



Human Resources  
Professionals  
Association  
Durham Chapter

FALL 2017

# Resource

Shaping Organizational Excellence



# CHANGING COMMUNITIES

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*Shaping Organizational Excellence*

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## About This Issue

*Catherine Claridge, CHRL, Editor*

For those of us who live or work in Durham, it's no secret that the region is going through its biggest industrial evolution since the 1990s, when GM closed its north plant and unemployment rates shot up. We are seeing new industries starting to flourish, and economic development groups rallying to help bring new, innovative businesses to our communities. This will require us to adapt our HR management skills to meet the demands of this burgeoning economic shift.

We spoke with several industry experts across various disciplines to gather insights on how well poised Durham employers are to navigate this change, and how their HR efforts should be focused. We have brought you leadership contributions from various areas that you'll find invaluable in helping you usher your organization through the transition.

In his first article as Chapter President, our new leader Ernest Ogunleye shares his thoughts on our Chapter's mandate and how we are continuing to serve our membership as we grow with the community. Also new to our Board are Gladys Saenz and Irene Jackman. They have recently assumed roles overseeing the Communications Committee, and Mentorship and Student Relations Committees, respectively, and are looking forward to leading these vital initiatives. Read more about them in the *Chapter Updates* section.

This issue's legal contribution addresses the growing concern of family status accommodation as our region grows and the population ages. It is becoming more important than ever for organizations with employees facing the demands of both child and elder care obligations—the “sandwich generation”—to understand their legal obligations to support their employees while still effectively managing their businesses. Our Student Liaisons have put together a piece on how the current and future state of the HR industry in Durham is affecting both those studying HR and new grads, who are faced with navigating these changes as they propel their careers from the ground up.

On a final note, we've recently produced the Association's first Chapter video, which will provide us with yet another channel through which we can promote our Chapter's value proposition to potential members. The video can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/PW1AnRIPhKI>. You can also find it on our Chapter website. We'd love to hear your thoughts, so let us know what you think!







From the President's Desk:

## A Legacy of Community Partnership

Ernest Ogunleye, Chartered MCIPD

To paraphrase former President Barack Obama's inauguration speech: My fellow Regional Durhamites, I write to you humbled by the challenges ahead of us, grateful for the custodianship entrusted to myself and the Board, and mindful of the legacy left by previous Boards. I wish to warmly thank Past President Morgan Kerby for her service to our Chapter. I, along with the Board, am very glad she will be remaining to complete her term as our Immediate Past President.

Since the founding of Durham Chapter in 1982, 23 HRPAs have taken on the Durham Chapter Presidency. I must acknowledge the distinct honour of being the first black president.

What else is there to know about me? I am an immigrant from a small group of islands in the north Atlantic commonly known as the United Kingdom. I am the owner and Principal Consultant at EON Performance Solutions (EONPS), which specializes in HR, Learning & Development and Management Consulting. Being very passionate about HR has led me to live and work in Durham Region, Toronto, Montreal, and London, England. All this is happily intermingled with HR assignments of varying lengths in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America. I continue to work in the public, private and non-profit sectors while sustaining an energetic membership of HRPAs since 2002.

HRPA Durham Chapter was established 35 years ago. The previous Boards have left their mark by truly serving members, representing the interests of the HR profession, and creating networking opportunities through events as well as community outreach partnerships and projects. This has included working with federal, provincial, regional and municipal governments, elected officials, chambers of commerce, community groups, charities and educational institutions. I am pleased to report that this constantly evolving and expanding mandate continues to be gallantly driven forward by the current Board.

Our policies can be defined in three ways: *Democracy, Community Involvement, Inclusiveness.*

- **Democracy:** We are accountable to our members. HRPAs have an unwavering belief in member participation and engagement. At the Chapter level, this is reflected by our members' active involvement in a variety of volunteer committees, community partnerships, events, Board elections and the Annual Business Meeting. As

a Board, we must continue to seek new ways to increase member participation, our accountability and the number of candidates submitting nominations for Board elections.

- **Community Involvement:** Engaging, consulting, developing, promoting and guiding community involvement is another significant focus for the Chapter, and I am a firm believer in positive community action. Since 2014, the Chapter has been promoting and supporting the charity, Threads of Life ([threadsoflife.ca](http://threadsoflife.ca)). In fact, a former HRPAs Durham President is now President of the Durham Region Threads of Life event we currently support. This reinforces our community ties, and the link with this worthy charity will continue under my presidency. We also work with and support the chambers of commerce in Durham Region, and we are looking to expand the range of community partners we are currently involved with.
- **Inclusiveness:** We are focused on removing barriers. For instance, the challenges and opportunities created by the Government of Ontario's *Bill 148, Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017* will need to be addressed. We have planned events for the fall and winter to update, advise, consult and engage you, our members. The HRPAs white paper of May 2017, *Next Steps for Improvement: Identifying the Gaps Between Education and Employability in Ontario High Schools*, is another area of concern. The education system is improving academic attainment for students, but life skills are not being so readily absorbed. HRPAs, with support from the Chapters, is seeking ways to assemble business, government, educational institutions and other stakeholders into a task force to address this deficiency. Based on my past work for *The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award in Canada*, I believe this program used in conjunction with others will boost life skills significantly. It also has the added advantage of being very low cost, completely community-based and with a measurable ROI.

