



# Disabilities Mentoring Day

Your Opportunity to Mentor Undiscovered Talent

## DMD 2016 FINAL Report

**'ENGAGE TALENT'**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- I. A Word From Our President .....3
- II. Background .....5
- III. Mission Statement .....5
- IV. Purpose & Outcomes .....5
  - a) Scope .....6
  - b) Growth .....7
  - c) Goals .....8
  - d) Event Experience .....9
  - e) Employers’ Response .....10
- V. Labour Market .....12
  - a) Supply .....12
  - b) Demand .....14
  - c) Analysis .....16
- VI. Community Partners .....18
- VII. Conclusion .....21

**“DMD is a great way to demonstrate the capabilities of people with disabilities to organizations that might otherwise "overlook" this source of potential talent.” Mentor 2016**

**“My mentor has given me hope, that my skills and experience add up to something of value. It's been very good for my soul to have someone at his level tell me that I've got skills that they could use “. Mentee 2016**



I would like to personally thank everyone who participated in the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Disabilities Mentoring Day. As President of Dolphin, I have had the opportunity to watch our event grow and develop and become a highly sought after mentoring experience.

Dolphin is a unique consulting firm because from the onset of our company, over a decade ago, my partner and I set out to consciously create a business model where the measurement of success would not only be economic, but would also include social impact. We wanted a private, for-profit company, that would also be an influencer on a social issue. Our actions would not be as corporate social responsibility, but rather the structure of our brand.

Dolphin believes in some basic principles of conduct. Firstly, we believe in ourselves. We believe even without validation or support, that given any opportunity we will be successful – failure is simply not an option; keep moving forward. Second, we believe that in many ways we are all our brother's keeper, responsible to contribute what we can in the conduct of business and to help others in their journey where possible. Thirdly, we believe that everyone has something to contribute and should be recognized when possible. We are confident the greatest advancements yet to be discovered will come through seeing things differently and hearing from those often unheard.

At Dolphin we set the hiring standard "We will hire the candidate most qualified but least likely to be hired elsewhere."

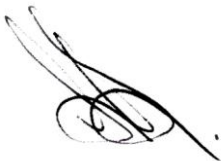
In our second year of business we developed the first Virtual Office. It enabled us to communicate and project tech centric projects to employees and clients alike, based solely on intellectual property; the real-estate of our industry. We hired candidates who were brilliant, who excelled when given the opportunity. Not that it matters, but I will also share with you that every one of those candidates identified as having a disability.

***Our experience changed the culture and predicted destination of our company; we see potential, rather than a challenge.*** Now, instead of focusing on only what might be called "personal" disability (such as physical, developmental etc.) we are moving to thinking about economic and social disability. We are currently developing analytics called Citizen Pathway; software to predict and defend proactive investment in people with challenges in any area of perceived 'limitation'. For example, homelessness is a "social disability" which can be addressed without judgment using software solutions that point to ways of restoring people to social integration/productivity.

At Dolphin it is our goal to broaden the understanding of disability and ability. We are all either currently in a state of experiencing disability or in transition to become disabled. One of my favorite aspects of Disabilities Mentoring Day is the reversal of roles I have seen each year where the expected term of mentor and role of mentee are reversed. It is often the business employee who is mentored and the recipient of knowledge and growth.

I would like to thank the Government of Ontario, CBC, BMO, Sodexo and the City of Kingston for being our first group of sponsors. Your support went beyond the financial as was evident in the level of participation, and enthusiasm to promote Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day. Sponsorship is a true partnership with Dolphin, and enables us to continue to grow and develop the mentoring experience to meet the needs of those who are seeking opportunity to demonstrate their skills, and those looking for new talent.

Thank you again to everyone who participated; you made this year a successful opportunity to "Engage Talent".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Burton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Scott Burton

President & CEO Dolphin

# Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day 2016

---

## **II. BACKGROUND:**

Dolphin Digital Technologies Inc. is a professional ICT consulting firm specializing in business logic analytics. Our award winning innovative designs have been globally recognized, and we are the first business in Canada to develop a barrier- free employment strategy for people with disabilities. “We have become a better business by meeting a social need.”

