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Mock Election at PTP

October 10, 2007 was Election and Referendum Day in Ontario. During the first week of October the Newsletter Team held a mock election and referendum



at PTP. We had a mock election because we wanted to find out how PTP students would vote in the real provincial election and referendum. The mock election also helped us learn about voting and about the referendum.

Here's how we organized the event.

Set Up

To make our PTP mock election as real as possible we read an original Elections Ontario training manual. One of our students got a job as a poll clerk and brought the manual in for us to refer to.

Our first step was to prepare our supplies: election ballots, referendum ballots, a voter's list, a voter's screen and a ballot box. We made the ballots for the general election using a template we found on the Elections Canada website. We made the referendum ballots by copying the text from a brochure. We typed up a voter's list from our list of students and staff. Karin, our Newsletter Team

instructor, contacted Elections Canada and they sent an original ballot box and voting screen to use in our mock election.

The mock election took place in room two. We organized the room to look like a polling station. We set up the tables and chairs, the voter's screen and ballot box needed for the occasion. We set up the voting station with the necessary ballots for the general election and the referendum. At the entrance to the room we taped a line on the floor to show the voters where to line up. We also set up the computer area with information to help voters find out where to go to vote in the real election.

Finally, we referred to the training manual to find out how to carry out the duties of a deputy returning officer, poll clerk and scrutineer. We then had newsletter students act out these roles.

Voting

Everyone had a chance to vote at PTP. We asked people to stand behind the taped line on the floor when waiting to vote. The poll clerk and the deputy returning officer checked their lists to see if the voter's name was on the list. If the name was on the list they crossed it off. If not,

they added the name to the list. The deputy returning officer issued two ballots to each voter – one for the referendum and one for the general election. The voter went behind the voter's screen to mark their ballot. The screen was to ensure that no one was able to see who the person voted for.

After the voter was finished, he or she came back to the poll desk and the deputy returning officer checked the ballot for his or her initials. The voter put both ballots into the box.

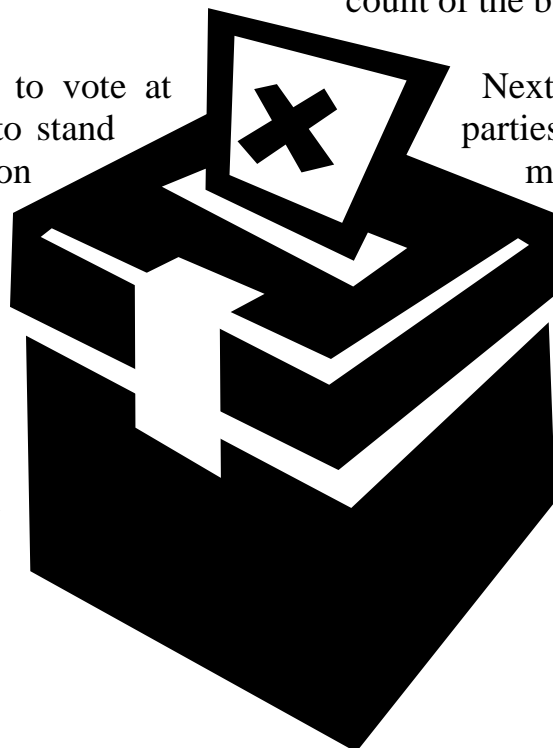
Counting the Ballots and Calculating the Results

After the election, the deputy returning officer and the poll clerk opened the election box and sorted out the good and the bad ballots. Some ballots were marked in two places so they had to be rejected. The scrutineer was present to make sure there was no cheating on the count of the ballots.

Next we had to separate by parties. We had to count how many votes each party had. We then had to figure out the percentage of the vote that each party got. Finally, we calculated the referendum results.

