Fall 2026 Edition /

Édition automne 2026

CAPTURING THE STUDENT VOICE© / LA VOIX DES ÉLÈVES©

Facebook / Twitter / Instagram / LinkedIN

ONTARIO COOPERATIVE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Celebrating 50 Years of Cooperative Education in Ontario: 1976 - 2026 | Célébrons 50 ans d'éducation coopérative en Ontario: 1976 - 2026

ASSOCIATION DE L'EDUCATION COOPÉRATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

INSIDE THIS ISSUE / DANS CE NUMÉRO

Behind the Mic: Finding Our Voice Through Creative Co-op	2
Mon stage COOP chez Independent Asselin	3
Mon stage en éducation coopérative à PB Esthétique	4
Finding Hope for a Future Career in Visual Art and Design	5
Finding My Passion with Triad Exterior Contracting	6
My Co-op: Youth in Policing Initiative with Hamilton Police Service	7
My Co-op Placement at Newlife Cabinetry	8
My Placement with 8th Graders Rekindled my Passion for Teaching	9
Completing My Co-op Placement at Guelph Lakes Dental	10
Mon stage chez Arrow Hydraulics	11
Mon stage d'éducation coopérative à l'église Temple Baptist Church à Sarnia	12
Sortir des sentiers battus dans le cadre de mon travail au sein de la COOP	13
More Than a Placement: How Co-op Helped Me Find My Future	14
A Co-op Experience That Built on My Passion for Barbering	15
My Co-op Placement at Steel City Millwork in Cayuga	16
Ifekristi Akinloye Co-op Story Reprinted from MIL	17
CRITERIA: Capturing the Student Voice© / CRITÈRES : La voix des élèves©	18
Contact Us: / Contactez-nous:	19

"CAPTURING THE STUDENT VOICE©" is an electronic journal that showcases stories written and submitted by Ontario high school students who have participated in a Cooperative Education course. The stories describe the tasks that were completed, the challenges overcome and the benefits they derived from their Cooperative Education placements.

***PLEASE NOTE:** These stories are in the students' own words, and the articles have not been edited in any way, to maintain the true spirit of "**CAPTURING THE STUDENT VOICE©**".*

Thank you for taking the time to read these inspiring stories and we hope that you will encourage your students to share their stories for publication in our next edition!

« LA VOIX DES ÉLÈVES© » est un journal électronique qui présente des histoires écrites et soumises par des étudiants à l'école secondaire qui ont participé à un cours en Éducation coopérative. Les histoires décrivent les tâches qui ont été terminées, les défis à surmonter et les avantages qu'ils ont tirés de leurs placements en Éducation coopérative.

***VEUILLEZ NOTER** : Ces histoires ont été écrites avec les propres mots de l'étudiant et les articles n'ont été modifiés en aucune façon, afin de maintenir le véritable esprit de l'initiative de **« LA VOIX DES ÉLÈVES© »**.*

Nous vous remercions d'avoir pris le temps de lire ces histoires inspirantes et nous espérons que vous encouragerez vos étudiants à partager leurs histoires pour qu'elles soient publiées dans notre prochaine édition!

MARK THESE DATES IN YOUR CALENDAR!

2026 Virtual OCEA Fall Symposium
Building Student Futures Through Virtual Collaboration
Virtual Online ~ Via ZOOM
November 5th, 2026
https://ocea.on.ca/events/fall-symposium/

2027 OCEA Spring Conference
Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel
600 Highway 7, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1B2
April 25th, 26th, and 27th, 2027
https://ocea.on.ca/events/spring-conference/

RÉSERVEZ CES DATES DANS VOTRE AGENDA !

Symposium virtuel d'automne 2026 de l'AÉCO
Construire l'avenir des élèves grâce à la collaboration virtuelle
virtuel en ligne ~ via ZOOM
le 5 novembre 2026
https://ocea.on.ca/fr/evenements/symposium-dautomne/

Conférence de printemps 2027 de l'AÉCO
Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hôtel
600, autoroute 7, Richmond Hill (Ontario) L4B 1B2
Les 25, 26 et 27 avril 2027
https://ocea.on.ca/fr/evenements/conference-de-printemps/

Behind the Mic: Finding Our Voice Through Creative Co-op

By: Katie Maltby, Lyla Stanton, Holly Warner, Annabella Watson-Baker, Patrick Fogarty Catholic Secondary School, Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB

This school year, the four of us created and produced This Is P.F. with Katie & Lyla, a student-led podcast at Patrick Fogarty Catholic Secondary School in Orillia.

Through our Creative Co-op placement with our employer and producer, Jeff Cole, we worked together to plan, record, edit, and publish 12 podcast episodes about life at our school. Our episodes included conversations with staff, students and alumni about school events, clubs, teams, trips, arts programs, and different student experiences.

In September, podcasting was new to us. We had to learn how to prepare interview questions, arrange guests, record clear audio, lead conversations, edit audio, create graphics and thumbnails, and publish content online. Some of these tasks were challenging at first, especially keeping interviews sounding natural and learning how much work happens behind the scenes before an episode is finished.

As the year went on, we became more confident. We learned how to work as a team, divide responsibilities, solve problems, and meet deadlines. We also became more comfortable talking to different people in our school community and helping them share their stories.

One of the best parts of this co-op was seeing the podcast become something real. It was exciting to know that the episodes we created were being shared on the Patrick Fogarty YouTube channel and that people in our school could listen to conversations about things happening around them.

This experience helped us build skills in communication, teamwork, organization, audio and video editing, graphic design, and media production. It also showed us how powerful student voice can be. Through the podcast, we were able to help tell stories from our school in a fun, creative, and meaningful way.