Whether around our virtual water cooler, as part of a change management team or a dB implementation project, Dolphin employees are encouraged to share perspectives, intuition and expertise to help Dolphin succeed. Our transitions as a business and in service delivery have been ubiquitous and fluid, largely due of our ability to continually innovate and incorporate experiences as a diverse and inclusive employer.

Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day (DMD) was founded in 2011 based on our insights and experience and the belief that all businesses can benefit from employing people with disabilities. We founded Disabilities Mentoring Day to facilitate an experiential learning opportunity for persons with disabilities, and provide a beneficial mentoring experience for mentors. DMD is very much a strategic mechanism to improve diversity and inclusion, and address myths and misconceptions regarding people with disabilities in the workplace, i.e. accommodations, interactions, language etc. DMD also facilitates access to an underutilized talent pool and has led to the successful hiring of some mentees.

Diversity is a competitive advantage that advances the innovation process. Diverse talent and multidimensional ideas, experiences and perspectives are the foundation of successful innovation at Dolphin. We encourage innovation and collaboration so that we all benefit from the value of each other’s skills, abilities and experience.

Finally, we believe the private sector has a vital role to play regarding the employment of persons with disabilities. By removing attitudinal barriers and making the workplace accessible, employers can greatly contribute to a society where persons with disabilities can fully participate.

### **III. MISSION STATEMENT**

Disabilities Mentoring Day utilizes technology to bridge the communication and knowledge gaps between business, employment and community support organizations, and persons with disabilities.

### **IV. PURPOSE & OUTCOMES**

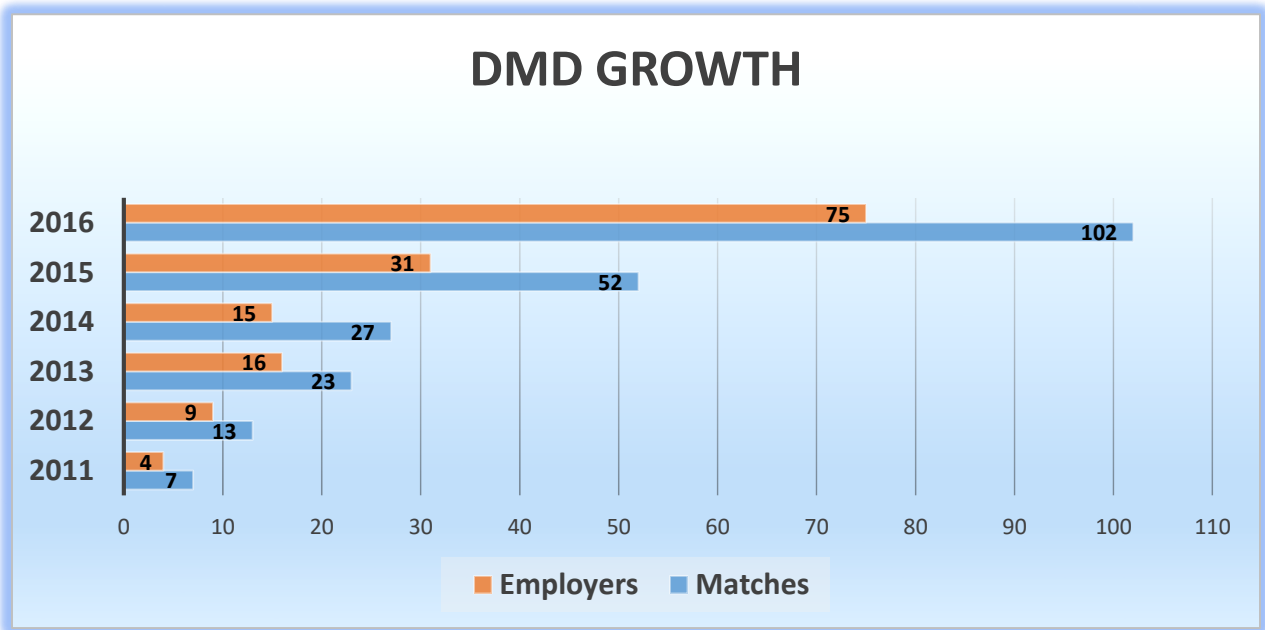
Mentoring and networking increase the likelihood of someone being hired. According to the Wall Street Journal in 2013, 90% of jobs were filled through employee referrals. DMD has helped many persons with disabilities establish an initial contact with an employee at a business in their chosen field of employment. These initial contacts have led to further connections, and deeper interactions over a longer period of time.

