

# YDC/NSCC Reverse Mentoring Partnership

May 3

# 2011

---

The Yarmouth Development Corporation (YDC) Promotions Committee and Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Burrige Campus are partnering to do a Reverse Mentoring Information Technology (IT) Project. This project will place second year NSCC IT students in various Downtown Yarmouth businesses who would like to enhance existing computer skills or learn new skills that would be useful to their business.

**Annual  
Progress  
Report**

# Introduction

---

The **Yarmouth Development Corporation** (YDC) Promotions Committee and **Nova Scotia Community College** (NSCC) Burrige Campus are partnering to do a **Reverse Mentoring** Information Technology (IT) Project.

This project will place second year **NSCC IT students** in various **Downtown Yarmouth businesses** who would like to **enhance existing computer skills** or **learn new skills** that would be useful to their business.

Business owners can **learn** more about **social media** such as **Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube** and eBlasts (formatted email advertising). Not-for-Profit organizations can have a **free website** built for them and learn how to manage it. NSCC is also looking for businesses willing to take on **work term placements** (learners work in your business for between five and ten weeks for free, usually from mid March to late May).

The **opportunities are endless** and it is **all FREE!** You let us know what days and times are good for you and NSCC will assign a student to work with you in **half hour sessions** until you feel comfortable you can handle it yourself.

Marcel d'Entremont, Faculty Advisor IT Web Development, School of Applied Arts & New Media at NSCC Burrige Campus will oversee the selection and placement of students. NSCC Burrige Campus believes in **giving back to the community**. They are dedicated to **community service and applied learning**. The Reverse Mentoring Partnership will be an on-going project during the school year and will be made available to you each year.

Read the Reverse Mentoring Partnership article in **The Yarmouth Vanguard** (30 November 2010) found in **Appendix A** of this report.

Listen to the Yarmouth Development Corporation (YDC) and Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) interview on the **CJLS Weekender** (05 December 2010) found in **Appendix B** of this report.

Watch the **EastLink Magazine** video segment on local EastLink TV stations (27 March 2011) found in **Appendix C** of this report.

Also, see the **Reverse Mentoring Partnership website** [here](http://joomla.mindseed.ca/resources/34-icom1320-training-techniques/46-reverse-mentoring-partnership.html) (<http://joomla.mindseed.ca/resources/34-icom1320-training-techniques/46-reverse-mentoring-partnership.html>) or **OurNSCC** story [here](https://ournscc.nsc.ca/InsideNSCC/NewsEvents/Pages/Turningthetableslearning.aspx) (<https://ournscc.nsc.ca/InsideNSCC/NewsEvents/Pages/Turningthetableslearning.aspx>).

# The Project

---

## Community Service Learning/Reverse Mentoring IT Project - initial report

I had a preliminary meeting with Heather McClelland earlier today. This project would fit nicely within several courses among several programs. This is what we discussed:

Heather works with Downtown Yarmouth businesses, and some of them have asked for training. We discussed the possibility of our learners delivering this training, especially those taking Training Techniques. On the surface it looks like they are looking for:

- 1) Basic Computer Training:
  - a) Information Technology Systems (ITS) learners would have no problem delivering this.
  - b) It may include Mac/PC training
  - c) Software training
  
- 2) Social Networking Training:
  - a) For IT Web Development (ITW), ITS or Business Administration (BA) learners to deliver
  - b) Facebook
  - c) YouTube
  - d) LinkedIn
  - e) eBlast (Those fancy ads that come through email – email marketing)
  
- 3) Business Training:
  - a) For ITW/ITS or BA learners
  - b) Marketing (Social Networking, eBlast etc.)
  - c) Accounting
  - d) Promotion
  - e) Project Management
  
- 4) Web Development for non-profits
  - a) For ITW
  - b) Build static websites
  - c) Build Content Management Systems
  - d) Build Information Management Systems
  - e) Multimedia
  
- 5) We could even involve Health and Human Services
  - a) Why it is important to eat right
  - b) Exercise regularly
  - c) Take breaks – burnout

## Training Delivered to Date

We started delivering training sessions in the first semester using this project to meet the learning outcomes in our **ICOM1320 Training Techniques**.

### We can cover both outcomes with this project:

1. Prepare and deliver technical presentations.
2. Design and deliver an effective training session of a minimum of 1/2 hour.

All learners were expected to prepare a course outline and lesson plan, including learning outcomes. We did practice sessions in class before we sent anyone out in the community. Most IT learners are quite proficient with social media and basic computer skills, so it came to them relatively quickly and easily. While some were out of their comfort zone, they all recognize the importance of being able to deliver training.

In the first semester, to start off gently, we targeted one business who wanted lots of training. We sent out 10 different learners, over the course of several weeks, delivering five different training sessions including: basic computer training and maintenance, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and LogMeIn, to *Sandi's Gifts & Ladies Wear*. The learners were very well received and appreciative of the chance to give back to the community. They all had to prepare a feedback form for the sessions.

After the huge success of the first semester, we decided to carry it forward to the second semester, where we continued to deliver training, but to meet some of the learning outcomes of **CSTN4015 Help Desk and Customer Support**.

