

# 2021/22 ANNUAL REPORT

## 2021/22 Programmes

- **Employment Ontario Employment Service Guelph and Wellington County**
- **Employment Ontario Employment Service Fergus**
- **Youth Job Connection**
- **Youth Job Connection Summer**
- **Canada Ontario Jobs Grant**
- **ACE**
- **Ways2work**
- **Women2work**

## Thanks to our Funders

- **Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development**
- **Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services**
- **Government of Canada**

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

**CHRIS BAGINSKI-HANSEN**

The 2021/22 fiscal year began the same way the 2020/21 fiscal year did, in a provincial lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A year ago, I wrote in the final report that we were experiencing a third wave of the virus, and a year later we were in wave six.

However, by April 2021 we were in a better position technically to deliver services virtually, with experience using virtual formats, our agency workshops were available through our YouTube channel and the ability to have staff answering phones from the safety of their home offices. We had numerous policies and procedures in place to ensure a safe working environment and ability for clients to receive emergency supports and services.

So, from a technical perspective we were strong, but the ongoing pandemic continued to create issues for our clients' mental health, financial stability and overall well-being. People were tired and this included staff.

Concern for children having to go back to at-home learning, the inability to spend in-person time with friends and family and the challenge and stress of accessing appointments for vaccination, along with the isolation was stressful.

As an organization we were not immune to "the big quit" that was experienced across all sectors during the pandemic. People looked at this time as an opportunity for change, and perhaps disconnecting physically from the people you work with daily made the process easier. Traditionally this has been an organization that has experienced low staff turnover and all this change was challenging and sad on top of all the stresses of being in a pandemic. But, it was also an opportunity. New people bring new ideas, experiences, perspectives and a chance for existing staff to teach, learn and re-evaluate processes. It was also an opportunity for some existing staff to take on new roles within the organization.

# WELCOME

It's definitely been a busy year of recruiting, hiring & training new staff!

As expected, when hiring, we carefully consider the applicant's education and employment experience but more importantly we look for the "right fit".

We always say we can teach new staff the basics of employment counselling (eg. how to write a client resume) but we can't teach someone to be dedicated, empathetic and compassionate (aka the "right fit").

Welcome to our newest staff members; I'm happy to say that we found the "right fit" in each of them!

Michelle Dally  
Programme Manager Fergus office



Roohi Bedi  
Employment Counsellor Fergus

"I am passionate about supporting and working with clients from all walks of life, and same is reflected in my past experiences".

"In my current role I have cherished being a part of our clients journey, and their professional development".

Leah Stumpf ~ Fergus Job Developer

I listen to fears, frustrations, dreams, goals, and barriers and I genuinely care about their well-being.

No matter what... kind words of encouragement go a long way and I see more success by building people up and connecting them to others in the community.



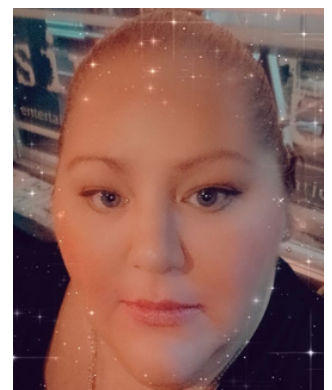
Heather Millard  
Employment Counsellor Guelph

"Every individual that works here has shown endless compassion for their client and I think that goes such a long way, even in building a culture that is healthy and understanding across the team"



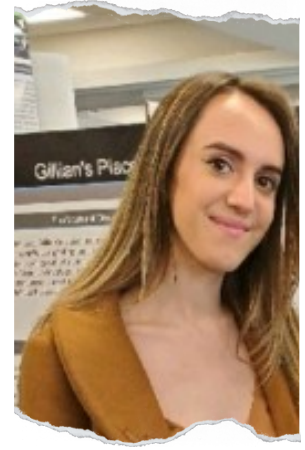
Rebecca Scholl  
women2work program

Working as an employment counsellor allows me to make a living doing something that I really enjoy doing. Not everyone can say that about their job. I strive to help our clients find the same passion in their careers as I have found in mine.





