

Excel Academy, A Division of the Excel Society
“Enriching Lives by Enabling Potential”

In this issue.....

<i>Academy Affairs</i>	2
<i>Alumni Spotlight</i>	2
<i>Pathways to</i>	
<i>Continuing</i>	
<i>Education</i>	2
<i>Community</i>	
<i>Connections</i>	3

If you have suggestions or would like to contribute to the Excel Academy Insider, please contact Kimberley Stewart at 780-441-7996

“Education is a gift that no one can take away.” – American proverb

Message from the Director

For this our second edition of our *Excel Academy Insider*, our focus is on the adult learner and going back to school. As I considered what I wanted to write about, two separate incidents provided inspiration. The first was a simple yet profound action by one of our HCA Instructors, Sharon Lawson. She was asked by a stranger outside the building to check up on someone who was outside the building, lying on the ground, to see if they were okay or not – the stranger wasn't sure if they were unconscious or dead. Sharon's instinct was to go right on out and check on this person with little regard for her personal safety (other than putting on her gloves – never forget those!). Thankfully, the front reception staff stepped up and accompanied her to make sure she was safe.

The second thing was a quote that I came across while catching up on Dave Hingsburger's blog *Rolling Around in My Head*. He wrote: "This year I will see each person I meet as a whole person, not as a bundle of behaviours, a whack of needs, or a jumble of concerns. This year I will see the nose AND the face. This year I will seek the center of the person - not the person at the center". What struck me about both of these incidents was how they brought me back to the heart of what we do, the heart of human

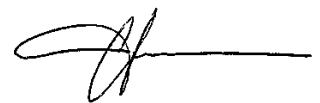
services.

Putting aside the need for academic excellence and practical skill development, I was reminded that "going back to school" is something we all need to do periodically, to get back to the basics in promoting the values that guide our fields: a concern for the needs, well-being and interests of all people. Values that unfortunately are sometimes lacking in human services, yet when lived out in our actions and relationships we have with those that we support, they have enormous potential to positively impact our communities, those that we serve, and even ourselves.

Witnessing that simple yet profound act of human service, checking on a fellow human being to make sure they were okay, even though they were a complete stranger, I was moved to consider how I might "go back to school" myself, ensuring that I always hold true to the heart of human services, a foundation built on the premise that all people are deserving of dignity, respect, inclusion and have worth. These can be difficult values to live by at all times, given our culture's obsession with far different values,

values that rank our worth based how beautiful, rich or famous we are. Working in human services, and in particular supporting individuals that do sometimes have some challenging behaviours that can test (and best) our patience at times, I am committing myself to see the whole person, and would invite you to 'get back to the basics' with me.

In closing, as stated in our inaugural edition of the Excel Academy Insider, we want to invite alumni to bring forth their stories to update us about events in their lives since graduating from the Academy. One of the aspects of the Academy that makes us unique is a desire to see our grads continue to succeed, not just in further professional development but in all areas of their lives. If you have experienced any exciting life changes or events, such as new additions to the family, travels to different parts of the world and marriage, we want to know! You can share your experiences via Facebook, phone or by emailing Kimberley Stewart at kstewart@excelacademy.ca.



Chris Thomson, Director – Excel Academy

Academy Affairs – Getting to Know Deborah Viallet



We often joke that Deborah Viallet is the face of the Academy, however, that title certainly bears a lot of truth!

As the Academy Administrative Assistant, Deborah plays a vital role in the day to day operations of the College by seeing that classes and programs run smoothly and efficiently. Amongst her many duties are ensuring students are

properly scheduled for certificate and professional development courses, acting as the first point of contact for those coming to the school and completing a plethora of administrative duties.

Additionally, at the beginning of each month, Deborah attends and provides class information to new hires at Head Office orientation.

When she is not hard at work at the Academy, Deborah enjoys quilting, embroidery, and is an avid Do-It-Yourselfer. She has a passion for volunteering in the community as well as for travelling, especially to the mountains and the beautiful red deserts of Utah. Most recently, she has become a self-professed Pinterest addict!



Alumni Spotlight

Jeanne Salipandy graduated from the Academy's HCA program in February of 2014. As a student, Jeanne received numerous awards and accolades for her excellent grades and commitment to providing quality health care. Known for her caring attitude, diligence and overall spunk, Jeanne was revered by classmates and clients alike

Since graduating, Jeanne travelled to the Philippines to put her newfound skills into practice. For several months, she cared for her ailing father, until her return to Canada in June of 2014.

