



## EASTERN WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

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Your Local Labour Market

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5 | DECEMBER 2023

### WORDS FROM THE ED

Frank O'Hearn  
Executive  
Director



Greetings everyone. Trust all is well as we move into a new calendar year. Our office continues its work in sharing and promoting the use of local, labor

market intelligence to our community. As they say, we have to keep the popcorn popping. I would like to take this opportunity to provide a brief overview of our work and its outcomes.

Our office visited a number of Employment Ontario sites and Economic Development offices in our communities this past few months. The intent of this outreach was to gather their feedback on the various labor market pressures that our citizens and community were experiencing. We have captured their responses within our Local Labor Market Planning report and we strongly encourage you to review this report which should be available for review in the early months of 2024.

You may review this report and our past reports to the community within our website. <https://www.workforcedev.ca> It is important to re-iterate that since the COVID-19 pandemic, our communities have experienced employment growth and relatively low unemployment. It continues to be a job seeker market where there are ample employment opportunities for them to choose from. Because of this demand/supply imbalance, many employers continue to have difficulty in finding workers.

In our outreach to the employer community, forty-one (41) employers responded to a labour shortages survey conducted in the fall of 2023 by our office. All but two employers or 95% indicated they were having difficulty finding workers. Employers were having difficulty finding workers in various sectors but the three main sectors where in: Skilled Trades, Health Care and Accommodation, Food and Beverage.

Our office also included discussions with our six Employment Ontario providers in our area and they have advised that they are experiencing a downward trend in clients accessing/requesting their services. This is due in part to the fact that there are a significant number of employment vacancies for job ready clients to access directly within our community and the need for an intervention / counselling has decreased. They (job ready clients) do not need assistance from Employment Ontario office. However, there continues to be pressures on the employer community as they are struggling to meet their workforce needs.

Many of the clients who are requesting assistance are laboring in their job search and many have various personal issues affecting their employment goals. These client pressures include mental illness, housing, transportation and day care needs. These are certainly very complicated client issues and

the Employment Ontario offices have limitations in respect to their ability to assist them. Mental health issues continue to be one of the major issues identified.

However, there are a number of positive discussion points to reflect on as we move forward into 2024.

These are:

- Lots of Jobs
- Wages are increasing
- Low unemployment rate
- National child care program was approved by the province
- Inflation rates are trending downward
- Projected job growth over the next 4 years
- We have a highly educated workforce in our region.
- Affordable housing starts being promoted
- Transportation challenges are on the radar
- Strong economy
- Employers developing initiatives to retain and hire workers
- Our region has experienced growth in our population base
- Positive growth in the number of new apprenticeships in our region < 39 %>
- We reside in a beautiful region that has a strong infrastructure.

There is no question that there are continuing pressures on our employers and our citizens in addressing our workforce challenges. It is equally imperative that as a community we continue to work collectively in addressing these on-going challenges as we need a skilled workforce to sustain our economy and tax base. Continued supports are needed by all three levels of government to ensure our communities prosper and grow. Positive messaging and actions are critical to this on-going exercise.

## WHAT THE BOARD IS UP TO?

### LLMP Report:

A presentation of the highlights of the LLMP Report was made December 13, 2023.

The LLMP Report will be sent to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, posted on our website and distributed to the community in February.

### Workforce Development:

The board will continue to publish the newsletter this fiscal. The board will host the Employment Network Committee meetings.

### Employer Engagement:

The Labour Market Information (LMI) Help Desk is a tool that is offered to the public to answer questions about your local areas. The EWIB has hired local Labour Market Information Consultant to respond directly to your questions.

Our LMI Help Desk service can answer questions such as:

- What skills are in demand in my area?
- What is the demographic of workers in my area?
- What is the demand for my occupation?

- What is the breakdown of industries in my area?

We provide answers to questions about economic trends, industry and occupational breakdowns, wages demographics and more.

To ask a question, click here [LMI Help Desk - Ask a Question](#)



### Jobs Tool 2020-2023 :

The Jobs Tool application is available on our website: [www.workforcedev.ca](http://www.workforcedev.ca) This resource will provide an aggregate of jobs in our region with supporting information.

Videos of potential careers. Go to our website to see videos of careers in our region.

<https://www.workforcedev.ca/career-videos/>

## MEET SOME OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF OF THE EASTERN WORKFORCE



Left to right Teanne Laroque, George Horton, Dale Jones, Maureen Keeler, Paris Escandon, Frank O'Hearn.