By the end of the year, This Is P.F. with Katie & Lyla became more than just a co-op project. It became something we were proud to create together, and it gave us a chance to learn by doing.

This Is P.F. with Katie & Lyla can be found on the Patrick Fogarty YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/@pforillia.





Mon stage COOP chez Independent Asselin

Par : Alizée Gagné, École secondaire publique Le Sommet, Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario

Je m'appelle Alizée Gagné et j'ai fait mon stage COOP chez Independent Asselin. J'ai vraiment aimé mon expérience parce que j'ai appris plein de choses nouvelles et j'ai vu comment ça se passe pour vrai dans une entreprise.

Pendant mon stage, j'ai appris à faire et empaqueter les biscuits, à faire et empaqueter les croissants, à placer les produits sur les étagères, et aussi à couper et décorer les cupcakes. C'est ce que j'ai le plus aimé, surtout décorer les cupcakes, parce que je pouvais être créative et voir le résultat tout de suite.

Un moment qui m'a rendue fière, c'est quand j'ai réussi à bien décorer une série de cupcakes. Je trouvais ça beau et ça m'a montré que j'étais capable d'apprendre vite et de bien faire les choses. Ça m'a aussi aidée à voir que j'aime travailler dans un endroit comme ça.

J'ai eu quelques défis, surtout pour m'habituer au rythme de travail et pour devenir plus autonome. Mais chaque journée m'a aidée à prendre de l'expérience et à être plus confiante.

Pour les futurs élèves, je recommande de rester motivé, d'essayer toutes les tâches et de ne pas avoir peur d'apprendre. Le programme COOP est vraiment une bonne chance de découvrir un métier. Pour moi, mon stage chez Independent Asselin a été une réussite et ça m'a aidée à mieux penser à mon futur.







Mon stage en éducation coopérative à PB Esthétique

Par : Alycia Lacroix, École secondaire publique Le Sommet, Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario

Bonjour, je m'appelle Alycia Lacroix et je suis élève de 12e année à l'école secondaire publique Le Sommet. Depuis quelques années, j'ai eu l'opportunité de faire un stage coop chez PB Esthétique avec Émilie Giroux. J'ai aussi pu aider dans d'autre entreprise situés au même endroit, PB Energie et Caroline Médico Esthétique. Durant mon stage, je participais a plusieur tache reliées a l'esthétique. J'ai aider a préparer le matériel nécessaire pour les soins, observe different technique et eu location d'effectuer des soins avec Caroline Médico Esthétique. Chez PB Energie, j'ai aussi préparé des breuvage pour les clients.

Ces expérience m'ont permis de développer mes compétences en services à la clientèle, mon sens de responsabilités et ma confiance en moi. L'un des moments les plus marquants de mon stage a été lorsque j'ai eu la chance de participer davantage aux soins esthétiques. Au début, j'étais un peu nerveuse, car je voulais bien faire et offrir un bon service. Avec les conseils et l'encouragement de mon employeur, j'ai gagné en confiance. Cette expérience m'a permis de réaliser que j'aime travailler avec les gens et apprendre de nouvelles techniques.

Un défi que j'ai rencontré pendant mon stage a été de sortir de ma zone de confort. Au début, j'étais plus réservée lorsque je devais parler aux clientes ou effectuer certaines tâches. Avec le temps, j'ai appris à être plus à l'aise et à communiquer de façon professionnelle.

En conclusion, ce stage a confirmé mon intérêt pour le domaine de l'esthétique. J'aime le contact avec la clientèle, le fait que chaque journée soit différente et la possibilité d'aider les gens à se sentir bien. Cette expérience m'a permis de mieux comprendre le milieu de travail et de réfléchir à mon avenir professionnel. Je recommande aux futurs élèves de choisir un stage dans un domaine qui les intéresse vraiment, de poser des questions et de profiter de toutes les occasions d'apprendre.
J'aimerais remercier PB Esthétique, Caroline Medico Esthetique et PB Energie de cette belle expérience et de m'avoir aider a choisir ma carrière pour le futur.





Finding Hope for a Future Career in Visual Art and Design

By: Bella Lortie, Saint Pius X Catholic High School, Ottawa Catholic School Board

As a child I always wanted to be an artist, but unfortunately that wasn't always “taken very well”. When you grow up in a minority family who lived in poverty for a long time, picking art as your dream job was considered a “debt”-sentence. I was told to pick a different option as my family was worried I wouldn't be able to make money. The truth is I held those same beliefs as my family when I first started high school. However, I still loved the arts, so I joined the creative arts SHSM.

Because I was in the arts SHSM I ended up doing an art related co-op. Having already been spotted and asked to do co-op years earlier by the manager at Saint Laurent DesSerres I decided that's where I’d go and I loved it.

My job was to be as creative as possible and manage tasks and projects that were given to me. I got to work on many projects that opened my eyes to the possibilities for jobs as an artist.
During my co-op I and the other students worked on projects that benefited the community. I made Christmas cards for the women at the Cornerstone-Women’s Emergency Shelter and made a piece of the Pebeo’s sign made out of lino blocks for the NAMTA Creativation 2026 Conference.

I was able to test out new art media that I wouldn't normally be able to use cost free, including a new line of Pebeo products, Des Serres brand paints, markers, high-quality pens paper, and in-store items. I learned how to apply constructive criticism and communicate with clients. Most importantly I started building a name for myself and making connections. Thanks to this experience many new paths opened for me and I'm one step closer to being able to make my dream career in art a reality.





