

JobWave Celebration

Premier Gordon Campbell

January 26, 2005

Check Against Delivery

First, I want to say thanks to all of you for coming, and for recognizing that when you set goals for yourselves, there is virtually nothing that can't be accomplished.

It's important to acknowledge WCG International, Ian Ferguson, Rob and all of you for the exceptional work being done here for people across the province.

We tend to deal with employment mostly in terms of numbers, but behind every job, every employment statistic is a person -- a person with a family; a person building a future; a person feeling better about themselves; a person excited about what they can offer to their community.

I'm very pleased that we have this audio feed. This audio feed is touching so many communities in British Columbia: from Prince George, to Surrey; from Duncan, to Kelowna; from Courtenay, right here, to Vancouver, and right here to Victoria.

I'm also very pleased to see John Winter here today; John is the President of the B.C. Chamber of Commerce, an organization that knows how essential job creation is to the future of B.C.

You know, it's important, as we look out to the future, to recognize that our real strength as an economy comes from our small businesses in this province. It comes from men and women deciding they're going to take an opportunity; they're going to pursue their goal of building a business. Building a business means building jobs: The chamber has done an exceptional job of doing that in community, after community, after community, across this province.

Today, the B.C. Chamber of Commerce represents 28,000 businesses. I want to say, John, thanks a lot for coming and taking the time to be with us today.

It is important to note that the chamber doesn't just put JobWave in touch with job opportunities; it also helps provide B.C.'s small businesses with free human

resource services which are very helpful to them as they look to building their business in the future.

So how successful can this kind of partnership really be? Let's put it this way: since July of 2002, JobWave's marketing team has contacted B.C. small business over 290,000 times, over a quarter-million times. They've posted 58,000 jobs -- 58,000 jobs -- that can be linked to people who need work. That's what is so incredible about this special partnership that JobWave has with the B.C. Chamber.

People want to work, JobWave understands this and the results confirm it: Eighty per cent of the clients who complete the JobWave program have obtained at least ten months of independence from B.C. Employment and Assistance.

But sometimes people need a little bit of help; they need a little bit of support; they need a little advice or some mentorship. That is why every JobWave client receives personalized coaching and follow-up after their placement. JobWave understands that a little bit extra really does so much.

So today there is a celebration. The celebration is: 30,000 job placements by JobWave since 1995. Congratulations to all of you for that exceptional work.

Since 2001, JobWave and three other placement agencies have helped 36,000 people in B.C. move from income assistance to new jobs, jobs that open up a whole world of opportunity for self-reliance and independence.

Programs that match people to jobs have never been more valuable than right now in British Columbia. We are number one in job creation in our country. Between December of 2001 and December of 2004, 198,000 new jobs have been created in our province, 198,000 new pay cheques, 198,000 new lives for British Columbians and their families: we should all be proud of that.

B.C.'s unemployment level is at a 23-year low. It's the lowest level it's been since 1981.

Looking to the future, there's a lot for JobWave to do, there's a lot for all of us to do, with one million new job openings expected over the next decade.

14,000 new jobs in health services; 110,000 new jobs in accommodation and recreation services; 110,000 new jobs in retail; 67,000 new jobs in computer and business services; 62,000 new jobs in construction -- and that's just the beginning.

We all see British Columbia as a place for jobs, for opportunities and brighter futures -- JobWave is helping us achieve that vision, that security, that bright future one job placement at a time.

But the real success here has nothing to do with numbers and has everything to do with people.

We are very fortunate to be joined by a very special person: The 30,000th JobWave client. Stephen Venn has joined us today. Stephen, come on up here.

Stephen lived in Victoria for ten years. He recently moved to Duncan to be with his family. He was without work for three years. JobWave helped Stephen move back into the workforce, by giving him the support that he needed to help him get him a job with the Vancouver Island Recycling Centre, right there, in Duncan.

I want to congratulate you, Stephen. I hope everything's going great for you.

I also want to ask John Winter if he could come up -- representing your new employer.

Doug Powers can't be with us, but he is with the Vancouver Island Recycling. Doug has hired several JobWave clients, and exemplifies the kind of community spirit that you find in small business owners all across the province.

I want to say congratulations to both Stephen and John and to thank John for the true partnership he represents here today.

I have a little something to give you. First, Stephen, from the province of British Columbia and JobWave International, congratulations on being number 30,000.

Stephen Venn: I'd just like to thank Cowichan Valley [inaudible] School and Barb Stevens (sp); she's the one that sponsored me and helped me and supported me in all this. I've come through a.... It was a long rut, and I'm out of it, and I'm proud of myself.

Campbell: Way to go. Good.

And John, on behalf of the province and JobWave, thank you -- and the Chamber -- for all you do, as well.

30,000 and counting. Let's keep doing this.

Thank-you very much.