Some board members and staff attended the Leeds Grenville Economic Development Summit in Kemptville.

## CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CHAMBERS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

### Kingston Economic Development Commission

Up coming events: **January 8, 2024-Mission to the Biotech Showcase 2024** The 16th Annual Biotech Showcase is an important investor and partnering conference for private, small and mid-sized and digital health companies.

**January 9, 2024 10:00am Kingston Frontenac Public Library**-Improving Your Digital Presence-Empowering small businesses through digital grants. Join us for an engaging event that focuses on helping small businesses harness the full potential of their digital presence by utilizing grants designed to support investments in digital technologies. In this informative session, you'll gain invaluable insights and practical strategies for optimizing your online footprint.

**January 25, 2024 12:00pm Exploring Entrepreneurship** -Kingston Frontenac Public Library- Are you ready to explore entrepreneurship? Join Norm Musengimana from Kingston Economic Development to learn how to start your journey.

**EDCO Business Grant Support Program** – The intent of the Business Grant Support Program to assist businesses access funding programs and assist with the cost of hiring a grant writer. The program will offer 50% up to \$2,000 to be used to cover costs associated with writing a grant application.

### Brockville and District Chamber of Commerce

One Sweet Experience Development Workshop Thursday January 11 at 10:00am – 4:00pm. Clarence- Rockland join RTO 9 in-person on January 11, 2024 from 10 am-4pm to learn how to advance your ideas around creating and delivering highly memorable visitors experiences. The appetite for agritourism is very healthy today, as people want to buy local, learn where their food comes from, engage with you, the farmer/producer, and participate in hands-on activities that have them making and tasting.

**Join RTO 9 and ITO for “Partnerships & Paths”** -a 2 hour long webinar open to tourism operators in RTO 9 eager to learn about the beautiful cultures of Indigenous communities and take a step forward in your understanding of how everyone can work together in the spirit of reciprocity to support the growth of responsible tourism.

**Join the Brockville and District Chamber of Commerce for Breakfast and update from the Federal Government by MP Barrett.** Registration is 7:30am, Breakfast starts at 8:00am, Update from MP Barrett will be after Breakfast. Cost Members \$39.00, Non Members \$44.00. Held at Brockville Country Club 1548 King Street West Brockville.

## EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO AGENCIES UPDATE



### ACFOMI

#### COVER LETTER WORKSHOP

##### **Are you having difficulty writing a cover letter?**

If so, ACFOMI Employment Services has a workshop that is given virtually. This workshop will provide you with ideas on what to include in your cover letter.

When:

Thursday December 14th at 10am,

Tuesday January 10th at 10am

Tuesday February 16th at 10am

Tuesday March 12th at 10am

To register: Call ACFOMI Employment Services at 613-546-7863

Avez-vous de la difficulté d'écrire une lettre de motivation?

#### INTERVIEW STRATEGIES WORKSHOP

##### **Do interviews make you nervous? ACFOMI Employment Services can help!**

We offer a virtual workshop on Interview Strategies.

When:

Tuesday December 19th at 10am

Tuesday January 23rd at 10am

Tuesday February 20th at 10am

Tuesday March 19th at 10am

To register: Call ACFOMI Employment Services at 613-546-7863

#### RESUME WITH IMPACT

##### **Do you have a resume, ACFOMI Employment Services can help!**

**We offer a virtual workshop on resume!**

When:

Tuesday January 9th at 10am

Tuesday February 6th at 10am

Tuesday March 5th at 10am

To register: Call ACFOMI Employment Services at 613-546-7863



## **CSE Consulting**

### **CAREER IN CORRECTIONS INFORMATION SESSION**

Join CSE Consulting and the Ministry of the Solicitor General as they provide insight into the recruitment process for a career in correctional services. Ask your career questions, receive advice and get the tools and resources you will need to help you in your job search.

Join us in person at our next information session:

CSE Kemptville  
Tuesday, January 16, 2024  
3:00pm – 4:00pm  
613-258-6576

CSE Prescott  
Thursday, January 25, 2024  
3:00pm – 4:00pm  
613-925-0222  
Please call to register as space is limited.  
Shannon Liscumb (she/her)



## **1000 Islands Gananoque Chamber of Commerce**

### **WHY JOIN THE CHAMBER?**

Being active in the 1000 Islands Gananoque Chamber of Commerce is an effective business strategy. Studies show that being active in a local chamber is in fact, 29% more

effective for communicating to consumers that a company uses good business practices and 26% more effective for communicating that a business is reputable.

