



LABOUR MARKET REVIEW 2005

A Publication of the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board

...Niagara's Workforce Development Board

Mission:

Our mission is to champion labour force development for the Niagara Region by facilitating community action on identified trends, opportunities and priorities.

Mandate:

Advocating for constituents by:

- Promoting local labour force development
 - Forging community partnerships
 - Addressing employment, training, trends, opportunities and priorities

Vision:

NTAB will serve as the organization in Niagara promoting workforce development.

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Co-Chairs' Message

On behalf of the Board of Directors for The Niagara Training & Adjustment Board we are pleased to present the 7th Annual Report as part of this Niagara Labour Market Review publication.

As one of 21 boards in the province of Ontario that make up the Local Board Network, NTAB continues to engage community partners in local labour market and workforce development to support and meet the needs of individuals and local industry. The strength of the Local Board Network is demonstrated through the collaborative and cooperative approach to research and initiative development for common issues impacting workforce development in Ontario. We encourage you to visit <http://www.localboards.on.ca>

Niagara Training & Adjustment Board has focused this past year on creating a stronger, cohesive organization driven by a strategic plan targeting key priorities to support a ready talent pool for Niagara. To more clearly define our role, the board has introduced a tagline to its name: "...Niagara's Workforce Development Board."

As part of its recent strategic planning process NTAB has identified three key strategic priorities for 2005-2008.

- Develop an operational foundation that incorporates board governance, operational structures and operational controls.
- Establish the NTAB as a catalyst of labour force development research and partnership development.
- Strengthen efforts to grow and expand the existing Niagara labour force through the provision of relevant information that validates the issues and needs over the short and long term.

Initiatives this fiscal year served youth, parents, employers, agencies, and Niagara's unemployed and underemployed as well as key sectors including Health and Tourism & Hospitality. The Board also continued to conduct specialized labour market research and to support strategic human resource planning across all sectors.

We wish to acknowledge the continued support and financial contributions of our Sponsors, Service Canada and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Thank you to our community partners, NTAB staff and fellow Board members who share their time, knowledge and expertise to achieve a common goal – building a strong Niagara!

Bridget Krajnak
Bridget Krajnak
Labour Co-Chair

Bill Irwin
Bill Irwin
Business Co-Chair

The Niagara Training & Adjustment Board is Funded by:



The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the Government of Canada or the Government of Ontario

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NTAB Staff

Trudy Parsons, Executive Director
Tracey Meszaros, Project Coordinator
Lisa McIntyre, Administrative Assistant

Executive Director's Report

As another fiscal year comes to a close, a great opportunity presents itself to reflect on the outcomes achieved through the numerous projects and initiatives undertaken by Niagara Training & Adjustment Board.

As Executive Director I work closely with the Board of Directors and the community in the identification of training needs, workforce development issues and labour market trends within the Niagara Region. Forging community based partnerships, strengthening relationships with key stakeholders and delivering relevant research has resulted in a trusting relationship and a strong cooperation and collaboration between NTAB and its partners.

The need for additional research to better support future initiatives has led to several key projects including the establishment of a business database to allow for further analysis on employer recruitment and retention challenges and projected needs. Completion of this database will provide NTAB with a key research component.

Following the release of the Trends, Opportunities and Priorities report NTAB engaged community partners and together we delivered on 11 of the 16 identified actions prioritized in this report. Niagara Training & Adjustment Board directed its focus, energies and financial resources on current and emerging issues identified through community outreach and consultative process. The organization has been successful leveraging both financial and in-kind resources/supports. For the 2004-05 fiscal year a total of 6 partnerships were delivered as part of our sponsor agreement and over a dozen other major initiatives were either led or supported. Check out the "Year in Review" section in this publication for details.

The increased focus on capacity building for Niagara's labour force and economy, has strengthened the momentum. Niagara, like many communities, is facing significant changes in funding accessibility, economic sustainability and developing a strong and ready talent pool. As we continue to address the trends evolving within our Region, the importance of maximizing our financial and human resources is magnified. This is a key role for NTAB as the Board creates a link between all levels of government, business, labour and our community constituencies – the ability to make the connection is as important as facilitating the identification and delivery of the solutions.

On a personal note, thanks to all those individuals and organizations that continue to support NTAB and I look forward to continuing to work with you as we move forward.

Sincerely,
Trudy Parsons
Executive Director

A Forward Direction for Niagara's Employment and Immigration

It is common knowledge that Niagara, as a regional community, has had significant challenges attracting and retaining newcomers, both immigrants and refugees, particularly newcomers who would like to invest their skills and money in Niagara.

Niagara however, has a long history of providing comprehensive services at the community level for newcomers, from employment and settlement services to educational programs, health and social services. Leaders in the community are aware of the Federal Public Policy statement that by 2011 immigration will account for all of Canada's labour force growth. We know that we need to prepare now for a prosperous Niagara that can compete globally. So why do we experience these challenges?

The Niagara Newcomer Employment Strategy Council (NNEESC) has been working to create and implement a newcomer employment strategy specific to Niagara. The primary motivation is to attract internationally prepared people who will enable Niagara to navigate the future, and position itself for global competition. Niagara will be a stronger more vibrant place to live if we are attractive to people who have diverse skills, languages, experiences, education and global positions.