Janet, Jaime, and Mary

Election Results: Page 12
Photo Story: Page 8



A Real Solution Is Job Solutions

Jessica is an employment facilitator at Job Solutions. We receive her occupational research workshops every Thursday and the Newsletter Team has interviewed her because her guidance leads our group on the right path. Jessica has been working at Job Solutions for the past 2 years, helping many people who are facing the problem of unemployment to find the right job based on their individual needs creating a real solution that has a positive impact on people's lives and improves their standard of living. She is sharing her experience and knowledge, helping to open new opportunities to all participants here at PTP.



Here are some of the questions that we asked Jessica in our interview and her answers:

Q: What is Job Solutions and who can obtain services?

A: Job Solutions offers job search support to any adult with grade 12 or less who has literacy issues and wants help looking for a job. We work in smaller groups with a lot of 1-1 support to address these issues.

Q: Is Job Solutions only for people on OW or ODSP, or can anyone come there to find a job?

A: No, Job Solutions is for anyone with any income; however, participants must be working 20 hours or less.

Q: What does a person have to do to get into Job Solutions?

A: If someone wants to participate in Job Solutions we refer them to Employment Assessment Centres such as VPI and COSTI where they establish an employment action plan to determine a job goal. You must be referred through an assessment centre counsellor.

Q: What kind of workshops does Job Solutions hold?

A: We hold workshops that help people learn job-searching tools such as how to fill out applications, read job ads, and have successful interviews.

Q: What kind of jobs do you help people find and what are the most popular jobs?

A: We help people find all kinds of jobs; some examples are service jobs such as cleaning, food preparation, and driving jobs. We've also found personal support worker (PSW), office and sales jobs. Industrial jobs such as picker/packer and shipper/receiver are some of the most popular jobs people tend to look for. Health and childcare jobs, such as Early Childhood Assistants (ESA) jobs are popular too.

Q: What would you recommend to people who are looking for a job?

A: I would say that your commitment and flexibility is important. You have to show that you are available for work. Also, a good resume and full effort in your job search are very helpful.

Q: What do you tell people who want a job in a certain field but don't have the experience for that job?

A: Volunteering is a good way to gain experience and get your foot in the door. Many companies eventually turn to their volunteers when looking to fill a position.

Q: Do you have or help access training or re-training programs?

A: The East Job Solutions office now offers pre-apprenticeship programs and we also refer clients to other services for training or re-training.

Q: What is Occupational Research?

A: Occupational Research involves finding out the details of an occupation such as required experience, training and education needed, necessary skills and salary range.

“I relate to a lot of the clients in that I’ve had to overcome a lot of barriers and challenges in life and never forgot those who helped me along the way. Now I have the opportunity to give back and help others and that means a lot to me.”

Q: How does Occupational Research help someone find a job or get a job?

A: It provides you with job descriptions and industry standards that help you figure out what career direction to take.

Q: Where does someone go to get help or information for Occupational Research?

A: The NOC (National Occupational Classification) is a very good source for job descriptions as well as Job Futures. (Both of which are online.) Job Futures tells you the education and training required for a position as well as future labour market trends. In addition, you can come to Job Solutions.

Q. What is your job description?

A. I do intakes with potential participants, write resumes, and teach employment-related workshops outlining job searching tools and techniques to PED, LBS, and Job Solutions Clients. I help in the development of workshop materials and work on a one-on-one basis in their job search. I complete reports and keep files up to date. I do community outreach programs through flyers, agency presentations and job fairs.

It was an honour to have this interview with Jessica as she has taught us a lot and answered all our questions very clearly. Jessica is a very sincere, open and approachable person who is always smiling and is passionate about her job. She is a strong woman who has overcome life barriers. She is also a great role model and an excellent example of success at the work place.

Valentina and Airin.

Do you need help finding a job?

For Adults...

- ✓ with grade 12 education or less
- ✓ who can come to 3 sessions a week for 12 weeks

We Have...

- ✓ Employment Counsellors
- ✓ Job Developers to help you find work
- ✓ job postings
- ✓ small group workshops
- ✓ phone, fax, photocopier,
- ✓ computers and Internet
- ✓ a location near you

We Help You...