### Those outcomes are:

1. Perform user need analysis and assessment.
2. Provide efficient and effective end user and customer support.

In the second semester we expanded our training to include several more businesses in the downtown Yarmouth area, with one from Dayton (just outside Yarmouth). While we tried to accommodate everyone and all their training needs, we simply ran out of time. Better scheduling next year will alleviate some of our shortcomings. As you will see, some businesses received no training, some one session, some received more than one. This is due to scheduling issues. Some businesses were not available when the learners were, and vice-versa.

### The businesses we delivered training to:

1. Sandi's Gifts & Ladies Wear (Basic computer, Facebook, LogMeIn, LinkedIn)
2. City Drug Store (Facebook)
3. House of Shoes (Facebook)
4. Simply for Life (Facebook, LogMeIn, MS PowerPoint)
5. Tooies Country Crafts (Facebook – this is the business featured on the EastLink Magazine show)
6. Dustin's Auto Sales (Facebook, general computer maintenance, iPhone Apps)

**Unfortunately, we were unable to accommodate the following businesses:**

1. Acadian Glass Art (Facebook)
2. Big Brothers Big Sisters Yarmouth (website)
3. The Final Touch (they want it all)
4. Fairway Insurance (Basic computer)

The kinds of training requested also increased as some were interested in Twitter, Internet searching, iPhone apps and other pieces of software.

**Testimonials – Clients**

1. *“Thank you very much for sending your students to us today, they were extremely informative and helpful! It was greatly appreciated! We hope we can have more help at some time in the near future.”*

Thanks again!

**Cindy LeBlanc**

House of Shoes

2. *“... I found it to be very interesting and informative! [The learner] is very professional and is a great instructor. He doesn't rush, and wants to make sure the info is understood. Very Good!”*

*"Thanks....the 3 students I've met so far have been great! They are professional and knowledgeable....and very happy to hear that many of them have been hired even before they have completed their course! You and your team have obviously done a fantastic job and the students have put in a great deal of effort."*

*"... I appreciate this great learning opportunity!"*

*“Thanks very much for the opportunity to participate in this project! I would certainly welcome the opportunity to participate in the future, and wish the best of luck to your graduating class. All the students I have met are very deserving of their [diploma] degree.”*

Best regards

**Kim Isaacs**

Simply for Life

3. *“What are you going to teach me next?”*

**Sandi Dennis**

Sandi’s Gifts & Ladies Wear

4. *“Awesome!”*

*“These guys... they’re just wizzes!”*

**Sylvia Hoben-Fougere**

Tooies Country Crafts

## Testimonials – Learners

1. *“... It’s a really good idea because it allows us to meet people in the business world, in Yarmouth, that you normally wouldn’t have a chance to meet.”*

*“It’s different first of all, because we are used to being taught things by our elders. But, in this case it’s the other way around.”*

**Elliott Fevens**

Information Technology – Systems Management/Networking

2. *“We take the knowledge we learned from here [NSCC] and, by using those programs, we can show them how to use them as well.”*

*“Overall I think it was an awesome project, really great to get out in the community.”*

**Joshua Muise**

Information Technology – Systems Management/Networking

3. *“I find the idea of reverse mentoring is very helpful, both the students and businesses enjoy the sessions and learn what we deliver in our local community. Reverse mentoring is great and very beneficial to our local community.”*

**Colin Boudreau**

Information Technology – Systems Management/Networking

4. *"... just wanted to let you know that I think the Reverse Mentoring Program works really well to get us out into the public to get used to helping and teaching people. I feel more comfortable working with strangers now that I've done that a couple of times."*

**Travis Ryerson**

Information Technology – Systems Management/Networking

## Testimonials – NSCC

1. *"Marcel, I know this takes a lot of your time. Thank you for not shying away from these activities and opportunities. The partnerships you have developed are very important and very strategic to promote NSCC to our business community."*

Thank you.

**Ron Kelly**

Academic Chair

NSCC Burr ridge Campus

2. *"Brilliant Marcel. This is a great chance to profile what we do and market our programs."*

Thanks

**Mary Thompson**

Principal

NSCC Burr ridge and Shelburne Campus

3. *"A good service learning project being driven by Marcel d'Entremont in Yarmouth."*

Cheers

**Ian H. MacLeod**

Dean - School of Applied Arts & New Media

NSCC

4. *"Hi Marcel,  
This was passed along to me and I want to congratulate you on a unique and innovative way to get the community involved with our students. I keep thinking of your 'apples and oranges' paper when I see this."*

Well done,

**Bruce Tawse**

Vice President Academic

NSCC

5. *"Great work Marcel. Thank you for the wonderful learning opportunities that you create for your students. Very much appreciated."*

Cheers

**Don Bureaux**

President

NSCC

# Conclusion

---

The YDC/NSCC Reverse Mentoring Partnership has been very successful. As a matter of fact, we are victims of our own success, as we were not able to deliver all the training requested by all our clients. Our clients are begging for more training, but unfortunately, our semester has come to an end. We want to continue the YDC/NSCC Reverse Mentoring Partnership next school year.