This strategy is based on reliable information that is Niagara specific and includes some of the successful components of other urban Canadian strategies. Ultimately, the intervention will be a hybrid that is made specifically for Niagara. The work of the Council is to close the gap in information and build and implement a sound newcomer employment strategy for the future.

The strategy will interface with other prosperity strategies in Niagara that are focussing on labour force development like the Niagara Economic Growth Strategy (NEGS). Four of the six strategic directions of (NEGS) 2, 3, 5, 6 are directly related to the Niagara Newcomer Employment Strategy.

(www.niagaracanada.com/growniagara)

The Council is reflective of the community of Niagara. The membership includes employment service agencies, settlement services organizations, educational sector employers, for profit businesses, "for social profit" organisations and all three levels of government. Each of the organizations contributes time, expertise and in-kind resources to enable the work to move forward. NTAB, for example contributes leadership and space on their web site as well as critical support in facilitating partnerships and disseminating information. A membership list is available on the NTAB web site www.ntab.org.

One of the initial tasks has been to identify:

- Facilitating factors that make newcomers to Canada successful in the Niagara market
- Barriers that keep newcomers and employers from connecting in a sustainable manner.

Ultimately, the strategy will allow organizations that have the mandate to welcome and support newcomers, to work cohesively on a common pathway of measurable indicators towards one goal of early and successful settlement and employment of the newcomer.

The strategy will concretely enable both the employer and the newcomer to reach their full potential. At the same time the community of Niagara enhances its human capital and presents as a globally competitive player and an attractive place to live and prosper.

"If new immigrants have more opportunities, it would be better for Canada and better for everybody." "I emphasize we need more immigrants becoming a part of Canada" "We need opportunities to learn in the workplace" Hugo Silva, (Newcomer from Columbia in Niagara 18 months).

Catharine Mindoff

Chair

Niagara Newcomers Employment Strategy Council

Labour Force needs of the Hospitality & Tourism Sector in Niagara

What do businesses in the hospitality and tourism sector have in common? A shortage of talented workers.

When I say talented, I'm not referring to positions requiring a College Diploma or University Degree; I'm referring to positions where knowledge and skills can be taught on the job. The only pre-requisites are having a positive attitude, a desire to serve others, the willingness to work hard, and the commitment to be courteous to our guests. Although these pre-requisites sound easy, in reality they are not. Not everyone can come into work every day with a sincere smile on their face or a commitment to providing guests with exceptional service. Niagara's hospitality & tourism sector is facing a labour shortage due to many influences: an aging workforce, increased development in the hospitality industry and an exodus of young workers leaving the Niagara Region can all be attributed to the shortages of labour.

In the accommodation and food and beverage sectors, the most critical shortages are housekeeping positions and kitchen positions. These positions are extremely essential to the success of any hotel or food & beverage company. Without them, it would be impossible to provide guests with the level of cleanliness, dining experience and service they have come to expect from the world-class destination the Niagara Region has become.

So how does an employer deal with this shortage of talented workers besides recruiting through conventional methods of running newspaper ads and hosting job fairs? It's not easy when there's a lack of talent, but there are a few things an employer can do to have an edge.

Get Creative – Although there is a labour shortage, there are still some very talented individuals wanting to work, but who may have barriers to employment such as transportation. Niagara 21st Group arranged for workers to be bussed into work from Port Colborne and Welland, and Vintage Inns arranged a taxi service for a few of their team members to be brought in from St. Catharines. Renaissance Fallsview Hotel and Vintage Inns brought seasonal workers from Barbados to assist with some of their labour shortages.

Partner with Employment Agencies – Local employment agencies are a valuable resource as they assist individuals in achieving their employment goals and assist employers with their hiring needs.

Hire Students – Develop partnerships with local post secondary and area high schools. Offer to speak to their students about employment opportunities in the hospitality and tourism sector as well as other workplace issues such as interviewing skills, health and safety, etc. You'll be top of mind when these students start looking for summer work opportunities.

Hire Older Workers – Many retired individuals are looking for meaningful work. You'll find that this group of individuals are very dedicated, have positive energy, and are highly motivated. With their wealth of experience and wisdom, they often make great role models and prove to give exceptional guest service.

Cultural Centres – Ontario is the largest port of entry of newcomers. Employers need to promote employment opportunities to newcomers who perceive that they need to move to Toronto in order to find work. Culture Centres can play a key role.

Retain Existing Employees – The best way to ensure you have the required talent is to retain the talent you already have. Make sure your employees are well treated and respected. Develop your employees and promote from within. This sends everyone the message that there are opportunities for growth. Most importantly recognize those employees who do a great job. This makes them feel valued and they'll want to stay at a company that recognizes them for their efforts.

The labour shortage is a challenge that all employers face in the hospitality and tourism sector; however, with companies working together on these challenges, we can promote the great employment opportunities we have to offer in this growing and exciting industry.

Anita Caslin
Chair, Niagara Association of
Hospitality Professionals

The Inventory of Programs and Services

...your Pathway to Employment



A bilingual web site providing access to a comprehensive searchable database of local, provincial and federal employment programs and services, the IPS is an invaluable tool to assist job seekers, employment service providers, community agencies and the public.

The IPS responds to the need for reliable, timely information that can assist job seekers to locate programs and services in their community that can help them enter or re-enter the job market.

Information displayed in the database section of the Inventory of Programs and Services has been submitted by Findhelp Information Services.