#### **a. Scope**

DMD began in Waterloo Region and has grown to include 5 other cities in Ontario, London, Hamilton, Brantford, Toronto and Kingston. Mentees must be job ready (experience & knowledge through training, work or volunteering), with the skills and interests relative to the mentor positions. Any employee, from any industry, is welcome to participate as a mentor. In order to ensure successful mentoring matches, a matching mechanism is utilized once all participants fill out an application outlining work experience, education, goals for the day, characteristics, learning styles, and accommodations (if any). Some applicants may not be invited to participate, dependent on specific criteria relevant to job readiness and aspirations for the experience.

## b. Growth

In 2016, DMD received 270 applications to participate; 136 mentors and 134 mentees. We received applications from the six event cities, as well as Ottawa, Montreal, Halifax, and Calgary. We make it a standard not to force matches, so there were instances where the talent pool did not match the mentoring opportunity. Some mentor applicants withdrew due to change in job scope, or location, and some mentees withdrew due to new employment, or school schedule conflicts. Though there was a challenge to match some financial/insurance mentoring positions in Waterloo Region, we did not experience any other sector specific challenges. We achieved **102** matches for mentoring day, with **94%** of mentees indicating a good match and **98%** of mentors indicating a good match.



### **c. Goals**

Our overall goals for Disabilities Mentoring Day 2016 met and exceeded expectations:

- **To provide mentees access to workplace contacts, environments, skills, & HR process**

Based on their mentoring experience, 78% of mentees were able to identify a specific job skillset they still needed to develop, “I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the industry and also how to improve my learning in order to access the industry” Mentee 2016

- **To increase confidence among job seekers with disabilities**

92% of mentees indicated an increase in confidence in their job search “I came away from the experience feeling more confident of being able to contribute in the workplace. I felt appreciated and valued by my mentor and that I had a lot to offer in the workplace environment.”  
Mentee 2016

- **To enhance internship, co-operative education and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities**

89 % of mentors recommended their mentees to apply to their business. “A great way to demonstrate the capabilities of people with disabilities to organizations that might otherwise "overlook" this source of potential talent” Mentor 2016

- **To dispel employers’ fears about hiring people with disabilities and promote disability confidence**

98% of mentors indicated an increase in confidence in working with a person with a disability. “Just a fantastic opportunity - the presentation that we saw at the meet and greet should be shown everywhere!” Mentor 2016

- **To give employers an opportunity to benchmark themselves as being accessible to what is a largely untapped pool of talent as well as a massive consumer market.**

100% of mentors indicate DMD plays an important part in helping to promote the hiring of persons with disabilities as part of a diversity and inclusion strategy “DMD is an awesome way to connect employers with talent they may not usually be exposed to.” Mentor 2016



#### **d. Event Experience**

Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day provides mentees the opportunity to meet people and develop their networks in an area of professional interest, demonstrate their skills and to learn about the work environment/industry. Experiential learning enables “real life” knowledge, response and focus which translates into an increased level of confidence and awareness of what is required to do the job. **94%** of mentees agreed their mentor match was successful and **92%** confirmed they had achieved their goals of learning about job opportunities, the industry, hiring process and having the opportunity to demonstrate skills and expand their professional network. Because of their participation, **72%** of mentees indicated they were also able to identify skills for improvement, i.e. communication, and team work, and were very interested in learning more information about the specific skills and knowledge for the industry and occupations. While some mentees have already contacted their mentors again, **84%** stated that they either had or would at some point in the future. It can be a challenge for some pwd’s to want to share their experiences with others, however, **95%** of mentees were willing to share the DMD experience on social media, amongst their peers and with other employment or counselling centres.

