

CENTENNIAL NEWS FEATURE SUMMER JOBS

Working hard for the summer

We checked in with a few of our student neighbours to see where they've been working the last few months and discovered they had a range of different jobs. Here are their stories and the selfies we asked them to take at their places of employment. Written by Denise Bacon, Kathy McGrath and Kathy Rowe.



Janine Armer enjoys customer service part of job at Coppas

Janine Armer works as a cashier at Coppas Fresh Market on Bennett Road. "Right now I work anywhere from 34-37 hours per week," she said. "During the school year my hours will drop to about 16-22 hours. I live fairly close and I can usually walk to work, which takes about 25 minutes."

Janine enjoys the customer service part of being a cashier. "I find that trying to make a human connection with customers always makes a shopping experience better for everyone."

One of the more challenging aspects of her job is that it's difficult to plan her personal life around the schedule, even though the managers and department heads try to keep it consistent.

"I think the funniest story I could describe was when an elderly man I usually help played a trick on me. He always tells me in front of his wife that if he were 40 years younger he would date me. One day he asked me if I would agree to date his grandson just so that I would always be around. I think he saw the panic on my face because he and his wife just started laughing! Then they told me that they don't even have grandchildren. It turns out that this is a prank they like to play on all the new cashiers. I took it in stride and we still laugh over this



Jai Don Paul helps to run zipline at Toronto Zoo

What's the perfect summer job for someone who is terrified of heights? How about a zipline attendant working 1,000 feet above the ground?

When 20-year-old Jai Don Paul was offered a job with Ecotrek running the zipline at the Toronto Zoo, he knew he had to overcome his acrophobia. The towering line runs 45 feet across the Rouge Valley tree canopy. Now in his second summer on the job, he has conquered his fears and helps others do the same.

"We crack jokes and make small talk as we harness people in," explains Jai, a Brock University student studying business communications.

One of the appeals of the position for the Centennial resident was the 15-minute commute from home. But he discovered the job has other perks. In addition to co-workers who feel like family, Jai enjoys meeting people from other countries. "I've met people from England, Scotland, Poland, Mexico, Dubai - it's great to hear their perspectives on life around the world."

Understandably, some of the zip-line clients don't speak English, which presents a challenge. That's when body language is important, says Jai, who will show people, rather than tell them, how to manage their zip-line equipment.

While Jai is a dedicated employee, he has his limits. "One day a lady insisted I rescue her son's hat from the tigers' den," he laughs. "When I told her I couldn't do that, she said, 'Why not? You're wearing a collared shirt!'" She thought anyone clothed in khakis could control the wild beasts!

Ava Erdmanis works behind the scenes at Ontario Tech

Sleuthing at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, also known as Ontario Tech University or Ontario Tech, is a regular part of Ava Edmanis' summer job. This first-year student at the university got the job at Ontario Tech in the Shipping and Receiving Department on the same day she was interviewed! She received packages ranging from lightweight to hundreds of pounds in weight. Using scanning and tracking systems, she got the packages to the right people by winding her way through the university corridors and underground tunnels. Sometimes, packages would arrive with no name on them. Ava used her best investigative skills to track down the intended recipient and she did this pretty fast!

The best part of the job was getting to know the school and its staff, especially meeting people she otherwise would never have met. She has spoken with many professors from Ontario Tech and Durham College through her work, which helped increase her knowledge and widen her network.

Ava says, "I have learned many things. I have learned to problem solve, use technology and machinery such as the scanning system or pump cards and people skills. Oh, and tons of organizing!" Ava is ready to go back to school for her second year with her new and improved skills and good familiarity with an important behind-the-scenes operation of the university.



Layla Tavakoli shares her passion for music at Marsman

Layla Tavakoli loves music and she shares this passion with others while she earns money! Ten years of music lessons at Marsman Music were strong qualifications for her to be hired by Marsman as a piano instructor. After job shadowing for a couple of weeks, Layla was offered her own music studio where she taught 11 students who are on track to becoming successful musicians.

One of the challenges Layla faced as a piano teacher was to develop custom lesson plans to accommodate different learning levels. Her personal experience with lessons over the years helped her motivate students to keep up with their daily practice.

The best part of Layla's job was having the opportunity to meet new people and share her knowledge of music. She loved being able to watch her students progress with their musical journey and, most importantly, to have fun in the process.

Layla's introspection leads her to say, "Perhaps the most significant thing I've learned is that teaching is a continuous, ever-changing process. It is satisfying, occasionally challenging, and deeply fulfilling to watch students develop and to find their musical passion."

Lucky students to have had Layla as a piano teacher!



Rylan Mascarenhas found something completely different

Rylan Mascarenhas did not imagine that he would be working at a gentlemen's club this summer! The need for a summer job, many job applications to lots of different employers and an online job posting led to this position.

The Nine O Five Gentlemen's Lounge in Pickering kept Rylan busy and earning money as a "Barback" this summer.

The most challenging part of the job was balancing all of the tasks that needed to be done, including cleaning dishes, sanitizing glasses and getting these items out to the bar; bathrooms needing constant maintenance; and bar tenders needing bottles changed, ice refilled, and bottles spouted and mixes ready for bottle service.

As a barback, he was not allowed to interact with clients unless they initiated the communication. Rylan said, "My friends did actually find it amusing that I work at a gentleman's club. It does shock some people when I tell them where

I work!"

Working in a place like this requires a respectful attitude towards the entertainers, he said. A lot of them find the job quite stressful and it helps that the staff is respectful toward them. He learned a lot about people, clients, staff and entertainers. People have different motivations to work in a gentlemen's club and clients from all walks of life come to this place for various reasons, including celebrations.

Rylan had an interesting summer job which will make for good stories for a long time!

Summer events basked in bright sunny days

CCRA's waterfront festival and outdoor summer concerts were wonderful opportunities for residents to come out and enjoy their community.



Row 1: The Port Union Waterfront Festival on June 22 brought young and old alike out to the fun and games on the waterfront.
 Row 2: The Scarborough Concert Band played everything from classics to show tunes on July 7 at the Port Union Community Centre.
 Row 3: Port United Band had the audience up and dancing with their lively mix of music when they performed on July 14.
 Row 4: Climax Jazz Band played marches, blues, spirituals and rags when they entertained the community on July 21. Photo credits: Waterfront Festival, Don Lawrence Music concerts, Ishmam Rahman