I invite you to network today for your future interests and reap the maximum ROI from your HRPAs membership. I look forward to serving all the members of our growing Chapter, and I am on a mission to speak with as many of you as possible at upcoming events. Your Chapter provides an incredible array of options for all HR professionals, so immerse yourself completely in these activities and enjoy!

# Working Towards a Bright Future



**W**hat a dynamic place we live in! According to Statistics Canada, in only 10 years, Durham Region's population has increased a whopping 15%.<sup>1</sup> It is one of Canada's fastest growing communities, with a forecasted one million people calling Durham Region home by 2031.<sup>2</sup> Its eight municipalities range from large, urban centres to small towns, hamlets and villages; and its growing business sectors are as varied as advanced manufacturing, agri-business, smart energy and film.

What does all this mean for you and your fellow HR professionals? We spoke to four experts across the Region, each with their own lens on how our community is changing, to give you some insight and ideas to prepare for what's to come.

## WORKFORCE PLANNING IN ACTION

A bit of background: In 1994, workforce planning boards were established across Ontario to plan and lead labour-market activities at the community level. The Boards were mandated to help improve labour market conditions in Ontario's communities by:

- Engaging labour-market partners locally to identify and respond to key employment and training issues and priorities;
- Researching employers' labour requirements to gain insight into occupational and skill needs;
- Facilitating local planning to implement joint actions to address local labour-market gaps; and
- Developing partnership projects that respond to local labour-market challenges.

<sup>1</sup> See "By the Numbers" on page 11.

<sup>2</sup> Durham Region Economic Development: [www.investdurham.ca](http://www.investdurham.ca)



The Durham Workforce Authority (DWA) is governed by a diverse Board of Directors, with a strategic plan that has focused the organization's direction for five years.

Putting labour market information into the hands of everyone in Durham Region is an ongoing challenge. The DWA takes on many projects annually and reports to the community, the Board of Directors and the funder. The DWA conducts research of employers' labour requirements to gain insight into occupational and skill needs, facilitates local planning to implement joint actions to address local labour-market gaps, and develops partnership projects that respond to local labour-market challenges.

Workforce planning can decrease an organization's exposure to challenges and concerns from uncertain economic times. Knowing how to close the gap between current employees and new hires can be the difference in executing an effective strategy for planning. Ensuring companies employ the right talent with the required skills using cost and time analysis leads to future growth and execution for corporate strategy.

The DWA has 20 years' experience in providing local labour market information. Historically, the DWA has presented information formally as the keynote speaker at the Annual Energy Summit and the Annual Agriculture Summit. These events are attended by high-level local businesses and leaders. The DWA regularly guest lectures at University of Ontario Institute of Technology in the community development program and has regular meetings with their management team to share information. Additionally, the DWA, through its survey process, connects directly with secondary and post-secondary students.

In 2015, Durham Region was selected as a pilot site for the province's Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC).



The DWA LEPC pilot is intended to improve local labour market conditions through research and labour market information to drive innovation in service delivery based on solid, local evidence. The emergence of the LEPC is a timely response to the need to increase the collection, dissemination and use of local labour market information to move Durham Region and the province toward the development of a workforce planning system, within organizations, clusters and regions. A more strategic approach to workforce planning is becoming increasingly important to assist organizations, regions and communities in responding to a variety of factors such as an aging workforce, current and projected labour shortages, a desire to increase productivity, and the evolution of technology and tools.

### Forming a Local HR Alliance

Labour information is vital to economic development departments, Employment Ontario service providers, job seekers and community support organizations. The best resource for information is direct from the professionals who hire and build organizations. The purpose of the HR Alliance project is to connect and collaborate with local employers by identifying the needs of HR professionals while building relationships.

The project is part of the redevelopment and launch of Ajax First for Business Retention & Expansion (Ajax First for BRE), and part of the Clarington Board of Trade's ongoing business engagement programming, the service coordination efforts of the LEPC for Employment Ontario service pro-

viders who require detailed labour market information and intelligence from employers to better serve their clients to understand employer current and future skill needs. Additionally, better engagement of employers will assist employment service managers in understanding what employers need from funded agencies to better support their hiring, training and retention requirements.

As a result of a request from members of the DWA LEPC Central Planning Table, the DWA in partnership with the Clarington Board of Trade, Ajax Economic Development Department and Agilec, on behalf of the Employment Service Managers and selected employers, propose the creation of a Durham Region HR Alliance. This Alliance will be a unique engagement with local HR professionals, a collaborative project focused on assisting Durham employers with recruitment and retention of a skilled and adaptable workforce.

The DWA would like to have more interaction with you, Durham's HR professionals. Please contact us at [admin@durhamwa.ca](mailto:admin@durhamwa.ca) for further information.