For mentors, DMD provides an opportunity to demonstrate personal expertise and career path, while discovering the talent of an individual capable of working with them. Mentoring is one of the oldest forms of influence and knowledge sharing, and we recognize the value of those employees who participate. Mentors help the mentees understand the requirements of their position, the specific demands of their workplace and the company’s policies and hiring procedures. They may also share interviewing skills, conduct mock interviews, and provide HR information sessions. “Mentoring can add to an employee’s work experience, and can facilitate better work attitudes, accelerated promotion rates, stronger perception of career success, gained technical expertise from their protégé (mentee), and the development of managerial skills.”<sup>1</sup>

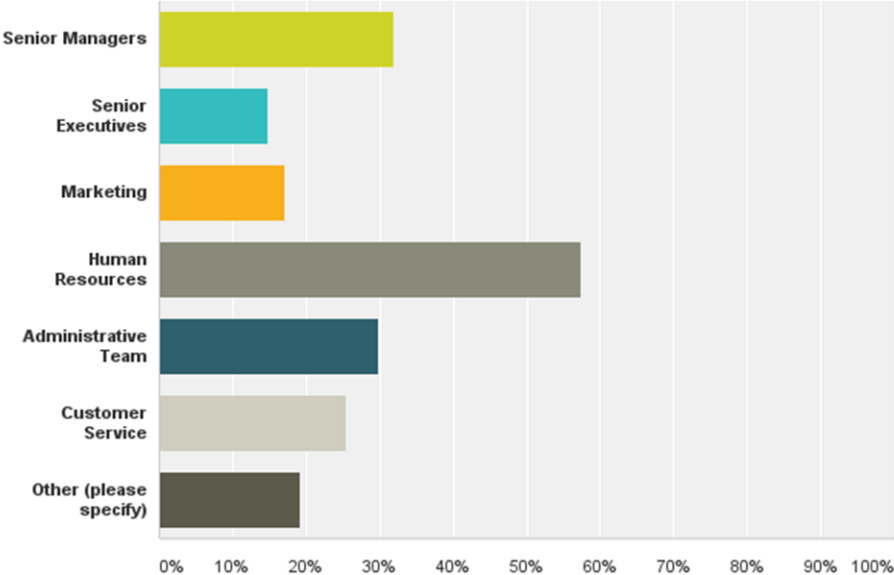
Academic Emergency Medicine, Jan. 2012 Vol. 19, p93

In the application process, mentors submitted goals for participating as identifying new talent, sharing expertise, providing guidance, and sharing tricks of the trade. Considering their selections, **98%** of mentors had the opportunity to achieve their goals. A sign of the event’s success is that **98%** of mentors felt that their mentees were a good match and **96%** indicated they would like to participate again. **89%** of mentors had already recommended or would

recommend their mentee to apply for a job with their company. Our most important finding of the event is that **98%** of mentors mentioned an increase in confidence in working with a person with a disability, and **100%** expressed that DMD helps to promote the hiring of persons with disabilities as part of a diversity and inclusion strategy. **88%** of all mentors also stated they would be likely or very likely, to talk about DMD outside of their work environment. An interesting addition to our data this year was the specific focus on who else should be involved in DMD in their workplace. **81%** of mentors suggested either Sr. Managers, Executives, HR, Admin, or Customer Service, while the remainder suggested front line staff, board members, and special events. There is a clear indication that this is not about the mentor experiencing DMD on their own.

### Q10 Who else that you work with should be involved in DMD?

Answered: 47 Skipped: 12



## **e. Employer Response**

DMD 2016 saw three distinct areas of new development: 1) Direct Hiring Focus 2) Collaborative Co-Event & 3) National based strategy development.

- 1) BMO positioned their expanded involvement in DMD as one of targeted hiring. They participated in our DMD process, but introduced specific components of talent acquisition and requested that each potential mentee complete their initial security check. The intent was to ensure potential for a hire was possible, if the candidate was cleared and the mentoring experience was positive. All eight mentees who participated were recommended for continued processing, with intent to hire 6 of candidates and further consideration requested for the other two pertaining only to job location, and job support. During our debrief session BMO shared that a mentee had been interviewed prior to involvement in mentoring day. They indicated the mentee did not pass their initial interviewing process. However, given the caliber and potential they witnessed during the mentee's mentoring day experience, they reconsidered the mentee as an applicant. The mentee is now hired in Waterloo Region, in a full time position as a CSR. BMO indicated that DMD made all the difference. Due to DMD, the manager got to experience what the mentee was capable of, and realized their potential in a real life work scenario.

Sodexo, Lowes, BMO, Manulife, CMHA, MODC, TD all participated in multiple locations. They presented themselves as wanting to ensure that the event was utilized and seen by as many employees as possible, and with consideration of having a source of talent in each community.

