

Federal Public Sector
Youth Internship Program

Investing in *our* *youth:* a success in itself!

A few messages...



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada



Canada 

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** The articles in this booklet are the original words of past participants in the Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program. They were not corrected or edited.



Introduction

SINCE 1997, THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SECTOR YOUTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (FPSYIP) has offered to over 8,000 young Canadians the opportunity to acquire experience and work skills through internships in federal organizations.

Delivered in partnership with YMCAs across Canada, the Program could not exist and succeed without the willingness of federal public service employees to welcome and share with a young intern their time, energy, wisdom, and wealth of experience. Thank you!

Our real heroes are still our young participants. In spite of having worked with this Program for many years, we are still deeply touched by their notes and testimonials. We would like to share some of them with you.

They confirm, for each member of our extended team, that our youth is worth it!

Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program YMCAs and federal teams.

Don't Quit

Source Unknown

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG, AS THEY SOMETIMES WILL,

When the road you're trudging seems all up hill
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest if you must, but just don't you quit.

Life is odd with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about,
When they might have won had they stuck it out,
Don't give up though the pace seems slow,
You may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far,
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
It's when things seem worse that you must not quit.

I chose this because when things got so "ruff" where I wanted to give up, but I didn't... I stuck though it until the end. I am a 26-year-old, single parent of three (ages 10, 7 and 4) and I never completed high school (or anything else for that matter). I thought to myself that because I had three kids and only a grade 11 education that I would not be able to work and there were no opportunities out there for single parents with no or little education, but I was wrong... there is, you only have to be motivated and tell yourself that's what you want to do.

It took me a long time to finally know and realize what I wanted to do and what was best for me and my kids, now that I know there is no stopping me. I got tired of hearing the little voice in my head telling “Forget about it, no one is going to hire anyone with little education and no work experience.” Well, I got a job and plan to go to school... right now, I couldn’t be prouder of myself as I am now. I set a goal for myself and I am doing it.

I had my oldest child when I was 15 and was on social assistance since then. As of July of 2002 I have been off the system and I won’t lie and say it hasn’t been hard because it has been, but I stuck it out and I couldn’t have been happier.

I heard about the Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program through a friend: I got a call for an interview, was accepted for the assessment week, completed four weeks of training and became an intern at (federal organization). This program has really helped me a lot and I am really grateful for being given the chance to try to change things around for myself. Since the program I’ve decided to keep on going and my first step is getting my GED, after receiving that I plan to attend university as a mature student to get a certificate and/or degree in Information Technology and Applied Arts. I don’t want to sit around and do nothing anymore waiting on “my end of the month cheque”. I’m off the system and I’m going to try my hardest to stay off knowing that I have three children to take care of and who look up to me every day and I know they are proud of me, I don’t want that to change. After all, if I don’t make things right for me and the kids, no one will.

When I look at how things were then and how they are now. I know I could have done this a long time ago. But I had no motivation and little-self esteem when it came down to finding a job. I was worried about not having a sitter for the kids and kept on saying to myself that no one would hire anyone that had not completed school (now I know that was only the devil trying to hold me back). Those were two barriers that I felt I could not overcome, but not anymore. I WANT to work and I NEED to get more education and I will. The way I look at it, if I keep the attitude I have I can do what ever I want to if I put my mind and my heart into it.

Someone once told me that one remarkable thing about life is that we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it.

Past Intern

Time to say goodbye ... and thank you

Nine months have passed already, time travels fast...

I CAN'T BELIEVE NINE MONTHS HAVE GONE BY ALREADY. I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT THIS has been the greatest work experience I've ever had. I'm sure you all can tell just how much I like it here at (federal organization). It's so hard for me to believe that I am going to college in the fall. Everything has happened so fast, getting this job, graduating, and then being accepted to the one program I wanted to take. It's just so nice. It is like I have been granted a wish that I never thought would come true. I have learned so many things since I came here and it has been an amazing experience in which I am leaving here with so much more knowledge about than I had before. Each of you took the time to help me with all the tasks that I was given to take care of, some that I only finally figured out only a short time ago.

For example:

V. helped me and was always around when I needed her. You are just all around cool, lady.

B. showed me how to figure out the accents on the computer when typing in French and helped me with my French Immersion and became a very close friend, as did all of you.

