



*A Mentoring Initiative to Promote Employment of People with Disabilities*



## **MentorAbility Project Background**

“MentorAbility” is a national program of the Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) designed to help Canadian businesses to effectively recruit and hire talented, motivated new employees with disabilities.

In October 2014, BC and Saskatchewan piloted the first MentorAbility program. National Disability Mentoring Day is held on the first Wednesday of October in conjunction with Community Living month in October. Any CASE member is welcome to use MentorAbility all year round.

There are three essential partnerships in every MentorAbility program – the mentor (employer) and the protégé (job seeker) and a service provider organizer in each participating community. Local organizers recruit job seekers with disabilities and employers to participate in the local mentoring program. Each participant gains value by providing information and experience that enables their counterpart to better succeed as an employer or job seeker. Ultimately, the volunteer business leader mentor helps their protégé receive career guidance; training and exploration opportunities that enable them to better prepare for and access employment with Canada’s top employers. And in return, the protégé helps their mentor (and host business sponsor) to be better prepared and comfortable in hiring new employees with disabilities. Win-win.

The main goals of the MentorAbility program are to:

1. Assist unemployed Canadians with disabilities to become employed utilizing employer mentors
2. Assist employers to become more successful in employing people with disabilities utilizing mentoring relationships and creative human resources recruitment outreach strategies

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In 2014, CASE partnered with Inclusion BC to bring mentorAbility to British Columbia.



## MENTOR

## Salsa Man, Nanaimo

## PROTÉGÉ

## Adrienne

This family-run business was founded by Kevin White in 1985. Sales have grown since its modest beginning, when Kevin's daughter, Emily, used to sell containers of salsa after school to parents and teachers. Today the salsa is sold to chain grocery stores, who picked up the product in 2005; everyone Loves Salsa Man!

Adrienne really enjoyed her mentorship with Salsa Man. The salsa-making is a hands-on process, made from a few simple ingredients and successfully led by Emily with her staff of three, and Adrienne. The atmosphere is a positive one: a small family working

together, doing what they love and the product's success reflects this.

Adrienne accomplished all the assembly tasks perfectly and appreciated how "everyone was so nice." Adrienne noted how clean the environment was. This is paramount: proper hand-washing, garment protection and hair nets, bleach-washing of all the tins and product sealing were adhered to. As part of our visit, Emily gave us each a container of salsa to take home - "I want to go back!" Adrienne said.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Nanaimo Association for Community Living*

## MENTOR

Genesis Fashion & Beauty,  
Kamloops

## PROTÉGÉ

## Breanna



Genesis Fashion and Beauty Complex is an award-winning full-service day spa and hair salon in Kamloops, B.C. Breanna is interested in both beauty and fashion so the spa and salon was an obvious choice for a mentorship match. Smart Options approached the manager of the complex, who welcomed Breanna in as a protégé. Breanna chose to work in the salon part of the complex and was paired up with Courtney, a junior stylist.

Courtney and Breanna worked together in a number of areas. Courtney first showed Breanna their laundry

room, where they washed, dried and folded towels. Breanna then swept up hair after a stylist cut. She learned how to dust, merchandize and stack shelves with hair and beauty products. Lastly, Breanna did some general cleaning in the lunchroom and around the shop.

Both Breanna and her mentor enjoyed the experience and Breanna now knows what it's like to work in an area she hopes to find employment in.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Smart Options, Inc.*



MENTOR

Old Navy, Nanaimo

PROTÉGÉ

Brenda

When Brenda arrived at Old Navy she was welcomed by Lori, her mentor and manager of the store. Lori gave Brenda her personalized name tag and showed her where to hang her belongings.

Brenda was shown how to fold the clothes and took it from there. She learned the job tasks quickly and as she gained confidence, her sense of pride and accomplishment was clearly visible. When Brenda finished folding and shelving the jeans that were out of place, Lori congratulated her on a job well done.

Brenda noticed when clothes were not in the right

spot and was responsible for matching the colours and sizes with the corresponding sizes printed on the shelves. She found her niche in folding the jeans. She did a stellar job of sorting and organizing, and making the shelves look presentable for the customers.

Throughout the mentorship, Brenda went above and beyond what was expected of her. Even as she was finishing her mentorship and leaving the area, she continued picking up clothes from the floor, making sure that everything was in its proper place.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Nanaimo Association for Community Living*

MENTOR  
Safeway, Fort St. John

PROTÉGÉ

Carmella



Carmella recently moved from Dawson Creek where she left her dream job at Safeway to live with her family in Fort St. John. When Carmella heard of the mentorAbility program she became very excited and naturally chose Safeway as a place to be mentored.

An employment specialist with the Fort St. John Association for Community Living connected Carmella with her mentor, Maria Green, a Safeway employee. After her mentorship, Safeway decided to hire Carmella, who is now employed at Safeway and still

works closely with her Maria, who says, "Carmella is a great employee. She gets along with everyone and is always so happy. We are so pleased to have her on our team."