Finding My Passion with Triad Exterior Contracting

By: Ben Cella, St. Patrick High School, Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

My name is Ben Cella and through my co-op placement at St. Patrick High School in Thunder Bay I completed the Construction SHSM while working with Triad Exterior Contracting. At first, I wasn't entirely sure what to expect, but as the weeks went on, I began to understand the trade more deeply and confirm that this was the path I wanted to pursue. Whether I was moving materials, digging holes, or assisting with site prep, every task felt meaningful and connected to real construction work.

I had the opportunity to complete a variety of hands-on tasks, including installing moor vents, putting up vapour barriers around basement perimeters, learning about the water table, and helping level basement gravel before concrete was poured. Working alongside the crew was a great experience—they were patient, supportive, and always willing to answer questions so I could better understand each step of the job.

One of the biggest challenges I faced was learning to use new equipment, such as the concrete drill. With guidance from my supervisor, I gained confidence and skill. The physical demands of moving heavy materials also taught me what the trade requires and helped me build strength and resilience.

This co-op placement has been incredibly valuable. I not only gained practical skills but also confirmed my future career direction. I am excited to begin working this summer as a carpenter's apprentice with Triad, starting right after my exams

Thanks to this experience, I've found the career path I want to pursue and feel prepared to take the next step.





My Co-op: Youth in Policing Initiative with Hamilton Police Service

By: Grace Mwalyo, St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB

My name is Grace Mwalyo and I am a grade 12 student attending St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School. My co-op teacher Mr. Piro and Mrs. Magliaro offered me this opportunity to work with Hamilton Police Service for my co-op placement Youth in Policing Initiative. My career has yet to be decided, but the goal is to work in law enforcement.

The work that I have done so far at my co-op placement has been community engagement and CPR First Aid training, taught me communication with different age groups, leadership, and time management.

The knowledge that I have gained from this work experience has been valuable and I will continue to cherish this. There is still so much to learn, knowledge to gain from this, and work to perform and seeing the many aspects of policing at this YIPI program, I enjoy working in this career field hoping to pursue a career in the law enforcement field.

This program taught me so many different things that I did not know about police officers by expanding my perspective on the various aspects of policing. I learned about how the different units of policing, the training involved, the teamwork between police officers and dispatchers, and how police officers rely on each other, and all collaboratively work together for success.

This experience working at the Hamilton police station reaffirmed my career choice a little bit but more of allowing me to discover a different career path in law enforcement that I am still exploring.

My co-op placement experience has affected my pathway in a positive way and influenced my course decision making, by choosing courses that align with my desire to join law enforcement. I networked with many people at the workplace starting from the second week.

My mother who was station at the police station worked at the RIST unit (Rapid Intervention Support Team), so many people recognized me, and I was able to make connections that way. Civilians and officers at the station are very friendly so networking and talking with people at the station are very easy and approachable.





My Co-op Placement at Newlife Cabinetry

By: Addy McBurney, St. James Catholic High School, Wellington Catholic District School Board

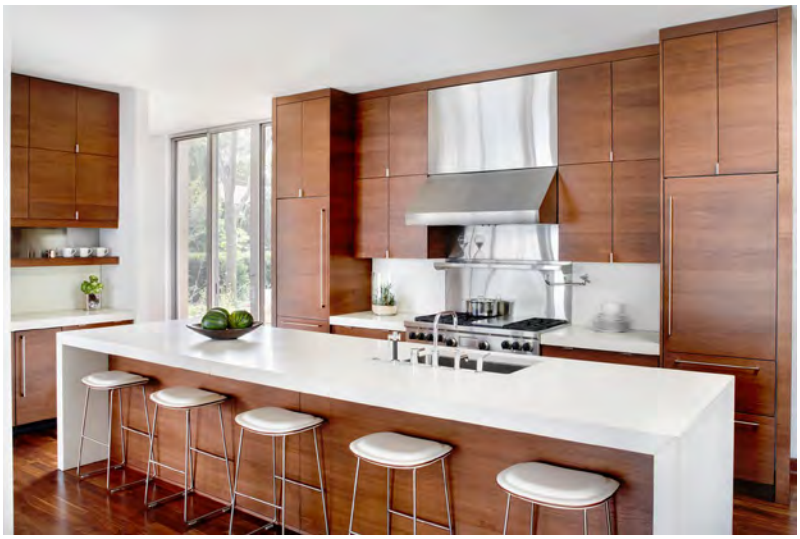
I was interested in the Co-op program at my school as a way to gain some hands-on experience and to help me narrow down what I might like to pursue in my post-secondary education. At the beginning of the course, I knew I was interested in landscape architecture or interior design. After doing some research into various programs and placements, I ended up doing my Co-op placement at Newlife Cabinetry with the goal of learning how to use design software. Newlife Cabinetry is a small family-run business that creates quality custom cabinetry based on the client's functional needs.

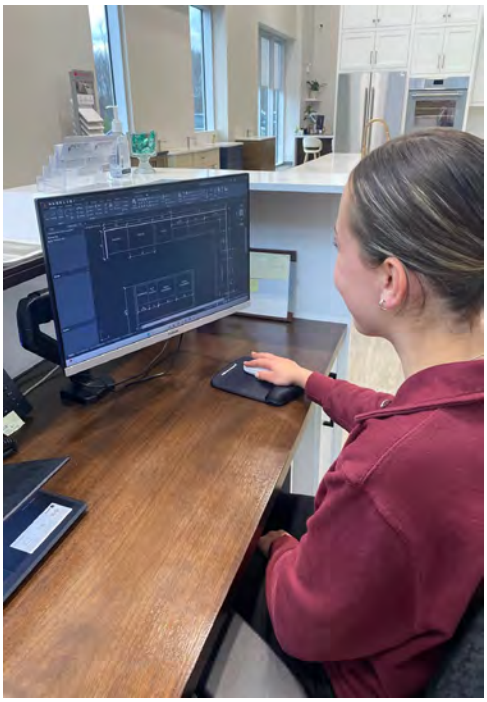
I assisted wherever possible on the design side of the business, whether it was consulting, measuring, or using design software. This placement was a good way to get exposure to design projects and software commonly used throughout various design industries. I was able to work with custom spaces, determine what fit best in each area, then design the space, selecting colours that matched the client's preferences.