K., E., D. and **B.** have taught me so many things and have always answered any questions I've had. They also made me feel very much a part of the front end. I will miss them like crazy, even **E.** acting like a big sister/mother telling me to sit up straight and to pull my shirt down if I had even the slightest bit of tummy showing.

You are all terrific people. I will miss the e-mails and laughs.

S. has been an absolute wonderful mentor and has been around to answer anything from office stuff to my time sheets. I will be in to see you soon about my SD package over the next few weeks and thank you for the encouragement.

Among another group who've been life-savers during my nine months there is **L.** who really pushed for me to go back to school, graduate and apply myself to this job and the Business Administration Program.

Thank you for your kind words and believing that I will succeed in whatever I do.

Always grateful,
L.

Our intern the film producer

This film has been co-produced by one of our past post-secondary interns. He was very proud to inform and invite us to view it.

Subject: internship pays off

Hey **J.**

MY FILM **DISCORDIA** THAT I STARTED WORKING ON WHILE I WAS AN INTERN is playing in Toronto, hope you can come.

Thanks,

S.

The National Film Board of Canada Presents **DISCORDIA**

DISCORDIA screens in Montreal and Toronto.

World Television Premiere on Cinema Real, CBC Newsworld

DISCORDIA, co-directed by **B. A.** and **S. M.**, documents the fallout from the day Netanyahu came to town—charting the turbulent progress of three young campus activists as they navigate the choppy waters of student politics and the most formative year of their lives.

S. M.

Getting a term position

Subject: YIP—Another Success!

Hi D. —

I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW THAT ANOTHER INTERN HAS SUCCESSFULLY migrated from the YIP to a full-time position with the Public Service. **A.** spent seven months with us as a communications intern. She was hoping to find work in Ottawa after the full nine-month period but through the networking and other opportunities provided by her internship with us, she was considered for and received a three-year term appointment with (other department) in the NCR as a (position). We are absolutely delighted with her success although we did regret losing her for the last two months as she was a terrific asset to our team.

I appreciate, as always, that the intent of YIP is not public service recruitment; but providing a meaningful and positive work experience however it is great when interns can leverage their YIP experience into full-time employment whether it is with the Public Service or private sector. Your program is fabulous and we consider ourselves very fortunate that we are able to work with you to provide opportunities for young talented people. I look forward to our continued partnership!

Regards,

J.
Regional Director

C. (an intern)

Hello,

THE REASON I AM WRITING TO YOU TODAY IS SIMPLE. THIS MARKS MY FIFTH MONTH IN the internship program with (federal organization). In February I started this internship and I have not stopped learning since. This is more than just a job or a way to get a good reference, it's more than just an opportunity, it is a real life changer.

I started out the program very cynical (read: cynical) and with little confidence in myself and in my skills. I have been transformed so much that it is almost like I put my foot in here and all of a sudden my old self disappeared and this skilful and confident young woman made her showing. This is my first REAL job, and when I started this program I got to say, I had very little skill and only a high school diploma in my hand. Most employers I had approached just smiled and threw my resume away because honestly I had nothing concrete to sell myself with.

I was a mess when this program got a hold of me and I would probably be a statistic today if it was not for this program. Sure the money is not great, but the opportunity is more than gold, it's really a life change and a life-saver in my case. Now I know some interns may not see it like I do, I guess everyone is a little different and some don't really get what the words "opportunity" and "privilege" mean.

If I have to say one thing about this program is that not only is the staff and the officers a god gift, but the program itself is a life-saver. Also just to add a little, I would like to say that the support and the guidance the program officer for this region is giving us, well, I guess I really should not talk for everyone, is exceptional and really crucial to the experience.

C.

The Quiet Intern

SOME DAYS, I FIND IT HARD TO PULL MYSELF
from the warm blankets of home to
meet with the chilly winds of Portage Avenue,
so early in the morning.

I am the new face.
The quiet intern, trying to contribute to a competent team,
Years beyond my realm of experience.

But hands extend, people smile,
And I am embraced by kindness and support.

No one stands over my shoulder shouting angry words,
Or rubs my face in the skills which still must be cultivated.
I am the sponge, soaking up all that I can in my current format.

I am invited into boardrooms and conversations.
I am learning the language of computers.
Learning to communicate strategically
beyond my artistic dabbling in music and film.