Carmella looks up to her mentor and is gaining a strong work and personal relationship with her. Carmella looks forward to going to work and even goes early just to spend time with Maria. This was a very successful match and both mentor and protégé hope it turns into a long and successful employment placement.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Fort St. John Association for Community Living*



## MENTOR

# Fresh is Best, Kamloops

## PROTÉGÉ

# Chris

Chris has been looking for work in a warehouse since he was laid off from Zellers, after it closed down. Smart Options first approached Fresh Is Best Salsa Co. in Kamloops, who welcomed Chris as a protégé. The general manager of Fresh is Best took Chris on a tour of the entire facility and introduced him to all the staff members.

Chris was put to work in three different departments, working with three different mentors. Chris first put on a hair net and rubbers gloves to cut up jalapeno peppers into small pieces, weigh them into 2 lb. packages and put them in the refrigerator. He then cleaned his work station with a special cleaner to get rid of the heat from the peppers.

From there Chris learned and assisted with the process

of making tortilla chips. His main task in this area was to sweep up chips that fell from the machine and put them in the garbage. He also checked the packages to make sure they were properly sealed for freshness. If they were not sealed, he would place the chips back into the machine to be repackaged. Chris's final task was to sweep the entire warehouse floor, collect the garbage and cardboard boxes and place them in the appropriate recycling bins.

When Chris was finished the entire staff thanked him and the management invited him to the office where they presented him with two gift bags full of Fresh is Best "swag," including two t-shirts, chips and salsa. Chris was happy with the mentorship, the staff and the gifts and hopes his experience will lead to future employment.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Smart Options Inc.*

# Overalls Laundromat, Fort St. John

## MENTOR

## PROTÉGÉ

# Isabelle



When Overalls Laundromat owner Angelina Brunet heard about the mentorAbility initiative from Sheri Ashdown, she signed on right away. Sheri is the employment coordinator with the Fort St. John Association for Community Living and was supporting Isabelle Paynter to find a job.

Isabelle had been looking for employment in a laundromat for a while, so she was excited about the opportunity to be mentored by Angelina. During the

tour of the Laundromat, Angelina discussed everyday tasks that were included in her routine. She gave Isabelle the opportunity to try these tasks and Isabelle completed them all. Within 20 minutes of the meeting, Angelina saw Isabelle's skills and positive attitude; she offered Isabelle a paid employment position at the Laundromat. Isabelle accepted the job and is currently a valued employee of Overalls Laundromat.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Fort St. John Association for Community Living*





## MENTOR

A&amp;W, Langley

## PROTEGÉ

James

James has worked in the front area of a restaurant before but was interested in working in the kitchen. Through mentorAbility, James was matched with John, the A&W operations manager. John gave James a detailed tour of the restaurant and answered his questions along the way.

James watched the cook make breakfast while John talked him through the process. He was shown where all of the food is kept, including inside the walk-in fridge and freezer.

James was also shown how to place an order on the

training screen and ordered his favorite meal. He was interested in the drive-thru and watched a number of orders being taken.

When it switched over to the lunch time menu, James headed back to the kitchen to see how the burgers are cooked. He had the opportunity to put hamburger patties on the grill, start the grill timer and flip the patties when the timer went off. He also laid the hot dogs on the grill, turned them, and took everything off the grill when it was cooked.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Langley Association for Community Living*

MENTOR

## Cold Cold Hearts, Langley

PROTEGÉ

## Jared



Jared had been learning how to play the bass guitar for years; he played almost every night but never in front of a crowd. Jared knew the members of Cold Cold Hearts, a band that agreed to have him play with them on stage in front of a crowd. He was a bit apprehensive at first, but knowing the members of the band, he felt

a little at ease. The band played a few songs for the audience and then called Jared up on stage. When Jared started to play it was as if he had been part of the band for years. It was an incredible experience for Jared and the band.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Langley Association for Community Living*



#### MENTOR

## Elite Canadian Championship Wrestling, Vancouver

#### PROTÉGÉ

## Jason

One of Jason's lifelong dreams is to become a professional wrestler. Through the mentorAbility project, Jason was able to attend a professional wrestling event at ECCW (Elite Canadian Championship Wrestling). At home, the energetic 16 year-old likes to flip through his WWF book and marvel over his larger than life heroes. Jason has always wanted to attend a live wrestling match and meet the wrestlers afterwards.

Jason got the happy news that he was not just going

to a wrestling match, but he was also going to meet Scotty Mac, "The Loose Canon" and Kenny Lush, Billy Suede and Andy "The Dreadful" Bird at the ECCW's Quest for Gold Match in Vancouver.

Jason sat front-row with his family to cheer on the superstars and divas. He met with four of the wrestlers afterwards and they chatted about wrestling. Jason posed for photos with the wrestlers and shook hands with each one.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Delta Community Living Society*

#### MENTOR

## Black Diamond Lanes, Prince George

#### PROTÉGÉ

## Jordan



Jordan chose Black Diamond Lanes bowling alley for his mentorAbility match because he loves bowling and frequently bowls there.