- 2) DMD held a shared event with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, in Kingston. We held a community breakfast for Chamber members and community members, to share information about the Abilities Connect Fund and Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day. We feel that this was a successful integration with complementary goals, and an effective manner to demonstrate collaboration. We will look to do this in other communities next year.

3) DMD has been developed as an easily replicated and scaled experience. We have managed growth in 6 cities in Ontario and have tested events in 6 other locations around the world. As we have had to turn down numerous requests from both business and organizations across Canada, it has always been our intent to scale our event as possible. Given their unique DMD experiences and their respective organizational goals towards hiring, retention, and diversity, in multiple locations, CBC, BMO and Sodexo have all indicated they would be interested in participating in multiple locations, across Canada, helping us to help make DMD a National event. 2017 will be spectacular!

## V. The Labour Market

The labour market consists of two sides that when they are working together results in more jobseekers finding employment that matches their skills and more employers being able to find employees who meet their needs and skills demands, current and future. The data for parts of this section comes from the labour market information gathered by the local workforce planning boards and employment planning councils. For the purposes of the demand section, some of the city data includes surrounding townships and municipalities as that is how Statistics Canada reports the data which the planning boards and councils use.

### a. Supply

The last time that definitive data around persons with disabilities and employment was released was in the 2012 Canadian Survey of Disability. No update has been done since that time so those numbers will provide an overall picture to start this discussion. At that time, the national **employment rate** for persons who identify as having a disability was **49%** compared to **79%** for persons who do not identify as having a disability. Within the group who identified as having a disability, the national employment rate *declined* as participants reported more severe disabilities, going from **68%** for those who reported a mild disability to **26%** for those who reported severe disabilities. As a comparison point, Statistics Canada reported the overall national employment rate to be **61.2 %** for November 2016.

One determinant that can be key in employment is educational level; what is the highest level a person has attained and is the program one which allows for a transferal of skills needed in the workplace? This year, **14%** of all registered mentees had a high school diploma listed as their highest level of education or training while **8%** had less than high school attainment. Among mentees not placed, those numbers shifted to **15%** of all non-placed mentees having high school and **10%** of non-placed mentees not having high school attainment. The remaining **78%** of registered mentees held **40** college diplomas, **80** Bachelor and advanced degrees and **35** certificates and certifications. Postsecondary attainment was high in both placed and non-placed mentees.

Knowing postsecondary attainment was high, analysis was done around what types of mentoring arrangements people wanted and the programs they completed. Of the unplaced mentees, **40%** could identify an industry where they may have interest but could not identify a job within that area where their skills may be transferable. Half of that **40%** also did not have higher than a high school diploma. When looking at the completed programs of those who were not placed and reported postsecondary education, programs that supported work in health care and social assistance and social science programs (like psychology, sociology and political science) topped the list. While health care and social assistance may have specific jobs tied to it, social science programs usually do not. Engineering, Science and Business were the next most popular programs with each having 4 degrees or diplomas completed by non-placed mentees. Among the mentees placed in Dolphin DMD, many could articulate the industry they wanted, a type of position or had a program that led to specific types of positions for pairing.

Mentees who were not placed need to better understand their skills and may consider working with an Employment Ontario (EO) provider or EO partner to better define what they are searching for and how their skills fit. The local planning boards receive some data around EO clients who have declared that they have a disability; please note, Kingston's information is from their 2015 report as 2016 was not released at the writing of this report. In Waterloo, Toronto and Kingston, Employment Ontario providers have seen growth in the number of persons reporting a disability accessing their services. Hamilton's EO providers, however, have seen a drop in clients who use the Ontario Disability Support Plan. Brantford and London did not provide updates in their reports on EO supporting persons with disabilities.

## b. Demand

“What jobs are in demand?” and “What industries are growing?” play a large part in the demand side of the labour market. When these questions can be answered, mentees can see if their education and training and skills are a fit for opportunities in the sector or whether further training, or re-training, is needed.