Maybe I can use my life experience to
better this world in some small way.

Each day I am challenged,
Not by the judgments of others,
Nor my own handicaps.
But challenged to keep this country great,
Nurturing creative souls,
Of this diverse tapestry.

I make sense of paperwork,
Eye alert to necessary revision,
Inviting constructive analysis and criticism.

I make mistakes. I correct them.
The confidence of our unit feeds my confidence.

I am the quiet intern.
A songcatcher,
And unseen actor.

With opportunity to learn of my dream,
I, in turn, can assist in unlocking the dream doors of all Canadians.

On the third floor of an eighteen-storey building,
a unique brand of communicators
are huddled around a table,
working on a development, Me.

Shawn Inwards

I, Shawn Inwards, hereby authorize the use of this text to be used within the YMCA and all Government Branches in Canada provided that my authorship of the piece is indicated with the text.

Participant's speech

Subject: A participant's success story

Hi D. :

FOLLOWING IS A COPY OF THE SPEECH OUR FPSYIP PARTICIPANT, R. GAVE AT a local Education/Career Practitioners conference. He was our luncheon speaker and there were 120 guests present, including the Director General of (federal organization), and the provincial minister responsible for human resources and employment.

It's a great "good news" story!

K. (YMCA counsellor)

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experiences with the YMCA-YWCA.

I CAME TO THE YM-YWCA IN NOVEMBER 2000 SEEKING HELP TO FINISH SCHOOL. While I was pursuing that option, my counselor, E.H., suggested that I look into the Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program. I was a little skeptical at first and even a few weeks into the program, but I was given all the support from the staff at the Y and as the old saying goes, "nothing ventured—nothing gained."

The internship program sounded very interesting and I met a great group of people who shared success and failure stories. The Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program not only worked out, it changed my whole life. I finished the employability training with the Y and I started my placement at (federal organization). At a meeting with a counsellor from the Y, I was informed that I might get some time off to study a little and work on finishing high school. Five months into the program I was an official high school grad. WOW!

I had achieved a major goal in my life, so if I got nothing else from the program it had already given me enough. Once I started my placement I started to build more confidence every day, and finally when I finished high school I felt like I could do anything that I wanted to. I have gained invaluable knowledge and experience, and I have met some of the most interesting people ever. Now I'm starting to form a plan to stay at this level in my life where I feel that I'm always moving up the ladder of success.

Since I have started my placement with (federal organization) I've also learned more about other related occupations and have job shadowed with officers. I've gone on two field projects. I've participated in inspections on equipment from three different nationalities.

I have experienced more in the last 10 months than in most of my life, but I don't think it's over yet. My mentor has informed me of some training that she has in store for me and possibly some experience out in the field with an officer. I finish my placement in January and I feel confident about my future. I just have to do a little more research and maybe some soul searching to find out what I want to do for the rest of my working life.

R.

Altered Life

Sir or Madam:

I RECENTLY MADE A CALL TO YOUR OFFICE AND INQUIRED AS TO THE STATUS OF YOUR past interns. Mainly, if any had made it to indeterminate status as of yet. I was informed that those numbers were not available as of yet. Well, I can help with one of them.

I was in your first Internship program in 1999-2000, held in (city), Ontario. We started with 12 people and we have all gone on to new experiences. I completed my Grade 12 diploma requirements during my program and I also competed in a competition that I placed in. When we completed the Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program, I started working as a casual in Human Resources of the (federal Department), my host organization. I then went on to work on contract in another branch of the same department. From there I was hired as a term.

In less than two short years I have placed in an indeterminate competition and been appointed indeterminately. I now work in that position in that department.

The branch has had two interns since my program ended and I have helped to advise and train both of them. So I have been giving back to the internship a little of what they have given me.

When I started the internship program, I was at rock bottom. I couldn't find a job and thought that no one would hire me except for a fast food restaurant. T. (YMCA counsellor) gave me a shot. I told her in my interview that if she got my foot in the door, I would push my whole leg in. I have! Thanks to the program I have completed my Grade 12, established a new career and my whole life has been altered.

I want to thank you very much for the opportunity to take part in such a great program. I wouldn't be where I am today if it were not for this program.

Feel free to contact me if you require any additional information about my experience.

Thank you,

L.