

Loyalist recruits more international students

Dramatic increase in number of students coming from other countries

By Rhea Munroe

When Rahul Prakash, a second-year student at Loyalist originally from Trivandrum, India first came to Loyalist College last year he said that he noticed there were few international students in the school. However, this year, he's seen a dramatic increase in the number of international students. Prakash's observation is something that the college has noticed as well.

Laura Naumann, the director of student enrolment services, said that the increase is "due to the efforts of the international office. Catherine O'Rourke spent a fair bit of time in Asia."

O'Rourke, who is student success director of Loyalist College, said "Loyalist College is an identified SPP member. What that means is that the Ontario government, the federal government and the high commission of a target country have set up a program where they have identified specific institutions to be a partner.

"SPP is student partner program. Loyalist is identified as a SPP with the high commission of India. And as a result of that it has again raised our profile in that country," said O'Rourke.

The recruiters go to different countries for a week or two at a time and run education fairs for students and inform them about Loyalist College and the many different programs that are offered. This is what Naumann said she thinks is the single largest reason for the increase.

Up until this year, the increase in the number of international students has been steady, but never quite peaked like it has this year.

O'Rourke also points out that there has been an increase in the use of social media to promote the programs at Loyalist.

Prakash said that his reason for coming to Canada was for "a better offered education. A diploma from Canada will help me a lot back home in finding a job. It will also help me to stay in Canada for jobs."

However, Riccardo Basagni from Arezzo, Italy said that he came to Canada for schooling because "I wanted to try a different experience. I always liked learning new languages and studying abroad."

Prakash said that his agent told him about Loyalist College and another school in Manitoba which he opted not to attend because he liked the programs Loyalist offered, and he did not want to deal with the cold winters of Manitoba.

O'Rourke said she knows the international students are enjoying their time here because "peers are inviting peers to come to study at Loyalist College. If the experience wasn't a positive one, we wouldn't see the number of students who are inviting their friends to come."

When Prakash came to Loyalist, he didn't know anyone but now finds himself with lots of friends from both India and Canada.

Ankit Patel, a student from Ahmedabad, India says that he would definitely recommend Loyalist to a friend.

It is being expected that the years ahead will only see more of an increase in the number of international students continuing their education at the college.



Photo by Rhea Munroe

Ankit Patel is an international student from Ahmedabad, India. Patel is currently in his first year at Loyalist College studying Fitness and Health.

Children's needs come first at daycare centres

By Amielle Christopherson

Staff at daycare centres in Belleville say they are eager to learn how to adapt to children's individual needs.

That includes anything from learning how to sign for children who are deaf to learning all the facts about diabetes and insulin. No matter what, it's always about putting the child, not the special need, first.

"Every parent is entitled to their child's needs being met," said Debbie Milne, the executive director of First Adventure Childcare Development Centre.

"All children should have that right to have access to all programs."

As such, daycare centres do what they can to best serve their little charges. But that's not where the issue lies. The problem is the fact that extra help is often where funding gets cut first.

"We couldn't offer some of the services without the aid of the community," Jennifer deGroot said gratefully as the manager of the on-campus child care centre at Loyalist College.

deGroot finds she's been needing more of that help in the last five to 10 years, especially since she's finding that there are more children who are being diagnosed earlier with autism.

"I don't know if that's because there's a broader spectrum that children can be fit into, but there has been a rise in numbers."

Little Rascals Daycare Centre has gone a step further than not just having their staff learning to sign, but to hiring a deaf daycare worker. Five years ago, they hired Sandra Lynds, the sign language teacher, and since then, she's taught all of the staff how to sign, as well as any of the children who are at the centre during the day. Hiring Lynds has allowed the centre to accept five deaf children comfortably into their midst.

Pam Elliott, one half of the management



Photo by Amielle Christopherson

Sandra Lynds, a teacher at Little Rascals Daycare Centre, has taught all the staff and some of the children how to communicate using sign language. Her abilities have allowed the centre to welcome deaf children to the centre.

at Little Rascals, acknowledges that, for their daycare centre, having Lynds there is extremely important.

"These children learn that children with disabilities are no different," she said. "When they go to public school, they have no fear of seeing a child with

a disability."

The question arises whether daycare centres are hiring workers with a special need in order to better connect with children who have the same needs.

"Would I hire someone because they present the same visual or

non-visual needs? No," deGroot said firmly.

"I hire someone based entirely upon their qualifications. If they had a special need and could do the job, we would, of course, hire them."

'Bed blockers' cause problems for hospitals

Alternative level of care patients taking up space while they wait for nursing home beds

By Topher Seguin

Known informally as "bed blockers", alternative level of care patients or ALC for short, are stuck in Ontario hospital beds never designed for them in the first place.

Often elderly, ALC patients are admitted to the hospital after sustaining injuries from something like a fall or a stroke, and end up in the hospital for what should be a short time, but end up having to stay because there isn't a nursing home bed available for them in the community.

