



**Communication Co-op  
Communications Team**

# Communiqué

A newsletter for Communication Co-op students and Co-op Employers Issue 1/Summer 96

## Employers reveal skills wanted

Kirsten Hall

Communication Co-op employers look for many of the same capabilities in students as in a permanent or contract employee: Strong writing, editing and computer skills and the ability to work well as part of a team. Blair Parkhurst of Health Canada says, "SFU does a tremendous job of ensuring that Co-op students have these tangible skills." Vera Radyo of Multiculturalism BC says, "students also need a familiarity with a variety of computer programs and the flexibility to be able to work in both Macintosh and PC environments."

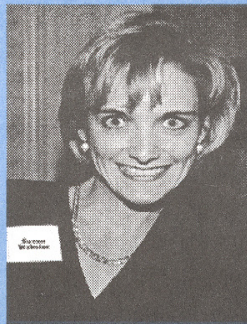
At the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Susan Webster looks for "practical skills like research and organizational skills, the ability to prioritize and manage multiple projects, and demonstrated initiative and creative ideas."

One of the most valuable things a student can bring to a Co-op position is relevant experience. Writing news releases, producing materials for not-for-profit organizations or political campaigns, working with the public and volunteer experience all help to

develop the basic communication skills employers want to see.

What do employers look for on your resume? Webster says, "I look for involvement with the public, and

**"I look for involvement with the public and related volunteer and work experience, also some indication of a well rounded life outside of school."**



Susan Webster  
Heart and Stroke Foundation

File photo

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"This is not to discount a strong academic background," says Radyo. "But experience and proof that the Co-op student is familiar with her organization and industry is vital in helping to secure a [job] interview."

Webster says an understanding of the organization's objectives and current projects is ideal. She looks for students who are familiar with her organization's annual reports and the work reports of previous students.

At Health Canada, the interview process is extensive and research is essential. "Students participate in an editing exercise and role play to see how they respond to various pressure situations," says Parkhurst.

These employers like to see initiative, flexibility and a willingness to work. "Research about the organization shows an enthusiastic and genuine interest in the position, and when most students have the necessary general skills, it can make all the difference," adds Radyo. She values students who take direction and receive feedback well and adds that "without a doubt, enthusiasm is the one quality that is essential."

This newsletter is produced by the members of the Communication Co-op Communications Team for SFU Communication Co-op students and Co-op Employers. The team is a group of volunteer students dedicated to promoting Communication Co-op.

The Newsletter Committee acknowledges the contributors who made this first issue a success.

Newsletter Committee: Theresa Cordova (Chair), Janet Brown and Karmen Koh Design and Layout: Theresa Cordova, Janet Brown

# Out of town survival tips

**Congratulations! You have just been offered a Co-op position out of town. Below are two students offering hints on how to make your move easier, even on a short notice. Good luck!**

## Victoria, British Columbia

Karmen Koh

**C**heck the bulletin board outside the Co-op general office for housing outside the Lower Mainland. There are often listings for furnished or shared accommodations that may suit your needs. If that fails, get a copy of the local paper from the library and scout the accommodations for something that suits your needs. Make initial inquiries over the phone — you may get lucky.

Also, contact current Co-op students who are working in your city. You may be able to move into their accommodation if their work

term is up. At least they can give you some valuable advice on how and where to find a place to live.

Try to bring only the essentials. Keep all receipts of costs incurred from the move. You can claim them as moving expenses on your income tax. Make advance arrangements with BC Tel, BC Hydro and the cable company to transfer your account to your new location. Have Canada Post forward your mail.

Having taken care of the moving hassles, you can enjoy the trip to your new location.

## Ottawa, Ontario

Louis Kim

**A**lthough Ottawa is a small city in comparison to Vancouver, it will be helpful to get a road map prior to arriving. Try to find a place to live that is close to a transportation route.

The transportation system is great! Many of the bus stops have time schedules written on them. In addition, there is a four-digit number for each bus stop. You can phone a local Ontario transit line, give the number and they will tell you exactly how many minutes before the next bus arrives. Bus fees here are \$1.60 during regular hours

or \$2.10 during peak hours. If you are taking the bus every day, it is wise to buy a month bus pass for \$54.

*Note:* Here you need to get ID pictures taken for a bus pass. You can get your picture taken at any Ottawa, Carleton (OC) Transpo Station.

Places you can visit: National Gallery of Canada, National Museum of Science and Technology, Canadian Museum of Civilization. Rideau and Dalhousie street houses many of the city's clubs, including two of the most popular, RJ's Boom Boom Saloon and On Tap.

# Create your own Web site

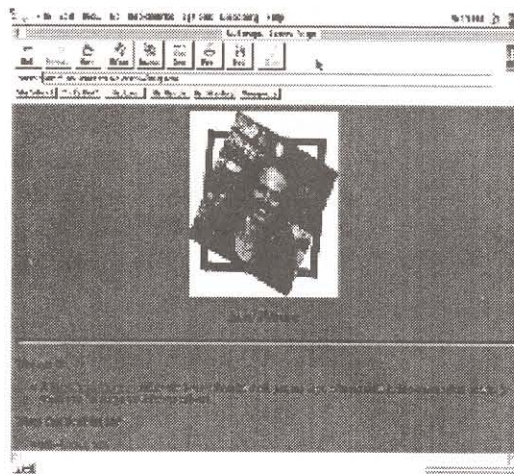
Sara Pitman

**Q**ualifications: Seeking a Communication Co-op student with a strong knowledge of the Internet.

Are you the qualified student this company is looking for? If your answer is 'no', then Communication 253 is obviously not on your academic transcript. The course is entitled "Introduction to Information Technology: The New Media."

The class is an invaluable introduction to the technology, its uses, and issues surrounding the Internet. Communication 253 provides both technical and academic instruction to students.

The focus of this course is on the issues involved in the growth of on-line communications. Susan Bryant, the course's teaching assistant



says, "students come away with considerable technical skills as well as an appreciation of the need for responsible and thoughtful use of the medium."

The technical skills you gain while learning about the issues surrounding this new

technology include researching on the Web, utilizing news groups and mailing lists, producing hyper text mark-up language documents, better known as HTML, using e-mail, and contributing to the Internet through the creation of a group Web site that explores the issues around this medium.

As a Communication Co-op student who has just completed Communication 253, I am finding the skills I have learned in this course are directly applicable to many Co-op positions. When employers ask questions about my knowledge of the Internet, I just show them my homepage.

What better way to demonstrate Internet skills to a potential employer than through your own Web site?