The manager of Black Diamond Lanes, Selina, told Jordan about the kind of work he would be doing. She also talked about her background; how she got into the business and has continued her career in both the management and ownership of bowling alleys.

A co-worker, Leif, who has worked at Black Diamond

Lanes for two years, arrived shortly after and gave Jordan a quick tour of the building. He told Jordan that they would be spending the shift cleaning the bowling lanes on the top floor.

Leif showed Jordan where all the supplies were, how to prepare cleaning solutions, and then how to properly sweep, mop, and dry all of the floors. Jordan enjoyed his tasks and getting to see the "behind the scenes" of a bowling alley.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: AimHi (Prince George Association for Community Living)*



MENTOR

## Expedia Cruise Ship Centres, Nanaimo

PROTEGÉ

## Joanna

Joanna is an avid reader and dreams about places she would like to explore. Through mentorAbility, Joanna was matched with Ronnie at the Cruise Centre. Ronnie met with Joanna and asked her questions about herself and her interests and then explained what people do in a cruise center.

Ronnie showed Joanna how to organize and sort travel magazines according to destination. Joanna is an out-of-the-box thinker so it was no surprise that she added an element of fun and creativity to the task; each time she started a destination pile, she would locate the country on the large world map.

Ronnie was so impressed and enthused at Joanna's accuracy and ability to categorize, reorganize and tidy up his shelving system, that he fixed his sagging shelves and paid Joanna to organize the travel magazines in a comprehensive order for the staff.

This job had been put off for a long time, as the staff team at the Cruise Centre works on commission. Tasks like this are labour intensive and take away from the staff's ability to make a sale and meet the needs of clients. As you may have guessed, they are most grateful to Joanna for making the right travel brochures for customers easy to find.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Nanaimo Association for Community Living*

## Pops Pizza And Pasta, Fort St. John

MENTOR

PROTEGÉ

## Dustin



Dustin's love for pizza and ribs made Pops Pizza and Pasta a natural fit for his mentorAbility match. Dustin can tell you all about how he makes pizza at home and especially the way he likes it.

Dustin's mentor, Tony, showed him how different pizzas were made, with the machines to mix the dough and

cut up the vegetables. After the tour, Dustin washed vegetables and after one demonstration lesson, used a machine to cut them. He was interested in how the business operated and would like to work in a business like it.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Fort St. John Association for Community Living*





#### MENTOR

## Ruskin Construction, Prince George

#### PROTÉGÉ

## Danny

It was Danny's interest in all-things John Deere that led to his mentorship at Ruskin Construction in Prince George. When Danny arrived at Ruskin, he was introduced to Jim Basha, manager of the Prince George office. Danny learned that Ruskin construction builds bridges (marine and industrial) all over North America, with offices located in Fort Nelson, Victoria, Prince Rupert and also in Grande Prairie, Alberta and Anchorage, Alaska.

Jim took Danny on a tour of the building and the site, where he saw how they build large structures. He tried out some of the equipment used on the site, such

as the large leaf blower. He saw several backhoes, bobcats and king sized excavators with tires as large as cars.

After the tour, Jim sat down with Danny to discuss the possibility of employment. Jim told Danny that many employees at Ruskin have gone to school to learn their trade; Danny would have to work his way up. Jim offered Danny a job on a part time basis in the shop, where he could learn how to take care of the equipment. One day Danny hopes to learn how to operate a big John Deere backhoe.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: AimHi (Prince George Association for Community Living)*

#### MENTOR

## UPS, Burnaby

#### PROTÉGÉ

## Fred



Fred likes to be busy and enjoys work that requires focus, organization and precision. His interests and skills therefore made his mentorAbility match with UPS as a mailroom technician a natural fit.

UPS owner Carina Tan-Lucero mentored Fred, telling him about the work they do there and answering questions about her job. She showed him the mail room

and spoke to the importance of accuracy when filing the mail into mailboxes to ensure the confidentiality of their clients.

Fred was excited to give it a try and proved to be a fast learner. He was careful to place items in the correct mail boxes, demonstrating his commitment to accuracy and speed as he completed his tasks.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Community Living Society*



## MENTOR

# Brikers, Surrey

## PROTEGÉ

# Colten

Colten has long known he would like his career path to take him to the trades and construction industry, specifically welding and machining. His love for the trade began in high school, where he took metal-working courses. Soon Colten had his own MIG (metal inert gas) welder at home and continued to build his skills.

Through mentorAbility, Colten had the opportunity to meet with Jerry Daoust, Human Resource Manager at Brikers in Surrey. Once Colten had his safety equipment on, Jerry provided Colten with a site tour and the opportunity to meet several members of the Brikers team. Jerry explained that Brikers specializes in heavy equipment cabs for the construction industry.

They dismantle heavy equipment for parts and source high-quality new, rebuilt and used parts.