The following chart illustrates the **industries which were engaged in Dolphin DMD this year** by 2-digit North American Industry Classification System, which cities that industry was engaged in and if the industry is in growth. For the purposes of this report with its focus on mentoring opportunities, the determinant of growth is reflective of whether the employment numbers are increasing or decreasing within the industry.

| Engaged Industries  | Brantford                  | Hamilton             | Kingston <sup>1</sup> | London               | Toronto             | Waterloo             |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| <b>41 Wholesale trade</b>                                   |                            |                      |                       |                      |                     | Decline <sup>2</sup> |
| <b>44-45 Retail trade</b>                                   | Growth                     | Decline <sup>2</sup> |                       |                      | Growth <sup>2</sup> | Decline <sup>2</sup> |
| <b>48-49 Transportation &amp; Warehousing</b>               |                            |                      |                       |                      |                     | Decline              |
| <b>51 Information &amp; cultural industries</b>             | Decline<br>(in prior year) |                      |                       | Decline <sup>3</sup> | Growth <sup>3</sup> | Decline <sup>3</sup> |
| <b>52 Finance &amp; insurance</b>                           |                            | Growth               | Decline               | Growth               | Growth              | Growth               |
| <b>54 Professional, scientific &amp; technical services</b> |                            | Decline              | Growth                | Growth               |                     | Growth               |
| <b>61 Educational services</b>                              |                            |                      |                       | Decline              | Growth              | Growth               |
| <b>62 Health care &amp; social assistance</b>               | Growth                     |                      |                       | Decline              |                     | Growth               |
| <b>71 Arts, entertainment &amp; recreation</b>              | Not available              |                      |                       |                      |                     | Decline <sup>3</sup> |
| <b>72 Accommodation &amp; food services</b>                 | Growth                     | Decline              | Growth                |                      | Growth              | Growth               |
| <b>81 Other services (except public administration)</b>     |                            | Growth               | Growth                |                      |                     | Growth               |
| <b>91 Public administration</b>                             | Not available              | Decline              | Growth                |                      | Decline             | No change            |

Brantford: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts 2015

Hamilton: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Kingston: Statistics Canada + CANSIM Table 282-012

*London: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 282-0125 (employment numbers 2014-2015, 51 and 71 are combined in table)*

*Toronto: Toronto Employment Survey + CANSIM Table 282-0125*

*Waterloo: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, 282-0125+ 282-0131*

<sup>1</sup> *This data is from 2013-2014 in the report and is combined with the statistics from the Kingston-Pembroke area to give an industry outlook.*

<sup>2</sup> *Retail Trade is combined with Wholesale Trade in the source data for these cities.*

<sup>3</sup> *Informational and Cultural Industries is combined with Arts, Entertainment and Recreation in the source data for these cities.*

Although some of these industries have seen employment numbers drop, that does not mean that demand has subsided. Retirements in skilled and technical positions may mean that it is harder to recruit those talents into companies and positions sit vacant longer. Across all six cities, industries in the service sector tend to have better growth than the industries that are part of the goods-producing sector. This leads to the second half of the demand equation which is looking at the types of careers in demand.

Similar to the chart above, the following chart depicts each of the broad National Occupational Classification categories that mentees were paired with and determines if employment and demand in that category had increased or decreased. There are some variations in the data reporting, but it will give an indication if the careers are potentially in demand.

| NOC Code   | Brantford <sup>2</sup> | Hamilton | Kingston <sup>1</sup> | London <sup>2</sup> | Toronto <sup>2</sup> | Waterloo <sup>2</sup> |
|--|------------------------|----------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>0 Management</b>                                  | Demand                 | Decline  | High                  | Demand              | Demand               | Demand                |
| <b>1 Business, finance &amp; admin</b>               | Demand                 | Growth   |                       | Demand              | Demand               | Demand                |
| <b>2 Natural &amp; applied sciences</b>              | Demand                 |          | High                  |                     | Decline              | Demand                |
| <b>3 Health</b>                                      |                        |          |                       |                     |                      |                       |
| <b>4 Education, law, social sciences, government</b> |                        | Growth   |                       |                     |                      | Some demand           |
| <b>5 Art, culture, recreation, sport</b>             | Not available          |          |                       |                     | No demand            | Not available         |
| <b>6 Sales and service</b>                           |                        |          |                       |                     |                      | Demand                |
| <b>7 Trades, transport &amp; equipment</b>           |                        |          |                       |                     |                      |                       |
| <b>8 Nat resources, ag &amp; related</b>             |                        |          |                       |                     |                      |                       |
| <b>9 Manufacturing &amp; Utilities</b>               |                        |          |                       |                     |                      |                       |

Brantford: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey & EMSI, Q3 2015, Analysis in Forging Skills for Today and Tomorrow: Update 2016

Hamilton: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Kingston: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey by Place of Work (POW)

London: www.VicinityJobs.com & www.MillierDikinsonBlais.com , Q1 and Q2 2015

Toronto: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

Waterloo: www.vicinityjobs.com, Q2 2016

<sup>1</sup> 1000 Islands Region Workforce Development Board did not contain a breakdown of job growth. The two NOCs that mentors made up both contain Top 20 jobs within Frontenac County meaning many people are employed in them.