It was an adjustment to jump into this new environment, but everyone was very supportive and patient. One thing that I found most challenging was using imperial measurements, since in school we are taught using the metric system. I learned that this is commonly used in some industries in Canada, such as woodworking, construction and manufacturing. After lots of practice measuring multiple spaces, I finally got the hang of it.

This placement provided me with hands-on experience, which made learning more interesting and allowed me to truly understand what a real day-to-day life looks like, determining elements of the job that I would like to pursue. It allowed me to immerse myself in the full experience, coming across things I may never have thought of or expected.

After completing my co-op semester, design is still something I am interested in pursuing. Learning design software like AutoCAD, which is commonly used within the design industry, really helped build my confidence and my resume/portfolio. I am hopeful this skillset will give me the edge I need when applying to post-secondary programs.





My Placement with 8th Graders Rekindled my Passion for Teaching

By: Johnvia Anna, St. James Catholic High School, Wellington Catholic District School Board

My name is Johnvia Anna, and I am from a high school in Guelph. This is my amazing experience working with a group of teenagers preparing for high school. This placement helped me decide on my future career pathway, as I was unsure if teaching was something I wanted to pursue.

Meeting the class for the first time was intimidating. I wondered, “Will they like me?”, “What if my supervisor is really strict?”. However, as soon as I entered the gym and saw the students, all my worries disappeared. My supervisor was welcoming and gave me a run-through of everything, and even till the end of placement she guided and supported me through every task and made sure I was confident. The 8th graders were an energetic, sarcastic, enthusiastic group of kids, which made every day more enjoyable.

Throughout my placement, I completed a variety of different tasks. Some were smaller duties like stapling, organizing, and cutting. I also completed larger responsibilities, including helping students one-on-one with assignments, and teaching an art lesson. One of my favourite tasks was being able to coach the school badminton team and watch them play in the tournament. My favourite experience I had was going bowling with my class for their graduation trip and being able to communicate in a fun setting.

Working one on one with students can be difficult, especially when they don’t want to complete their work. This challenge took me a while to solve. To overcome this, I tried different strategies such as giving them a 2-minute break after a set amount of questions. I also learned to explain concepts using simpler language, examples and with step-by-step instructions, which helped the students improve.

This placement showed me many aspects of teaching, including supporting students academically, classroom management, and leading lessons. As an introvert, communication was something I struggled with but communicating with different people every day improved my confidence. This experience also improved my leadership skills, and problem-solving skills. This placement rekindled my passion for teaching and confirmed that education is a pathway I would like to pursue.





Completing My Co-op Placement at Guelph Lakes Dental

By: Seanne Sarausos, St. James Catholic High School, Wellington Catholic District School Board

Completing my Co-op placement at Guelph Lakes Dental provided an opportunity for me to learn valuable skills while exploring a career that interests me. During this placement, I was an assistant for the clinic, allowing me to explore 3 main sectors in a dental setting: administrative, clinical, and communicational aspects. Some significant responsibilities and opportunities I performed and completed were sterilization of tools and equipment, clinical shadowing, studying patient x-rays and charting, and providing administrative support like patient billing and scheduling appointments. Being able to perform most of these daily has significantly reinforced my ability to perform these tasks much more efficiently and independently, with trust from staff and less error.

Initially, I faced challenges with self-doubt and a lack of confidence in my communication skills due to inexperience and apprehensiveness. However, seizing opportunities with initiative to learn helped me improve comfort in speaking professionally, engage in teamwork, and obtain clarification, whether it would be asking about the measures to sterilize a certain instrument, asking to learn more about a biological process, or recognizing patient-specific conditions and needs. Having the opportunity to also talk to professionals; a dental hygienist, dentist, etc., has helped me gain insight on their careers such as how they interact with patients of different needs or navigate through difficult procedures, which require skills I can develop at my age, like communication and perseverance, to become successful in the future.

My goals were transformed from simply completing health and safety training and learning terminology, to becoming comfortable in implementing infection prevention measures when disinfecting an operating room or understanding the purpose in common procedures like root canals and cleanings. Building confidence over time helped me support the clinic with efficiency in allowing them to focus more on patient care. Developing adaptability, a good mindset, and a willingness to learn has shaped how I approached difficulties and new experiences in the workplace. Overall, working in a dental environment made me realize that I want to work towards a career that integrates technical and interpersonal skills, and expertise in the sciences to help others in the community.





Mon stage chez Arrow Hydraulics

Par : Gabrielle Beaudry, École secondaire catholique Champlain, Conseil scolaire catholique Nouvelon

Je m'appelle Gabrielle et je suis en 12e année à l'École secondaire catholique Champlain. Je fais également partie du programme de la Majeure Haute Spécialisation (MHS) en exploitation minière. Pour ma 2e expérience en éducation coopérative, j'ai eu la chance d'effectuer mon stage chez Arrow Hydraulics, une entreprise spécialisée en usinage et dans la fabrication de pièces destinées au secteur minier. J'ai grandement apprécié cette expérience d'être participante au PAJO, qui restera pour moi très marquante.

