual event.

Favaro said the 33 school boards

and recruiting agencies who attended the fair gave students the opportunity to meet boards looking to hire.

"We're into helping students."

The fair was held at the Rodd Charlottetown Feb. 5-6 with school boards from across Canada, Korea, United Kingdom, China and Japan.

Other universities in the Maritimes have their own job fairs but UPEI's is unique because it is open to

everyone, Favaro said.

He said about 50 job-seekers came from off-Island because they didn't have their own.

"They really appreciate that this fair was open to all education grads."

Mamdouh Elgharib, a career development specialist at UPEI and one of the fair's coordinators, said there were hundreds of jobs available.

Although they don't know the total number for hirings, he estimated about 100 interviews were done over the two days.

"Contracts were signed yesterday."

And some of those contracts were for jobs in Fort McMurray where the starting salary is \$70,000, he said.

The starting salary on P.E.I. is \$45,000.

"It's a good incentive," he said.

Elgharib said one of the recruiters for Fort McMurray was a UPEI graduate who was hired at the fair two years ago and is now the vice principal at her school.

"Here's an example of what could happen."

Favaro said the fair has grown since the first year when they had about 25 school boards.

Even though they could use a bigger space, the fair is always held at the Rodd Charlottetown because the boards appreciate the classiness of the hotel, instead of having it in a gym like other job fairs, he said.

Favaro said they now set a limit because one year they had over 50 boards and couldn't fit everyone.

"The venue can accommodate so many."

This year was the first time the fair was held during the week instead of on a weekend because some of the boards were involved in another job fair the same week, he said.

Favaro said they will try and bring it back to the weekend next year.

"Overall the boards were very pleased."

Young adults don't recognize grief symptoms

Twenty per cent of Holland College counsellor's work deals with the grieving process

By Ellen Klein

Holland College

Young adults don't always recognize symptoms of grief in their own lives, says a Charlottetown grief counselor.

Andrea Conway is the hospice coordinator of patient services at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Charlottetown.

She is also involved with the Queens chapter of the Hospice and Palliative Care Association in P.E.I.

She was originally scheduled to give a Dealing with Loss workshop for Holland College students at the Tourism and Culinary Centre on Thursday, Feb. 21 from 6-9 p.m. at the request of the college's counseling department.

Low registration numbers were responsible for the cancellation of the workshop.

Most young adults find it harder to express what they are feeling, Conway said.

"They often feel that they are a little weird and maybe crazy."

June Harper of Holland College's counseling services said she organ-

ized the workshop to help students.

"[It was] in response to student needs who are dealing with imminent loss or who have had a loss."

Roughly 20 per cent of her work is directly or indirectly involved with the grieving process, Harper said.

"They may see me about difficulty in sleeping, attendance, depression, or academic concerns, but then disclose they are trying to cope with a very ill or death of a parent, sibling, immediate family member, or close friend."

Conway said young adults share the stigma of going to a counselor, so it's harder to get them to come to this type of event.

"They don't have a base of experience to recognize symptoms."

Symptoms such as depression, anger, sleeplessness, racing or obsessive thoughts may indicate unresolved grief, she said.

"Not moving through it is not normal."

Conway spent her early years in Cape Town, South Africa, where she also got her education.

She had four years of psychotherapy training and was often confronted with grieving people, even among

volunteers, she said.

Grief counseling has evolved over the years, starting with the medical model, which suggested grief was not normal.

But now it is seen as a normal part of life, she said.

"You get to the point where you can come out the other end of a rather sad tunnel."

Some get stuck, Conway added.

"They need a little kick start."

Harper had hoped participants would leave the session knowing what they are experiencing is normal and with healthy coping tips, she said.

"Every person deals with grief differently and for different lengths of time and there are supports in place that can help them through that difficult time."

Conway has offered her counseling services to Holland College students in lieu of the Dealing With Loss workshop. Call June Harper at 894-6833, or email jharper@hollandc.pe.ca.

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