*Heather McMillan is the Executive Director for the Durham Workforce Authority. The DWA is a non-profit body that facilitates community labour market development. Her focus is Durham's Local Employment*

*Planning Council, addressing employment, training and labour market issues.*

*Continued on [next page...](#)*

## THE EVOLVING WORKPLACE

Where is the world of work heading these days? It used to be so dependable. Get a good job, work hard and retire 35 years later. In 1974, the year the Region of Durham came into being, our population was approximately 250,000. General Motors was by far the biggest employer in Oshawa, employing, at times, more than 20,000 people in a city of 50,000. As high school graduates, our choice was simple: go to college or university, or get a “good” job at GM and stay there until retirement.

Forty years later Oshawa is now a city of approximately 168,000 and the Region has blossomed to over 645,000. By 2031, we will be looking at a population of close to one million. Good, full-time jobs with excellent wages and benefits for all should follow, right? Yes and no.

Yes, because if we double the population, there should be twice as many good jobs in the public sector. However, time has seen significant changes in the private sector. GM, for example, has gradually reduced its employment numbers to approximately 2600. If, as some suggest, the auto industry has a 7–1 impact on jobs, that means thousands of jobs have disappeared over the years. What happened? Is this a microcosm of something happening in the world at large?

The answer is somewhat complicated but has something to do with the global economy, as many employers are finding cheaper labour costs in third world countries coupled with the incredibly rapid changes we have experienced in technology. These factors will affect not only employers but also the choices to be made by young folks now entering the world of work.

Consider the following:

- The first computer in my office took three men and a small boy to carry (perhaps a slight exaggeration!). Now, a simple memory stick has the capacity to carry every record and every bit of information I need for my business.
- Banks, gas stations, grocery stores and even home improvement centres are eliminating cashiers as they switch to online and self-service. How is this affecting workforce numbers?
- Robots are being increasingly engaged in agriculture to such an extent that market research firm IDTechEx forecasts they will become a \$12 billion industry by 2027.
- The role of auto mechanics is changing to rely increasingly on the ability of computers to analyse repair needs. At the same time, medical tricorders (just like in Star Trek) are being developed, which may have a significant impact on the entire medical field.
- Online shopping is affecting sales at our shopping centres and the retail industry.

While I don’t claim to have any concrete insights into the future, I can say with absolute certainty that the working world we know is changing and that the rate of change is ever increasing.

Sadly, we are not all equally adept at living with such dramatic changes. Some of us will lead the charge, while others will roll with it and still others will resist.

Two other challenges are worthy of note for HR professionals. First, unions still tend to refuse to accept the new reality of part-time, casual, temporary or contract arrangements, and are constantly pushing for full-time, high-paying jobs with expensive benefits. Employers, for their part, can no longer

afford that. We need to be more flexible and mobile, and keep pace with the changes happening. Second, the nature of management is changing. We are evolving from the “command and control” approach of the past to the need for managers to be servant leaders and coaches with high levels of emotional and social intelligence.

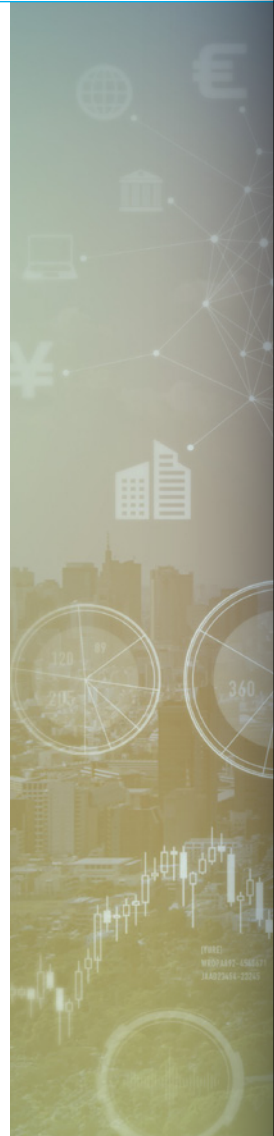
Durham Region is no different. Times have changed and will continue to change, and you, as HR professionals, need to be leaders on behalf of your profession, organizations and staff. If I have had any regrets in my career, they would be the times I could have embraced change rather than fight it.

Things will continue to evolve, and your attitudes and thinking about many facets of your work life will become outdated in due course. Approach your work with an open mind, embrace change and take every opportunity to lead those disruptions. Watch where you are going with one eye and continuously scan the horizon with the other.

Good luck.



*Garth Johns is the former HR Commissioner for the Region of Durham, and is currently the Executive Director for the Oshawa BIA. He is an accomplished author, business consultant and motivational speaker.*







## ADAPTING AND ENHANCING EDUCATION

As an institution, Durham College is watching very carefully how our community is growing. We draw about 75% of our students from Durham Region; the other 25% comes from across Canada and around the world. Our student population has grown by 72% in nine years. We've launched around 45 new programs in that period of time with the lens on community needs.