<sup>2</sup> In their reports, these cities looked at job vacancy demands and other variables. The wording in the chart reflects demand.

In looking at this data, it is important to remember that there are large variations in the demand for employees and that each high level NOC contains a variety of types of workers.

### c. Analysis

Overall, there were many opportunities that were seized for mentees. The community coordinators engaged many industries that saw growth. There are a number of industries where growth was not consistent across the board but it may be that the industry in question is easier to engage or that an employer is interested in the mentoring opportunity and is in hiring mode. An



example of this is BMO's industry. While BMO's industry, Finance and Insurance, was technically in decline in Kingston, the corporate office saw the advantage of being engaged and got involved. This is also true with the educational companies in some communities. One area with a lot of opportunity that has not seen a lot of engagement is manufacturing. Only Toronto and Kingston saw a decline in their manufacturing employment numbers over the previous year; yet, even the analysis with those planning boards anticipates potential growth.

Another interesting piece in the analysis of the demand was that many mentors were classified as managerial. In some cases, these were direct matches where the mentee and mentor were in a one-on-one match. In other cases, the manager registered as the mentor and the mentee spent the day with a team. These team matches need to be captured to better reflect the positions that are mentoring the mentee and what types of positions the mentee may be the best match for. This data capture will better build the day and provide more information when community coordinators and the Dolphin DMD look for employer engagement.

As in 2015, one of the most important factors that affected whether a mentee had a match was their choice of industry and the ability of the community coordinator to find a business willing to provide the mentoring experience. The better a community coordinator's connections and awareness of the local employer market, the more able the coordinator is to find a match. Mentees with engineering and technological backgrounds can be harder to match unless the coordinator has an "in" at a company or knows of companies in the area that hire that skill set.

The final challenge is in the industries that are growing but are not engaged. Construction, health care and manufacturing are all industries that are seeing growth in the majority of these local economies. There may be opportunities to connect some of these industries with mentees whose backgrounds are more administrative in nature. This approach may require the Dolphin DMD executive team to engage a national industry partner, thereby broaden the scope of mentoring opportunities into these sectors.

## **VI. COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

DMD requires a community partner in each DMD event location. These relationships are utilized to help identify potential mentee sources, as well as pre-existing relationships with employment and community support workers. Current business connections are great, but desired impact is the establishment of new business engagement. This year we worked with 4 new community partners, March of Dimes, Ableworks, Canadian Council for Rehabilitation and Work, Workplace Essential Skills Partnership, Keys Job Connect, and a provincial partner, ODEN. We also continued to work with our community partner Brantwood Community Services.

MD could not happen without the partnerships of community partners and coordinators, which help to run the location events, source mentees, arrange accommodations, communicate with the employer sites, and present information sessions to both mentors and mentees. Dolphin hosted employer DMD information sessions, which enabled new employer connections for partners, a greater understanding of employer expectations and HR processes, and improved communication between business and community.

DMD partners/coordinators were asked to share how DMD supported their activities and what they hoped DMD would help them do moving forward.

### **Hamilton, Ableworks**

DMD provided our member organizations with a wonderful tool to share with their existing clients. Ten of the Mentees placed in Hamilton were referred by Ableworks service providers. The Service providers received feedback on the job seeker's experience gaining an edge in evaluating and further developing their career goals with them. DMD provided a new opportunity to share information about our services within the business community and with job seekers who are not engaged with an ODSP-ES service provider. As the DRS for Ableworks.ca initiative, my goal is to create mutually beneficial relationships with employers. By facilitating this event in Hamilton, I was able to offer new and existing employers with a very valuable experience. Representing a segment of the not for profit sector, I feel it equally important to demonstrate the value this sector can offer the business community in order to encourage community partnerships between the two sectors. J. Gorman