Je tiens à remercier sincèrement toute l'équipe d'Arrow Hydraulics de m'avoir accueillie dans leur milieu de travail et de m'avoir offert cette belle opportunité. Dès le début, j'ai été bien accueillie et mise à l'aise par tous les membres de l'équipe. Tout au long de mon stage, chacun a su répondre à mes questions et m'aider à progresser chaque jour. J'ai eu l'occasion d'apprendre à utiliser les machines d'usinage et divers outils. J'ai participé à l'opération des machines CNC pour la fabrication de différentes pièces, et j'ai travaillé régulièrement sur la fraiseuse et le tour manuel. J'ai également appris à nettoyer et préparer les machines, à installer et retirer des pièces, ainsi qu'à m'assurer que chaque étape du travail était réalisée avec précision. J'ai aussi contribué à maintenir un espace de travail propre et bien organisé, ce qui m'a permis de mieux comprendre l'importance des petites tâches et du souci du détail dans un environnement industriel.

En surplus, j'ai développé plusieurs compétences essentielles, notamment le sens de responsabilité, l'écoute, la communication et le travail d'équipe. J'ai pu développer ma confiance grâce à des tâches concrètes et pratiques effectuées quotidiennement. Avant la fin de mon stage, j'aimerais approfondir mes connaissances en programmation afin de devenir plus autonome et de perfectionner mes compétences.

Je suis très reconnaissante d'avoir eu cette opportunité. Je remercie encore toute l'équipe chez Arrow Hydraulics pour leur soutien. Cette expérience m'a énormément appris et m'accompagnera dans la poursuite de mes études comme mécanicienne-monteuse industrielle au Collège Boréal en septembre.





Mon stage d'éducation coopérative à l'église Temple Baptist Church à Sarnia

Par: Joel Lochhead, École secondaire Franco-Jeunesse, Conseil scolaire Viamonde

Je m'appelle Joel Lochhead et je suis un élève de la 12e année à l'École secondaire Franco-Jeunesse. Cette année, j'ai eu la chance de compléter mon stage d'éducation coopérative à l'église Temple Baptist Church à Sarnia, dans le domaine de l'entretien.

Durant mon stage, j'ai obtenu plusieurs compétences qui m'ont aidé à développer mon autonomie et mon sens des responsabilités. J'ai appris comment installer et réparer des cloisons sèches, à mieux faire de la peinture et à remplacer des ampoules situées à plus que 70 pieds de hauteur. En plus, j'ai découvert quels produits utiliser pour nettoyer efficacement le plancher et comment garder un environnement propre et sécuritaire.

Cette expérience m'a aussi permis d'améliorer mes compétences en gestion du temps. J'ai appris à organiser mes tâches de façon efficace et de m'assurer que tout le travail soit accompli à temps. De plus, j'ai eu la chance d'en apprendre plus sur le fonctionnement quotidien d'une église et sur les différents événements qui peuvent arriver dans les coulisses tout au long de l'année.

L'un des aspects que j'ai le plus appréciés de mon stage a été le contact avec la communauté. J'ai créé des liens plus profonds avec mes collègues et les membres de l'église, ce qui a amélioré mon expérience et l'a rendu plus amusante. Travailler dans un environnement accueillant et collaboratif m'a permis de développer mes habiletés en communication et en travail d'équipe.

Pour l'avenir, j'aimerais poursuivre une carrière dans l'Agence des services frontaliers du Canada (ASFC). Je crois que les compétences que j'ai appris en entretien, en organisation et en résolution de problèmes pourront m'aider dans mon parcours professionnel. Cette expérience de stage m'a permis de gagner en confiance, en responsabilité et en engagement envers ma communauté.

Je suis reconnaissant d'avoir eu l'occasion de vivre cette expérience et j'encourage les autres élèves à profiter des possibilités qu'offre l'éducation coopérative pour découvrir leurs intérêts et développer de nouvelles compétences.



« Le succès n'est pas la clé du bonheur. Le bonheur est la clé du succès. Si vous aimez ce que vous faites, vous réussirez. » — Albert Schweitzer

« Choisissez un travail que vous aimez et vous n'aurez pas à travailler un seul jour de votre vie. » — Confucius

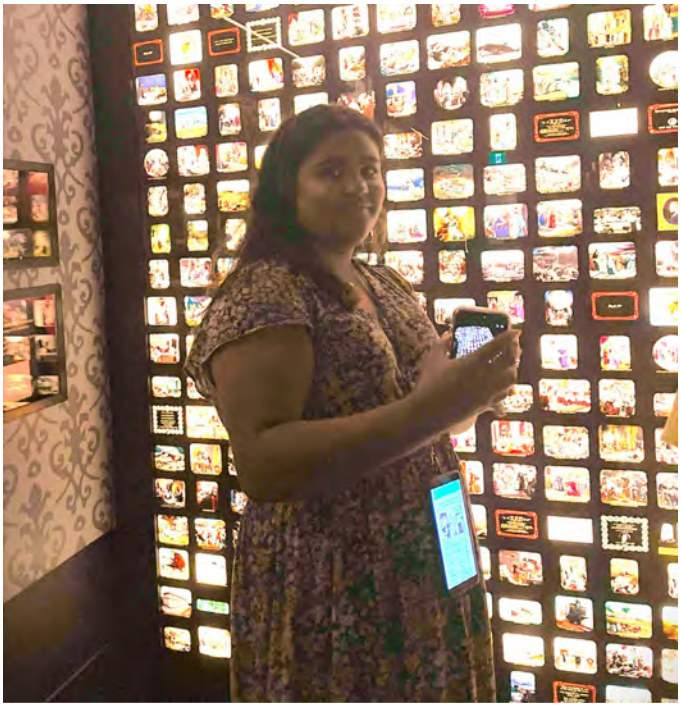
Sortir des sentiers battus dans le cadre de mon travail au sein de la COOP

Par: Mackayla Dantzler-Hill, ES Franco-Jeunesse, Conseil scolaire Viamonde

Quand je dis aux gens que je fais mon stage au sein de mon organisation religieuse, l'Organisation des Témoins de Jéhovah, ils me demandent : « Mais qu'est-ce que tu peux bien y faire et y apprendre ? » Étonnamment, beaucoup de choses. Pour commencer, notre organisation religieuse est officiellement connue sous le nom de Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Lorsque nous avons présenté l'idée à mes professeurs, nous avons expliqué que « notre organisation se consacre à des actions de service communautaire significatives dans divers domaines ». Voyons donc en détail quel genre de travail j'ai eu l'opportunité de faire.