Putting Business Front and Centre

...a Niagara Business Directory

Niagara Training & Adjustment Board, through the financial support of the local Service Canada office is currently conducting a telephone outreach to businesses in the Niagara Region in an effort to create an on-line business database that will be a key component of the YourNiagara.ca portal. The database will allow businesses to promote their products and services in a searchable Internet-based format. The opportunity for businesses to reach beyond their local community and indeed the Region will help promote the diversity of Niagara's economy and support business sustainability and growth. NTAB is facilitating the development of a sustainability plan that will support the ongoing data integrity of the database. Once the database is up and running, businesses will have complete accessibility to their records to allow for updating and additional information to be entered. Anticipated completion of Stage One is Winter 2006. NTAB wishes to acknowledge the support of the YourNiagara.ca partners in the development of this database.

2005-2006 NTAB Sponsored Events

April 11, 2005	Youth Leadership Symposium
April 19, 2005.....	Francophone Career Fair
May 11, 2005	Community Forum
July 11-15, 2005	Student Success Camp Hospitality & Tourism
November 1, 2005	Annual General Meeting
November 3, 2005	Niagara College Canada Career Day
December 6 & 7, 2005	Destination Success 2005 Student Career Awareness Conference
February 10, 2006	Employer Training Excellence Recognition Awards of Niagara 2006
March 1, 2006	Niagara Information Exchange & Community Exploration
March 29, 2006	Mission Possible – Parents Conference
May 31, 2006	Employer Appreciation

Ongoing

- Tourism ~ Best Practices in Retention
- Transportation ~ Initiatives in Action
- Newcomers Employment Strategy Development and Implementation

For a complete listing of NTAB publications check out NTAB Publications or Career Related Resources Centre on our website at www.ntab.org

New Access Law will Impact Business and Labour

June 18, 2005 was witness to an important and historic moment for Ontario. It was on this day that the long awaited, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) finally received Royal Assent and became law. The result of a tenacious decade-long grassroots campaign by Ontarians with disabilities, this new, comprehensive legislation is unlike any other law in Canada and is designed to make Ontario fully accessible within the next 20 years.

So, what does this mean to you? The AODA will apply to any person or organization in Ontario, whether public or private, who provides goods, services, or facilities to the public, employs persons in Ontario, offers accommodation to the public or owns or occupies a building or premises that is open to the public.

Although some may see this law as intrusive and may believe this a great deal of effort for "a small segment of our population", many others have the foresight to recognize the huge market and competitive edge that exists by being an accessible business. One in every six people in Canada has some sort of disability. In Ontario, that translates to over 1.5 million people. There are 60,000 people with disabilities living in the Niagara Region alone. Add to that the large influx of tourists our Region sees every year, and you've increased the

population of "disabled persons" in Niagara by another 2 million people. Then add the "Baby Boomers" who, as they age, will spark a 1.4 million increase in the number of working age Canadians with some form of disability by 2010. So, what was once seen as a special interest group is now a force to be reckoned with.

Most people with disabilities live successfully on their own, have and want jobs, eat in restaurants, go to movies and use products and services of all kinds. Persons with disabilities are responsible for an estimated \$25 billion in consumer buying power in Canada annually. And they have an influence on a huge secondary market of friends and family in all walks of life.

New legislation can create new opportunity. By becoming accessible you can access a new labour market, a new consumer market and gain a competitive edge.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Herrington
Assessibility Specialist
The Herrington Group Ltd.
Persons with Disabilities Director, NTAB

"Coming and Going"

It is with regret that the Board accepted the resignation from the following Directors in 2004-05:

Carol Maingot – Women

Bernadette Corbin – Visible Minorities

Laurie Wartman – Business

We recognize that other commitments may result in individuals having to reevaluate their availability, but we do wish to acknowledge their contribution and thank them for their support, time, dedication and expertise which they shared with the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board during their term in office.

A special welcome to:

Kate Acs - Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities

Christine Pinto - Service Canada

Kim Penwarden - Women

Troy Brooks - Visible Minorities

Labour Force Activity June 2004 - June 2005

St. Catharines-Niagara Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)

Labour Force Trends

The Labour Force in June 2005 rose by 8,500 from June 2004. This increased the Participation Rate to 63.8% from 61.7%. All of those who entered the Labour Force found employment plus another 2,500 of those who were previously unemployed raising the number of employed by 11,000. This caused the Unemployment Rate to drop to 6.7% from 8.2%, the same time last year. Monthly changes throughout the year were all positive in comparison to the weak labour market in the first half of 2004. It would appear that 2005 may be the start of the recovery from 2004. The St. Catharines-Niagara CMA's unemployment rate (6.7%) is lower than both Canada and Ontario where each has a rate of 6.8%.

Labour Force Trends St. Catharines-Niagara CMA

Labour Force Characteristics	June 2005	June 2004	Absolute Change	% Change
Population 15+	324,700	322,300	2,400	0.7
Labour Force	207,200	198,700	8,500	4.3
Employed	193,400	182,400	11,000	6.0
Full-time	153,300	144,100	9,200	6.4
Part-time	40,100	38,300	1,800	4.7
Unemployed	13,800	16,300	-2,500	-15.3
Not in Labour Force	117,500	123,600	-6,100	-4.9
Participation Rate %	63.8	61.7	2.1	
Unemployment Rate %	6.7	8.2	-1.5	
Employment Rate %	59.6	56.6	3.0	

Employed Labour Force by Industry

Compared with last June, employment levels were up in most of the sectors. The most significant changes were Agriculture (+2,200) and Manufacturing (+2,000) in the Goods-producing sector. The most significant increase in the Services-producing sector was in the Wholesale & Retail Trade sector (+4,600). There were also gains of (+1,800) in both Health Care & Social Assistance and Business Building & Other Support Services. Only two industries showed noteworthy declines: Information, Culture and Recreation (-2,300) and Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing (-1,700).