Patients can often spend months waiting for a spot to open up in a retirement or nursing home, all the while taking up space in a hospital bed that could otherwise be used to treat others.

According to the Ontario Hospital Association on Oct. 31 last year, there were 4,088 ALC patients waiting in an acute care or post-acute bed and over 20,000 people waiting for a long-term care bed in Ontario, most of which were waiting in the community.

"Different people need different support," said Laura Hare, executive director at the Alzheimer Society of Belleville-Hastings-Quinte. "The whole idea is to equip families with strategies, tools, and techniques to care for the person as long as possible. The person doesn't want to leave their home, and the caregiver doesn't want to put them in a home, but sometimes the caregiver gets burnt out emotionally and physically, then a crisis comes along that they can't handle and the person gets put into acute care and then later into ALC."

A calm atmosphere is the best thing that can happen to an ALC patient, and as you can imagine, the hospital isn't the best place for any of that. It's a very distressing place for people that have to wait, added Hare.

For direct transfer from hospital to long-term care, the average wait time is 50 days. People waiting in hospital tend to have higher needs and take priority over the first available long-term care bed. For people waiting in the community, the wait time can be almost six months.

The shortage of beds in hospitals can lead to cancellations of planned surgery, a delay in admitting emergency patients, and transfers of existing patients between wards, which may add a day to a patient's length of stay.

Come fly with Peter Pan

By Stephanie James

Centennial Secondary School in Belleville will take you up, up, and away with their production of *Peter Pan*.

Rewritten into a musical in 1985 by Piers Chater Robinson, the play has a cast of 35 actors played by the students of the theatre production class at Centennial. The cast also includes four students from neighbouring public schools to play the roles of the younger characters in the play.

Peter Pan will be open to the public on Jan. 20 at 7 p.m., two showings at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Jan. 21, and Jan. 22 at 2 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at Centennial Secondary School on Palmer Road as well as the Red Ball Radio Station located on North Front Street, in Belleville. Tickets are \$10 for seniors and students and \$15 for adults.

Daddy'n Me program offers bonding time

Lots of activities part of the fun at Early Years Centre

By Stephanie James

Jay R Perehinchuk has been bringing his two sons to the Ontario Early Years Centre since they were babies.

They participate in a wide variety of activities such as crafts, riding bikes in the gym, or playing with play dough. Participants can always find something to do.

"The program offers a variety of activities in a variety of different rooms," said Perehinchuk.

He and his kids, Liam, 6, and Adrian, 4, are among a group of men and children who take part in the Daddy 'n Me program offered at the centre.

Located on MacDonald Avenue in Belleville, the Ontario Early Years Centre is a great place for parents to take their children to play, learn good parenting skills and find support with parenting and child development if needed. The Daddy 'n Me program is one of many free programs that the centre has to offer.

Held on Tuesday nights between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m., the program is run by men and for men whether they are fathers, uncles, grandparents or family friends with a child between infant years to age six.

"They get to come here to play with their children without any television screens or game consoles. It also gives them the opportunity to talk to other fathers and learn early learning with their children through play," said Julie Hickey, an early childhood educator.

Hickey is the only female worker who deals with the Daddy 'n Me program and helps with planning and organizing events

and activities.

Started in 2005 by Phil Jones, the program is designed with many activities throughout the night so dads and kids never have a dull moment. Beginning with a light buffet-style dinner, usually consisting of pizza, fruit and drinks, participants have the opportunity for free time with their children in one of three playrooms and small gym. Everyone is then invited to take part in a planned activity such as music and dancing, races and paper airplane building. Later on, participants can sign up to read to the group at story time, or older children, usually age six, can read to the group as well.

"The Early Years Centre is an incredible facility. It lets the kids run wild and have some fun," said Dan Foley, who has been bringing his son Ryan, 2, and daughter Brooke, 14 months, to the program for about two months.

Running the program on Tuesday nights, Jeremie Nolet has been a part of the program for about two months. Having a career with Children's Mental Health and being a father of three gives him the opportunity to provide both professional and personal advice about child development to those who seek it.

"My role is really to make the night a positive experience for the dads and their kids," said Nolet.

The program is also offered to high school students wanting to complete co-op credits for their high school education. Current co-op student Jeden Jones, 18, helps Nolet run the program and getting activities ready before fathers and children arrive.

"I get an intro into the real world and get to see how the different age groups of kids interact with each other," said Jones.

With an average count of 30 participants nightly, the Ontario Early Years Centre is filled with young children and their male role models. They can be found running,



Photo by Stephanie James

Dan Foley has been bringing his two children, Ryan, 2, and Brooke, 14 months, to Daddy 'n Me held at the Ontario Early Years Center in Belleville, Ontario for the past two months. Being able to let his kids have a chance to be wild is his favourite part of the program.

playing and learning together, whether they are making crafts, burning off energy in the gym or simply spending quality time together in the toddler room.