



April 2016 Newsletter

Written by Sharon Halliday

DEAR ALUMNI,

As I look outside, I realize that it is officially BLOOMSDAY—the day the new green leaves sprout out on the trees—which has always been one of my favourite times of the year. I associate this event with a NEW, CLEAN, FRESH spirit and a promise of warm weather and good things to come. I feel spoiled this year because I took a quick trip out to Vancouver to visit family a few weeks ago, and I arrived on their Bloomsday. Everyone was walking around in shorts and sandals and new leaves contrasted with the dark green of all the spruce trees and evergreens. There were blossoming cherry trees all over—it was really beautiful.

Here are the scores to date:

1 person has referred 2 people

16 people have referred 1 person

This does not include the referrals for the June 6 program.

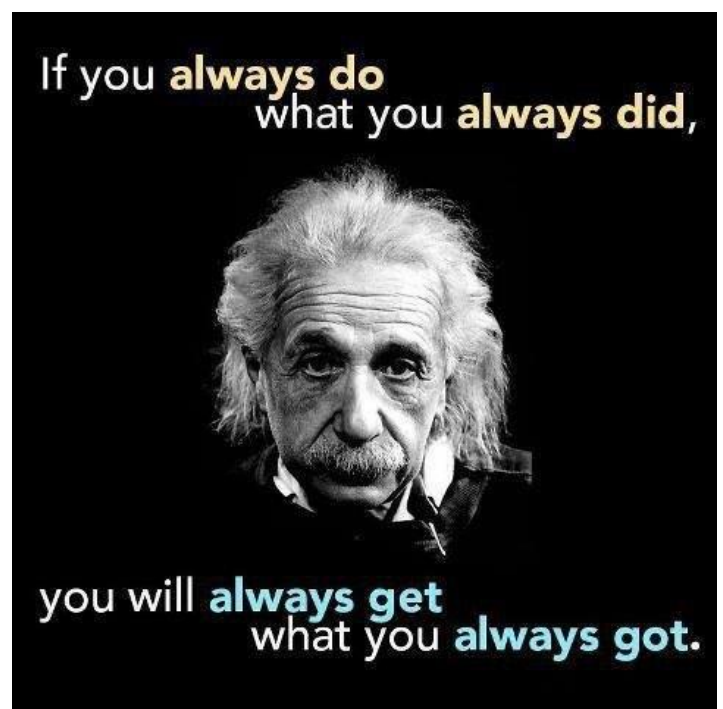
\$300 Referral Bonus for June!!

Starting May 1, and for the June intake only, we are raising the bonus to \$300. The June intake seems to be moving along nicely. There are still seats to fill, and if you want to make a little extra \$\$, and get yourself started for the \$1,000 prize at the end of the year, send us your wonderful referrals.



WIN \$1,000—2016 REFERRAL CONTEST

We are once again running the referral contest and 5 programs in 2016—which started in February. The student or graduate who has the most successful referrals through the 5 intakes will win \$1,000.



CONNECTIONS CONFERENCE 2016

On April 19, Brenda, Alice, and I represented Campbell College at the annual Connections Conference 2016. This is a yearly conference where schools, big and small, and all Service Providers and support agencies from Edmonton and area come together with front-line workers from Human Services, Government of Alberta. The intent is to exchange and gather information regarding services and supports.

This year, instead of a guest speaker, they asked representatives from a variety of agencies and schools to sit

on a panel and respond to set questions. One set of questions was regarding what we (service providers) were experiencing regarding the economic situation in Alberta. They had 4 people answer key questions in the morning and 4 more in the afternoon. I thought it was an effective way to gather factual and current information about what is really going on out there from the people who work with job-seekers, students, and employers.

The information shared was very relevant to both unemployed and

employed Albertans because job competition is fierce right now. This fact affects those who have recently graduated and are still seeking employment, as well as our employed Alumni who are wanting to move up the ladder or change job positions.

I thought I could share some of the key highlights that might be of interest or helpful to you or even a family member impacted by the economy. This was the general consensus shared that day.

I can't help thinking about my start at Campbell College. I was hired because I had taken an administrative program, also because I had worked in hospitality for so long and had strong customer service skills. Another reason I was hired was I had marketing and sales skills gained from home-based businesses throughout the years. Ron Campbell wanted a staff member who could work many areas of his business. He started me in an entry-level position, but I advanced very quickly—I am so glad that I mentioned my transferrable skills on my resume.

GOOD NEWS

All panel representatives reported that they are already seeing signs of improvement regarding job opportunities. I too definitely see much more activity regarding administrative competitions with the bigger organizations (Government and the City), and I am starting to receive more reference calls—hiring is going on regardless of what the media says. Remember:

- There is a misconception about there being no jobs coming from the Media who love to sensationalize and share bad-news stories. Look out the window at the on-going construction all around Edmonton.
- For the next 15 years, there will be a "Mass Exodus of Retirees/Baby Boomers" which means more jobs in all industries.
- In 2020, they are predicting a BIG BOOM ECONOMY; bigger than ever experienced before because of the situation with retirees.
- A "down economy" is the very best time to get training, take courses, and add to your skills.
- Those who get their foot in the door now will be so much further ahead for promotions or opportunities in the busy years to come (the not-so-distant future 2020).
- Currently Student Aid Alberta is a source for low-interest loans and living grants. These could change in the future, so it is an excellent time for you to prepare, upgrade, and make yourself more marketable. Part-time training will also improve your marketability.

- With the exception of very, very bad credit or a previous loan that is in default, Student Aid will award the loan to cover tuition and book fees regardless of savings or earnings—also, this funding could change any time.

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL

Job Seekers really must "Step Up to the Plate" at this time! Here are the suggestions from industry experts who attended the conference:

- You have to "Stand Out." Your cover letter is so important—more than ever. You have to customize your job search tools (resume/cover letter) so that they are directly related to the job. Get help doing this if needed.
- Think outside the box and highlight all your transferable skills and experience. Employers have their pick right now and applicants who have diverse skills in many different areas are of interest to them. Job seekers must be adaptable, willing to start out at more entry level positions at this time. They must get out and market themselves in any way possible.
- Apply for jobs online, but networking is so important—make connections in person!
- Keep your skills current and maintain a positive, optimistic outlook!