

## Job fair linking employers with would-be employees draws 300



By Brian Lockhart

A job fair hosted by the Town of Orangeville's Economic Development department brought employers and those seeking employment together at the Best Western Inn and Suites in Orangeville on Wednesday, May 2.

In the first hour almost 300 people arrived, resumés in hand, to speak to people from almost 40 companies in the region that were represented.

Georgian College was there to help guide visitors depending on their qualifications.

"This is a Town of Orangeville economic development mission," explained Economic Development manager Ruth Phillips.

"Georgian College has come in as a partner and they are helping with resume's and offering advice and guidance. If someone comes in and they don't know how to approach employers, they are here to offer that service. The Town is leading the initiative but we partnered with Georgian College and the County of Dufferin. The idea is to bring employees and employers together."

The opportunity for a company to actively recruit potential employees proved so popular that some business had to be turned away.

"We had to establish a waiting list because more employers wanted to participate but we just didn't have space to accommodate them," Ms. Phillips said. "We started reaching out to employers in January to explore the opportunity and see if they needed that kind of support from the economic development office. We heard loud and clear that they had a lot of job opportunities available and were struggling to fulfill their workforce needs. The whole idea here is to support our local employers and support our local workforce as well."

The gamut of opportunities included a wide variety of industries from hospitality and finance to construction and high tech.

"We're looking for anyone local. We desperately need mechanics and truck drivers," said Cameron Wood representing Roto-Mill, a company that is involved in road construction and repair.

Mr. Wood along with fellow associate Chris Thompson said their business always picks up when the warmer weather arrives and roads are in need of repair.

"We hire all sorts of people from kids with no experience to more qualified people," Mr. Wood said. "Over the summer we'll hire 25 people. Our season goes from May 1, to when the snow starts flying in November. You start out doing one job and if you show that you are good you can move up. Your career depends on you."

"We work all over Ontario, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick," Mr. Thompson added. "Quite often we're a sub-contractor to other companies."

While not everyone at the job fair would be cut out for construction the list of companies recruiting covered a wide variety of jobs from those seeking entry level work to those with a specific set of skills that employers need.

This was the second time the Town's Economic Development department hosted a local job fair.

The fair was held between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. to give employers the ability to complete their daytime work and afford visitors and opportune time to drop by and see what is available in the local job market.