The Manufacturing industry has suffered many losses over the year. It reached a historical low of 23,700 in July and August of 2004 (dating back to 1987). The peak this year was in January 2005 with 33,700 employed. It has declined monthly ever since to a total of 26,000 in June.

Employment by Industry St. Catharines-Niagara CMA

Industry-NAICS	June 2005	June 2004	Absolute Change	% Change
All Industries	193,400	182,400	11,000	6.0
Goods-producing sector	45,200	41,400	3,800	9.2
Agriculture	5,300	3,100	2,200	0.7
Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil & Gas
Utilities	...	1,900
Construction	12,300	11,800	500	4.2
Manufacturing	26,000	24,000	2,000	8.3
Services-producing Sector	148,200	141,000	7,200	5.1
Trade	31,700	27,100	4,600	16.9
Transportation & Warehousing	6,400	7,200	-800	-11.1
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing	9,600	11,300	-1,700	-15.0
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	7,800	7,700	100	1.3
Business Building & Other Support Services	11,400	9,600	1,800	18.8
Educational Services	12,800	12,900	-100	-0.8
Health Care & Social Assistance	20,900	19,100	1,800	9.4
Information, Culture & Recreation	10,800	13,100	-2,300	-17.6
Accommodation & Food Services	20,000	19,400	600	3.1
Other Services	7,900	5,800	2,100	36.2
Public Administration	8,900	7,800	1,100	14.1

Note: "... " indicates that data are too small to be expressed and are not appropriate for release. Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

Note: Every 5 years, Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates undergo extensive revisions. At the beginning of 2005, revisions affecting the information provided above were: All estimates were adjusted to reflect 2001 Census population counts; industry estimates were classified from the 1997 to the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS); and the occupation estimates were classified from the 1991 Standard Occupation Classification to the National Occupational Classification for Statistics 2001 (NOC-S).

Carol Dupuis
Labour Market Information Analyst
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
Niagara Area

Navigating Our Future

Niagara's Economic Growth Strategy 2005-2010



AT A GLANCE

WHAT: An economic growth strategy for Niagara.

WHY: Niagara needs a plan to stimulate additional economic growth.

HOW IT WILL HELP: By providing direction for decision-makers who affect Niagara's economic future.

WHO PREPARED IT: A 12-member steering committee appointed by Regional Council, with input from some 200 public and private sector stakeholders.

WHEN IT WAS COMPLETED: April 2005, with a five-year implementation timeline and annual review.

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT IT: Regional Council along with other business, government and community leaders who choose to take a pro-active role in fostering Niagara's economic growth.

WHO WILL BENEFIT: Everyone who lives in Niagara!

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.niagaracanada.com or www.regional.niagara.on.ca

BACKGROUND

On April 28, 2005 Regional Council formally approved Navigating Our Future: Niagara's Economic Growth Strategy 2005-2010.

The economic strategy outlines six directions that are intended to help steer Niagara towards a more prosperous future:

1. **Build a Stronger Collective Voice.**
2. **Create A Competitive Business Environment.**
3. **Target Strategic Employers.**
4. **Improve Transportation and Related Infrastructure.**
5. **Re-Brand Niagara.**
6. **Develop Niagara's Talent Pool.**

The economic strategy is intended to showcase the diversity of Niagara's economy, encourage new investment and focus on strengthening Niagara's manufacturing sector.

"This underpins the way for us to grow, for us to prosper and create jobs and maintain the youth in our community" (Rudi Kroeker, Chair, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, St. Catharines Standard, April 29, 2005)

"Divided and individually we can only do certain things. Together, focusing on specific issues, we have a real opportunity to make a difference." (Patrick Gedge, CEO, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, St. Catharines Standard, April 29, 2005)

Each community in our Region will benefit from working towards these economic goals

"The only way we are going to successfully implement any kind of economic strategy is if everyone is working together" (Wayne Redekop, Mayor of Fort Erie, and Economic Growth Strategy Steering Committee Member, St. Catharines Standard, April 29, 2005)

For further information please contact:

Niagara Economic Development Corporation
Ph: 905-685-1308
Email: info@niagaracanada.com
Web: www.niagaracanada.com

About the Local Boards of Ontario



The Local Board initiative was launched in 1994 and is jointly funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities.

Local Boards are non-for-profit, community-based organizations comprised of volunteers from business, labour, education and community groups.

Local Boards engage their communities and community partners in a local labour market research and planning process that leads to cooperative efforts among partners to find local solutions to local issues.

Local Boards have proven themselves as "catalysts for positive change" to labour market conditions at the community level. Over the last several years, the work of Local Boards in their communities has resulted in a broad range of labour market partnership activities to help improve their local labour market by promoting the trades as viable careers, raising awareness of literacy issues, facilitating the integration of foreign trained workers, etc.