- ✓ make a resume
- ✓ make a cover letter
- ✓ find and contact employers
- ✓ fill out application forms
- ✓ use the Internet to find a job
- ✓ sell your skills to employers

Job Solutions is a supportive job search program.



The Newsletter Team



Some of you are probably wondering: What exactly is the Newsletter Team? What do you do in the Newsletter Team? And what do you gain from being in the Newsletter Team? Well, these are really good questions that I hope to answer.

In the Newsletter Team:

We write articles for the newsletter. We write stories related to personal interests, employment and training or about things happening in the community. When we do this, we do brainstorming, drafting, a lot of revising, editing and proof reading.



We write emails to each other about what we're doing or working on. We also use email for sending rough copies of our work to our instructor.

We have a blog. A blog is a web log. We use it to keep track of our work. We log in and post our work to the site. Then we can go back and view it, edit it or have other people view it and comment on it. (To see our blog go to: www.ptpnews.blogspot.com)



We use a digital camera to take pictures for making photo stories. A photo story is pictures with minimal writing to go with it-- the pictures tell the story themselves.

In Microsoft Office, we use Word to lay out a newsletter. We customize pictures, columns, titles, background colour, text colour, fonts, headers/footers, page breaks and even the banner. We can change the page numbering and do any other editing we want. Sometimes we use Microsoft Publisher templates to do the layout. After all the layout



is finished we print and distribute our newsletter to the students and staff.

We also maintain an information bulletin board for students and staff which includes employment listings from Job Solutions, information about training opportunities, and a monthly calendar highlighting special events in our community and school.



The Newsletter Team provides students with the opportunity to upgrade their oral communication, reading, writing, computer, continuous learning and thinking skills. The remaining three skills are document use, numeracy and working with others.



That's right! There are **nine essential skills** taught and used in the Newsletter Team.



We use and practice these skills because we will need them in the workplace eventually. The Newsletter Team is a great learning environment that helps students with organizing work, developing writing skills, computer skills and strengthening reading skills.



I have experienced so much in the Newsletter Team. I've learned that I have skills and knowledge I didn't know I have. I have upgraded my communication skills, math, computer, writing and social skills all from being enrolled in the Newsletter Team.



If you're looking for a team to join, why not gain and practice your skills in the Newsletter Team so that when you're ready to start working you'll have these skills.



I highly recommend the Newsletter Team and the school to anyone. You won't regret it, believe me. If you still are unsure, then come see for yourself. You don't have anything to lose but all to gain.

Teresa L.

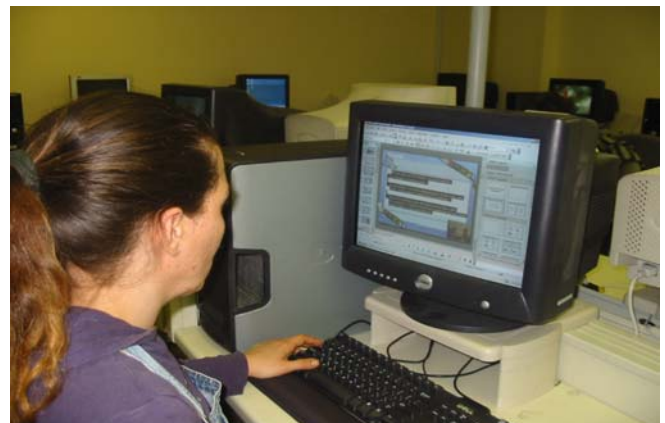


Photo Story



Learning how to put an election together.



Waiting for voters at the polling station.



Patiently waiting in line to vote.



Checking to see if
your name appears
on the voter's list.

Behind the voting screen.



Opening the ballot box.



Sorting the ballots.

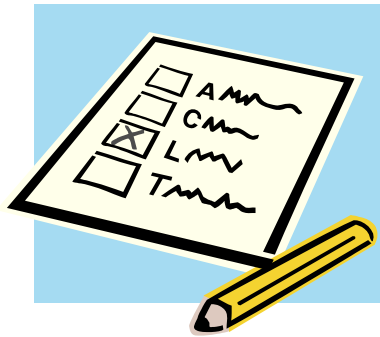
Doing the calculations to find out who won the mock election.