In collaboration with C-level leaders from General Motors, Ontario Power Generation (OPG), Lakeridge Health and other corporations, we hold discussions about the transformation of Durham

Region as a bedroom community. We're seeing lots of housing development, and retail and service industry growth, but we're not seeing any industrial or business development. It's hard to remember the last time we saw massive industry built in Durham Region. The concern from the college's perspective is that we're training people to go work in Toronto.

As a group of CEOs, working with our regional and political partners, we're all discussing how we can create an environment where we can begin building business back into Durham. This, in turn, will provide opportunities for our graduates and the community. In this effort, HR becomes vital in always engaging the right people.

The program advisory committees make the college system very unique compared to other educational systems, such as high schools and universities. By law, every program cluster we have must have a program advisory committee. As an example, for our business marketing program, we go out in the community and talk to people who work in the business marketing field, from industries big and small, and invite them to sit on our advisory groups. Twice a year, they come and meet with our academic staff, students and deans. They look at our curriculum and provide feedback on where we can improve.

*Continued on page 14...*

# Family Matters

## The Evolving Analysis for Family Status Discrimination

Adam James



Following the 2014 Federal Court of Appeal decision in *Johnstone v. Canada*,<sup>1</sup> employers across Canada appeared to have some certainty in the approach used by adjudicators to determine whether discrimination had occurred on the basis of family status. However, for Ontario employers, that was certainty short-lived. On September 20, 2016, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (the Tribunal) released its decision in *Misetich v. Value Village Stores Inc.*,<sup>2</sup> lowering the threshold to establish family status discrimination.

After the release of *Misetich*, employers were left wondering which of the two decisions reflected the prevailing law—*Johnstone* or *Misetich*? The recent decision of the Public Service Labour Relations and Employment Board in *Guilbault v. Treasury Board (Department of National Defence)*<sup>3</sup> suggests the answer for federally

regulated employers is *Johnstone*. However, for employers regulated provincially in Ontario, the recent decision in *Ananda v. Humber College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning*,<sup>4</sup> signals Tribunal adjudicators will be endorsing the *Misetich* approach.

This inconsistency highlights the difficulty employers in Canada now face, where the test for family status discrimination differs among jurisdictions despite direction from the Supreme Court of Canada that human rights legislation is to be interpreted consistently.

### The *Johnstone* Test

*Johnstone* addressed an employer's obligation to accommodate schedule changes associated with an employee's childcare responsibilities. The Federal Court of Appeal held that in order to successfully claim discrimination on the basis of family status, an employee had to demonstrate four things:

1. The child was under the employee's care and supervision.
2. The childcare obligation engaged a legal responsibility for the child, as opposed to a personal choice.
3. The employee had first made reasonable efforts to self-accommodate.
4. The impugned workplace rule interfered with the fulfillment of the childcare obligation in a way that was more than trivial or insubstantial.

### The Tribunal's Evolving Perspective

In *Misetich*, the issue was whether the employee, ultimately terminated for refusing to work her scheduled shifts, had been discriminated against as a result of her eldercare responsibilities.

The Tribunal disagreed with earlier decisions, including the Federal Court of Appeal's decision in *Johnstone*, particularly on the issue of self-accommodation. According to the Tribunal, requiring self-accommoda-

1 2014 FCA 110 [Johnstone]

2 2016 HRTO 1229 [Misetich]

3 2017 PSLREB 1 [Guilbault]

4 2017 HRTO 611 [Ananda]



tion “conflate[d] the test for discrimination and accommodation.” In other words, discrimination, if it exists, does so regardless of an employee’s ability to self-accommodate.

Instead, the Tribunal held that to establish discrimination on the basis of family status, an employee must only show:

1. Membership in a protected group.
2. Adverse treatment.
3. The protected ground of discrimination was a factor in the adverse treatment.

In reaching this conclusion, the Tribunal acknowledged that not *all* adverse treatment constitutes discrimination and, in the context of family status and employment, “the negative impact must result in real disadvantage to the parent/child relationship and the responsibilities that flow from that relationship, and/or to the employee’s work.”

The Tribunal also noted the importance of considering “context” in assessing the impact of an allegedly discriminatory act or rule, including other supports available to the employee. While considering other available supports sounds a lot like the third step in *Johnstone* (i.e., the obligation to attempt self-accommodation), the Tribunal noted this did not mean an employee is required to self-accommodate. Rather, although the supports available may affect the impact of the act or rule (and thus whether the employee’s familial relationship has suffered a “real disadvantage”), the employee does not bear the burden of attempting self-accommodation in order to establish discrimination.

#### **Misetich Endorsed by Other Tribunal Adjudicators**

The test adopted by the Tribunal in *Misetich* is a concern for Ontario employers, as it lowers the bar for discrimination on the basis of family status.

While it remains to be seen whether Ontario labour arbitrators will adopt the *Misetich* test, more recent decisions from the Tribunal affirm its adjudicators are endorsing *Misetich* and its critique of the *Johnstone* analysis.

