

ON NEWS

YOUR ONTARIO NORTHLAND EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



Steering Success: Tom Skinner's Rail Journey

Tom Skinner's journey with Ontario Northland is a story of career evolution and adaptability. Starting as a Conductor and advancing to Locomotive Engineer, Skinner transitioned from a satellite technician at Bell to a key player in the running trades here at Ontario Northland.

Initially aiming for a signal maintainer role at another railway, the lack of openings led him to embrace conductor training. His career took a significant turn when a Conductor position at Ontario Northland opened during a visit to his hometown of New Liskeard—a twist of fate that Skinner couldn't ignore.

In his current role as a Locomotive Engineer, Skinner shoulders many crucial responsibilities. His work encompasses the safe operation of trains, adherence to schedules, and secure transportation of passengers and freight. Skinner's expertise spans a broad range of train operations, from braking mechanisms to locomotive dynamics and safety protocols. His role demands not only comprehensive knowledge of systems but also attention to detail and quick decision-making skills, particularly under the dynamic weather conditions and terrains of Northern Ontario.



Tom speaks candidly about the unpredictability of his schedule, noting it as a challenging aspect of his job. However, he finds great reward in the job itself and the community among his colleagues in railroading. *“There’s always the possibility to be called randomly despite a set schedule,”* says Tom, *“but I love what I do, and friendships you make in this industry and community are awesome.”*

Embracing the unpredictable nature of railroading, Skinner understands the need for flexibility. *“If you’re a railroader, don’t make plans,”* he humorously echoes, highlighting the challenge of maintaining a rigid schedule in this field.

Reflecting on the support and recognition for running trades, Tom appreciates the improvements at Ontario Northland. He praises managers like Michael Hayes, Manager of Train Services - Cochrane, for acknowledging the hard work of employees. *“Mike is one of the most respected managers I have ever come across,”* Tom states, hopeful that such positive attitudes will spread throughout industry managers.

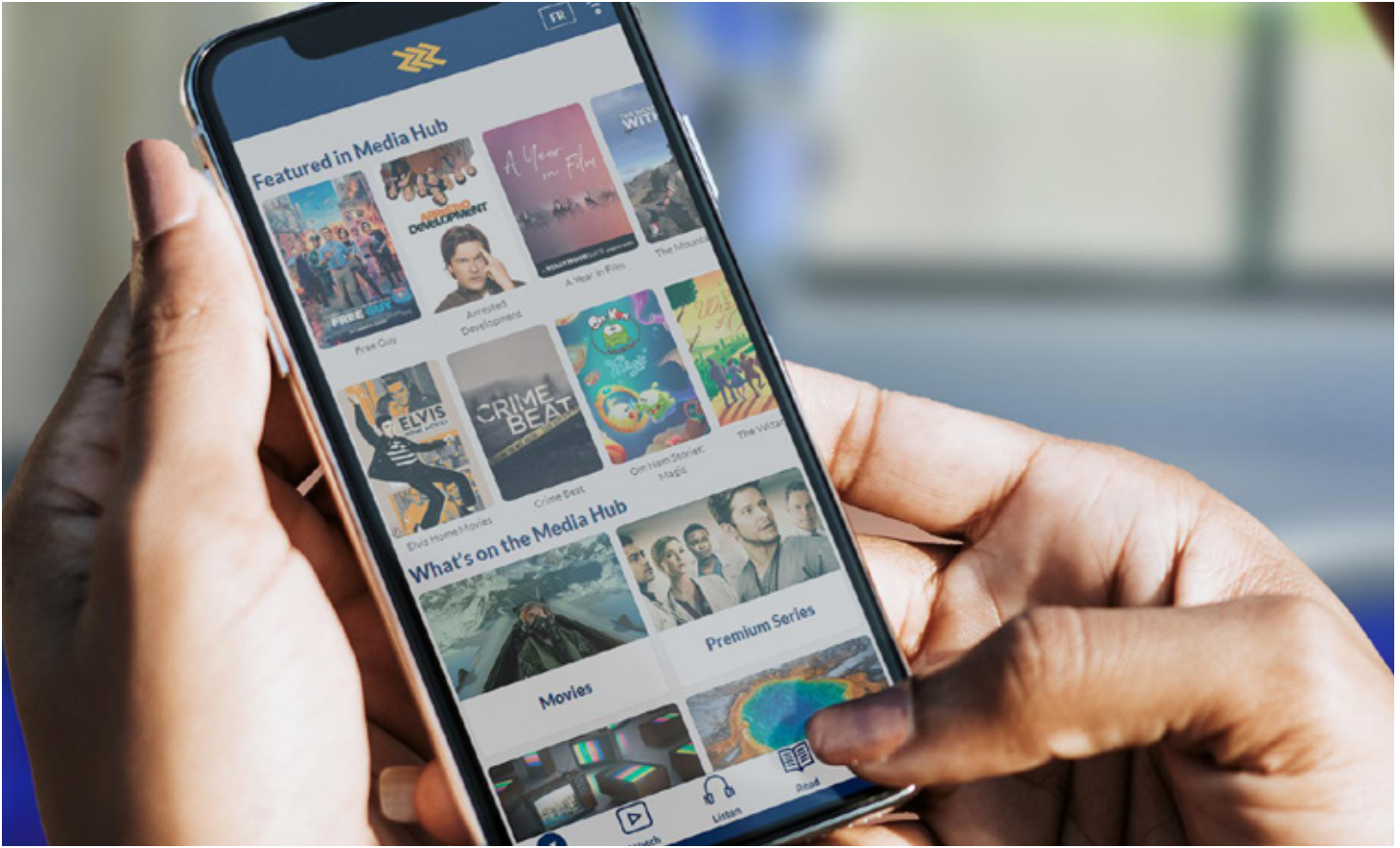
Balancing a demanding career with family responsibilities, Skinner, a father of two daughters, emphasizes the importance of making time for family and enjoys outdoor activities on his days off.