It has been found that when a company is highly involved in its local Chamber, consumers are 12% more likely to think that its products stack up better against its competition. Consumers tend to believe that active chamber members are more trustworthy, better industry leaders and highly regarded volunteers in the community.

When our members are active in the Chamber, it communicates to consumers that these companies have good business practices; are actively involved in the community, care about their consumers and are in fact a reputable company.

There are a plethora of reasons to join a local chamber. Number one is visibility; you stand out, get noticed as an active member of the community. It's not just who you know, it's other two others who know - networking is powerful. There are member to member discounts. Businesses can offer a discount on products and services. Credibility, your reputation matters, chamber membership is respected by the community. Voice, we advocate on your behalf! Quality training and educational opportunities. Economic growth is bringing business to the area by promoting tourism and events.

The 1000 Islands Gananoque Chamber strives to represent the interest of the business community more effectively than any one person could do on their own. We provide leadership, promote partnerships, and open lines of communication in the interest of business and community growth. The chamber provides an opportunity to invest in the future of the community, and thereby the prosperity of your individual business at a high rate of return.

The trick to your success - you **MUST** get involved. We hold the events - but you **NEED** to come. We provide the workshops and zoom calls, but you **MUST** attend.

Upcoming Events include our Annual Political Breakfast - date still to be announced but hoping for early February.

International Women's Day in March  
A Fashion Show in April  
Our Annual Golf Tournament in the late spring  
Our Annual Gala in the Fall  
and so much more!

Sincerely,  
Jan Murray  
Executive Director,  
1000 Islands Gananoque Chamber of Commerce  
10 King Street East  
Gananoque ON  
Work: 613.553-3414  
Arrival Guide: <https://1000islandsarrivalguide.com/>  
Website: [www.1000islandsganchamber.com](http://www.1000islandsganchamber.com)



## STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Bhavana Varma steps down from her role** as the head of the United Way Kingston, Frontenac, and Lennox and Addington after 24 years. She leaves it as a transformed organization. After finishing at the United Way, Varma said she plans to spend more time as her role as an honorary colonel with the 77 Line Regiment and training the leaders of charities and non-profit agencies as a way of building their capacity to help their clients. She is also looking forward to something that has not been an option since she started working with United Way, more than 30 years ago: She and her husband planned to take a vacation this fall, a time when the agency traditionally holds its major funding campaign.

**The City of Kingston is to move to Automated Garbage Collection System.** Kingston is planning to switch to an automated garbage collection system. Households across the city are to be issued standard garbage bins. About three-quarters of the city's 12 garbage trucks are due for replacement in the coming years to making the switch to an automated system which is already used in other municipalities in Ontario, would save the city money in operating costs. Currently, the city employs 32 people to work on the waste collection trucks, but the automated system could reduce that number by up to 16, prompting concern from some on council about potential job losses. Staff reductions related to the introduction of automation could be done through attrition or reassigning employees to other jobs within the municipality.



# St. Lawrence College

**St. Lawrence College announced** in September its nominees for the annual Colleges Ontario's Premier's Awards, which recognize outstanding contribution to society from graduates of Ontario colleges. "Our graduates are simply amazing, and we know they go on to make a difference in the world" SLC president and CEO Glenn Vollebregt said. "The strength of our programs is evident when looking at the incredible group of nominees, and the Premier's Award are a chance to showcase their contributions in their fields." The Premier's Awards, hosted by Colleges Ontario celebrate the achievements of Ontario college graduates in the province and throughout the world and recognize graduates in seven categories: Apprenticeship, Business, Community Services, Creative Arts and Design, Health Sciences, Recent Graduate, and Technology.

**Kingston's new Rona+ store officially** opened in September. The store is one of many previous Lowe's stores that are part of a cross-country rebranding this year. "A lot of work has gone into getting the store ready for our customers today, and I think they've done a tremendous job of making sure that the store is clean and fresh and full ready to go, and really representing the best possible version of what Rona+ could be," store manager Robert Macmillan said.