Post Election Survey: Feedback on the Election Process

We wanted to find out how people feel about voting, what they thought of the mock election and if they planned to vote or not in the real election so we did a post election survey. From our survey, we found out that most students didn't vote but most staff did.

Here are some of the comments staff and students made about the mock election:



“The mock election was really well organized.”

“I was surprised to see how similar the mock election and the real election was.”

“I was confused about voting and how to vote. The mock election really helped me understand at the real election.”

“I think the mock election is good practice for voting in the real elections because many newcomers don't have a background in democracy and elections. Mock elections help people elect their candidate for their area. It helped me a lot because it made me familiar with how to vote, where to vote and so on.”

“The mock election helped me a lot to vote in the real election, it made voting easier for me.”

“It was a great way for everyone to learn about the elections, referendum and how to vote. Also, it got students talking about the issues and how something that seemed so complicated turned out to be easy thanks to having the mock election. We should have one every year so new students can share the good experience.”

“I learned a lot. It really helped me vote in the real election.”

“I thought the Newsletter Team did a great job with the mock election. It was very organized and professionally done. You worked really well as a team! Please keep doing this. Perhaps you should organize mock city hall meetings.”

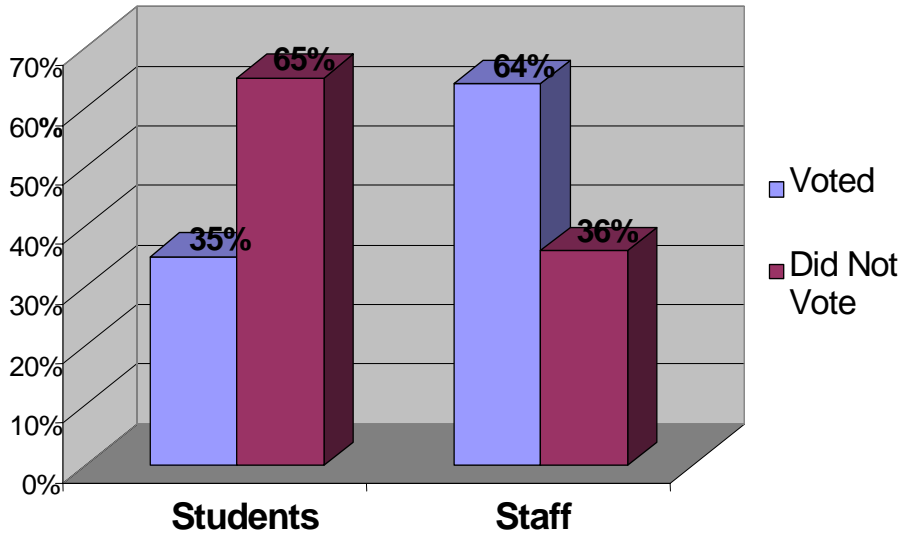
“It taught me about voting and prepared me for the next election.”

“I think the mock election was a good experience for me. It would be nice to have it again when the next election comes.”

“You should do it again. It is a good idea. The next election is a federal election.”

Survey: Airin, Diane, Jaime and Janet

Percentage of Students and Staff Who Voted in the Ontario Election on October 10, 2007



Graph: Jaime

PTP Mock Election Results	Ontario Election Results
LIBERAL 59.6%	LIBERAL 42.2% 71 seats
CONSERVATIVE 13.4%	CONSERVATIVE 31.8% 26 seats
NDP 19.2%	NDP 16.8% 10 seats
GREEN 7.8%	GREEN 8.0% 0 seats

Data Analysis: Camille, Jaime, Janet and Jerry

Job Profile: Working On Election Day



Fanny's Experience

On October 10, 2007 Ontario had an election. I had worked for the election before so I got the number to call and they gave me an appointment for the next day. I did the training and I got the job for District Returning Officer. At the training, they told me that on Election Day I would have to work from 7:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. We were asked to bring our own meals because we would not be allowed to

leave our poll. We were also told our doors would open at 8:00 a.m. so everything would have to be set up on time because people would be there waiting for us to open. We were told that things have to run on time.