Motorin' Along

Ontario Northland welcomed back the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) for a tour of our rail line from Sunday, September 10th to Thursday, September 14th. The 5-day, 624-mile excursion went from North Bay to Cochrane with a side trip to Rouyn-Noranda and included 25 motor cars and two Ontario Northland hi-rail trucks. Chad Marin and Jeremy Girard are pictured here before setting off with the group of operators on their tour.

A special thank you to Guy Langis who coordinated this tour on behalf of Ontario Northland and delivered the safety briefing prior to the group's departure.



ON Board Entertainment System Takes Off

In the age of streaming movies and TV at the click of a button, Ontario Northland knew enhancing access to Wi-Fi and entertainment options on their busses would bring the customer experience to the next level, especially for passengers travelling long distances. Since August, internet access, movies, TV shows, podcasts and more are now available to motor coach passengers free of charge thanks to the new onboard entertainment portal, ON Board.

At the beginning of their trip, passengers are invited to look for "ON Board Wi-Fi" on their device and connect via onboardwifi.com. They are then welcome to browse the extensive list of free entertainment options.

The new system is already getting rave reviews from customers, with one customer stating *"the on-board free Wi-Fi and entertainment system is fantastic for me as I do not have data on my phone, and it was wonderful to access internet on my tablet to watch movies and TV shows. It sure made my 22-hour trip go by much more quickly than it actually was."*

CEO Chad Evans is also impressed with the new system saying, *"This is a major upgrade for our passengers, the ON Board experience looks incredible, and we have a great team delivering and supporting the service".*



Coming Soon: Wi-Fi on the PBX

Following the success of the ON Board portal on our motor coaches, sights are now set on our Polar Bear Express which has no Wi-Fi connectivity due to the remote nature of its route. This past Fall, Chad Evans, CEO of Ontario Northland publicly announced that the PBX will soon be experiencing an exciting upgrade as we prepare to install ON Board entertainment on the PBX and internet connection using Star Link's satellites.



the ability for employees to stay connected to each other, enhancing both safety and productivity.”

To further this, Manager of Passenger Services Eric Rochon says that *“Connectivity is going to be a game changer. Conductors will be able to scan (redeem) and update passenger tickets in real time and receive updates that there may be passengers to pick-up at flag stops along the route even after departure.”*

Access to Wi-Fi and the ON Board entertainment system is slated to roll-out in 2024 on the Polar Bear Express. Stay tuned for more updates on this monumental service enhancement!