In *Thapa v. Suisha Gardens Limited Les Jardins Suisha Limitée*,<sup>5</sup> released a few months after *Misetich*, the Tribunal recognized and applied the lower threshold established by *Misetich* without mentioning or addressing *Johnstone*. More recently, in *Ananda* the Tribunal agreed with the analysis set out in *Misetich* and its critique of *Johnstone*.

In *Ananda*, the applicant was a nursing student who was denied an extension to complete his nursing program. He alleged that he was required to provide care and support to his mother who had health issues and that this contributed to his inability to complete the requisite courses in the time required by the program. He claimed discrimination on the basis of family status.

On the evidence, the Tribunal concluded the applicant failed to establish his mother’s care-related needs prevented him from completing the

program. Hence, the application was dismissed.

However, on the appropriate test to apply, the Tribunal reaffirmed *Misetich*:

In my view, the correct approach to an allegation of a failure to accommodate on the basis of family status is as set out in this Tribunal’s decision in *Devaney v. ZRV Holdings Limited* ... which requires demonstration by the applicant that a rule or requirement had an adverse effect on her or him because of requirements or needs relating to or arising out of the parent-child relationship: see para. 117. I also fully endorse this Tribunal’s critique of the *Johnstone* test as set out in *Misetich v. Value Village Stores Inc.* ... and the principle that in order to constitute a “need” or “requirement” relating to or arising out of the parent-child relationship, it is not sufficient that there just be any negative impact, but that the negative impact must result in real disadvantage to the applicant, arising from the parent-child relationship and the responsibilities that flow from that relationship.

*Continued on page 13...*

<sup>5</sup> 2016 HRTO 1316



# Chapter Updates

As we look forward to the 2017-18 programming year, the HRPA Durham Chapter would like to welcome two new members to its Board, Irene Jackman and Gladys Saenz, and let them introduce themselves to you.



## **Welcome, Irene Jackman, CHRL, CEC**

I am thrilled to be a recent addition to the Board of Directors, chairing two committees: Mentorship and Student Relations. Both areas of focus are close to my heart.

I have enjoyed a varied career, which has spanned more than 30 years, including roles in the world of finance and technology. For the past 17 years, I have been responsible for several facets within the HR function, including recruiting, total rewards, workforce planning and talent management. I was honoured to have received the CHRP designation in 2004 and have since been granted the CHRL designation, something that I hold with great pride.

I am a lifelong learner, returning to Durham College in 1997 to obtain a diploma in Business Administration – HR Management. And then, in 2011, I found my way back to campus at UOIT, where I completed my Bachelor of Commerce degree, majoring in HR Management and Organization Development.

Currently I am an HR Business Partner with a global pharmaceutical company. A critical aspect of my role is to coach people leaders at all levels. It was this facet of my role that led me to pursue and complete a graduate certificate in executive coaching from Royal Roads University. This intensive program is internationally recognized and accredited by the International Coach Federation.

As part of the program curriculum we were asked to develop a personal vision statement, which would frame how we wanted to act as coaches. After much reflection, I created the following:

*It is my personal vision to do whatever is in my power and energy to support individuals, whether leaders or followers, to reach their fullest potential. At the same time I will create a space within me where a soul resides that is content with life, but not complacent, and recognizing the incredible joy of turning my work life into my life's work.*

I am so pleased to see my vision coming to fruition and the journey just keeps getting better! I look forward to working with my fellow Board members to support the growth of the Durham Chapter, advancing the HR profession in organizations and continuing a life of service.

## **Meet Your Durham Chapter 2017-18 Board of Directors**

- President: Ernest Ogunleye, Chartered MCIPD
- Treasurer: Don Sinclair, CHRL
- Membership Director: Catherine Claridge, CHRL
- Professional Development Director: Tisha Lorincz, CHRL
- Mentorship & Student Relations Director: Irene Jackman, CHRL, CEC
- Communications Director: Gladys Saenz
- Immediate Past President: Morgan Kerby







### Welcome, Gladys Saenz

I am honoured to join the Durham Chapter Board of Directors, and eager to work with the collaborative group of volunteers on the Communications Committee.

My professional background spans over 20 years of progressive HR experience in both public and private sectors, and within unionized and non-unionized environments. With this in-

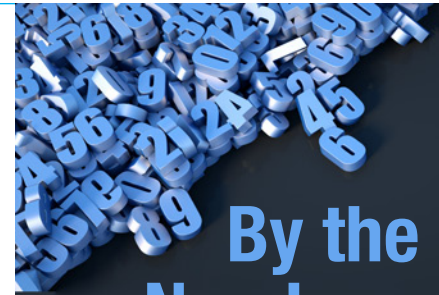
depth HR knowledge and innovative approach to driving change, I have made it my own professional goal to implement quality processes that exceed job expectations. Over my tenure in HR, I have earned recognition for helping build effective teams and taking critical steps to improve work practices. My extensive knowledge managing defined benefit pension plans, benefits, STD/LTD, payroll and HRIS implementations have enabled me to work effectively within financial goals.