Jerry took the time to answer all of Colten's questions about the industry as well as review his resume. He specifically noted how impressed he was with the way Colten presented examples of his work with photos.

After this experience, Colten is confident he has the skills and experience to find a career in metal-working. He's looking forward to beginning his career as a shop assistant in a metal shop. He knows he still has a lot to learn and looks forward to learning from the bottom-up, with the support of experienced trades professionals.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: posAbilities Employment Service*

## MENTOR

# Woodgrove Mall, Nanaimo

## PROTEGÉ

# Brenda



The Food Court at Woodgrove Mall is a vibrant, busy gathering place for hungry shoppers. In addition to clearing and cleaning the tables, Brenda's mentorship included learning the recycling system. She jumped right in and started pushing the cart, wiping the tables and recycling.

Brenda got along well with her mentor, Catherine. Together they joked and laughed, as Catherine helped Brenda learn the many stages of the recycling process. Brenda was beaming from ear to ear. Mall shoppers loved Brenda's enthusiasm, energy and pride in a job well done.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Nanaimo Association for Community Living*



MENTOR

A&W, Langley

PROTÉGÉ

Connor

Connor was thrilled at the idea of completing his mentorship with A&W in Langley. Wearing the staff uniform, a collared shirt and dress pants, Connor showed up with a positive attitude, ready to work.

He arrived at A&W and met John, the operations manager, who gave him a tour around the restaurant. Connor was shown where he would be working, around the kitchen and lobby. He was shown all of the tasks that the job entailed and the order in which they are

completed. Connor completed the tasks throughout his shift and before long, he was looking like a natural.

Some of the tasks included clearing and cleaning tables, straightening chairs, loading and unloading the dishwasher and putting away the dishes.

Connor's mentorAbility was such a huge success that he now wants to focus his job search on bussing tables in a restaurant!

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Langley Association for Community Living*

White Spot, Prince George

MENTOR

PROTÉGÉ

Karla



Karla has always wanted to work in busy kitchen, with real chefs. When White Spot agreed to host Karla for the mentorAbility project, Karla jumped at the opportunity; this was a local restaurant, close to her home that she frequented often.

When Karla arrived, she was warmly greeted by all the kitchen staff. She watched how each chef portioned-controlled each item to ensure the same standards were met for every guest. Karla moved onto the fry station and the main grill area, where she worked at

the station to create some beautiful fluffy buttermilk pancakes. Staff got the opportunity to see what Karla could do and they were impressed.

Karla then moved to the pre-shift board where all the line-staff look at the goals and targets for the day. This board is filled with positive messages that help workers stay focused on the daily message. On this day it was, "Treat customers like they are family – with smiles positive attitudes."

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: AimHi (Prince George Association for Community Living)*



## MENTOR

# Mission Crime Prevention Office

## PROTÉGÉ

# Kyle

Kyle is interested in law enforcement so he jumped at the opportunity to spend some time with the head of the Mission Crime Prevention Office (CPO) through mentorAbility. Vic Barron gave him a tour of the downtown Mission office and explained the CPO's function within the community.

At Vic's request, Kyle helped to find a safe space for the radar trailer on Stave Lake Road using Google street view. Outside the office, Kyle helped to prepare the radar trailer for travel. Vic explained a few safety procedures and they jumped into the CPO van. Upon arrival at the site, Kyle helped Vic set up the

device, leveling, opening the speed readout sign and programming parameters. The device was activated and, after a quick test, they headed back into town.

After familiarizing Kyle with the on-board computer, Vic asked him to access the Stolen Auto Recovery Data Base program. Kyle entered license plate numbers into the computer. Vic then took Kyle to McDonald's for coffee where they talked about their mutual love of football.

Kyle and Vic had a great time and the experience reinforced Kyle's desire to be involved in law enforcement.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Mission Association for Community Living*

## MENTOR

# Larry Crawford, Langley

## PROTÉGÉ

# Lee



Lee has wanted to learn how to DJ for a long time. He loves music and entertaining a crowd and though he is a man of few words, he knows how to get the crowd moving with the music he plays. Lee is dedicated to his DJ'ing and spends hours practicing in his home.

mentorAbility provided the perfect opportunity for Lee to be matched with a professional DJ. Larry showed Lee how to engage and read the audience, important skills to have as a DJ.

Lee and Larry had a great time, and so did the dancers.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Langley Association for Community Living*





MENTOR

## Randy Ravenous Myers, Professional Wrestler

PROTEGÉ

## Matt

For most of Matt's life, he has dreamed about becoming a wrestler. He has watched almost every wrestling match on TV and follows his favorite wrestlers. When mentorAbility provided the opportunity to spend a few hours with Randy Ravenous Myers, Matt was excited. A limo came to pick him up and he was shown backstage and sat in the front row during the matches.

After the match, Matt was asked if he still wanted to wrestle as a career. He thought about it for a while and responded, "I think I will just manage the wrestlers. There is too much blood and people getting hurt up there in the ring."