Manager of IT Operations Jeff Lacarte was on hand at the event to answer questions about the new solution. Referencing the router unit pictured here, Jeff explains, *“the unit will be set up in the Polar Bear Express’ baggage car and receives internet from Star Link which will then be distributed across access points set up in each passenger rail car.”*

Jeff highlights the importance of this advancement for the organization saying, *“not only will passengers benefit from this solution, but operations will also be enhanced with new point-of-sale access for food and beverage sales and*



Partnership Ensures Speedy Specimen Deliveries for Health Provider

At Ontario Northland we keep people and goods moving each day. While this may seem a simple task to some, it creates an incredibly positive impact on the communities we serve, especially in the North. A recent partnership between our Bus Parcel Express service and the North Shore Health Network has proven that once again.

The partnership originated when Kim Rouselle, a Manager - Medical Imaging & Lab from NHSN, reached out to Ontario Northland’s Manager of Agencies and Sales Jennifer Buchanan, seeking assistance with their freight service concerns.

Faced with prohibitive costs for their daily specimen deliveries and no agency in Blind River, Jennifer engaged with Motor Coach Services to find a solution. Operations Supervisor Mike Gour played a pivotal role in exploring the area, ensuring our transportation services could efficiently reach the site and Jen’s team worked simultaneously to establish a direct shipping account for them.

Jennifer says, *“Given the time-sensitive nature of these packages, requiring daily pick-ups, our primary focus was ensuring timely transportation.”*

North Shore Health Network relies on the Bus Parcel Express service six days a week to manage their daily shipping needs, with the consistency and reliability of our service being integral to the smooth running of their healthcare operations.

Specimens are collected and transported to our Sudbury Bus Depot. From there, the time-sensitive cargo seamlessly moves through a courier service to reach the hospital in Sudbury, a process made possible by the collaborative partnership.

This unique scenario underscores Ontario Northland’s commitment to assisting Northerners in finding cost-effective solutions. Our joint efforts not only resulted in an efficient, reliable, and cost-effective transportation solution but also contributed to the well-being of the community. Ontario Northland’s affordable service played a pivotal role in supporting North Shore Health Network’s mission to provide quality care.

In response to our collaboration, Tim Vine, President & CEO of North Shore Health Network, expressed his appreciation, stating, *“I think this is such a wonderful example of Northern resourcefulness and shows Ontario Northland’s commitment to the communities it serves.”*

Englehart Shop Complex Expansion Project Underway



If you work out of Englehart or have been by for a visit lately you may have noticed the beginning stages of some exciting construction work happening near the Maintenance of Way Shop! The Englehart Maintenance of Way Repair Shop Expansion project will see an addition of 90'x120' to the existing Maintenance of Way Shop – a much needed addition now that the Maintenance of Way work out of North Bay has moved to Englehart. The expansion will have the following features;

- Three work bays with one being dedicated to Rail Mechanical
- An overhead crane over two of the bays for heavy lifting
- New Signals Shop
- Expanded Stores space
- Expanded lunchroom
- New training room
- Office spaces

This expansion will centralize the Work Equipment repairs and add capacity to the Rail Mechanical group to complete minor repairs and maintenance to locomotives and railcars. The anticipated completion of this project is the end of August 2024. The existing Rail Mechanical and Signals Shop will be demolished at a later date. Stay tuned as this construction project progresses!



Ontario Northland Welcomes Associate Minister to North Bay



Ontario Northland was happy to host Associate Minister of Transportation Vijay Thanigasalam and Minister Vic Fedeli in November for a series of activities showcasing

Ontario Northland's current and future service offerings.

Members of the Northlander Project Team gathered at the North Bay Station to meet the Associate Minister and discuss what Ontario Northland is doing now to prepare for the future passenger rail service.