In my current role as Director of HR, I am delighted that I can create innovative ways to attract and develop the best talent, build a culture of engagement, and improve systems and training that will help develop leaders within our organization. As a certified Health & Safety professional, I provide leadership and training on current, relevant policies. I find my role demanding but motivating, as I enjoy a complex work environment where I can apply effective negotiation and mediation skills to find fair resolutions. Although my education was originally in the technology field, I decided after working in HR for five years to become a Certified Payroll Manager with the Canadian Payroll Association, and later obtained a certificate in HR Management from University of Guelph.

I take a pride in the accomplishments I've achieved over my HR career, particularly in supporting the organization's growth by guiding employees to reach their full potential. I enjoy building strong, collaborative relationships, and using my leadership skills to motivate and influence teams towards success on different levels. I am fortunate to have come across many talented and ambitious individuals, who I have helped achieve professional goals and fulfill potential in their roles.

My advice to new HR professionals is that amid our mandate to develop, maintain and revise policies and procedures, we must never forget to have empathy while making and delivering the difficult decisions that are also part of our roles.

I am delighted to be working alongside the very talented professionals who make up the Durham Chapter and Board of Directors, and I look forward to seeing the outcomes of our collaborative efforts.



## By the Numbers

**8.4%** Population growth experienced by Durham Region between 2006 (561,258) and 2011 (608,124), as per Statistics Canada, 2006 and 2011 Census Profiles.

([www.durhamworkforceauthority.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/v2\\_LLMP\\_updateENG\\_2015.pdf](http://www.durhamworkforceauthority.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/v2_LLMP_updateENG_2015.pdf))

**6.2%** Population growth experienced by Durham Region between 2011 (608,124) and 2016 (645,862), as per Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2016 Census.

([www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CD&Code1=3518&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Coun&SearchText=Durham&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=3518&TABID=1](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CD&Code1=3518&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Coun&SearchText=Durham&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=3518&TABID=1))

**12,220** Number of businesses in the Region, according to the 2016 survey by the Regional Municipality of Durham. Oshawa has the greatest share of businesses at 23%, followed by Whitby at 18% and Pickering at 16%.

([www.durham.ca/departments/planed/planning/businesscount/2016BusinessCountHighlights.pdf](http://www.durham.ca/departments/planed/planning/businesscount/2016BusinessCountHighlights.pdf))

**89%** Percentage of active businesses surveyed in 2015 that are still operating at the same location in 2016.

([www.durham.ca/departments/planed/planning/businesscount/2016BusinessCountHighlights.pdf](http://www.durham.ca/departments/planed/planning/businesscount/2016BusinessCountHighlights.pdf))



# Student's Perspective: Setting Yourself Up for Success

*Alyssa Dufton and Lindsay Grande*



According to Durham Workforce Authority, unemployment in Durham Region for youth aged 15-24 is astonishingly over 15%. Therefore, new graduates—including those in HR—need to work even harder to find a job that suits their talents and experience level. Added to that, the profile of HR in the workplace is constantly changing and evolving. What does this mean for finding your first job in HR?

Traditionally, HR was deemed an administrative department, but this view is changing. In fact, HR is increasingly being recognized as a strategic component of an organization's goals and objectives. As HR's profile is raised, so is the level of experience and skill required to obtain an entry-level position within the field. It is becoming increasingly difficult for new graduates to obtain and maintain current experience while searching for a job. Employers are seeking a pre-existing skill set they can build upon from those now entering the field. Examples include being able to complete payroll, administer benefits, and track absenteeism. A commitment to continuous learning is essential.

Technology has become an integral part of every organization, making it imperative for HR professionals to constantly learn about and keep up to date with the latest trends in this area. To land a job in HR, you must have proven experience with relevant software. Although maintaining relevant and current experience with tools such as Peoplesoft and Ceridian PowerPay can be difficult and/or expensive, it is advantageous for new graduates, as they can then provide employers with insight on the latest technology in the industry.

As with technology, legislation is also undergoing constant transformation. Students and new graduates must stay up to date with employment law while searching for jobs and studying for HR designations. They can then demonstrate that they can ensure compliance of the firm's strategy with current legislation. An example of evolving legislation is the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, which includes gradual changes to accomplish a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. While this can require a lot of time and effort, it is critical knowledge.

HR professors at Durham College are advising students to look for opportu-

nities to volunteer and intern in the field, as well as get involved with the HRPAs mentorship program to gain practical hands-on experience. While simultaneously volunteering, job hunting, keeping your skills and knowledge current and earning a designation may seem like a large feat, it is reality for today's graduates.

