

Learner's Story

How and Why I Returned to School

Leigh Chaisson is the winner of The Co-operators Learner Achievement Award presented each year at the PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy. Here is the essay he submitted with his application for the award.

My name is Leigh Chaisson and I am an Irish Moss harvester. I am 48 years old and before the year 2000 had only attended one-room school houses. I am currently attending the adult education program at Westisle Centre through Holland College to fulfill my future career goals.



When I was younger I went to a oneroom school in Pleasant View. I went up to grade 7 there and then they put me in grade 8 at the St. Edwards mobiles. I didn't quite finish my 8th grade. I started to work and never went back to school until the year 2000.

I went to Palmer Road to take up my GED and wrote in the spring of 2001 passing it. I was told to keep going farther. I did not know where to go or what I wanted to do. Career Bridges was suggested to me by Career Development Services. In Career Bridges I found out that I would be well suited to the health care field.

For the last two winters I have been taking my academic English and Biology at Westisle Centre. I have applied to Holland College to take the Practical Nursing Course in September. I also applied to the Resident Care Worker course, in case I do not get into the Practical Nursing Course.

When I become a Practical Nurse I would like to work in West Prince if I can.

My biggest goal is to find full-time employment. Rather than seasonal work I want to work year-round in a field that I am truly interested in and enjoy.

Editors note - Leigh gave a rousing thank you speech during the golf tournament awards luncheon at the New Glasgow Lobster Suppers on June 15th.

He thanked all his teachers for their work and encouragement. Leigh remarked that at each step in his adult education he thought he was too old to go back to school or go further.

With the support and encouragement of his family, teachers and friends Leigh has completed his necessary academic credits and is on the waiting list for the Practical Nursing program at Holland College. Leigh got a standing ovation after telling his story.