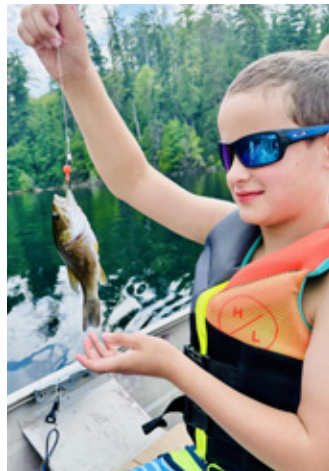
As part of the visit, we were also proud to showcase the incredible work happening at our Remanufacturing and Repair Centre. The craftsmanship and quality our employees exemplify is second to none!

Thank you to everyone for giving our VIP guests a warm welcome.

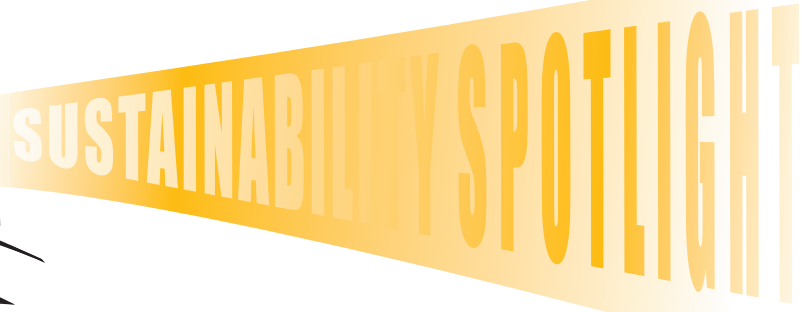


Photo Contest Makes a Splash

This August we asked employees to show off their best catch on our Dispatch App for a chance to win a fish finder and they did not disappoint! Check out some of the entries from our 'Snap N' Splash' fishing photo contest. Congratulations to our winner Samantha Whitelock, we hope you were able to find even more fish for the taking!







Submitted by Abbigail Shillinglaw, Sustainability Specialist

The “Sustainability Spotlight” section is dedicated to highlighting the important environmentally-friendly projects being undertaken by Ontario Northland and its dedicated employees.



Exploring New Possibilities through Electric Coach Bus Trials

During Fall 2023, Ontario Northland conducted a field trial of a full-sized battery electric coach bus to better understand the benefits and limitations of incorporating potential coach bus electrification technology. The trial bus features a unique technological design that helps to resolve some of the issues that had been previously identified in other electric bus model trials (including the reduction of required battery storage space which allows for more luggage storage, as well as increased battery range). Ken Grube, Director of Motor Coach Operations, shared, *“This bus has been engineered and designed in consideration of the long distance and space requirements necessary for intercity motor coach transportation.”*

With this model being a potential candidate, a series of field trials were conducted during October to explore its capabilities. Four Ontario Northland employees and two employees from FleetZero, the vendor supporting this initiative, joined the trial runs. Three routes were analyzed: North Bay to Sudbury (one-way), North Bay to Sudbury (round-trip) and a sensitivity test in North Bay. *“We are very excited with the distance/range that the vehicle can travel on one charge,”* says Gerald Decou, Sr Fleet Manager. *“The*

number of charging centers throughout our bus service network has also increased, creating more opportunity to charge coaches,” he adds.

An important finding was that the electric bus could successfully complete the North Bay to Sudbury round-trip intercommunity corridor with 44% battery life remaining at the end of the run. To continue exploring the possibility for Northern Ontario intercommunity battery electric motor coach operations, the Ontario Northland team furthered their field trials with an extended one-month pilot program from November to December 2023. This pilot program considered new variables by testing longer distances, weight load capacities and implementing the training of additional drivers. The program was monitored by a third party and provided a better understanding of how this technology operates in colder conditions – a critically important consideration in the North. Following the month-long program, the manufacturer upgraded the Coach’s heating system, which has since greatly improved the interior heating. In addition, the impact on the battery power has been minimal, a great milestone achievement for the program. Now that Winter is in full swing, the team is planning to test the equipment on a longer trip to Ottawa near the end of January 2024.

While still *“early days”*, these trials represent major strides towards a more sustainable motor coach fleet. Decou added, *“The electric coach demonstrates the true possibilities of EV implementation in our fleet, with the prospect of creating a green, zero emission line-run while continuing to support passenger comfort and minimum impact to storage capacity.”* Overall, a very exciting sustainability venture at Ontario Northland with terrific future promise!