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Langley Association for Community Living*

MENTOR

## La Spa Sereine, Victoria

PROTEGÉ

## Meagan



Meagan is a quiet person with limited work experience and still unsure of her career path. She has worked in businesses that were large and busy but is interested in a calmer environment. When mentorAbility provided the opportunity of mentorship in a spa, Meagan's employment specialist at Community Living Victoria thought it would be an excellent fit.

Meagan was matched with Crystal Chabot of the La Spa Sereine in beautiful Downtown Victoria, BC. La Spa Sereine is a tranquil day spa providing various services to their guests in a calm and relaxing environment.

Meagan was nervous at first, but Crystal and her team

made her feel more comfortable as the day went on. All the different beautiful smells, Meagan says, helped her relax too. Meagan worked alongside Crystal and her team folding towels, making cotton balls, cutting wax strips and doing light housekeeping. She also learned how to check-in guests when they arrived for their appointment. Meagan's favorite task was folding towels and tidying up the locker room.

When asked if she would like to do this as a career, her answer was an immediate "yes," with a warm smile. At the end of her day, Crystal and her team gave Meagan gifts of soaps and makeup to remember her day.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Community Living Victoria*





#### MENTOR

## Fraser Valley Regional Library, Mission

#### PROTÉGÉ

## Eshona

Eshona is an inquisitive person who is always happy to learn new skills in order to find paid work. Librarian manager Heather Scoular welcomed Eshona to the Fraser Valley Regional Library as a protégé in the mentorAbility initiative. The friendly staff at the library mentored Eshona by showing her the diverse duties of

a librarian, library technician and circulation assistant. Each staff member took Eshona through a tour of their respective roles and answered her questions. Eshona, Heather and all the staff members at the library valued the experience.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Mission Association for Community Living*

## Oddball Workshop, Vancouver

#### MENTOR

#### PROTÉGÉ

## Michael



Michael is a 24 year-old self-taught artist with a passion for photography and design. He loves loading his photographs onto his computer and morphing them into a piece of art by adding depth, color and texture with his design skills.

Michael has been exploring with design on his computer for the past five years and enjoys different techniques. One of his favorite filters is a black and white effect, because he finds it has more impact and gives the shot a sophisticated look.

Michael wants to get a job where he is able to find a balance between his design hobby and his work life, with hopes that he will always be working in a creative atmosphere. Through discussions about his skills

and interests, Michael decided to explore the printing process.

Michael had the opportunity to meet with Carey Bridgman from Oddball Workshop, a printing company, in Vancouver.

Carey met with Michael at a nearby Starbucks. She was a wealth of information and answered all of his questions about the printing business, including what types of jobs were available in the industry. Carey was interested in Michael's skills and gave him some suggestions for other places he could approach for employment. Carey said that she would share any connections they might have that would be of help to Michael's job search.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Community Living Society*



MENTOR

## Community Living Victoria

PROTEGÉ

### Michelle

Michelle is passionate about wanting to work in a supportive role, so she mentored with Christine, manager of a residential program for people with disabilities at Community Living Victoria. When Michelle met with Christine at Community Living Victoria's head office, Christine asked her why she wanted to work in the field of disability. Michelle answered, "I want to work in the field of diverse ability because I feel that I would be able to really understand where people are coming from because I have been through things myself."

Michelle and Christine went through a practice interview and Michelle did well, taking the time to answer all of the questions. Christine then took her through the orientation process and what would be expected of her as a new employee.

After their meeting at the head office, they visited one

of Community Living Victoria's residential programs. Michelle introduced herself to the residents and staff. Christine gave her a tour of the home and showed her some of the specialized equipment they use to support people. They talked more about what would be expected of her on a shift and Michelle looked at the procedure book.

After lunch, during one of the activities, Michelle jumped in to assist one of the individuals so he could participate. She then learned how staff members assist individuals who use wheelchairs as their main source of transportation and the process of ensuring the safety of everyone.

Christine and Michelle enjoyed their mentorAbility experience. "I really enjoyed mentoring Michelle," said Christine. "She confirmed that we all have the drive to be employed to do something meaningful to us."

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Community Living Victoria*

MENTOR

## Long and Mcquade, Kamloops

PROTEGÉ

### Mike



Mike loves music and plays a number of different instruments (saxophone, piano and keyboard) so it's not surprising that he was very interested in working at a music store. Mike's mentor was the assistant store manager at Long and Mcquade, Ron Wiles. Ron was impressed not only by Mike's well-spoken manner and his knowledge of instruments, but also by his professional clothes; black dress pants, a collared

shirt and dress shoes.

Mike worked his way through the store, dusting pianos, keyboards, drums and guitars. He also tidied smaller merchandise and shelving units. He unpacked new stock and broke down packing boxes for recycling.

Mike thoroughly enjoyed his mentorAbility experience, working in an environment he's passionate about.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Smart Options, Inc.*



MENTOR

## Phoenix North Salon, Fort St. John

PROTEGÉ

## Miranda

Before graduating this year, Miranda did work experience in a hair salon during high school, performing tasks such as folding towels and cleaning. She loved it and now wants to find a position in the community doing something similar.

