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### Providing help for displaced ferry workers

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By Tina Comeau

THE VANGUARD

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The Career Resource Centre, located at the Burrige Campus of the Nova Scotia Community College, is hoping to throw out some life preservers to displaced Bay Ferries employees and others who will suffer job losses as a result of the absence of a ferry service this summer.

Due to the demise of The Cat ferry service, the centre has seen an increase in the number of people coming through its doors seeking its services. But staff know there are even more people they need to help.

"We would like to reach as many people as we can to be able to advise them of the services that we provide," explains Mariette Thibault-Poole, manager of the Career Resource Centre. "The bottom line is to get them employed and back to work."

Because of the increased traffic, the centre applied for transitional funds for a project called Yarmouth Transition Support – Bay Ferries. It was successful in receiving funding from the Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement – through Nova Scotia Labour and Workforce Development – which allowed it to hire an additional employment consultant to work with displaced ferry workers.

The centre is planning a series of free workshops to help displaced workers find alternate employment. Some of the topics to be explored in these workshops – which also mirror many of the services provided by the centre – include coping with financial loss, self employment, transferable skills, résumé building, job search, interview preparation and coping with job loss.

Coping with the loss of a job, Thibault-Poole says, isn't easy. She likens it to dealing with a death or grieving a loss. But although times may seem bleak, she says, the centre wants to let people know that when one door closes, often there is another opportunity on the other side.

It may sound cliché, then again Thibault-Poole knows what's she talking about. She worked at the Dominion Textile mill when it was shut down. And then she lost her job at Human Resources when downsizing took place.

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But with so many people out of work and so many looking for work, she admits the job search and retraining for many people will be a lengthy process.

The Career Resource Centre, which has been in existence since 1997, didn't immediately see hordes of people coming through its doors following the announcement in December that The Cat service was ending. That's likely because for months people were still holding out hope that the ferry service might be resurrected. But now that it's clear that won't happen, the centre expects to see more people turn to them. And Thibault-Poole says they are ready to provide these people help.

"We'll look at job opportunities that are here, and away as well, or maybe they can create their own business," she says. "We will focus on employment, helping them with their résumés, cover letters, doing a job search. We will look at the skills they have, all of them have a variety of transferable skills so we can help them identify that."

The hours of operation for the centre are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

You can also contact the centre by telephone at 742-0784 or email at [crc.burrige@nsc.ca](mailto:crc.burrige@nsc.ca). Bilingual services are also available. All services are free.



Staff at the Career Resource Centre, including new employment consultant Sandra Hubbard-LeBlanc, manager Mariette Thibault-Poole and employment consultant Rhonda Sweeney discuss an initiative to aid displaced ferry workers. Tina Comeau photo

*employed and  
back to work.”*

*- Mariette  
Thibault-Poole,  
manager of the  
Career Resource  
Centre*

#### QUICK GLANCE

Services provided by the Career Resource Centre at the Burridge Campus of the Nova Scotia Community College:

- return to work action plan
- career exploration
- employment counselling
- needs assessments
- résumé writing
- cover letter preparation
- interview preparation
- Internet searching for jobs
- daily job listings
- labour market information
- employer-employee matching
- job applications