Future Solar Power Generation at Motor Coach Facility in North Bay

A new shelter is being constructed at the North Bay Bus Maintenance Facility to provide coverage to help protect Ontario Northland buses from harsh weather elements.



The new bus shelter also presented an opportunity to incorporate a renewable energy component. *“The new shelter will be equipped with a solar PV (photovoltaic) system that will power operations like power receptacles and LED lighting,”* says Ken Grube, Director of Motor Coach Operations. *“The great part is that the excess power can be returned and used by the neighboring bus maintenance facility to reduce our annual electricity consumption.”*

According to preliminary analysis, the solar power generated by the new canopy will meaningfully offset a good portion of the bus garage’s annual electricity consumption. This renewable energy solution will likely result in a return on investment in 14 years out of a 35-year project lifetime.



Limiting Waste with Recyclable Asphalt at Head Office

Asphalt is one of the few building materials that is 100% recyclable, which helps to reduce waste and limit the constant need for all new materials. Facilities supervisor, Shawn Harwood, explains that the Facilities Department tries to incorporate sustainability initiatives in all the projects they take on. During recent parking lot upgrades in North Bay, Miller Paving started by milling up the existing asphalt into smaller pieces which was then loaded and transported to a stockpile at one of their asphalt plant sites. This stockpile of existing asphalt is then crushed into

a product called RAP (Recycled Asphalt Product). Ontario specifications allow for 20% of this product to be added back into new asphalt mixture, which lowers the amount of “new” asphalt cement that needs to be added in the mixing process. Once everything was heated and mixed, it was transported back, re-laid, and compacted as the new asphalt. With the old material being added to their RAP stockpile, it can continue to be reused in additional paving jobs as needed. Very sustainable, indeed!



Cochrane’s First Electric Truck – Plugged-In and Ready!

There was an exciting addition to the Cochrane Shop’s fleet – a brand new Ford F-150 Lightning! This truck is fully electric, and the first of its kind for Ontario Northland. The EV truck is used by Ontario Northland employees for local work, as well as travelling between Cochrane and Timmins. This pilot program will provide key metrics that will aid in future fleet purchase planning. *“This is a great pilot program that will draw a lot of good intelligence to confirm the viability of this new technology,”* says Martin Bizier, Operations and Capital Projects Analyst. While the North still has plenty of room to grow with respect to EV charging infrastructure and overall uptake, piloting this electric vehicle will help Ontario Northland better understand performance, capabilities and maintenance of EV technology in the Northern Ontario climate. Where feasible, electric vehicle technology presents a great opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and, so far, employees at the Cochrane Shops have been impressed by the F-150 Lightning.

Building Climate Change Resilience through Innovative Rail High-Water Study

During July and October 2023, Ontario Northland rail managers were accompanied by researchers from the National Research Council (NRC) to undertake field data collection along the Kirkland Lake Subdivision using digital, hi-rail truck mounted sensors (LIDAR, RGB and thermal imagery). This research collaboration between Ontario Northland, NRC and McGill University is being undertaken under grant award through Transport Canada’s Rail Climate Change Adaptation Program. Collected data, including field and satellite imagery, will be processed through algorithms to support the development of a digital, GIS-based



dashboard tool for Ontario Northland rail managers to monitor climate data and high-water trends across the rail system. *“Overall, this innovative study will provide critical information to help Ontario Northland rail managers better understand, map, and mitigate environmental and climate change risks along the rail right of way,”* says Joe Viscek, Sr. Manager, Earth & Environment. We hope to share more information about this exciting project as it develops!