## YOUTH JOB CONNECTION TEAM



"My favorite part about my work is the clients, sitting with them, listening, and hearing their stories".

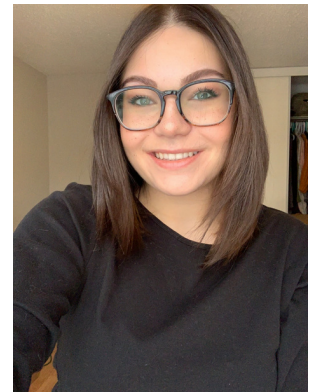
"I often wonder when the last time someone made them feel heard or took an interest in their lives".

Josh Healey

Carla Corderia

What I love about 2nd Chance is the effort made to serve every person that walks through our door. I believe that many clients feel a great sense of safety here, and trust that we will do our best to help in any way we can. My passion is and has always been youth. My passion stems from lived experience being a young person that could have benefitted from the amazing guidance and support that is offered at places like 2nd Chance.

## ACE TEAM



"From my experiences, I learnt a lot from clients, co-workers, and health care professionals of other community services to better the lives of individuals with disabilities".

Kristine Bleeker

BEN HOGAN

"What I enjoy most about my job is seeing a progression of both confidence and independence in my clients so that ( hopefully) the program is not just a job search but a learning experience for them as well"

"I have had some breakthroughs with clients that have been emotional and rewarding"

"I feel so fulfilled in my role and genuinely love connecting with and supporting clients"

Talia Albano

## ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

The unemployment and employment participation rates for the year clearly show how turbulent the 2021/22 fiscal year was for communities.

The second year of drastic highs and lows in the unemployment rate show how lockdowns affected workers.

Job Postings  
2021/22 - 263 postings  
2020/21 - 190 postings

		April 2021	Sept. 2021	Dec. 2021	March 2022
Guelph	Unemployment	9.3%	6.4%	3.5%	4.9%
	Participation Rate	70.1%	72%	71.4%	71.5%
Rural ER	Unemployment	11.4%	5.7%	5.3%	5.3%
	Participation	66.3%	64%	61.8%	61.8%

Source: Workforce Planning Board Waterloo Wellington Dufferin

## WHAT'S NEW IN 2021/22?

JENNI BROOKS, PROGRAMME MANAGER GUELPH

The staff have really seen their clients continue to struggle with yet another Covid year, mental health continues to be a predominant factor affecting a large percentage of the people we are seeing. Clients are struggling to find and maintain work in these stressful and anxiety provoking times. These factors have really compelled the staff to reach out and develop some meaningful community connections with the help of our consulting therapist Colin McVicker.

For the last year as part of our contract with Colin and our case management teams we have been forging some really helpful connections in the community. An example would be the staff were seeing a significant amount of individuals struggling with serious mental health issues including anxiety and depression sometimes severe enough for us to be concerned for their safety. As a team we discussed and problem solved with Colin and born from that was Here 24/7 connecting with all of our teams. Here 24-7 staff helped to build confidence for our counsellors on how to help individuals and connect them with the resources that they might need to feel supported and be better equipped for success in their employment and training goals. Also in connecting clients with some of these supports we are seeing connections being made with those supports and individuals being referred to our services as a result of the information sharing we are doing.

We will continue to discuss the issues in case management and from that further pursue opportunities. We have upcoming scheduled training and information sharing sessions with CMHA on self-harm, eating disorders and behavior regulation. We hope to be able to continue to be a helpful and supportive "spoke in the wheel" for individuals on their journey to achieve their employment and training goals.





# WOMEN2WORK PROGRAMME

BY JENNI BROOKS, GUELPH PROGRAMME MANAGER

We couldn't be more excited to see this program come to fruition this year! As a team we have been talking for years about having a women's program as we see a unique set of needs women have accessing opportunities and training.

