

Local job Fair draws hundreds to connect with local employers

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The annual Shelburne, Dufferin and Area Job Fair drew a strong turnout on April 23, connecting hundreds of job seekers with employers, community organizations and local government representatives from across the region.

The Centre Dufferin Recreation Complex was transformed into a busy networking space on April 23, as the annual Shelburne, Dufferin and Area Job Fair returned, giving attendees the opportunity to meet face-to-face with recruiters and learn about a wide range of employment opportunities.

Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills said he was pleased to see the strong turnout throughout the day, an indicator of the opportunities available close to home.

"It was fantastic to see such a strong turnout at this year's job fair," he said. "Events like this highlight the depth and diversity of employment opportunities available right here in our region. From skilled trades to healthcare, manufacturing to education, there are real pathways for people to build meaningful careers close to home. We're proud to support initiatives that connect people with opportunity right here in Shelburne and Dufferin County."

The job fair brought together businesses, public sector employers and non-profit organizations, all currently looking to network and fill current openings with potential future hires in the community. A variety of well-known regional employers were in attendance, including KTH Manufacturing, Chapman's Ice Cream and Dufferin County itself.

Kait Anselmi from KTH Manufacturing said the job fair was a perfect opportunity to recruit local employees. With their facilities in town, they currently have multiple positions available.

"Currently, we are looking for weld production associates, forklift operators, skilled trades positions and more," she said. "We absolutely try to stay local, we have a lot of local employees, some even walk to work. For the students that are interested, we also have a summer student program that we run along with part time student opportunities as well. We encourage everybody and anybody to apply."

Some local companies are placing even greater emphasis on recruiting youth. Chapman's, a local ice cream manufacturer based in Markdale, was also present. Wanda McHarg, from Chapman's, said that those who start with them often become employees for years.

"We love to see the young people come out, apply and work for us," she said. "Many of them tend to stay after graduation, and they become full-time employees for us. We have some great benefits and pension plans."

Currently, Chapman's is looking for new employees to fill positions across the board.

"We're a very large facility, so we hire across the board into our office," she said. "We're hiring for production primarily, but we hire for team leads, supervisors and for accounting."

For those looking to work in the public sector or for the government, there were options available. Dufferin County is currently hiring and had a table at the job fair, sharing some of the unique opportunities available at the county level.

Bonnie Firth, representing the county, said that outreach was a major component of their presence at the job fair, but there are plenty

of positions they are recruiting for, and some include education partnerships.

?Currently, we're hiring in our community support department,? she said. ?So that would be community support workers and casual transportation drivers, who drive people who can't travel themselves to appointments and things like that.?

?We also partner with a lot of post-secondary education institutions. We really just want to be good community partners. We want people to know that Dufferin County has several different career opportunities for people to find employment.?

The variety of opportunities featured at the job fair is part of an ongoing effort by the Town of Shelburne and its partners to support workforce development and to strengthen the local economy.

Events like this are designed to make the job search process more accessible than ever by putting employers and applicants in the same room, encouraging direct conversations and on-the-spot networking.

Representatives from these organizations spoke with candidates about available roles, workplace expectations and application processes, offering valuable insight into local career pathways.

The strong turnout and level of engagement throughout the day underscored the demand for local employment opportunities and the value of in-person hiring events.

For many attendees, especially the substantial number of high school students present, the fair provided a chance not only to apply for jobs, but to gain a better understanding of the region's labour market.

The success of the job fair was a clear indication of a community seeking work and local employers willing to hire them, reinforcing Shelburne's status as a rapidly growing business hub.