This is where post-secondary institutions can help. By offering more practical experience as a part of their HR programs, colleges and universities may be able to alleviate some of the stress of being a new graduate and provide their students with more value. An increase in the amount of hands-on technical experience provided by post-secondary education, as well as a focus on building a solid work ethic and strengthening knowledge and networks, will ensure continued success for current graduates in any marketplace. □

*Alyssa Dufton is Student Liaison for the Durham Chapter and HR Assistant at the Township of Alnwick/Haldimand. She is currently completing the Graduate Certificate in HR Management at Durham College.*

*Lindsay Grande is Student Liaison and on the Membership Committee of the Durham Chapter. Among other roles, she was previously Executive Assistant and HR Coordinator for the Bargains Group. She is now actively seeking new opportunities.*



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### **Johnstone Returns at Federal Level**

In 2017, the Public Service Labour Relations and Employment Board resuscitated the *Johnstone* analysis. In *Guilbault*, the issue was whether the employer discriminated against a unionized employee by denying his request to take two 15-minute breaks back to back at the end of the day so he could leave work early to care for his children. In support of his request, the employee pointed to his spouse's health problems and the developmental difficulties of two of his four children, explaining that arriving home earlier would relieve the strain on his spouse. While the employer ultimately agreed to the request, the employee nevertheless grieved on the basis of family status discrimination.

In dismissing the grievance, the arbitrator applied the *Johnstone* analysis without reviewing any other legal test. He found the second and third stages of the *Johnstone* test had not been met—the employee's request did not engage a legal obligation to his children, and the employee offered no evidence of self-accommodation.

### **Looking Ahead**

*Guilbault* and *Ananda* highlight the difficulty Canadian employers now face, where the test for family status discrimination

differs among jurisdictions. For now, the decision in *Guilbault* is welcome news to *federally regulated* employers, whereas *Misetich* and its adoption in *Ananda* is troublesome for those in Ontario. We will continue to monitor this evolving area of human rights law and update readers as developments occur. □

*To learn more and for assistance addressing family status and other human rights matters, contact the human rights experts at Sherrard Kuzz LLP.*

*Adam James is a lawyer with Sherrard Kuzz LLP, one of Canada's leading employment and labour law firms, representing management. Adam can be reached at 416-603-0700 (main)/416-420-0738 (24-hour) or by visiting [www.sherrardkuzz.com](http://www.sherrardkuzz.com).*



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# Call for Volunteers

**Wednesday, November 8, at 6 p.m.**

**105 Consumers Drive, Whitby**  
(our chapter offices)

## **HRPA DURHAM CHAPTER IS GROWING!**

We will soon be among the largest chapters in the province. We need enthusiastic and dedicated members to help us shape the HR profession as we grow and our industry transforms.

If you're a CHRP or CHRL looking for valuable CPD hours, or a Student or Practitioner member seeking to build on your skill set, a volunteer role on one of our committees could be the opportunity you've been looking for!

Join us on Wednesday, November 8, at our bi-annual Volunteer Open House where you'll learn about the current opportunities with our Chapter and how you can get involved. Meet our Membership Director and Volunteer Engagement Team, and get all your questions answered. Refreshments will be served.

**RSVP to [volunteer@hrpadurham.ca](mailto:volunteer@hrpadurham.ca) by Sunday, November 5, to reserve your spot!**

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There are a minimum of 12 people for every program cluster, and we have 78 of those. So you've got a thousand people a year who help us ensure our curriculums and programs are relevant, current and meeting the needs of industry. No other educational system does that.

From an HR planning perspective, if business leaders went inside their organizations and listened to what was needed directly from their employees, they'd be far better off. It helps us as a college stay current, and it drives our program development, enrolment and success rates, as well as the employment rates of our students.

### **Practical, Responsive Programming**

Our mission is, "The student experience comes first." We want to ensure they have the best experience possible—not only academically but socially as well.

Durham College is one of the largest online colleges in Ontario. We host more online learning than any other college in the OntarioLearn network ([www.ontariolearn.com](http://www.ontariolearn.com)). Twenty

percent of our courses are hybrid-delivered: two hours in the classroom and one hour of independent study. We find the teaching role has changed more toward facilitation—students need help distilling the information out there, understanding what's true and what isn't, and applying it. Applied courses are a strength of the college system.

We have annual KPIs for every program, looking at student satisfaction, employer satisfaction and employment rates. We survey 6,500 of our co-op students every year and use the results in that program's scorecard. If we see a low employment rate, we take a closer look. At times, industry approaches us to increase our enrolment for a particular program to meet their skill demand, but we must be responsive when the demand starts to decline. It's a balancing act between being responsive to the industry while giving students what they want.

### **Success Initiative**

There are activities taking place in Durham Region, such as the City of Oshawa's Teaching City Initiative

announced earlier this year. Begun in 2016, Idea Summit is a collection of nine CEOs and about a hundred people who are discussing the development and innovation needs in Durham Region: How do we reverse the flow of people leaving Durham for Toronto? How do we create an innovation hub or tech centre like Communitech in Waterloo ([www.communitech.ca](http://www.communitech.ca))?

Success comes down to matching the right people with the right jobs, and getting the innovators, inventors and investors to come to Durham and create that environment and momentum. By bringing industry and business together, we can encourage more investment in Durham.



*Don Lovisa has been the President at Durham College since 2008. He is considered a leader in the college system and the broader provincial and national communities.*





## HELPING BUSINESSES THRIVE

According to Teresa Shaver, Executive Director at the Business Advisory Centre Durham (BACD), a big concern for employers in the Region is sourcing key talent.

