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Edited By:
Mandy Lai, Greg Ross, Christina Sanguinetti
(VIP Assistant Coordinators)
Don’t know where you will be in a few years?!
Confused about your career choices?!

You are not alone. Many students have almost no idea what they want to do once they graduate. But don’t panic, there is help out there!!!

The annual all-campus job fair was held January 28th, 2003. It gave students the opportunity to investigate future possibilities—whether it be a career-focused initiative or post-graduate education.

The major companies present represented three basic fields—business, healthcare and international employment. Financial companies, such as the Investors Group and Foresters, were among the many participants. When asked what qualities are most desirable in successful applicants, Jim Gordon (Branch Manager for Foresters) replied, “People who are focused and know what they want from their jobs.” He also went on to describe that successful students are those who know why they want to work in a particular company.

International opportunities were also present. Companies like Nova and Aeon offer opportunities to teach English overseas, such as Japan. Masako Ogawa (Recruiter for Aeon) stated that “teaching skills, business skills and interpersonal skills” were all important qualities that they look for in future employees. Candidates must be “flexible because they are facing a different culture. They need to be sensitive to other cultures.”

In addition, there were some volunteering opportunities available. St. Joseph’s Health Care London presented information on volunteering in the London hospitals. Registered Nurse Ann Kirby stated that when volunteering, “interest is number one.” It is important to donate your time and efforts to what you feel is a worthwhile cause. She also stated that “following up” is very important when putting you ahead of the competition. Grand River Hospital also has some volunteering opportunities for those who live in and around that area. Speaking from experience, it is very important to let the hospitals know that you would like to volunteer well ahead of time, as there is usually a long waiting list of people like yourself that are seeking the same opportunity.
Last but not least, there were representatives for Graduate Programs. Western was, of course, present along with Fanshawe College, Humber College, The University of New York, The National University of Health Science, and many others. Many students are not sure if graduate work is what they really want to do. Liaison Officer, Amanda Koski, said it is also imperative that students do research into the university or college of their choice.

If these companies, colleges and universities aren’t up your alley, the following websites may help you in your job search:

- SDC Career Services — www.sdc.uwo.ca/career
- Government Website — www.jobs.gc.ca
- WorkopolisCampus.com — Access Code is “jobsforyou”

If you’re still unsure about which way you’re heading, Career Services in the Student Development Centre holds great resources and provides counselling services to help you define a most-suitable career path.

We would like to thank Sharon Lee, Recruitment Coordinator of Career Services, and her volunteers for the fantastic effort they put into the career fair.

Remember, your future is moulded by what you do today.
Invest in the present and the rest will follow.

CONGRATULATIONS to VIPs 2002-2003!!!

The VIP Program would like to recognize the volunteers who have contributed their time and effort for two years or more. Congratulations from the Student Development Centre!!!

VIP (2 Years):
Hana Badreddine
Jenna Dawson
Lammis Hammoud
Mandy Lai
Jennifer Lau
Marco Lim
Stella Ng

Hazel Ann Rona
Christina Sanguinetti
Amanda Shamshudeen
Olivia Yao
Zahira Zahid

VIP (3 Years):
Kyla Lamarche

Volunteers with Sharon Lee, Recruitment Coordinator
France: April Fool’s Day is called "April Fish" (Poisson d’Avril). The French fool their friends by taping a paper fish to their friends’ backs. When someone discovers this trick, they yell “Poisson d’Avril!”. (The fish in April are newly hatched and easily caught.)

Portugal: April Fool’s is celebrated on the Sunday and Monday before Lent. The traditional trick there is to throw flour at your friends.

England: Tricks can be played only in the morning. If a trick is played on you, you are a "noodle".

Scotland: April Fool’s Day is 48 hours long and you are called an "April Gowk", which is another name for a cuckoo bird. The second day in Scotland’s April Fool’s is called Taily Day and is dedicated to pranks involving the buttocks. Taily Day’s gift to posterior posterity is the still-hilarious "Kick Me" sign.