Miranda enjoys getting her hair done and keeping up with the latest fads. Through mentorAbility, she was

matched with Danielle, a young stylist at Pheonix North Salon. Miranda received a tour of the salon while Danielle explained everything she had to do to get to where she is. Miranda learned about the nail area as well as hair salon and was happy to get to see the many areas of the business.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Fort St. John Association for Community Living*

MENTOR

## Peninsula Co-op, Vancouver Island

PROTEGÉ

## Nathalie



Nathalie is a vivacious and outgoing woman who loves to keep busy. Her sunny and friendly disposition would be an asset to any employer.

mentorAbility provided Nathalie with the opportunity to mentor with the Peninsula Co-op, which operates grocery, petroleum and convenience stores. Nathalie was nervous and apprehensive at first but was put at ease when she met Tom Humphreys, the petroleum operations manager. Tom gave her a company t-shirt, a personalized name-tag, a travel mug and a co-op bag.

Nathalie enjoyed the tour of the grocery store and had the opportunity to meet with the human resources manager, who gave her an informational interview and tips on how to write up a professional-looking resume. After having lunch with Tom, they headed to a gas bar/convenience store where she assisted staff by fueling vehicles, washing windows, cleaning and stocking shelves and even gave a customer's dog a treat. After such a great day, Nathalie has expressed interest in applying for work with Peninsula Co-op. After all, she already has a personalized name tag!

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Community Living Victoria*



#### MENTOR

## Mission Chamber of Commerce, Mission

#### PROTEGÉ

## Rhonda

When Rhonda was asked to describe her ideal career, she immediately said she would like to be a receptionist. She wanted to have a desk, organize paperwork and greet customers. mentorAbility provided the perfect opportunity: Rhonda was quickly matched with the friendly staff from Mission's Chamber of Commerce.

The welcoming staff at the Mission Information Centre went above and beyond to make Rhonda feel a part of

the team. She was introduced to all staff and received a tour of the Centre, learning about their daily routines, responsibilities and objectives. She was given her own desk area and took initiative by greeting customers with a smile, replenishing pamphlets and folding brochures. This mentorship experience has heightened Rhonda's desire to work in an office environment.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Mission Association for Community Living*

#### MENTOR

## Anna Beaudry Photographic Design, Burnaby

#### PROTEGÉ

## Robert



Robert enjoys taking photographs; when he sees something interesting, he wants to capture it. He is also very drawn to color; he is creative and enjoys the process of choosing little details that make each photo special.

Robert had the opportunity to meet with Anna Beaudry of Anna Beaudry Photographic Design. The two hit it off, both sharing a love for photography.

Robert was invited to Anna's home-studio to talk about the photography business and to learn some professional tips. Robert brought some of his own photographs to show Anna and they talked about his composition and other elements of his work. Anna

said that Robert was a good storyteller and showed expression in the stories he told.

Robert had Anna guessing the subject of some of his photos. "I like making people guess," says Robert. "That's what makes photography fun. Photography can communicate 1000 powerful words sometimes".

Anna explained light and colour techniques and told him about the skills he is already using.

Anna took Robert into her light-room, where she showed him the computer programs she uses in the finishing stages. She helped Robert create his own professional virtual signature and gave him advice on how to start selling and showcasing his work.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Community Living Society*





## MENTOR

Former Mayor of Mission,  
Ted Adlem

## PROTEGÉ

## Shawn

When Shawn learned about mentorAbility, he knew right away who he wanted to spend the day with: Ted Adlem, who was Mayor of Mission at the time.

Shawn started his busy day with the mayor by accompanying him to a Hospital Auxiliary Conference, where Mayor Adlem gave a welcoming speech. Shawn then received a tour of City Hall, where he met many of the friendly staff, sat in the mayor's seat and learned about the many duties required of the office. After the tour, Shawn and Mayor Adlem toured the various facilities of the Leisure Center. Shawn, being the popular and social person that he is, was excited to introduce the mayor to some of his friends, whom they had happened to meet there.

The tour continued to the fire station, where Fire Chief Larry Watkinson showed Shawn the fire trucks and let him try out some of the equipment they use. Shawn was also offered a ride in the truck. You can imagine Shawn's excitement when he requested the truck stop outside the day service he regularly attends, and they did! Shawn was very proud to introduce the Mayor and Fire Chief to his friends.

The fire truck dropped them off downtown and Mayor Adlem treated Shawn for lunch at Eleni's. Over lunch, Shawn talked about his employment goals and the Mayor told him to send in his resume. They ended the day back at City Hall; the mayor invited Shawn to visit again and gave him some great District of Mission souvenirs.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Mission Association for Community Living*

MENTOR  
The Moose FM, Fort St. JohnPROTEGÉ  
Taylor

Taylor Zeck is 18 years old and loves country music. She listens to it faithfully and you can catch her singing it often. Her favorite radio station in Fort St. John is the Moose FM and through the mentorAbility project, she was matched with the station. She met with radio announcer Beth Morrison in the "on the air booth," where she was shown all the aspects of the station, including a sneak-peek into the production room

where a commercial was being created.