Visit our website www.localboards.on.ca



The site that brings the world to Niagara...and Niagara to the world

Created by the Business Education Council of Niagara with the co-operation of Niagara's 11 lower-tier municipalities, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, local school boards and a myriad of community partners, YourNiagara.ca offers long-time residents, newcomers and people planning to visit or relocate to the area an up-close look at what Niagara has to offer. "More and more individuals are searching for information on a wide variety of topics and their first stop is the net," said BEC executive director Ted Palmer. "What better way for residents of Niagara to find specific current information on Niagara business, education, municipalities, recreation and culture than to have our own portal, YourNiagara.ca? We should all be proud of the commitment and foresight of our municipal and education systems for making Niagara one of only five per cent of municipalities in Canada to have their own portal.

Divided into a number of sections, YourNiagara.ca gives current, in-depth information about the services offered by each of Niagara's cities as towns, regional government, public, separate and private schools, day care, employment opportunities and weather. For those

who want to know more about the area, there are sections dedicated to the geography of the area, as well as the history that made Niagara the thriving area it is today. News, weather, travel and tourism information and the Niagara Geo-Smart program which helps people find a spot on the map are also key parts of the website, which launched in November 2004.

Want to book ice time? Do it on-line. Don't want to waste time looking for an attendant to pay? Pay while you're on-line. Rounding out the site are online forms, information about housing and real estate, recreation, services for youth and health care - all of which will help long-time resident's lives easier and will help ease the transition for newcomers to Niagara.

Updates to the site are coming soon, aimed at making YourNiagara.ca more user-friendly, more informative and more full of current information than ever before.

There are also opportunities for local businesses to be a part of YourNiagara.ca. Service providers can contact info@yourniagara.ca to be added to lists of local businesses to assist people with their search for unique items, everyday services and Niagara speciality items such as preserves made from Niagara's tenderfruit, icewine and crafts from local artisans.

Help is now just three numbers away...

Niagara residents can now dial 211 to find the information they need to access government, health and social services. 211 is expected to revolutionize the way Niagara accesses its human services by helping people find what they need, when they need it. Since early September 211 Niagara has been available in a testing phase. As of Nov. 2, 2005 211 Niagara will be officially launched and marketed to the general public.

The goal of 211 is to improve access. 211 eliminates confusion by helping the user access information in a fast and efficient manner. Information and Referral specialists are trained to help callers navigate the numerous and complex human service systems. The caller may be seeking assistance with employment to childcare, senior's services to bereavement groups, credit counseling to charity scams.

211 Niagara is available to all Niagara Residents and will help reduce frustration for users, particularly those who may be feeling overwhelmed or stressed by a personal difficulty or community crises. The easy-to-remember number is especially useful for vulnerable groups such as seniors, those with limited English and persons with a disability, by helping them access the resources they need.

As the second Ontario municipality to implement 211, Niagara earns the reputation as a progressive leader by keeping its residents informed through the ease of 211. Although a North America wide initiative with over 60 US cities offering the service, only Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary are operating in Canada with Niagara and Collingwood launching November 2005.

211 as a National initiative is being spearheaded by the United Way of Canada and Inform Canada. In Niagara 211 is being championed by the local United Ways and delivered by Information Niagara. More information regarding the Canadian 211 initiative can be found at www.211.ca

* 211 is available to Niagara residents with the exception of Wainfleet, West Lincoln and a few exchanges in Grimsby. Residents of these areas can still reach Information Niagara at 905-682-6611 or 1-800-263-3695.

Rosanna Thoms
Executive Director
Information Niagara

A Snapshot of Niagara's Employment Programs

Ensuring accuracy of program information and identifying gaps in services was the goal of a summer project led by the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board. With recent funding changes affecting many programs and services, capturing an accurate description of what is offered and the unique components that differentiate these programs and services was seen as an important next step in the identification of gaps in services. This project served the following key purposes:

1. Ensuring current and accurate information is being promoted to the clients.
2. Ensuring information accurately reflects the specific programs, services, targeted client groups.
3. Allowing for an aggregated view of the types of services being funded in Niagara.
4. Identifying existing gaps in services and programs available to Niagara residents.

Goodwill Niagara - The Niagara Trades Career Centre



Results from the “Employer Questionnaire” which was recently conducted by the Niagara Trades Career Centre, were presented confirming that of the 51 local employers in the construction sector that participated in the survey, there is a strong support for the Niagara Trades Career Centre project:

- 95% of respondent employers in the construction sector have difficulty finding suitable employees.
- 63% of respondents are expecting to hire new staff within a year.
- Over 93% of respondents identified “soft skills” as the #1 problem
- “General Construction Labourer” is the trades’ position in greatest demand

Employers in the construction sector also emphasized that negative perceptions among youth towards skilled trades contributes to future labour shortages. The

Niagara Trades Career Centre is responding to this need by developing a Skilled Trades Exploration Centre that will provide opportunities to gain experience and knowledge in skilled trades as well as encourage youth to consider the skilled trades as a possible career option.

The Niagara Trades Career Centre is a collaborative project which responds to a number of key challenges currently facing the Niagara Region and will provide significant benefits to individuals, employers and the Niagara community. Along with offering a variety of market-driven training opportunities for all residents of Niagara, the Niagara Trades Career Centre will focus particularly on providing individuals with employment barriers with construction and pre-apprenticeship skills that can be applied to direct, sustainable employment or formal apprenticeship training.

