

NEWSLETTER

Issue #4 | March 2025



EASTERN WORKFORCE
INNOVATION BOARD



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that our office is situated on the traditional Audenosaneew Mohawk Territories with gratitude and respect, we acknowledge the significant contributions indigenous peoples have made to preserve the land around us.

Words From The Executive Director

Greetings from the Eastern Workforce Innovation Boards staff and board of Directors .



Community consultations and our outreach to the community reflects the following:

There certainly is a considerable amount of uncertainty within our local and regional economies these past few months. The recent changes in the issuance of student visas by the federal government has certainly been impacted various changes in programing at St. Lawrence College in Kingston and its other two campuses in Brockville and Cornwall . Many talented and dedicated employees of these institutions have been impacted because of the reductions in programing. These changes will certainly reduce the capacity of the college to react to the training needs of our community. These training needs will not decrease, and the issue will become more complex as the ability of other educational institutions may be limited in respect to their ability to respond to our community's needs. The college was not alone in its downsizing as the region experienced closures within the service sector in Kingston which included: Peavy Mart, Ricki's and Cleo stores, Golden Rooster Delicatessen and two of our local Beer Stores.

On the positive side - we certainly look forward to a prosperous and busy spring and summer with the hope that our region will experience a busy season.

The tariff debate with our American neighbors has created some reluctance in the hiring of new staff by the employer community as there is a climate of uncertainty in respect to our economic well-being and future. We have also observed that some of our local < manufacturing > employers who produce specific products for American based industries are concerned that the demand for their products will decrease in the states. It is reasoned that this product demand could be achieved by American based companies who will fill the void. Now - others will argue that this proposed new tariff structure, and its outcomes will result in better coordination of the Canadian economies and flow of goods across provincial boundaries. A further discussion point is that our region is blessed with an abundance of visitors and our hospitality sector is booming because of this influx of visitors. The potential impacts of tariffs could certainly impact on the financial ability of our citizens to travel and enjoy our local hospitality. Accordingly, one could argue the strong American dollar could result in increased travel to Canada from our neighbors to the south.

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Words From The Executive Director Cont.

There continues to be demand for food services staff within our hospitality sector. There are continued needs for a variety of occupations within this group – however the need for qualified cooks is increasing. Some agencies are reporting that there are issues in some clients not reporting to a scheduled employer interview which in turn is creating a negative environment for employer recruitment. This issue is not new to our region as employers have indicated quite strongly their frustration regarding worker motivation, their soft skills. Others will argue that there is a continued need for employers to be more flexible in their wage rates and hours of work.

Employment Ontario Caseloads:

Caseloads and requests for services from our Employment Ontario offices in the Kingston region are seeing an uptake in their requests for services as the closure of the Employment Ontario office at St. Lawrence College in Kingston has impacted on client needs within the three Employment Ontario sites in Kingston. Other offices in the region are also seeing a positive movement in their caseloads. Employers are also seeing a positive response to their job fair networking and client needs. Very positive response from the public to attend local job fair events.

Older workers:

It certainly appears that there are more mature, older workers within various service/ hospitality sectors of our local economies. This may in part be to the increasing costs of living in the region and limited financial resources available to this population. Employers in turn are looking for mature workers with sound work ethics, attitude etc.

Our local communities and its social issue related complexities:

Our rural communities in our region are seeing and experiencing a dramatic change in our communities' needs < IE: poverty, mental health, housing, transportation needs >. Our communities are now experiencing a variety of special need clients that were normally confined to large urban centers. We are no longer isolated from these complex client needs, and it is impacting several agencies' ability in dealing with these diverse client needs. Demand for food support re our local food banks, mental health, housing support, and emergency /first responder services continues to grow.

Many of these agencies are not staffed < trained > or resourced to deal with these issues and it is impacting on the agencies abilities to retain qualified staff to deal with these growing client needs. These needs are increasing, and it is clear that this issue continues to expand. There is a need to do a review of these needs in our region and how each region's agencies and organizations <who are tasked to respond to these needs > are staffed and trained. Primary concern is what the staffing needs < present and future > of the entire region in dealing with these complex problems are. Our office and the other workforce development boards in our region are looking to secure support to do a thorough investigation of these needs.

Future Newsletters from the Eastern Workforce Innovation Board:

Our future newsletters will move to monthly – labour market bulletins – effective April 2025. It is our plan to provide more detailed labour market information pertaining to a variety of topics that focus on local issues, labour market challenges and good news stories. Your support for our work in the community is fully appreciated and we always look for your input.



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Events in the Community

Practice your
English and French
for free in a friendly
environment.

**Café
FRANGLISH**

At different locations across Kingston | Every Wednesday | 6:00 - 7:45p.m.

ACFOMI | Canada | Centre culturel Frontenac | KMFRC | CRFMK

The CAFÉ FRANGLISH - FREE event!

Are you looking for an opportunity to practice your English or French to converse confidently and fluently in both languages? CAFÉ FRANGLISH will meet this need! It's a weekly meeting space where Francophones and Anglophones come together in a relaxing and fun environment to discuss interesting and captivating topics over a cup of coffee. CAFÉ FRANGLISH a free event, is based on a mutual support relationship between Francophones and Anglophones. If you're a Francophone, it's the perfect opportunity for you to improve your English while helping Anglophones improve their French and vice versa. All participants will leave satisfied from this exchange of linguistic skills.

CAFÉ FRANGLISH will provide a unique opportunity for Anglophones and Francophones to build enriching and lasting connections.

Meetings will take place every Wednesday from 6:00 PM to 7:45 PM at various locations across the city of Kingston, including the Centre culturel Frontenac (CCF), the Kingston Military Family Resource Center (KMFRC), and different branches of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library to facilitate the participation of as many people as possible. Come chat confidently in a judgment-free space.

For more information give us a call at 613-546-7863



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What the Board is up to?

The board is continuing to navigate our Jobs Tools, with a focus on our Labour Market Information Help Desk. You can find these tools at the link below:

<https://www.workforcedev.ca/about-employment-tools/>

The board is also proud to announce the newest LLMP report is now live on our website. You can view the report in it's entirety at the link below:

<https://www.workforcedev.ca/llmp-reports/>



Community Update

The Eastern Workforce Innovation Board lost a valued employee and friend this month. Maureen Keeler passed away on March 05, 2025. Maureen < Moe > had worked for the board for the past twelve plus years and was well known and respected within the employment services communities in our region. Moe will be missed by her colleagues within the board and our stakeholders. We have attached a link to refer to in respect to Maureen's passing.

<https://www.kingstonist.com/obituaries/in-loving-memory-maureen-keeler/>

"Long may you run"



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/>