The business owners are very appreciative and learn social media and basic computer skills and the learners get to apply their knowledge in a real world situation. It showcases our learners to the local business community and introduces learners to opportunities within our town and villages.

I would like to thank Heather McClelland (YDC) for her idea and handling the paperwork for the local businesses. I would like to thank NSCC Burrigge Campus Academic Chair Ron Kelly for his support in this project, as well as all the support I received from other levels of management. I would especially like to thank our learners for being willing to step out of their comfort zone and blindly follow me as I take them through this experiment in their life and learning journey.

**UPDATE: YDC suspends operations.** (Wednesday, April 27th 2011)

The Board of Directors of the Yarmouth Development Corporation has voted to suspend the Corporation's operations until June of this year. YDC President Chris Atwood says because Yarmouth town council decided not to approve interim funding for the YDC, the Board had little choice but to close up its offices and lay off staff. Atwood did say that operations could start up again if the council passes their budget at the June meeting. Atwood says the decision affects promotions for downtown businesses, insurance for festivals such as Seafest and the Shark Scramble, Main Street flower baskets, welcoming posters and promotional material for conventions. [\[CJLS\]](#)

**YDC suspends operations: By Tina Comeau** (April 27, 2011)

Following a decision by Yarmouth Town Council not to provide interim funding to the Yarmouth Development Corporation (YDC), the YDC's board of directors has voted to suspend the corporation's operations until June. And that's provided the town approves its budget in June. Funding for the YDC is included in the town's budget.

Recently a motion to provide the YDC with interim funding until the town's budget is approved was defeated in a split vote at town council. Without the interim funding – which it did get last year – the YDC says it has no money to pay its bills.

And so the decision has been made by the YDC to cease operations for the time being. [\[The Vanguard\]](#)

# Recommendations

---

While managing this project manually (literally... writing things down on paper) has been a daunting task for us, with the help of an IT faculty, Joe Doucette, we have recently developed a database to better organize time and resources. We expect the following changes for next school year:

1. Use database to better organize businesses, learners and training sessions.
  - a. Database is designed and built
  - b. We are testing it
  - c. It will have a web interface
2. Try to schedule multiple training sessions on the same day (or at the same time).
  - a. To avoid confusion
  - b. To avoid missed class time
  - c. Sets up a routine, easier to fit in a schedule
  - d. Consistency for local business owners
3. Make the learners submit a reflection piece as part of each training session.
  - a. Apply the portfolio process to everything we do
  - b. The reflection should be on what they learned and their experience
  - c. Difficult to get feedback if it is not built in to the sessions or mandatory
  - d. Make them think about teamwork and eventual employment
4. Expand the project to include other learners, like Business Administration, Applied Arts and Health and Human Services learners.
5. Expand the project to involve more businesses in the Yarmouth area, not only downtown merchants (we are already getting requests).
  - a. **UPDATE:** YDC suspends operations so we do not know how this will affect the partnership. There are no guarantees of who will be the representative of the YDC or even if the YDC will be operating in September 2011.
  - b. So far I have all the contact information for the local businesses and we are ready to go for next September.
  - c. We may need to approach the Town of Yarmouth.
6. Roll out this initiative to multiple NSCC campuses.

# Appendices

---

## Appendix A

Read the Reverse Mentoring Partnership article in The Yarmouth Vanguard (30 November 2010).

The Yarmouth Vanguard

30 November 2010

## Reverse mentoring partnership offered

An innovative program will match second year Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Information Technology students with downtown businesses in Yarmouth.

The Yarmouth Development Corporation (YDC) promotions committee and NSCC Burrige Campus are partnering to do a reverse mentoring information technology (IT) project.

IT students will be placed in various downtown businesses that would like to enhance existing computer skills or learn new ones.

Business owners can learn more about social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and eBlasts (formatted email advertising).

Not-for-profit organizations can have a free website built for them and learn how to manage it. NSCC is also looking for business willing to take on work term placements (learners work in your business for between five and 10 weeks for free, usually from mid March to late May).

The program is available at no charge. Participants are requested to let facilitators know what days and times are good for them and NSCC will assign a student to work in half hour sessions until a comfort level is reached.

Marcel d'Entremont, faculty advisor for IT web development at the School of Applied Arts & New Media at NSCC Burrige Campus, will oversee the selection and placement of students.

The reverse mentoring partnership will be an on-going project during the school year and will be made available each year.

For more information contact Heather McClelland at 902-742-2082.

Yarmouth Development Corporation/NSCC Burrige Campus

Heather McClelland/Marcel d'Entremont

## Appendix B

Listen to the Yarmouth Development Corporation (YDC) and Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) interview on the **CJLS Weekender** (05 December 2010).

## Appendix C

Watch the **EastLink Magazine** video segment on local EastLink TV stations (27 March 2011). Anyone wanting to watch the video will have to contact Marcel d'Entremont or **NSCC Media & External Relations** because it cannot be distributed to anyone outside of the College or posted on any websites (including Facebook and YouTube). These are the terms of our copyright agreement.