For additional information please contact:

Niagara Trades Career Centre
Brenda Martin, Project Manager or Stan Droblich,
Project Developer: Phone:905-685-8777 • Email:
goodwill@iaw.on.ca

Niagara Workforce Focus

Presenting a labour market and demographic snapshot

Niagara Workforce Focus is a quarterly, two page publication providing insight into the labour market of the Niagara Region. Pertinent issues to community stakeholders are highlighted by statistical evidence, publication exerts, and communications with local participants.

Topics will include demographic change, sector profiles, and interest group trends. The first publication will be officially released at the 2005 Annual General Meeting with subsequent releases published through the NTAB website in January, April, July and October 2006.

Feedback and suggestions welcome!

Trends, Opportunities and Priorities Report

Update and Action Planning 2005

Over the past several months NTAB has been carrying out community consultations and research as part of the Trends, Opportunities and Priorities Report Update and Action Plan Development. This report is an NTAB driven, community based report that results from a highly interactive process of research, community consultations, on-line survey and interviews.

The results of the TOP consultative process will be compiled and included in the TOP Report 2005 which will be delivered to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and Service Canada and released to the community in January 2006.

Your continued support of NTAB and its mission “to champion labour force development for the Niagara Region by facilitating community action on identified trends, opportunities and priorities” is very much appreciated.

Visit the NTAB website for updates on
the consultation process
www.ntab.org

Transportation...Initiatives in Action

Project "Job Bus" hit the road in June as part of an innovative solution that linked job seekers to jobs. Through a three way partnership - employer - employee - community, over 20 individuals were successful in securing employment and gaining valuable job experience.

The Niagara 21st Group worked with local employment support agencies and other community partners to interview and hire associates to work at their Niagara Falls properties. Community partners included PORT CARES, City of Welland Transit System, City of Port Colborne, Niagara Tourism Human Resources Council - Niagara College, Community Services Department-Regional Municipality of Niagara, and Niagara Training & Adjustment Board.

This hiring initiative was the most significant hiring in Port Colborne in the past 10 years. Prior to this initiative, Niagara 21st Group was seeking overseas migrant workers to fill seasonal positions. The success of the project has been demonstrated in the retention rates achieved over the duration of the project and the potential for continuation of this initiative for the 2006 tourism season.

This pilot project has been presented to the Regional Niagara Transportation Committee with an update scheduled for October 15, 2005. This collaboration will set the platform for not only on-going employment opportunities for the community, but development of an Inter-Municipal Transit System throughout Niagara.

FREE!

5th Annual Conference for Parents

Wednesday, March 29, 2006
Four Points Sheraton, Thorold
5:00 pm Registration
Program 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Invaluable opportunity for any parent with a child in the school system to attend presentations and workshops addressing elementary and secondary issues

***Light refreshments will be served**

"Knowledge today leads to success tomorrow"

Register today by contacting:
Phone: 905-641-0801 Fax: 905-641-0308
E-mail: ntab@ntab.org

Please share this information and encourage parents to attend
Don't Miss Out!

CONGRATULATIONS

to the winners of the

2005 Training Excellence Recognition Awards!

The Niagara Training & Adjustment Board in partnership with Work in Niagara, a project of the Business Education Council of Niagara congratulates the following companies for their commitment to workplace training and development of their employees.

Manufacturing/Motive Power

Speedy Muffler Brake & Wheel Shop - Vine Street
William B Rattay Holding Inc. o/a Canadian Tire Store #71

Service

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry Niagara Inc.
Community Living Fort Erie
Convergys
Niagara Health System

Tourism

White Oaks Conference Resort & Spa

Other

Teamster Union Local #879 - Niagara Region

NTAB Year in Review 2004/2005

Forging community partnerships in response to labour market priorities.

Key Deliverables – 2004/05

Niagara Training & Adjustment Board forges community partnerships in response to labour market priorities that address industry and individual needs. Focus of work carried out for 2004-05 fiscal year supported the organization's vision and mission.

Annual Trends, Opportunities and Priorities Report (TOP)

The primary focus of the TOP report is to achieve clarity and understanding of the labour market trends, opportunities and priorities at the local level. This report provides the reader with the following information:

- Key trends impacting Niagara's labour force/labour market
- Top issues reflecting community priority
- Niagara Action Plan relative to each issue including timelines, proposed community leaders/partners and expected outcomes.

The Niagara Trends, Opportunities and Priorities Report 2005 was officially launched through a presentation to the community at the Annual General Meeting of the Board held on October 19, 2004.

Community Think Tank - Forum 2005

As part of the TOP community consultation process, NTAB hosted approximately 75 representatives from cross sectors as part of a think tank on labour force issues and actions identification. This process helped bring forward gaps which were not being addressed and resulted in discussions for future projects and actions. The summary of the results from the forum were shared electronically with registrants and are available on the NTAB website (www.ntab.org)

Inventory of Programs and Services (IPS)

A comprehensive database of employment programs and services available locally or through provincial and federal initiatives is a valuable resource for job seekers and agency staff. IPS has been moved from a stand-alone application to interconnect with 211Ontario.ca. As a 211Ontario.ca

partner site, IPS will not only increase client entry points, but also leverage the broader range of supports represented by 211, including mediated support provided by the 211 telephone service. 211Ontario.ca delivers comprehensive and up-to-date human services information online and will support 211 phone services at regional information centres across Ontario including Niagara.

NTAB also serves as part of the IPS Provincial Task Group involved in the ongoing review of this initiative.

