

PTP West Summer Highlights

Centre Island Picnic a Success!

On August 18, PTP West had a picnic at Center Island. The whole school was invited including students, teachers and family members. In all there were about 40 people at the picnic.

We met at the Center Island docks at about 9:45, then took the 10 o'clock ferry over to the island.



Once at the island we walked over to the picnic area and found a quiet place to have our picnic. At 11 o'clock we started to play the games that Richard, Susan, Bill, Agnes,

Vince and Faduma organized. Everyone participated in all the games. We had lots of

fun. The winners received prizes that were donated to PTP.

At 12 o'clock we ate a delicious lunch that the Food Team prepared in advance for the picnic



and brought to the island that day.

After lunch we continued to play more games. A few decided to relax and watch others play. Half the group went to the beach to have a quick swim. At 2 o'clock we started to clean up and to head home. Some people decided to stay longer at the island. Others stayed behind to go to the petting zoo. It was a great day!

Moving Forward: Chipo's Story

Chipo is a former PTP student. She recently completed a certificate program at Humber College in Computerized Accounting and Book Keeping. On Thursday, August 5, she came to speak to us about how she reached this goal.

Chipo took this program January through June of this year. The program teaches students how to do payroll, use a budget spreadsheet and man-

age a database. The courses were very hard. Sometimes Chipo stayed at school until 6 o'clock to finish her projects on time. Often she woke up at 5 o'clock in the morning, fin-



ished her assignment and made lunch for her family. If she was late for class, she lost marks. Being on time and having good attendance were important factors for getting good marks. Chipo read more than 20 pages of papers every day and she had a test once a week. She had to pass every single test because otherwise she would fail the course.

Chipo said PTP is much easier than Humber College. She told us that college is a

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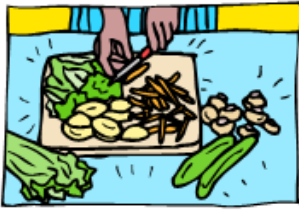
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lot of work and more strict, so we'd better keep pushing ourselves every minute we're at PTP. She said PTP helped a lot, especially math and computers! Because accounting has a lot to do with numbers, Chipo needed the Excel 2007 program and good math skills.

Everybody paid attention during the interview and focused on what Chipo had to say. We learned a lot from her.

Pre-Culinary Graduate



Ann attended PTP for upgrading. With her love for food she decided to join the food team. Because of her interest in food preparation,

nutrition and well being Ann decided to do the pre-culinary course run by PTP, George Brown and FoodShare to learn more in-depth about food and food preparation.

The course started February 1 and ran until June 25, 2010. It is taught by professional chefs. It's a certificate program. It's a course that

teaches you to prepare meals, and skills like cutting, dicing, baking, reading recipes, and setting temperatures. It's a fast paced environment.

"As with every other job, safety comes first. So the course also prepares you to get your Food Handler Certificate."

Job Solutions Makes a Bold Move

In the beginning of September, Job Solutions moved from a small space on the second floor to a much larger home on the first floor at 5415 Dundas West. They made this move so they can serve PTP and the public in a broader way.

Since moving, Job Solutions has expanded its services. Previously, Job Solutions served only people who had less than a grade 12 education. The new Job Solutions, however, is open to everyone. Anyone with a working permit can use their services, even people who are refugee claimants.

Another new change is that Job Solutions now has a resource centre that is open to the public. At the resource centre, job seekers can use the Internet and job search during office hours. The staff is there to help with the computers. They also help with preparing resumes. The new centre has more computers and staff.

We asked Job Solutions staff how they chose their new location. They told us they wanted to be in the vicinity of the school.

Job Solutions is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. The centre does not close during lunch.

To learn more about Employment Ontario, check out their website online.



Bits and Bites Employees of the Month



Bits and Bites is a little store inside the school where they sell fruits, granola bars, trail mix, small bags of chips, chocolate bars, pop, popsicles and other snacks. Every Tuesday they also sell sandwich combos and on Thursdays they have beef patties.

Bits and Bites is not just a store, team members have responsibilities like every other team. They do training, shopping, price tracking, expenses tracking, repackaging and making posters

Each month the Bits and Bites team chooses an employee of the month. This summer the following team members were chosen for this award: Ansella (April), Eddie (June) and Barbara (July). To become an employee of the month you have to meet the criteria of the job. You must work four shifts in the store every week. Being punctual is very important. You

have to have a consistent work ethic, have team building skills, show leadership skills, and be committed to your work. If you have met all these conditions, you will be nominated for employee of the month. The team then has a vote to decide who it will be.



A Day at Mustard Seed

Every month a group of students from PTP goes to a place called Mustard Seed to cook delicious food, get out of the school, have a good time and enjoy each others' company.



Mustard Seed is a non-profit Christian organization that meets the needs of the less fortunate. Together with the community, they offer guidance, independence and lasting life change for people in need. Mustard Seed has several nuns that support and assist people, both outsiders and residents. There are also residents that live in apartments on the upper floors of the Mustard Seed building. These apartments provide affordable housing for women.

PTP has a noteworthy connection with this organization. PTP is granted access to the kitchen at Mustard Seed.

The Mustard Seed kitchen is very spacious. It can easily fit up to 15 people cooking and working together. Mustard Seed has a lot of cooking equipment. We bring our own ingredients when we use the kitchen, but if we need to borrow something, the kitchen has a wide variety of ingredients and food supplies.



Students and teachers who have visited Mustard Seed have learned many things such as how to work together as a team. We have learned what a kitchen setting might be like in a work place. Finally, we have learned new cooking recipes for great tasty food.

"We cooked together, talked together, laughed together, and ate together. It was very nice."