My job was to ask for ID and make sure the address and name on each person's voter registration card matched the information on the voter's list. Then the person next to me gave them two ballots to vote – one for the general election and one for the referendum. After they voted, they came back to me and I placed the ballots in the box. At the end of the night we counted all the ballots and made sure they were placed in the right envelopes. Afterwards we had to call in with our numbers. When that was done we packed up and took everything into the office.

Janey's Experience:

On October 10, 2007 Ontario had an election. I had the honour to work on this very important day. It was a special election because we also had a referendum. I learned about this job here at PTP. The class was given a website as well as a phone number. I used the website; it was very brief. I filled out my name, address and phone number. I received a phone call in about two days. They asked me to come in for training the following day. The training lasted 4 hours and I was paid \$45.00. I then found out I would be working as a District Returning Officer on Election Day.

On Election Day I had to be at my post by 7:30 a.m. to set up my station. My day began at 8:00 a.m. when we opened the doors. It did not end until 11:00 p.m. My poll clerk and I had to count the votes and referendum ballots. We then had to call them in before we were able to leave our polling station. The poll clerk was free to go home. I however had to drop everything off at the election station before I could go home. I was paid \$130.00 for working the election. About six weeks later, I received my check in the mail for training and working on Election Day.

Women Under Stress

Maria M.

Anne works at Opportunity for Advancement. She joined us here at PTP from October through November on Thursday mornings to run Women Under Stress. This group is for women who are coping with stress. It helps women learn to be more assertive so that they can set goals and make changes in their lives.

One of the benefits of being in the group is that participants find out about lots of community resources and programs out there for them. They also realize they are not alone. They find out that everyone has obstacles and stress in their day-to-day lives.

Opportunity for Advancement is located at 1095 Queen Street West (just west of Dovercourt). Their website is: www.ofacan.com.



Do you need to know more about...

- coping with stress?
- assertiveness?
- setting goals?
- making changes?
- community resources and programs?



Women Under Stress is a FREE support group offered by Opportunity for Advancement

Where? PTP West, 5415 Dundas Street West, Suite 200
Close to the Kipling subway stop

When? January 2008

Science Centre Field Trip and Poster Competition

PTP students and staff visited the Science Centre on Thursday November 27. We were delighted by the fascinating exhibits. It was an amazing experience and a great opportunity to get everybody together off site. The Science Centre offered us the special 'community access' discount price of \$2.00 per person which we greatly appreciated.

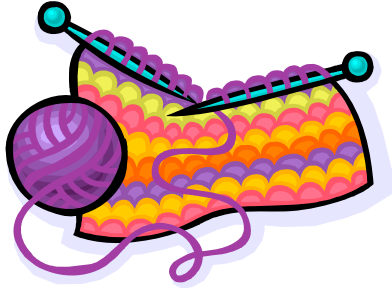
To promote the event, we held a poster competition. The following people entered the competition: Ahmed, Janet, Khudor, Samer, Teresa and her daughter. Students and staff voted for their favourite. The criteria was: information, design and effort. Khudor was the winner. Congratulations Khudor!



Collage done by Mary I.

Knitting Workshop

It's cold outside! Students (and some staff) learn to knit at a knitting workshop on Dec. 7. The wool and needles were donated by StreetKnit. Thank you StreetKnit!



Newsletter Team Members:

Airin D.
Alice N.
Bronwen W.
Camille M.
Diana P.
Valentina M.

Garvin M.
Jaime B.
Janet S.
Jerry K.
Karin M.
Shawn R.

Khuder A.
Kwazi S.
Maria M.
Mary I.
Teresa L.