Taylor was thrilled to see how the station gets texts and requests from the Moose FM app and even used it with Beth while she was there. Taylor and Beth both enjoyed themselves and Taylor was glowing through the entire meeting. She didn't want to leave the station and continued expressing how much she enjoyed herself many times even after leaving the station.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Fort St. John Association for Community Living*





MENTOR

## Johnston Street Liquor Store, Coquitlam

PROTEGE

## Tessa

Tessa had always been interested in working at a liquor store and having just turned 19, it became a real possibility. Her mentorAbility coordinator got in touch with the Johnston Street Liquor Store manager Ian Krampitz and Tessa was able to protegee as a store clerk. Tessa worked a four-hour shift alongside Ian and a fellow employee named Braden.

Tessa was mentored by Braden on how to stock merchandise, operate a till and provide exceptional customer service. Tessa enjoyed herself was glad she got to “get out of the house and meet new people.” She still wants to work at a liquor store and now has confidence that she can excel at the job, thanks to mentorAbility and the Johnston Street Liquor Store.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Delta Community Living Society*

MENTOR

## Urban Pets, Aldergrove

PROTEGE

## Theresa



Theresa has always wanted to work with animals so we thought learning what happens at a pet store might be a good first step in that journey. Anna Davis, the owner of Urban Pets in Aldergrove, was more than willing to have Theresa job shadow herself and her staff for a day. Theresa observed the dog grooming process from bathing to finishing and found that it was much more intricate than Theresa had thought. She had a chance to work hands-on by sweeping up after the grooming and assisting with retail products. Theresa really enjoyed the time she spent at Urban Pets and would definitely want to work at a pet store, but is more

realistic about the tasks she may do like sweeping, pricing product, putting it on shelves and facing. She also thinks she could learn to bathe the dogs. Anna is very supportive of hiring individuals with diverse abilities and expressed an interest in expanding her shop to include a training facility for individuals to learn how to groom and get certified; as well as potentially expanding locations of Urban Pets and making it a requirement to hire an individual with diverse abilities! Thank you Anna and the staff at Urban Pets for this amazing opportunity to learn about working at a pet store through “MentorAbility”.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Langley Association for Community Living*



MENTOR

Don MacRae, MLA  
Comox Valley

PROTEGÉ

Sherwin

Sherwin Strong has a keen interest in public speaking, social justice and community development. A mentorAbility match with the Honourable Don MacRae, then Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation and MLA for Comox Valley, was a natural fit.

Sherwin started the meeting at the MLA's constituency office in Courtenay where he asked questions such as, "how did you initially get involved in politics?" In turn, Minister MacRae learned about Sherwin's role as a self-advocate liaison with Vancouver Island Community Connections Inc. Sherwin reported that, "the Minister was the one getting mentored!"

Sherwin accompanied Minister MacRae on several appointments throughout the Comox Valley. Their first stop was Excel Career College in Courtenay where a student with diverse-abilities was recognized by the Minister for her efforts towards getting a scholarship to become a veterinary technician.

The MentorAbility session ended with a trip to Rocky Mountain Cafe in Comox. The popular cafe has also been a longstanding employer of people with disabilities. While having a coffee, Sherwin and Minister MacRae met with Barb Legg, the Community Living BC Regional Employment Coordinator for Central/Upper Island.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Nanaimo Association for Community Living*

NR Motors, Prince George

MENTOR

PROTEGÉ

Trevor



Trevor chose NR Motors as his mentorAbility match for a few reasons. It was his favourite shop and he had been visiting it for years. Trevor has a huge interest in motors, machinery, and outdoor equipment and has experience repairing small engines. He also has a friend who works there and loves it. Trevor was matched with Doug, who had been manager at NR for many years. Doug gave Trevor a tour of the lot, including the two main merchandise and parts shops, and the various garages and lots where employees were cleaning and repairing RV's, boats, motorcycles,

and small engines. During the tour, Trevor expressed his interest in working in the field.

Afterwards, Doug and Trevor sat down in his office and Trevor asked questions about the company, the work, and the experience and education needed to get a job at NR or somewhere like it. Doug told Trevor about how he got started in the industry and gave him some career guidance. He told him about the training and experience required to work as an engine repair specialist and suggested other jobs in the related field.



## MENTOR

## Seaspan ULC

## PROTEGÉ

## Victor

Victor is a kind and personable man known for his strong work ethic. He is currently working on-call as a dishwasher and is hoping to find a steady, part-time job with good pay and benefits.

His mentorAbility match was with Seaspan ULC at the Victoria Shipyards (VSL) site. They perform ship conversion, repair, and maintenance projects on cruise ships, Canadian Navy vessels, Deep Sea Trawlers and containerships. Victor's day included attending a safety brief, a tour of the shipyard, a practice interview and work experience in the stores and recycling departments.