Au cours de mon expérience coopérative, j'ai pu aller dans la communauté et partager des réflexions bibliques encourageantes. Cela m'a beaucoup aidée à m'exprimer en public, à déceler les signaux sociaux indiquant qu'une personne ne souhaite pas parler, et à apprendre à communiquer avec des personnes que je ne connais pas et aux personnalités variées. J'ai également nettoyé et rangé notre Salle du Royaume. J'ai aussi pu faire de la pâtisserie et livrer des gâteaux aux personnes âgées, puis leur rendre visite et les encourager. J'ai également eu l'occasion de visiter la succursale du Béthel au Canada. Lors de ma visite au Béthel du Canada, j'ai découvert le fonctionnement de notre organisation et ses projets en cours. Voici quelques autres petites choses que j'ai faites : j'ai écrit des lettres à ceux que nous n'avons pas pu atteindre en faisant du porte-à-porte, j'ai imprimé des invitations pour un événement spécial et j'ai effectué des recherches sur de nombreux événements importants qui se passaient dans la communauté afin de mieux communiquer avec les gens et de les encourager.

En conclusion, j'ai acquis de nombreuses compétences au cours de ce stage. Comme je travaillais de 8 h à 14 h, j'ai appris à bien gérer mon temps. J'ai appris à rédiger des lettres destinées au grand public. J'ai pu en apprendre davantage sur notre organisation. Et j'ai développé de bonnes compétences en communication. Ces compétences que j'ai acquises me seront utiles dans n'importe quelle carrière que je choisirai d'entreprendre.





More Than a Placement: How Co-op Helped Me Find My Future

By: Bianca Rocca, St. Albert Learning Centre, Sudbury Catholic District School Board

Before my summer co-op (July 2025), I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after high school. I knew I was interested in health and wellness, but I didn't have a clear career path in mind. My Focus on Youth Summer Co- op placement at APT Fitness changed that.

During the summer, I had the opportunity to work at APT Fitness in Lively and experience what it is like to be part of a real workplace. I learned how to sign up new members, communicate with clients, provide good customer service, and be part of a team. As the weeks went on, I became more comfortable and confident, but I also started paying closer attention to the work happening around me.

Being in a fitness environment gave me the opportunity to learn more about exercise, nutrition, and the human body. I became fascinated by how exercise and food work together and started to realize that this was something I could see myself pursuing as a career.

Growing up in an Italian household, I have always been surrounded by food and cooking. During my placement, I realized that I could combine my love of food with my new passion for fitness and nutrition. It just felt right. For the first time, I could picture a career that brought together things I genuinely enjoyed.
By the end of my placement, I had a much clearer idea of what I wanted for my future. I now see myself becoming both a personal trainer and a nutritionist.

Another special part of this experience came after the summer when I had the opportunity to present about Focus on Youth Summer Co-op experience to the Sudbury Catholic District School Board of Trustees and senior administration. Along with another student and our principal, I was able to share how the program helped me gain confidence, experience, and direction. It was exciting to tell the people who support programs like Focus on Youth what these opportunities can actually mean for students.

My co-op experience taught me that sometimes you need the opportunity to experience something firsthand before you know where you belong. If I had not been given the chance to work at APT Fitness, I may never have discovered how interested I am in personal fitness and nutrition.

I started the summer without knowing what career I wanted to pursue. I finished it with a goal and a direction for my future.

I'm so grateful to St. Albert Learning Centre, Focus on Youth, Cooperative Education and APT Fitness for giving me this opportunity. My placement didn't just give me work experience or a credit; it helped me discover what I want to do with my future.





A Co-op Experience That Built on My Passion for Barbering

By: Tristann Johnson, St. Theresa Catholic Secondary School, Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board

I've been working as a barber at Revive Studios for two years, and it's been an amazing experience. When I got the chance to do my co-op there, it was a great opportunity to learn more and build on the passion I already had for barbering.

Since the studio opened, I've improved my skills, especially in cutting fades, and learned how important it is to understand what clients want. Barbering isn't just a job for me, it's something I truly enjoy, and this experience has helped me grow even more.

During my co-op, I got the chance to focus more on the details of cutting hair and perfecting my fades. I also learned about the business side of barbering, like managing appointments and making sure everything runs smoothly in the shop. This experience has helped me develop the skills I need to one day open my own barbershop.

I'm grateful for the support from the team at Revive Studios. They've been great mentors, and their guidance has helped shape my career. I'm excited to continue improving my skills as a barber, and I know this co-op experience will have a big impact on my future.