“Many of my clients are having issues finding good people without relying on agencies,” she says, adding that software developers are in particularly high demand. The BACD’s primary focus is on developing the local economy and creating vibrant communities within the Region. “Changes are coming slowly, but we have lots of competition from Waterloo and Toronto.”

She sees the challenges in navigating the market changes coming from the Region’s current lack of infrastructure to support this growth. “We don’t have the fibre-optic networks we need, and there are transportation issues and gridlock, which makes it difficult to move around Durham.” While the individual communities within Durham have well-structured roads and transit systems, moving between them can

be hard—“It’s not easy to get around without a car. Within Oshawa you’re OK, but Oshawa and Pickering don’t connect well.”

While Ms. Shaver acknowledges there is a good amount of investment coming in from China, this alone won’t be enough: “The opportunity is that our land values are so cheap, but they’re also going up, and we don’t have transit to go with it. Also, it’s not easy to find a place to rent.”

She notes the efforts of the Spark Commercialization and Innovation Centre, which works to improve competitiveness and visibility of Durham Region and Northumberland County as a world-class innovation cluster.<sup>3</sup> “The Spark Centre is working on being an energy supercluster. BACD’s economic development is about businesses inside the Region and local, where Spark is more international and focused on bringing businesses in.” She adds that Spark has additional resources to support this effort, such

<sup>3</sup> [ignitedurham.ca/spark-centre-ignites-canadian-innovation-ontario-power-generation](http://ignitedurham.ca/spark-centre-ignites-canadian-innovation-ontario-power-generation)

as its involvement in the federal government’s Start-up Visa Program.<sup>4</sup>

Ms. Shaver believes that local organizations who aren’t taking steps to upgrade systems and embrace new technologies aren’t doing themselves any favours. “Existing businesses not looking to innovate and change their business models are going to get left behind.”

BACD is in the process of developing a business accelerator program, which will launch in January 2018. The objective of the program is to help existing businesses be innovative, plan the next step of their growth, and keep local businesses viable and strong. How do we retool what we do? How do we make more money and find more customers? These are questions, she says, this program will help answer.

More information on the BACD accelerator program will be available in November at [bacd.ca](http://bacd.ca). □

<sup>4</sup> [www.durhamregion.com/shopping-story/7551562-spark-centre-helps-bring-foreign-business-investment-to-durham-region](http://www.durhamregion.com/shopping-story/7551562-spark-centre-helps-bring-foreign-business-investment-to-durham-region)



Community Care Durham (CCD) is a multi-service charitable organization providing support for adults and caregivers with needs related to aging, physical and/or mental health. Our success depends on the commitment and contribution of volunteers to maintain our clients’ independence, dignity and quality of life. Employers and staff find it rewarding to make connections with clients through Corporate Responsibilities and Community Involvement. When your corporate team delivers Meals on Wheels and makes that connection with a client, you feel great about donating your time!

***CCD makes it easy to add value through CORPORATE VOLUNTEERISM!***

### **BENEFITS TO YOUR COMPANY:**

- ▶ Promotes a positive corporate image, and provides opportunities for cost-effective public relations.
- ▶ Fosters team spirit and enhances employee morale, productivity and loyalty.
- ▶ Enriches self –esteem, confidence and satisfaction from making a difference in someone’s life.

*“A weekly Meals on Wheels route is certainly a commitment but it is in no way taxing on Lear to have our employees involved, and in fact helps provide employee satisfaction!” - Lear Corporation*

**Please call 905-837-0017 x237 OR visit [www.communitycaredurham.on.ca](http://www.communitycaredurham.on.ca)**



# Upcoming Events

The HRPA Durham Chapter offers events to help you make connections and expand your network while you learn something new. Your participation in certain events also earns you continuing professional development hours to maintain your CHRP, CHRL or CHRE designation. We look forward to seeing you at an event soon!

**Oct 18**

**CAREER NETWORKING GROUP**

Durham Chapter Offices, 105 Consumers Drive, Whitby, ON

**Oct 25**

**FAIR WORKPLACES, BETTER JOBS ACT, 2017**

Oshawa Golf and Curling Club, 160 Alexandra Street, Oshawa, ON

**Nov 1**

**CAREER NETWORKING GROUP**

Durham Chapter Offices, 105 Consumers Drive, Whitby, ON

**Nov 15**

**CAREER NETWORKING GROUP**

Durham Chapter Offices, 105 Consumers Drive, Whitby, ON

**Nov 20**

**BREAKFAST SEMINAR: HELPING EMPLOYEES "OWN" ENGAGEMENT**

Deer Creek Golf Club, 2700 Audley Road, Ajax, ON

**Dec 7**

**DECEMBER SOCIAL**

Oshawa Golf and Curling Club, 160 Alexandra Street, Oshawa, ON

**Jan 24**

**WSIB BREAKFAST SERIES:**

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO WORK REINTEGRATION**

Zingers, 500 Victoria Street West, Whitby, ON



Human Resources  
Professionals  
Association  
Durham Chapter