



OTDC Annual Report – 2006

Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society Employment Services

To date there are 77 active files on Contact IV with others being closed out as clients obtain employment. We recently did a follow up on all our files and closed many as the clients had completed training and/or secured employment. To date we have worked with 435 clients. Below are the stories of some of our clients.



Lanora is a young woman I started working with last year. She was working at the time for a wood manufacturing company for low wages and high stress. She is a single parent of two children and worked to support them.

She wanted a change, a direction, a future, so we started exploring possibilities. During this process Lanora ended up taking a medical leave, due to work environment. We continued to develop her long term goals and Lanora decided she really wanted to work as a LPN but would start as a resident care attendant, work a few years and then go back to school and complete her practical nursing.

She is currently in a resident care program, getting a 4.0 GPA, will graduate in 3 months and already has worked lined up. Her confidence, self esteem and zest for life is again apparent.

Stephanie is a single parent who has been working with our program for about a 1 ½ yrs. She came to us frustrated and unsure of what she wanted. She had just been laid off from a job working with children (has an ECE certificate) and was thinking she may want to expand her education in the human service field. We began examining options and she discovered the trades. We hooked her up with the SICA program and she has just graduated and is looking for work. She has connected with the coordinator of the Kelowna Bridge Project and is excited about the work possibilities. She loves finishing carpentry and will do very well in this industry.

There are many more stories of individuals coming to the centre for support with direction, funding possibilities and job opportunities. With the support of the OTDC Program Administrators, this fiscal year we have supported;

- Approx. 25 people to get short term training in food safe, flagging, first aid, small business workshops, servicing it right, security, etc.
- Developed training packages for long term career development to OTDC for around 15 individuals this year, all except one is either still in school or has graduated and is working.



One of our focuses for the year has been developing community partnerships to further enhance our abilities and knowledge of the community and how best to serve our clients. Examples are;

- Set up job fairs with employers,
- Met with Ministry Representatives for support with educational programs for social assistance recipients,
- Met with employers to assess what their needs are to better prepare our clients for the work force and,
- Worked actively with other employment agencies on building a team approach for service. We hosted a Community Capacity Day, with Global Resources (federal case management organization), for all community employment agencies in Kelowna. This was very successful, with great feedback on how to better service clients. We will continue developing these relationships in the upcoming year.
- Held information sessions at the centre, with representatives from the Trades Industries, including the college. They have shared with our clients what job opportunities are available, what they are looking for in employees, what training they will need, and what is the first step!



2006 12th Aboriginal Career Fair was a huge success this year. The Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society along with Okanagan College and UBC-Okanagan organized this event every year for Aboriginal youth throughout the Interior of BC. This year we added to the Career Fair by involving the local Service Canada employment department.

We received support from the local SC office to hire youth to participate in the arranging the day, hosting on the day and completing follow up evaluations. We had more hands on activities such as a cartoonist who drew pictures of youth in careers they planned on working in, a big rig, for people to climb in and get the feel for, and hairdressers who as part of their booth, completed hair styles for any youth interested. We also really encourage not only the in school students to attend but youth who are “at risk” and/or in alternative schooling. Next year we will expand even further into the community to reach more “at risk” youth.

We have also been very fortunate this year to have participated in several trainings and conferences which have significantly increased knowledge and job effectiveness. We have had training in Contact 1V data entry and uses, Outlook software, Brain gym, and Essential Skills. Attended the Aboriginal Employment Conference in Kamloops and made some great contacts and gathered useful material.

It has been a productive and successful year!