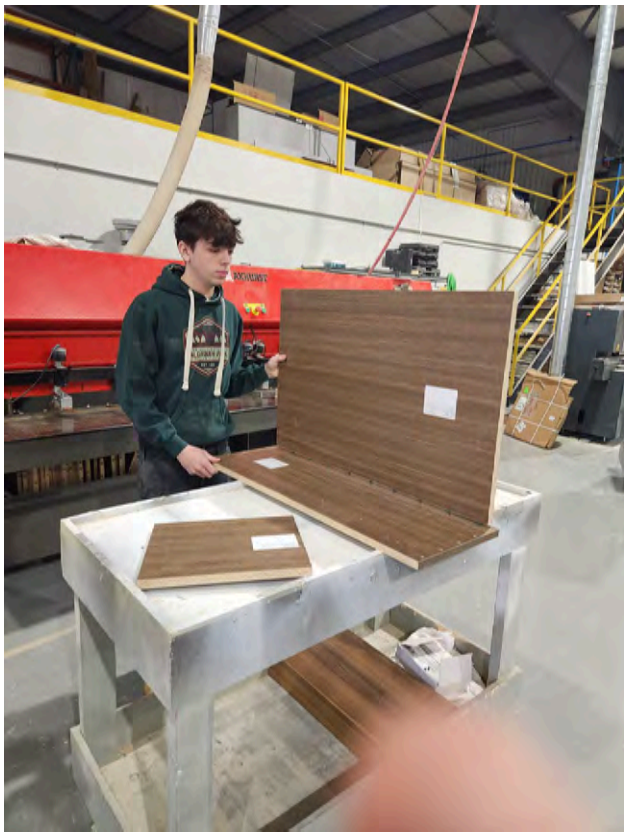
My Co-op Placement at Steel City Millwork in Cayuga

By: Nicholas D'Amario, Bishop Ryan Catholic Secondary School, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

My name is Nicholas D'Amario and I am a 12th grade CO-OP/SHSM student for Mr. Piro's CO-OP course at Bishop Ryan Catholic Secondary School. I am currently a student working. So far at Steel City Millwork my role is to operate the Dowelling machine and make sure all the measurements are good so that the cabinets will turn out nice when assembling. During my time here I've learned a lot about the process on how they put together their cabinets and all the steps involved in doing so. Later in my life I am hoping to start my career UBC Local 18 by taking the apprenticeship program that they offer. My goal is to not only be a part of Local 18 but to also get my Red Seal Certification as soon as possible.

So far working at Steel City Millwork I've had a good experience in this career field. I've gained more knowledge on things I already knew and gained knowledge on things I didn't already know. Working here for the past 3 months has also helped me improve on other skills including working under pressure and my problem-solving skills. As I keep working here, I can say that I do enjoy many aspects of the work, but I'm also going to try and explore other career options to see what would best fit me for the future.

Doing this co-op has helped me gain experience and knowledge while also helping me better understand a career I may want to try in the future. It has also shown me a bunch of useful skills that I will need to have in order to succeed in this field.





MILTONTODAY.ca

'Start of something amazing': Milton District grad earns full tuition to world-renowned Johns Hopkins

Ifekristi Akinloye accepted into ultra-competitive bio-medical engineering program.

By Steve LeBlanc

For someone with an innate curiosity and deep-rooted passion for health-care advancement, Ifekristi Akinloye couldn't find himself in a better position.

Pondering the opportunities ahead, his enthusiasm is nothing short of palpable.

"I think this is the start of something amazing for me," said the Milton District High School valedictorian, who's headed to Baltimore later this summer after being accepted into the bio-medical engineering program at Johns Hopkins University. "There's so many complex feelings that I have. The biggest is just excitement to really hit the ground running."

The 18-year-old Miltonian will do so with a full tuition to the world-renowned institution, which – with a roughly 5 per cent overall acceptance rate – is on competitive par with any branch of the Ivy League.

And that's before his specialized studies are taken into account

Throw in the school's cutting-edge facilities and massive government funding, and Akinloye will be in rarefied academic circles. He greets his post-secondary education with immense gratitude.

"To reach a place where people are making an impact, a difference in the world, I'm so appreciative of that."

The son of Nigerian parents who taught him "what it means to be excellent," the Johns Hopkins-bound teen ranks curiosity above drive when it comes to his achievements to date.

The former reached new heights during a Grade 9 science class, where his future aspirations first took shape.

"We watched a video of a single cell becoming an embryo. That was just, wow! It was so cool, seeing how the world works. I just love being able to explore things."

With a 'leave nothing on the table' mindset since that watershed moment, Akinloye welcomes the wealth of medical and technological insight to come.

Of course he's not exactly hurting in that department – not after





multiple co-op placements and internships that accompanied his high school career.

With ample support and encouragement by MDHS co-op teacher Kevin Kokerus, Akinloye had a front row seat to 10 surgeries at his hometown hospital – everything from knee replacements to bowel resections.

"The first time putting on a gown and going into surgery and having those nerves, it was like wow. I'm really not supposed to be here," recalled the humble honour roll student, who at one time thought about being a veterinarian before gravitating to the intersection of technology, healthcare and research. "It was such a privilege. I learned so much."

Akinloye's window into healthcare was further widened by time spent in the surgical robotics lab at SickKids and in research at the University of Guelph, as well as at a clinic in Guelph – which offered a look into the business side of medicine.

These collective experiences offered a heightened appreciation for both the day-to-day human impact being made at health-care facilities, and the rapid advancements being made by many in the field.

"I tell my students that I teach coop like I'm a driver's education instructor and the student is in the driver's seat. Ife demonstrated that he could not only drive, but apply those skills to fly," said Kokerus. "The staff at both of those placements adored Ife... his passion, maturity and desire to learn. He was an absolute pleasure to teach."

Of course that admiration cuts both ways.

"I've had so many great mentors, and Mr. Kokerus has gone to bat for me so many times," said Akinloye, who was initially on course for a more direct path to a university medical program before first deciding to apply to Johns Hopkins about a year ago. "I'm just so grateful for the amazing opportunity of the co-op program. It opened so many doors for me."