Victor also had the opportunity to do a practice interview with two people from the HR team. The HR manager was impressed with his ability to answer the questions clearly and thoughtfully. Victor said that the people made him feel "very comfortable" and the

interview was "excellent practice."

Victor had a chance to work in the Stores Department where he handed out equipment to the workers and then in the Recycling where he crushed cans and learned about recycling aerosol containers. If given the opportunity, he said he would like to "work there on a part-time basis." At the close of the day, Victor was presented with a Seaspan SWAG bag that included a key chain, mug, his ID badge and reflective vest to remind him of his MentorAbility Day.

The staff was impressed with Victor's hardworking attitude and outlook on life. They had the opportunity to see what value he could bring to their workplace. "It was a pleasure to have Victor with us today. His enthusiasm for life is infectious" said Steve Baker, Director of Operations. Overall, it was a successful day of learning for Victor and the staff at Seaspan.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Community Living Victoria*

MENTOR

## Electronic Arts, Burnaby



Through mentorAbility, Electronic Arts (EA) welcomed a group of individuals to tour the facility and learn about the company. Holly Gold, senior recruiter at EA, and the testors prepared in advance for the mentees. They explained their roles in game development and the mentees heard that many testors came into the

job with an array of experience and education. The common denominator was that they all had a lot of experience in gaming, something the visiting group also had. Everyone involved was engaged throughout the whole process; it was a great experience for all. EA was very interested in developing further inclusivity.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI)*



## MENTOR

# Belkin Art Gallery, UBC

## PROTEGÉ

# Charmane

Charmane is an artist so her mentorAbility match with Teresa Sudyeko, Registrar at the Belkin Art Gallery, was a perfect match. Teresa keeps track of the art and makes sure it is kept safe. Many of the artworks are old and fragile, and also very valuable; it's Teresa's job to make sure the art travels safely for special exhibitions, so that people can see and enjoy it.

When Charmane arrived at the gallery, Teresa took her on a tour, introducing her coworkers and explaining what they do. Teresa showed Charmane where they stored all the paintings and art work.

Teresa talked about how she got into working at the

Belkin Art Gallery and they went through a mock interview. Charmane was nervous at first but felt she did well.

Charmane was also shown the Archive, where all the art is being held on record and kept for a person or organization. Charmane couldn't believe how much hard work, tracking and organizing it takes.

*"This experience has helped me to understand how a gallery works. It taught me how much hard work and organization it takes to run an art gallery," said Charmane.*

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Chilliwack Society for Community Living*

## MENTOR

# Joe's Table, Burnaby

## PROTEGÉ

# Edward



Joe's Table began as a father's dream for his son, Joe, to experience the joy and self-esteem that comes from having a meaningful job, doing something you love that others value.

Edward was a perfect match to work at Joe's Table. He is a very motivated individual who wants to pursue a culinary arts career in Chinese cooking. Edward was delighted to be matched with Joe's Table through

mentorAbility. He had already met the manager on a previous occasion while having lunch there; it was a great fit.

Edward worked hard at the restaurant and took every opportunity to get to know how a restaurant operates. He completed a variety of tasks and is even more motivated to seek employment in the food industry.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Back in Motion*





## MENTOR

# Electronic Arts, Burnaby

## PROTÉGÉ

# David

David and the group of protégés at EA were awestruck by the facilities and the work environment at Electronic Arts. It is designed to promote creativity, ideas and efficient production through teamwork and individual focus.

After the tour, each group met with a mentor who demonstrated their expertise in a particular area of E- game production. Katie, a game tester, said that you need to have patience, attention to detail, time management, and team communication skills to do the work.

David was pleased to test out the NHL game and discovered he had similar skills as the Electronic Arts game testers. "I liked meeting the people who work at EA. It was interesting to see how people work in the different areas. I loved the tour they gave us. It was a good experience for me and I am glad that I got to learn how the games are made". David

It was an informative day that raised awareness for both the mentors at EA and the protégés.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: North Shore Disability Resource Centre*

## MENTOR

# Electronic Arts, Burnaby

## PROTÉGÉ

# Robert



Robert has always been interested in gaming. He is good at video games and pinball is because he has an extraordinary ability to visually focus and recognize patterns. He has an excellent eye for detail, an amazing memory and is very observant and keeps information in his head. Robert is also very drawn to color and enjoys the process of being creative.

When Robert found out that he had the opportunity to visit EA Games and learn about what a game tester does he was very excited.

Along with the other protégés, Robert was invited to sit with the Game Testers for Plants vs Zombies. He had the opportunity to observe them in action, talk about what they do, ask questions, and to take in any professional advice.

The testers did a systematic breakdown of the entire process of making a game all the way up to the game testing, step by step, which helped Robert understand how it all works.

*mentorAbility co-ordinator: Community Living Society*