Upon returning, Jeanne gained a position with S.A.I.L.S and has since moved on to working as a casual HCA with the Innovative Housing Society. Her position

brings forth all of the skills that Jeanne excelled at while a student of the Academy, including assisting client's with their activities of daily living, recreation and supporting them through their medical diagnoses.

In the near future, Jeanne hopes to gain a full time position as an HCA and we know that whoever hires her receive the best of the best!

Pathways to Continuing Education

Medication Administration is one of Excel Academy's most in-demand professional development courses with both Excel employees and external students. Due to the importance of properly administering medications, the Excel Academy is implementing some exciting changes to enhance competency and confidence for those enrolled in the class.

Previously, this one day

course offered important concepts behind the safety and delivery of giving medications. Now, to further develop the skills of attendees, the course will be expanding an additional half day!

Day one will continue to lay the theoretical foundation for medication delivery, while day two will incorporate a practical component where students can put the theory into action!

Additionally, training on Catalyst will be provided so frontline staff gain a solid working knowledge of the electronic medication documentation system used at Excel sites and elsewhere.

Look for these new changes coming soon!

Visit www.excelacademy.ca for registration and fee information.

DID YOU KNOW??

For new and existing Excel Society employees, the Medication Administration student handbook is available on the Public drive. Staff are encouraged to review the handbook prior to attending the Medication Administration professional development course to aid in their learning!

Community Connections

"You're already what you are supposed to be. Our job is to support you to be that."

This quote came from Dave Hingsburger at the McMan Conference, [In Our Community](#) last month. Chris Thomson and I met with a number of partner agencies and colleagues while developing the new CSW curriculum and their consistent response to us was that we needed to focus on developing values and attitudes first and foremost.

I had a wonderful opportunity to talk with Dave about our program and our students and the dreams we have for both; mainly that we contribute to a workforce that strives to create lives of value and meaning as defined by the people who live them. I asked him for any words to send to our current class, and he asked me to share his message to the graduating class at Loyalist College as the message would be the same:

I am impressed, first of all, that you have chosen the career you have chosen - you will be told, over and over again, by those who don't know any better, that there must be something special about you, that you must be so kind, and so patient, and so *special* because you do what you do. Be wary of these compliments because they aren't compliments at all - they are excuses for exclusion. "There is something exceptional about those who are around exceptional people - and since I don't have what you have, keep them near you and away from me." So that's not what I mean.

When I say I am impressed by your choice, it's for a very

different reason, it's because we live in the days of selfishness. Where iPhones and iPads and iPods have created the ultimate culture of 'I'. Choosing to work with and support people means that you are choosing to step outside of yourself, choosing to fill your day with meeting the needs of others, choosing to listen to voices that others prefer not to hear - choosing this means that you, willingly and knowingly, are opening up yourself, your inner 'I', your you-ness, to the life and to the will and to the dreams of another. That is an extraordinary choice.

There are many dangers along the path that you have chosen. The most terrifying, is the addictive nature of power. Be cautious with the power given you, in learned submission, from those you say you serve. Be cautious of the power that you have simply by being needed by another human being. Be cautious of the power given you simply by being seen as the valued in support of the devalued. The greatest power you can have, is the power to resist power. To stay silent when your voice isn't required. This takes the muscle of self control and the courage of self awareness - it can be done, but it's work. Every day at work, it's work.

Train yourself toward vigilance, remember, always, that you are only you - and that who you are ends at the tips of your fingers. Your decisions and your choices end where you end. Maintaining self-hood while welcoming the self-hood of another is perhaps the coolest skill that you can develop over time. The fact that the person you support likes, and chooses, and wants different things than

you - will be evidence that they have learned to trust you enough to be who they are without fear of you, and your judgement and your power. This is an extraordinary thing.

Being in human services is cool because, in essence, you are paid to be human. Paid to explore the commonalities of the human condition. Paid to discover the incredible diversity of the human spirit. Paid to spend your day doing something that matters, something that makes a difference, something that you can be proud of. Done right, you have chosen both a job and a passion, both a passion and a mission, both a mission and a purpose.

There are those who spend their lives looking for purpose.

You will rise to it each morning.

And that's a hell of a way to start the day.

Dave Hingsburger has worked in the field of disability services for over 30 years. To read more from Dave, visit:

<http://davehingsburger.blogspot.ca/2013/06/leaving-loyalist.html>

Contributed by Janet M L Bauer, Instructor, Community Support Worker Program



Janet Bauer with Dave Hingsburger

Excel Academy

10766 97 Street
Edmonton, AB
T5H 4R2

Contact Us at
780-441-7999

www.excelacademy.ca

Twitter: @ExcelAcademy_

Facebook:
The.Excel.Academy

