



STAFF PROFILE | PAULA GREENE

SUMMER 2022

We recently sat down with Paula, the Job Developer at Our WorkPlace, to talk about the work she does to support clients and where she sees the program moving in the future.

Paula has worked at Our WorkPlace for 2 years. She previously worked with another not-for-profit organization where the focus was on people facing serious trauma. “I’ve always been passionate about working with people facing barriers in life and believe that no matter the experiences being faced by the people I serve, everyone has the potential to achieve.”

Prior to taking up her current position at Our WorkPlace, Paula’s work was more clinical in approach. However, while the ethics surrounding the work are the same, the approach at Our WorkPlace is more relaxed and more holistic in nature. In essence, Paula and her colleagues try not to have pre-conceived ideas of what they can do to support clients. We believe that a strength-based approach is key to the work we do, and that “everyone is something to someone”.

“Employment is an important part of recovery,” says Paula. Our WorkPlace is focused on helping people return to work, or school, or volunteering. In this way, the program offers them an opportunity to reclaim their own sense of confidence and belief in themselves no matter in what direction they decide to go.

Clients set their own goals and find their own direction as they move through the programs offered at Our WorkPlace. “I find they’re amazing, they’re fun and they’re inspiring too!” They all come in with a wealth of history and Paula says she’s always impressed with their resiliency and their determination to overcome barriers.



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When asked if all the participants in the People in Progress (PIP) program offered by Our WorkPlace find work, Paula is happy to say that most of them do. However, she is also keen to point out that some participants in PIP discover that what they want most is to go back to school or to volunteer. Overall, the feedback from participants has been that attending workshops and doing the work placement component has helped them to better focus on next steps.

In the future, Paula says the goal is to work towards increasing the number of PIP programs offered each year. For her part, Paula recognizes that relationships with local organizations is key to the program’s success and in the current climate of labour shortages, developing closer ties with the local business community can be a win/win situation for all.

Outside of the office, Paula enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading and, above all, trying new things. Thank you, Paula, for all you do at Our WorkPlace!

IN MEMORIAM

We recently learned about the passing of a favourite client, **JPR**. We are grateful to have known them.

PORTRAITS OF SUCCESS | MORGAN AND PATRICK, MURALISTS

We recently spoke to Morgan and Patrick, both graduates of the People In Progress (PIP) program at Our WorkPlace, to talk to them about their experiences going through the program and especially how they came to create a beautiful new mural in the classroom.

While the paths they took to Our WorkPlace were somewhat different, Morgan and Patrick told us that the program has radically changed how they look at life. “I came into the program from a challenging workplace where the negatives outweighed the positives and I even thought I’d hate learning,” says Morgan. “Now I’ve learned how to think outside the box and the confidence to try new things.” Patrick, on the other hand, came into the program through New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community (also operated by Our Place Society), where he came to terms with his addictions and embraced the goodness in this life. “Going through the PIP program has given me the tools I was lacking and the learning and skills to be employable,” he says.

During his time participating in PIP, Patrick turned to Morgan for advice and support in sharing the beauty of his art with others. Meanwhile, Morgan found while exploring her own individual creativity that creating art is good for their mental health. Recognizing an opportunity to liven up its training area, Our WorkPlace staff offered

Morgan and Patrick a wall to create a mural. When asked about the significance of the mural, Patrick and Morgan agreed that it’s a “visual recipe” representing everything that’s learned and experienced in the group. “It also represents growth and the importance of light, water, and encouraging everyone to come together,” Morgan says. For his part, Patrick told us that he wants to “inspire others to explore their own abilities.” As he says, “Put in the work, put in the time, and I want others to do the same.” The handprints, or “leaves”, (the first 3 of which were just added by the most recent graduates of the PIP program) in the mural represent inclusivity and, in their view, the purest form of expression.

Both Morgan and Patrick intend to continue making art as a way of opening doors for others and living life that’s true to themselves. Meanwhile, Morgan did the work placement section of PIP at Our WorkPlace, secured a wage subsidy position and was the successful applicant for the position of Employment Facilitator. Patrick’s goal is “to be a millionaire and give back to others.” In the meantime, he wants to find ways to create art that his fellow artists can be involved with, and to spread the idea of projects such as the mural at Our WorkPlace to other organizations.

Congratulations, Morgan and Patrick, on your many achievements to date. We know your creativity knows no bounds.



VEE'S CORNER

Work experience is one the most important and highly anticipated components of the People in Progress program. As business advisor Gary Travis says, "Work experience doesn't make a great employee. Their work ethic does." What we know here at Our WorkPlace is that work experience increases self-understanding, maturity, independence and self-confidence on the part of participants in PIP.

Vee



Jeremy Pollack, Ph.D.
PeacefulLeadersAcademy.com

Fancy resumes and titles
won't always get you hired.

More often it's your
attitude that counts.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DIGITAL JOB HUNTERS

September 7 - 23, 2022

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
(1 pm - 2:30 pm)

PEOPLE IN PROGRESS

October 24, 2022 - March 31, 2023

Monday through Friday: 10 am - 3 pm
Drop-in Mondays: 10 am - 3 pm

NEWS FLASH!

Morgan Andrews was the successful applicant for the position of Employment Program Facilitator, responsible for workshop programming. Congratulations, Morgan!

Also - **People in Progress** will be extended until March 31st, 2023, which means Our WorkPlace will be offering, at a minimum, 2 more intakes of our program.

The Ministry of Social Development nominated our program specifically to be extended.



INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

Wednesday, August 31

Members of the Our Place community recognized International Awareness Day on August 31st by gathering at the community drop-in to remember lives lost to overdose

VOICES

"As a co-learner, I leave each session with hope, joy and gratitude for all the sharing."

Sheryl
workshop facilitator

"People In Progress provided me a gentle landing back into employment."

- Workshop Participant

"The 6 weeks of pre-work classes were a good balance of work related with personal growth/ reflection presentations."

- Workshop Participant



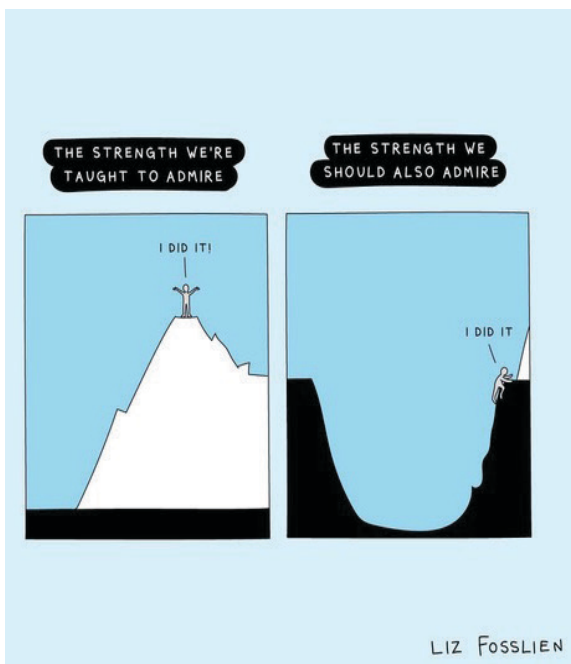
RECENT WORK PLACEMENTS

Robert worked on a new web page for Our WorkPlace.

Brad is a housing support worker at Capital City Centre.

Dana, having completed her work experience at Cook Street Activity Centre, is now working there full-time!

Morgan continues to work at Our WorkPlace as the new Employment Facilitator responsible for workshop scheduling.



NOTE TO READERS:

This newsletter is produced by Our WorkPlace volunteers, with input from staff, clients, and supporters.