**It is an end of an Era for Ramekins restaurant.** Joe de Couto's establishment, known for casual dining, fine cuisine and much more, closed its dining room for the final time the end of November. De Couto is opting to only offer takeout, catering to continue its Heat and Eat Meals program going forward. De Couto will remain the owner of the building that houses Ramekins until the end of November, when he will either remain as a tenant or have to find an alternate location. The plan as of now, he said, is to stay put as the incoming owners have told him he's welcome to stay as long as he wants short term, until the building is razed to make way for a parking lot. The staff level will go from 32 employees to six.

**Metroland Media Group plans to end the print** editions of its community newspapers and will exit the flyer business as it seeks protection under the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act as part of a restructuring plan. The move will mean the loss of 605 jobs or about 60 percent of its total workforce. Newsletters affected include those in Perth, Renfrew, Arnprior, Smith Falls and Kemptville.

"The media industry continues to face existential challenges, largely because digital tech giants have used their dominant positions to take vast majority of the advertising revenue in Canada", the company said in a statement.

**While Canopy Growth's recent** announcement that it's selling the former Hershey plant in Smiths Falls back to the company that made it famous might feel like deja vu all over again, Sean Lawrence says the community is not the same place the chocolate-maker left in 2008. "The attitude in Smiths Falls is completely different than it was 15 years ago," says Lawrence, the president of the Smiths Falls Chamber Commerce. Pankow, the mayor says the confectionery giant is still working out its plan for the facility, including what exactly it will be used for and how many workers it will employ.

Thirteen community service organizations in the Kingston region are set to receive nearly \$600,000 in funding, thanks to Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund. The United Way of Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington is delivering \$593,033 in grants from the program across its catchment area, it announced in October. According to its press release, the United Way money is designed to help organizations recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following organizations are benefiting from the program: The Alzheimer Society of KFL&A, The Amherstview Lions Club, Bereaved Families of Ontario, Beth Israel Congregation, Girls Inc. Limestone, The Kingston Historical Society and Murney Tower Museum, New Leaf Link, Outreach St. George's Kingston, Resolve Counselling Services Canada, St. Andrew's By-the-lake United Church, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Sexual Assault Centre, Sydenham Street United Church.



Umicore announced that the first customers for the electric vehicle battery components would be the Automotive Energy Supply Corporation and the BMW Group. "Were excited to be part of the first steps of the supply chain in North America" Marc Belcourt, director of corporate communications with BMW Group Canada, said following the announcement. The Bath facility will manufacture cathode active and precursor materials on a large industrial scale. The facility is set to create more than 1,000 jobs during construction on its 350 acre plot of land. Once complete in 2025 and production ramps up in 2026, it is expected to offer 600 high-skilled jobs and 700 co-op positions for students. The company has already posted various positions available at the Loyalist Township location on their website.



The Grenville Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) in September marked another year of helping local business with the help of federal funding. The organization held its annual meeting in Johnstown Friday, looking at some highlights of the past year. Officials looked ahead to initiatives underway for the coming year, including communications rebrand and the launch of the Grenville Community Futures Initiative, an economic development program "supporting strategic economic development priorities benefiting the business community". Over the past

year, Grenville CFDC'S business loans program disbursed loans to 18 local business with financing valued at over 2.5 million, and affected the creation or retention of 47 jobs, local officials said. Through its free business advisory services, Grenville CFDC provided coaching to 167 business, with impact on 193 jobs.



Ross Video, the Iroquois- based live event productions firm that is a star among the regions manufacturing players, is Brockville Business of the Year. "This area...is such a wonderful place to live and work", said Jeff Poapst, the company's chief manufacturing officer, as he accepted the award on behalf of management. While the company is headquartered in Iroquois, Poast said many of its local employees live in Brockville, and Brockville companies played a key role in the South Dundas site's recent expansion.



Kehoe Marine Construction won the Skilled Trade Award at the 2023 1000 Islands Gananoque Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala at the Ivy Restaurant.

This award is given to a business that promotes careers in skilled trades education, to key audiences such as youth, parents and educators, including stakeholders. It is given to a company that has acted as an advocate to increase sustainability and promote Gananoque and the 1000 Islands. This award goes to a company that has demonstrated outstanding leadership.

## LINKS TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS

For Links to our community partners click on the link below to go to our website  
<https://www.workforcedev.ca/community-partners/>

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We would like to honor all the ancestral stewards of this land on which we create this newsletter for our region and all First Peoples of our indigenous communities .

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*The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of Employment Ontario.*