Local Boards of Ontario - Partnership Database

This on-line interactive database provides information on all local board driven projects and partnerships. Check out <http://www.localboards.on.ca/search.asp>

Outreach and Linkages

Bringing industry and workforce issues, trends, and challenges to the Board is a key role of the Directors who represent business, labour and community groups. This information is a vital component to the planning process for the local board each year as it identifies its key performance areas – where the greatest needs can be influenced through partnership development and resource allocations. Directors serve on local, provincial and federal committees representing the needs of the Niagara labour market.

Community Partnerships

Niagara continues to demonstrate a pro-active approach in its quest to ensure a strong skilled labour force is readily accessible to employers within our Region. Partnership activities identified as part of NTAB's Operating Agreement with the sponsors for this fiscal year focused on: School to Work; Health Sector; Tourism Sector; Employer Recognition; Immigration and Women. Additional information specific to each partnership follows. This past year NTAB directed its focus, energies and financial resources on current and emerging issues identified through the community outreach and consultative process. The organization has been successful leveraging both financial and in-kind resources/supports to assist in the delivery of these initiatives.

Focus On...

Career Awareness

WOMEN IN SETT

(Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology) – Building Communities)

As part of the Canadian Coalition for Women in Engineering, Science and Technology – CCWEST National Conference June 10- 13, 2004, NTAB sponsored a Community Outreach Session for young women in the Niagara Region. This session saw approximately 50 young women and parents interact and hear addresses from several conference participants regarding the career choices and pathways. Parents also had the opportunity to converse with representatives from the post-secondary institutions within the Niagara Region on the transition from secondary to post-secondary.



TAKE CARE! OF YOUR FUTURE... Youth Career Awareness and Resource Exploration Symposium

Held on May 18, 2004, this one day health career symposium showcased and raised awareness of the health care sector. Approximately 180 students and educators joined 34 role models and 17 exhibitors for the day which provided opportunities to highlight careers, generate discussions among students and role models and heighten awareness of the number of careers available within the health sector. The event was also promoted to employment support agencies as an opportunity for clients to visit the exhibit area during the afternoon portion of the day.

SKILLS WORK FOR YOUTH

NTAB, in partnership with Skills Canada Ontario, District School Board of Niagara, and Niagara Catholic District School Board delivered this one week camp for Niagara youth entering into grades 7 or 8 for September, 2004. The camp provided opportunity for participants to explore employability skills and skilled trades with each day focusing on a different sector: Construction, Manufacturing, Service and Motive Power. Eight students from the Niagara area participated.

E.T.C. – Exciting Tourism Careers

This one day tourism focused event held on January 12, 2005 showcased and raised awareness for different occupations that exist in the tourism and hospitality sector. Over 150 Niagara high school students and educators participated along with 17 role models. Educators were provided the opportunity to tour the “back of the house” in the hotel setting while students took part in panel discussions, interactive learning activities and role model discussions.

CATALOGUE OF HOSPITALITY & TOURISM CAREERS:

The Catalogue of Hospitality & Tourism Careers provides a resource to raise awareness and promote career opportunities in Niagara's tourism sector. Occupation information can be found on over 150 career choices and includes descriptions of the work, the working conditions, the education and training requirements, where the training is available, the local wage rate and prospects for employment. The catalogue has been distributed to the Niagara Association of Tourism Human Resource Professionals, elementary and secondary schools in the Niagara Region, libraries, community resource centers and employment support providers. Copies may be obtained through NTAB or via the web at www.ntab.org.



MISSION POSSIBLE: Young Men/Young Women's Conference:

This initiative involved the delivery of two one-day conferences dedicated to raising awareness of young high school female and male students to the career opportunities in skilled trades. Co-coordinated by the Business Education Council of Niagara and NTAB, this event brought together over 200 students, educators and local role models.

MISSION POSSIBLE – Growing Up is Hard To Do:

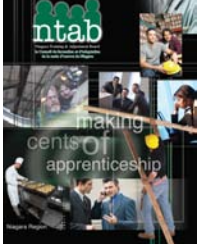
This event has become a recognized and well attended opportunity for parents to network and gain valuable knowledge and insight into actions and guidance they can provide in their children's quest for career direction. The session for this fiscal year was held on March 30, 2005 and had approximately 120 parents attend. Feedback continues to confirm the value of this event and NTAB is pleased to continue to support this in partnership with Niagara Catholic District School Board, District School Board of Niagara, Niagara College, Brock University and the Business Education Council of Niagara. Keynote speakers address key issues that are current and relevant to youth.

NIAGARA FALLS COMMUNITY CAREER FAIR

NTAB played a partnership role in this career focused initiative that saw close to 2000 high school students from the District School Board of Niagara take part in an opportunity to explore career opportunities and career pathways. A display promoting the career awareness resources was on-site.

Apprenticeship

MAKING CENT\$ OF APPRENTICESHIP...



BOTTOM LINE IMPACT

This two-part initiative resulted in the development of an easy-to-read guide for employers on available financial supports for apprenticeship. Identification of agencies and education institutions available to support the employer and the apprentice was provided, including access to wage subsidies and tax credits.

This booklet was launched on February 2, 2005 at the event of the same name which saw over 50 employers attend a breakfast presentation.

NTAB was pleased to share this booklet for reproduction in many areas across the province.