Key Study Commenced – Ontario Northland Baseline Sustainability Audits

As the old saying goes, *“if you can’t measure it, how can you fix it?”*. As part of Ontario Northland’s sustainability efforts, it is important that we understand the key metrics behind the organization’s environmental footprint. To do this, Ontario Northland has engaged a consulting/engineering firm to complete organization-wide sustainability audits, which will involve collecting and evaluating historical data about energy consumption, waste generation/diversion, water and greenhouse gas equivalents. Evaluation of this critical data will allow Ontario Northland to establish a baseline, identify environmental impacts and potential inefficiencies from our facilities/operations, and highlight opportunities for setting key performance indicators (KPIs) for goal setting and continual improvement. *“This initiative is part of the necessary beginning steps of our Sustainability Program,”* says Abby Shillinglaw, Sustainability Specialist. *“The data compiled from this exercise will help guide, support and measure all future sustainability initiatives that are to come,”* she adds. Most recently, during November 2023, preliminary site visits were conducted at Ontario Northland’s North Bay, Englehart and Cochrane facilities to meet staff and make observations from the ground. This project work is expected to continue into 2024. With this important information at hand, we are very excited for what the future will bring for Ontario Northland!

For questions or comments related to Ontario Northland’s Sustainability Program, please contact Abbigail Shillinglaw, Sustainability Specialist (Email: Abbigail.Shillinglaw@ontarionorthland.ca)



Scrap Rail Tie Clean-up Continues!

Ontario Northland continues to work with its Contractors as part of its annual scrap tie pick-up program along its rail right of way, improving the appearance of communities and bettering the environment. *“So far, as of November 2023, we estimate that about 260,000 scrap rail ties have been collected from the rail right of way this season, with this clean-up work ongoing”* explains Mérick Letourneau, Manager of Track Programs. These scrap rail ties are sent for end-of-life re-purposing, which typically involves third-party chipping of the wooden ties followed by reuse for “co-generation”/feedstock to power various industrial facilities.

Farewells from Retirees



Dave Beadman

Dave started his career with Ontario Northland in 1984 right after finishing high school. He was hired as a Summer Coach Cleaner, responsible for cleaning the passenger trains. At the time, Dave's mother oversaw Food Services, therefore the Shop Manager made sure Dave was assigned to cleaning the diners so they wouldn't receive any

complaints. For the next two summers, he would clean the 1407, Meacham, Mouse River and 1405.

From 1986 to 1987, Dave spent two years as a Seasonal Labourer for MTO until he got a call from Kirk Archer in early April 1988 for the opportunity to become a Conductor. It was his dream job as railroading had been around his family for many years, with his mother and two older brothers working at the company. After finishing his training trips, he was assigned to the Englehart Yard spare board and worked for nine months before getting laid-off. Dave then continued to repeat the seasonal Trainman jobs for the next three years, working mostly in the Englehart and Cochrane Yards.

Early in 1991, Dave realized he couldn't continue to work as Conductor any longer as he was married with three children, working three months wasn't cutting it anymore. In late August 1991, he had an interview with CMO Peter Turgeon for a permanent position as a Coach Cleaner. Dave accepted the position with a promise from Peter that if he did well on the upcoming apprenticeship interview, he could start as a Carman Apprenticeship (now called Railway Car Technicians).

In October 2019, Dave took on a leadership role as Mechanical Equipment Supervisor on dayshift, receiving mentoring from Brian, Peter, Randy and Scott. Dave really enjoyed the challenges of his new position. Although it wasn't easy for him to adjust to management. Once he figured the job out, he really liked working with the employees and training them to become better at their respective trades. Dave thanks Brian Malherbe and Lonnie Little for giving him an opportunity to work in the Equipment Supervisor position, one that he truly enjoyed. It will be a sad day for Dave to say goodbye to everyone as 35 years is a long time to work for one company. He will definitely miss railroading but it's time for him to fly.

James Massicotte

"First and most importantly, I would like to thank my wife, Sherry. Without her and my family my retirement would not have the significance it has. This is as much a retirement for

me as it is for her, through all her hard work at home and the many years of her dedicated work at a variety of companies.

On May 11, 1989, I started with the Ontario Northland Railway in Cochrane, Ontario at the age of 21. This was just five days after marrying my beautiful wife of over 34 years now and one month after the birth of our first son Warren. So, to say my wife and I were grateful for my hiring on with the ONR would be an understatement. I worked as a Cleaner for my first three years then went on to accept an Electrical Apprenticeship in North Bay. I trained and worked in different departments there between 1992-1998 and successfully completed my schooling at the Sault and Northern Colleges.