Source: http://www.computingcorner.com/holidays/aprilfool/aprilfool.htm

A WORD FROM SANDRA  Written By: Sandra Pehilj

The VIP Program, as it is approaching its 20th Anniversary this fall, has reached the highest number of students - over 140, including summer volunteers. Each year, it is interesting to read the program evaluations and learn about what motivates the students to join the program. While some of you value the opportunity to gain career related skills and enhance your professional knowledge, others feel honoured for having the opportunity to work closely with the SDC professionals. But, for many of you, the major reason for joining the program is, indeed, to help others and contribute to the community.

On behalf of the Student Development Centre, I would like to take the opportunity to express my sincere Thank-you for your hard work and dedication to the program, and for making a difference in the lives of your fellow students.

Special thanks go to the VIP Assistant Coordinators — Mandy, Christina, and Greg — for their exceptional enthusiasm and creativity in improving different aspects of the program during this past year.

And, before I forget, as I will be off on maternity leave soon, I would like to introduce to you the new Interim VIP Program Coordinator, Rachel Crowe, who started in her new position as of March 26th. We wish Rachel good luck with the program management and the 2003-2004 VIP recruitment.
Ever wondered about working or volunteering abroad?
Here are some tips that were given out at the International Information Session held on February 12th, 2003.

“Think Big.” When searching for volunteering opportunities, look for international companies, like Coca-Cola, that provide job opportunities in many different countries, or reputable organizations like Canada World Youth.

“Laugh at yourself.” There are going to be times where you get confused about different cultures and their traditions. Instead of getting angry with yourself and your situation, think positively and enjoy the experience.

“Emotional No-No.” Often when entering a strange environment, people tend to close themselves off from the host culture. This will only make you feel more homesick. Get out, explore, and try new things. Interacting with new people will help alleviate your longing for home. Who knows, you may have fun while doing it.

“Multiplicity is the key.” When traveling, make sure you have copies of student visas, passports, travelers’ cheques, and other important identification documents. Leave copies with your family and take one copy with you, but remember to keep it separate from the originals. It’s better to be safe than sorry.

If traveling sparks an interest in you, Go For It! It’s a great opportunity to build knowledge and emotional strength. The sky’s the limit.

**CONGRATULATIONS to ENGLISH CONVERSATION LEADERS 2002-2003!!**

**2 Terms:**
Uzair Amir  
Jaspal Chahal  
Fred Chan  
Rocky Chan  
Jessie Cox  
Adam Davis  
Radhika Dixit  
Kaitlin Dupuis  
Alison Foskett  

Jason Grbavac  
Kelly Heffernan  
Karen Hersenfield  
Hedyeh Javidnia  
Niko Karatsoreos  
Cy Khanna  
Kate Primeau  
Ashwati Raghunath  
Shawna Robinson  
Cham Roeun  

Amanda Eva Schwartz  
Aleksandra Stanimirovic  
Jillian Toogood  
Marci Turner  
Jenn Van Nest  
Matthew Warren  
Yan Zheng  

**3 Terms:**
Ophelia Bou
Adam Davis, a second year ACS student, expresses his thoughts and experience with VIP as an English Conversation Leader.

I would definitely consider returning because I like the position very much. But I feel that I would also like to try something different within the VIP stream. Nevertheless, I encourage everyone to apply to be an English Conversation Leader.

Do you think you will be an English Conversation Leader next year?

I really enjoyed getting to know my group. They are all interesting people who have many good questions and ideas. Some times we talk about serious things like politics. But other times, we just joke around.

What did you enjoy about your position?

I’ve learned to appreciate other cultures and ways of life. People can be so different and at the same time so similar. Also, I’ve come to respect my group’s different perspectives about Canada’s culture, as opposed to just viewing it through my eyes.

What have you learned from your experience as an English Conversation Leader?

It was when we talked about slang and Ebonics. We all had a good time using different slang and then explaining the meaning of each word. We laughed a lot.

What was the funniest thing you did with your group?

I would definitely consider returning because I like the position very much. But I feel that I would also like to try something different within the VIP stream. Nevertheless, I encourage everyone to apply to be an English Conversation Leader.

What have you learned from your experience as an English Conversation Leader?