Looking back to his time in the after-school Kumon math program – when, admittedly, homework wasn't always met with enthusiasm – Akinloye said his parents have been an ever-present source of support and encouragement.

"I know they love me because of how much effort they put into my education."

Akinloye now stands at a crossroads, viewing the coming months as the "most unsure" he's ever been about what comes next.

And that suits him just fine.

"I'm just so excited for what the future holds, because I have no idea. It's the beautiful unknown."

CRITERIA: Capturing the Student Voice©

"**Capturing the Student Voice©**" is an electronic journal that includes success stories written by students from across Ontario who participated in the Cooperative Education program and other forms of Experiential Learning (OYAP, SHSM, etc.) in their high school. These stories describe their placement experience, the tasks they had to complete, challenges overcome and the benefits they derived. Thank you for taking the time to read these inspiring stories and maybe even share yours!

Do you have a student who would like to share their success at a placement? We are looking for stories in the following areas:

⇒ Dual-Credit and Co-op
⇒ Successful OYAP / Co-op
⇒ Successful SHSM / Co-op
⇒ Successful Special Ed. Co-op (non-earning credits)
⇒ Successful Co-op



Criteria:

1. Submit student(s) story(ies) by May 31st (annually) via email to info@ocea.on.ca;
2. Ensure the article is no more than 350 words in length;
3. Teachers are asked to edit student articles for grammar, spelling, sentence structure, etc.
4. Submit one picture of the student at their placement (high-resolution (300 dpi) jpg format)
5. Complete and submit the Photo and Model Release Agreement Form.

CRITÈRES : La voix des élèves©

« **La voix des élèves©** » est un journal électronique qui regroupe des histoires de succès écrits par des élèves de partout en Ontario qui ont participé au programme d'éducation coopérative et autres formes d'apprentissage par l'expérience (PAJO, MHS…) de leur école secondaire. Ces histoires décrivent leur expérience de stage, les tâches qu'ils ont eues à compléter, les défis surmontés ainsi que les avantages qu'ils en ont retirés. Merci de prendre quelques minutes pour lire ces histoires inspirantes et même peut-être de nous partager la vôtre!

Avez-vous un ou une élève qui veut partager son histoire de réussite? Nous sommes à la recherche d'articles dans les domaines suivants:

⇒ Double reconnaissance de crédit et COOP
⇒ Stage d'éducation coopérative/PAJO réussi
⇒ MHS/Coop réussi
⇒ Expérience de travail (EED) réussie
⇒ Stage d'éducation coopérative réussi



Critères :

1. Soumettre annuellement l'article ou les articles de l'élève ou des élèves par courriel à info@ocea.on.ca et par au plus tard le 31 mai;
2. S'assurer que l'article ait une longueur maximale de 350 mots;
3. Les enseignantes et les enseignants sont priés de réviser les articles de leur(s) élève(s) pour assurer une grammaire, une orthographe une structure de phrase correctes;
4. Soumettre une image de l'élève ou des élèves au stage (en haute résolution (300 dpi) format .jpg);
5. Remplir et soumettre le formulaire d'autorisation de publier des photographies et le formulaire de renonciation au droit à l'image.

OCEA / AÉCO

c/o 35 Reynar Drive (Satellite Office)
Quispamsis, NB E2G 1J9
EMAIL: info@ocea.on.ca

Facebook / Twitter / Instagram / LinkedIN

https://ocea.on.ca/

CAPTURING THE STUDENT VOICE©
A newsletter published for the members of the Ontario Cooperative Education Association

———-

LA VOIX DES ÉLÈVES©
Un bulletin d'information pour les membres de l'Association de l'éducation coopérative de l'Ontario

OCEA MISSION STATEMENT

"Facilitating and supporting the exchange of ideas among Experiential Learning Professionals"

The Ontario Cooperative Education Association (OCEA) is a not-for-profit professional organization of Ontario Cooperative Education and Experiential Learning Professionals. It strives to provide the leadership and vision needed for optimal professional development of its members. The Association also develops and facilitates access to information, resources and other supports relevant to OCEA members and other Experiential Learning Professionals in the province of Ontario, while supporting excellence in the education of all students in Ontario.

———-

ÉNONCÉ DE MISSION DE L'AÉCO

« Aider et encourager l'échange d'idées entre les professionnels de l'apprentissage par l'expérience »

L'Association de l'éducation coopérative de l'Ontario (AÉCO) est une association professionnelle, sans but lucratif, qui regroupe des professionnels de l'éducation coopérative et autres formes d'apprentissage par l'expérience. Elle s'efforce de fournir un leadership et une vision nécessaires au développement professionnel optimal de ses membres. De plus, l'association contribue au développement de ressources, en facilite l'accès, et fournit des renseignements actuels et pratiques à ses membres et aux autres professionnels de l'apprentissage par l'expérience en Ontario, tout en soutenant l'excellence en éducation de tous les élèves de la province.

***CAPTURING THE STUDENT VOICE*© IS PUBLISHED ONCE EACH YEAR BY THE ONTARIO COOPERATIVE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (OCEA)**

Subscription is included with a yearly OCEA membership.

COPYRIGHT© 2026 BY OCEA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION OF ANY ARTICLE, PHOTOGRAPH, OR ARTWORK WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. THE PUBLISHER CAN ASSUME NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNSOLICITED MATERIAL. ALL OPINIONS EXPRESSED ARE THOSE OF THE WRITERS.
Office of publication indexed in the Canadian periodical index. PRINT: ISSN NO. 1718-942X

- - - -