JOURNEY TO THE TRADES

Delivered in partnership, this initiative focused on bringing together over 150 participants seeking information on the skilled trades, employment prospects and the apprenticeship process. This event created a "real" picture and allowed individuals to validate their choices while also giving them ample opportunity to talk to trades people, employers and to take part in hands-on activities.

Other Labour Force Development

FUTURE POSSIBILITIES.... Take a Break and Learn!

A series of four morning workshops were held throughout the Niagara Region over a two week period with a focus on employment related topics. A total of 54 women participated. Workshops were delivered in partnership with local agencies that provided facilities and facilitation.

NIAGARA INFORMATION EXCHANGE:

Over 30 employment support agencies exhibited at this one day NTAB initiative that was designed to provide a venue for agencies in the community to network and promote services. Information sessions included presentations on apprenticeships, Local Board Partnership Database, Motivation in Changing Times, and Client Support through the Ontario Works System. This year's event saw over 175 agency employees take part in various aspects of the day.

EMPLOYER APPRECIATION CELEBRATION:

Recognition of employers who support school to work transitions through co-op, OYAP and speakers bureau is the main focus of this event. Student success stories are shared with the attendees reiterating the invaluable learning experience which results from this workplace exposure.

Labour Market Research

NIAGARA LABOUR FORCE UTILIZATION STUDY:

The labour force challenges facing Niagara are not unique to Niagara. Many jurisdictions have wrestled with, and continue to wrestle with some of the same issues, including a shifting economic composition, and supply and demand mismatches. Some jurisdictions have already taken steps to deal with their labour force challenges. A research project currently ongoing in Niagara is focusing on how to best assist and support the Region's labour force by examining interventions that have been implemented and or developed by similar jurisdictions. Particular emphasis is being given to maximizing underutilized groups including youth, women, persons with disabilities, francophone and newcomers.

NIAGARA HEALTH TRAINING NETWORK

NTAB has established an advisory committee to review the recommendations from the Feasibility Study carried out in 2003-04. Community outreach is ongoing and this project will continue in 2005-06.

NTAB Values

All our activities will be congruent with our core values. These values, ranked in priority are:

Leadership: We commit to leadership that is innovative, visionary and relevant towards accomplishing shared goals.

Integrity: We commit to a strong ethical code of conduct, striving to continuously build trust with our partners, stakeholders, sponsors and the community.

Equality/Inclusiveness: To recognize the diversity within our Region and its residents.

Accountability: To act in a responsible and open manner.

Commitment: To fulfill our role of partner to achieve maximum value and establish long-term relationships; to support the participants of Niagara's labour force to achieve sustainable employment.

Professional: We will conduct our business in a manner which is professional and respectful.

Other Activities

LOCAL BOARD PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

2004 Local Board Provincial Conference provided an opportunity for NTAB to promote the local board network within its local geographic area, while managing the project which included 2 days of professional development and networking.

LOCAL BOARD PROVINCIAL BROCHURE

This initiative involved the development of a local board network brochure that promotes the focus and purpose of local boards, while articulating their impact at the local level within their geographic boundaries. NTAB served as the Project Manager.

OPPORTUNITIES CONFERENCE 2004

Local Board initiative to promote the provincial reach of the network while supporting an annual conference that focused on workforce and career development. NTAB facilitated a partnership with all other boards to secure sponsorship for the opening keynote speaker and a provincial exhibit to promote the local board network.

PRIOR LEARNING & ASSESSMENT RECOGNITION STRATEGY

A one-day meeting held in November focused on discussion of PLAR in the province and exploring ways in which new and existing PLAR resources and expertise could be utilized in local communities.

GOVERNANCE BOARD TRANSITION

During 2004-05 The Niagara Training & Adjustment Board committed to transitioning from a working board to a governance board. This involved extensive research, planning and implementation of policies, processes, strategic planning and strategic management. To date the board has completed the policy development and is currently finalizing the Strategic Plan for 2005-2008.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2005-08

- Develop an operational foundation that incorporates board governance, operational structures and controls.
- Establish the NTAB as a catalyst of labour force research.
- Develop partnership initiatives that address short and long-term labour force development needs.

KEY RESULT AREAS

Our vision outstretches our resources. Therefore, we choose to be deliberate and strategic to focus our resources on achieving results in areas that will best propel us forward in our mission.

- **Operational Foundation**
- **Performance Measurement System**
- **Youth**
 - Leadership Development
 - Student Career Awareness
- **Employer Supports**
 - Retention and Recruitment Best Practices
- **Transportation Linkages**
 - Facilitate dialogue and action plan development between employers, employment support agencies and transit systems.
- **Newcomers**
 - Employment strategy development

NTAB BOARD/STAFF ONGOING COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION:

- Educators and Trainers Steering Committee
- Apprenticeship Strategy Group
- Ontario Disability Support Program
- Partners in Enterprise Committee
- Apprenticesearch.com Advisory Committee
- Niagara Newcomers Employment Strategy Council
- St. Catharines Interagency Group
- Niagara Falls Interagency Group
- Welland Interagency Group
- Netcorp Niagara Economic Growth Strategy Task Force
- Welland Labour Force Development Advisory Committee
- Niagara Transportation Committee
- Niagara Skills Trades Centre Advisory Group
- Work in Niagara – Agency Advisory Group
- Local Board IPS Task Group
- Job Connect/Apprenticeship Marketing Committee