**NEW!**

A concerted effort has been done at developing a program that addresses these unique needs and which provides support and encouragement to young women to explore all their career and training options. It is still a new program and is still transforming and fine tuning as we go.

So far it has been very successful with a lot of interest from the community, excellent placement opportunities for our participants and new and meaningful connections with community partners.

The participants have been a diverse demographic in that 40% identify as a racialized person and 54% identify as having a disability. The groups have been generating a lot of conversation with the participants and the counsellors have been able to find some really good employment opportunities for the women completing the program.

To date 90% of the women that start the in-class portion of the program have finished and 75% have started their placements. We look forward to continuing this program and see how it goes and grows in the next year!

**Success!**

A women2work participant, originally a referral from a community service provider, had a lot going on in their life and hardships to overcome.

The client did exceptionally well in the workshop portion of the program, always showing on time for workshops sessions and completing all the group assignments. The client also completed forklift training while in the workshop portion of the program. She was very interested in working in manufacturing or some type of factory setting.

Although she did not end up in a factory, she did end up in a type of manufacturing for her placement, cookie dough manufacturing! Bliss Dough was a new employer contact for 2nd Chance and was very eager to partner with us for the Women2Work programme. Being a female entrepreneur herself, she was keen on the idea of supporting other women in the workplace.

At the mid-point check in, both the employer and the client were very positive about how the placement was going and excited to continue working together.

The client has been offered continued employment with Bliss Dough and the employer is open to working with us again in the future.

The counsellor recently spoke with the client and she is very excited to continue her employment with Bliss Dough. She expressed sincere gratitude for the program, the counsellors in the Women2Work program, and the other support staff at 2nd Chance.

She says she wouldn't be where she is today if she didn't do the Women2Work programme!

5★

5★

5★

## WHAT CLIENTS ARE SAYING ABOUT 2ND CHANCE !

(The below comments are collected from client surveys)

I have worked in service delivery for the past 8 years, and Marilyn was genuinely the embodiment of the type of worker that I hope to model myself after, and my professors would talk about in school. She balanced empathy, understanding, and problem solving -- with realistic and manageable steps and pragmatic goals. Provided thorough and relevant resources, and support through navigating the mixture of emotions, and logic that goes into problem solving. I had less experience with Sue, just by virtue of the situation, but she was equally amazing. Her workshops were informative, and provided highly relevant information. Her information about the job market, and the practicalities she shared were invaluable.

I really appreciate that the main goal is to find sustainable employment but this program / services offers so much more, that's what I like most about Second Chance. Everyone who works at Second Chance is so mindful of mental health, encouraging, and empathetic and that means a lot to me.

I liked the genuine interactions. I appreciated the validation for being underemployed and marginalized due to my age, gender, and chronic health condition that was the catalyst for a career change.

I would say from the very first day I found the counselors and job developers very helpful. They discuss different job fields with their clients and find out what can perfectly match to them. They are also very helpful with setting up resume. I found my counselor has great skills to prepare her clients for interviews. She always encourages me that I can do it!! Her encouragement makes me feel I have quality to reach my goals.

## Finally...

This past year has been filled with challenges, but it has also been one filled with change and growth. As Executive Director it was stressful, and there were many times I faltered, but the feedback from clients assured me that our processes were working. At the core of the organization we have staff that care and provide excellent supports and continue to make a difference to many people in our communities.

We look forward to the new year, being in office with the ability to support each other, our clients and to experience the social comradery that has always been a strong part of the 2nd Chance culture.

We are still though, in a pandemic, and we have a lot of healing in front of us. We have maintained the recommended, but not mandated, public health precautions. We are having in-person meetings with each other and clients and had a wonderful staff St. Patrick's Day regift exchange and Bake Sale postponed from December 2020 and again December 2021.

To experience so much laughter and fun with each other was truly medicinal for me, and what a great bunch of people all wearing green to celebrate.

