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THE PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE September 27, 2021

Work Local Campaign Launch

The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce launches a “Work Local” campaign to support businesses through the current labour shortage crisis.

Prince Edward County – September 27, 2021- The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with local technology workforce scheduling app “Shift Yourself” announces the launch of a “Work Local” campaign developed to raise awareness and encourage involvement of the community to support labour shortages affecting businesses by working local.

The spirit of supporting local businesses and the community is a large part of what gives The County its desirability as a place to live, work, and visit. Over the course of the pandemic, The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce (PEC Chamber) has seen this generous spirit through its work with numerous partners and organizations on initiatives such as “Shop Local” campaigns and its on-going work with members and local business community, as advocate, matchmaker, educational provider, and opportunity developer.

“During the busy season and the weeks leading up to it, businesses struggle to meet growing demand, specifically in the service industry due to severe staffing shortages. It is in this spirit of cooperation that the PEC Chamber looks to the local community to address these issues over the short-term, while looking for sustainable future solutions such as the implementation of specific opportunities highlighted in the recently released “Attracting and Engaging the Evolving Workforce” strategy,” said Lesley Lavender, Executive Director of The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce.

Lesley Lavender adds “We see an opportunity to launch a strategic campaign to tap into the community and leverage the gig/on-demand economy to provide an expanded workforce, helping to alleviate local staffing shortages. As The County rallied around the Shop Local Campaigns, the PEC Chamber, through focused marketing efforts, expects to raise the community’s awareness of the impact that the staffing shortage has on local businesses and the community at large, and encourage residents to support the Work Local initiative.”

Many residents of PEC support themselves through a variety of roles including service, artistic or retail jobs that fit with their passions and pursuits. The Work Local initiative leverages this spirit to provide additional income to residents while off setting current labour shortages.

Outreach to the Local Community

As the most recent Centre for Workforce Development EmployerOne Survey stated, many local employers depend upon “word of mouth” as their top recruiting method for talent. Employers can be supported with a variety of tools to outreach to the community with their current openings and value propositions. The following demographics have been identified as potential workforce that can support this initiative:

- High school students looking for part-time work



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- Retirees looking for occasional income
- Local entrepreneurs/artisans, etc. seeking supplemental income
- Newcomers to The County who are interested in exploring new experiences, meeting new people and engaging with The County's employment opportunities.

Using Technology to Link Employers with Employees

In service industries (such as retail and hospitality), many positions are seasonal and/or part-time in nature with schedules changing regularly to meet shifting demand. If employees had the opportunity to pick shifts with different employers based on their availability, staffing shortages that local employers are facing would be satisfied. This will be enabled through a partnership with local tech company C3 Solutions the creator of "Shift Yourself."

The idea of a shared scheduling system between employers and employees was identified several years ago as a need in The County by The PEC Chamber and several community partners. In Spring 2021 Shift Yourself was launched by C3 Solutions with the additional support of Launch Lab and Invest Ottawa.

"Based on community feedback, Shift Yourself has evolved not only to include scheduling between Non-Profits and their Volunteers but is refocusing to be a central scheduling and promotional hub for the community. Shift Yourself positions are now visible on websites across The County (such as the Picton BIA) with more to come. We want Shift Yourself to be used by everyone so your feedback, positive and negative, is very important. C3 Solutions is excited to partner with The PEC Chamber on the Work Local Campaign in support of the community. We will be adding new features to Shift Yourself so look for great new things in the coming month," says David Williams of C3 Solutions.

Learn more about Work Local here: <https://www.pecchamber.com/Work%20Local/work-local>

The Prince Edward County Chamber of Commerce is a member-based organization. Our focus is to channel the collective strength of the business community to improve the economy.

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