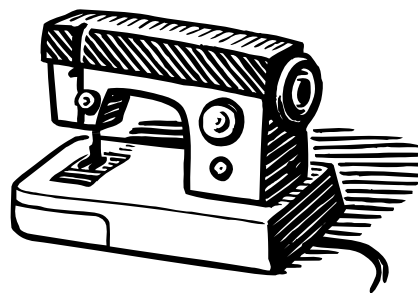
Passion for Sewing

At the start of the summer, PTP West bought a sewing machine for students to use in class projects. One math group, for example, has already started using the machine to make chef's aprons. Making the aprons gives students a chance to learn some basic sewing skills while practicing math skills like measuring and using fractions.

Here, Diane talks about her passion for sewing:

"Learning about sewing has been a great passion of mine, but I have found learning from a pattern very

frustrating. I wanted to learn to sew freehand, by measuring my body and cutting from my measurements and sewing it together. I didn't have the money to pay someone to teach me freehand sewing, but in May I found a wonderful lady at the Jane and Finch Community Centre who runs a sewing group that's free and I joined the group. Now it's nice when I see a simple



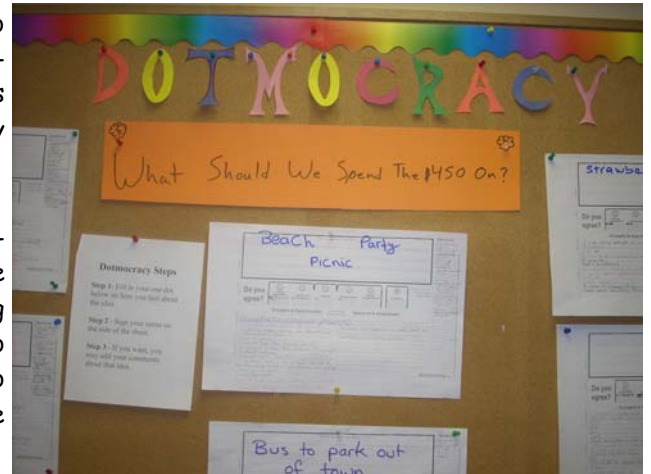
skirt in the store that costs \$50 and I know that I can buy the fabric and make it myself. It really feels good!

Being at PTP I realized that other students share a passion for crafty things too. Agnes and I started a craft day to do some basic sewing together. I have been helping Agnes with her dress pattern. With sewing you have to be very patient. I have invited Agnes to come with me to the community sewing class on our summer vacation."

We Voted for a BBQ!

In the late spring and early summer, PTP students helped to "field test" new learning materials by completing math and communications modules and giving their feedback about the modules in an online survey. For their effort, PTP students collectively received an honorarium of \$450.

The Advocacy and Events Planning Team was in charge of organizing students and staff to decide how this money should be spent. All teams were asked to brainstorm ideas. After coming up with some ideas, the Advocacy and Events Team needed to find a way to narrow down the ideas to just one idea on which to spend the \$450 honorarium. In order to involve everyone, the team used a decision-making process called "Dotmocracy."



The first step of the Dotmocracy process is to find a method of displaying the ideas being presented. Each idea was printed on an individual Dotmocracy sheet. The sheets were laid out in the classroom on different tables with facilitators from our team assigned to each table to explain how the sheets work. Students and staff were asked to read and think carefully about each idea and fill in one dot per sheet to record their opinion on a scale showing "strong agreement," "agreement," "neutral," "disagreement," "strong disagreement," or "confusion." They also had to sign each sheet they dotted and some people left brief comments that gave good feedback. Once everyone had a chance to fill in each of the sheets with dots and comments, the sheets were posted on a bulletin board for students and staff to look at and discuss.



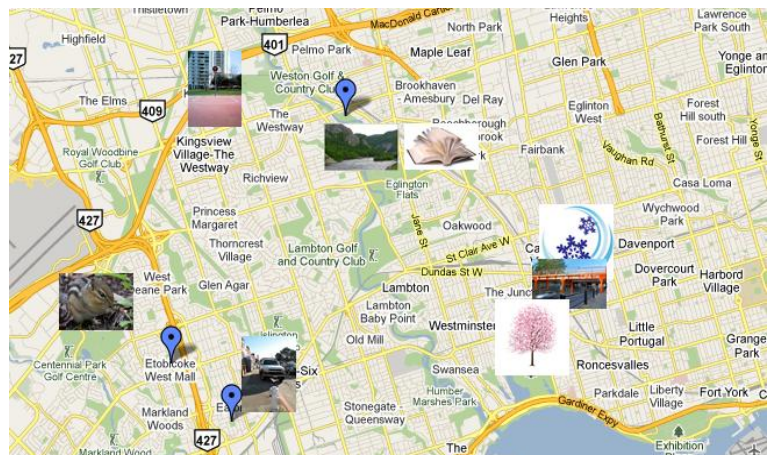
The final step of the Dotmocracy process is to formulate a common solution. The Advocacy and Events Planning team reviewed the Dotmocracy results in order to determine which idea the money should be spent on. Usually the most popular idea gets picked in this kind of scenario. In this case the idea of having a BBQ came to a consensus. It was decided that the money would be spent on hosting a BBQ event for the school using the \$450 to budget for food and supplies. In June, the whole school went to Centennial Park for a picnic.

Read more about the preparation for this event and our day at the park on the Student Corner of the PTP website (www.ptp.ca/student).

Online map of students' favorite places in Toronto!

Students have written about their favorite 'public spaces' in Toronto and mapped these places on an interactive map online.

For a link to this map and other student work, check out the Student Corner of the PTP website! (www.ptp.ca/student)



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