### **London & Waterloo Region, March of Dimes**

March of Dimes was pleased to be the Community Coordinator for Disabilities Mentoring Day for both Kitchener/Waterloo and London. The goals and values of Disabilities Mentoring Day

align with the goals and values of March of Dimes Canada and the way we do business - by presenting a business case to employers highlighting the value a PWD can bring to the workforce. As the Community Coordinator, March of Dimes Canada obtained increased access to employers motivated to hire from a non-traditional talent source - people with disabilities. These connections continue with several employers and have provided opportunities for March of Dimes to increase our knowledge of employer needs as well as increase access to hiring opportunities and labour market information. DMD directly resulted in a job start with an employer who had not hired from us locally before. DMD also resulted in a client obtaining information from his mentor which prompted him to be more open when applying for jobs and pursuing a "path" to employment. This will increase his opportunity to obtain employment significantly. Another client recognized very quickly that she was seeking a different type of work environment and articulated this to MODC upon completion of DMD which assisted staff in tailoring their employment search activities. March of Dimes obtained at least one ODSP referral from a mentee who is highly employable. It also served as an opportunity for MODC staff to observe our own clients in their interactions with employer mentors which will assist in identifying suitable job goals and environments.

Disabilities Mentoring Day not only benefited our office directly in the way of a job start, referrals, employer connections etc., it has also contributed to our greater goal of increasing our overall presence in the community. This includes increased connections with the local college and universities with whom we hope to create opportunities to partner and work collectively to meet the needs of students with disabilities who are seeking employment. L. Livingston

### **Kingston, Keys Job Centre**

DMD helped us promote KEYS in the community as an organization serving people with disabilities and build new relationship or strengthen existing relationships with employers and other community agencies, the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Kingston. This will help us in future with recruitment of employers and clients for other programs. Our DMD experience can also help us demonstrate organizational capacity to serve persons with disabilities, work effective with employers and raise awareness about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. J. Mareckova

### **Toronto, Canadian Council on Rehabilitation & Work, Workplace Essential Skills Partnership**

Many of CCRW's clients who participated in the Dolphin Mentorship Day are people with a professional background who have experienced barriers and discrimination. The impact of

DMD went beyond the day itself. Many of our clients have maintained communications with their mentors, some have had interviews and all of them regained their confidence. DMD opens the door for job seekers with disabilities to enhance their employability and for employers to take advantage of a talent pool that has remained untapped for too long. M. Pandith

### **Brantford, Brantwood**

DMD gives us an opportunity to show appreciation to our community for support in our on-going pursuit of community connections, via social media and publicity, for people using our services. It is another opportunity for our participants to prove their abilities in the work place and employers we have made connections with to experience for themselves what abilities they have! S. Pritchard

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

As there has been accelerated growth with DMD many potential outcomes have been revealed. Businesses have requested disability language/interaction training, methodologies for identifying talent resources, and opportunities for sharing best practices. These requests present opportunity for new deliverables and will enable development towards DMD as a sustainable model. It will also require significant participation by more community partners, EO providers and the utilization of other business supports, like WPB's, Chambers, and Associations.

Successful hires and continued mentoring are a natural outcome of this mentoring process. We have received confirmation that **14** hires have been completed or are in process at the time of this report. Twelve are full time positions, and two are in food services. Each event location notes multiple instances of continued communication, resume review, interviews, internship review, and introduction to other business contacts. We do not require post event reporting, after the initial survey, so are working on a mechanism to do follow up monitoring to be able to capture complete results. Of continued importance is the reception to our 'Meet & Greet' events. 86% of mentees and 84% of mentors indicate it to be valuable or critical for the success of their DMD experience. A number of businesses indicated interest in further training or information sessions, like our Meet & Greet and 80% of our community partners/coordinators requested support with initial employer engagement and/or post DMD employer communication. There is opportunity here to continue to develop this model on both the supply and demand sides.

Leaders need to be able to disrupt without interrupting, reshape without stretching and achieve sustainability without complacency. It is important to elevate the conversation from a purely rational “business case” discussion to one that also wins hearts and minds and compels others to become passionate about their sense of work. A leader is one who knows what is possible and can inspire others to believe in that possibility too.

We see potential: Dolphin is committed to the continued growth and development of DMD and we look forward to establishing a National presence in 2017.