In the Fall of 1998, I successfully bid on a bulletin that brought my family and I back home to Cochrane where I would continue to work in the electrical field for an additional 25 years. I enjoyed mainly working on repairing HVAC, refrigeration and electrical systems on the ever-changing PBX and Northlander passenger trains. I also enjoyed doing the job of Electrical Work Cell Leader from 2018 until the present.

I am proud to have carried on what my family had started here and now my son Zach will continue the same as her forges his own path in the electrical field. It is a personal highlight of my career that I was able to teach and work with my son. I support and believe that hiring and training apprentices within is, and will continue to be, the best way to build the electrical personnel.

I am ready to enjoy retirement and healthier quality time after going through two knee surgeries in the last five years. My wife and I plan on travelling in our first winter of retirement somewhere warm to celebrate. We also look forward to spending more real quality time with our families, including our six beautiful grandchildren Anna (11), Jersey (11), Jaxton (9), Avery (4), Ayden (3), and Jaidyn (2). I plan on doing what I love the most: being in the outdoors with family, travelling, camping, hunting, fishing and being on the trap line.



Lastly, I would like to thank everyone that wished me well in retirement and assisted with the purchase of the great retirement jacket, the other great gifts, and the presentation, unexpected but very appreciated. I would also like to wish my fellow employees' good luck in their own career paths and retirements. It was nice working with everyone."

Welcome New Employees

Since June 5th 2023, 82 employees have joined us. Be sure to introduce yourself and personally welcome them to Ontario Northland!

Drew Arbic Track Labourer Englehart	Haley D'Angelo HR Business Partner North Bay	James Jessup Machinist North Bay	Scott Merkley Warehouseman Moosonee	Kyle Snider Production Worker North Bay
Scott Barber Asset Strategy & Planning Spec. North Bay	Brian Dickinson Conductor Trainee North Bay	Shawn Johnston Refurb. Painter North Bay	Courtney Miller Production Worker North Bay	Carter Sopchyshyn Track Labourer Englehart
Shalyn Bartraw Production Worker North Bay	Michael Dlugosz Electrician North Bay	Tyler Karpenko Refurb. Electrical Apprentice North Bay	Edward Milton Production Worker North Bay	Sarvesh Syal ITS Support Analyst North Bay
Kelly Beach Steward/Chef Cochrane	Alexandre Dutrisc Production Worker North Bay	Collin King Production Worker North Bay	Greyse Obin De Los Santos Parts Data Coordinator North Bay	Steve Vaillancourt Conductor Trainee North Bay
Jacob Belanger Storesperson North Bay	Bright Effah Bus. Int & Reporting Analyst North Bay	Ross Kingshott IT Systems Engineer North Bay	Rejean Ouellet Track Labourer Englehart	Vladyslav Vasylets Production Worker North Bay
Brian Bessette Production Worker North Bay	Tristan Ford Machinist North Bay	Stephanie Lalonde-Chapman Production Worker North Bay	Tanvi Pal Bus. Int. & Reporting Analyst North Bay	Mark Verok Conductor Trainee North Bay
Broedy Bessette Track Labourer Englehart	Daxym Genier Cleaner Cochrane	Alexander Larade Cleaner North Bay	David Pieri Refurb. Painter North Bay	Shannon Vickery Asset Analyst Rail Mechanical Englehart
Brady Boileau Production Worker North Bay	Darian Gervais Conductor Trainee North Bay	Branden Leroy Track Labourer Englehart	Paul Michael Pilkington Environmental Scientist Englehart	Ed Violette Maintenance Planner North Bay
Marshall Bourgeois Track Labourer Englehart	Jessica Gramigna OCM Specialist North Bay	Hayley Lessard CSSA Cochrane	Daniel Pottruff Metal Fabricator (Fitter) North Bay	Samantha Whitelock CSSA Cochrane
Nicole Campbell Bus Operator North Bay	Liliana Hamelin-Stewart Storesperson North Bay	Paul Loder Supervisor, MoW Cochrane/Kapuskasing	Brinda Ranpura Proc. Contracts Specialist North Bay	Heydon Wilkes Conductor Trainee North Bay
McCrea Cazabon Media Graphic Design Student North Bay	Josh Hamilton Refurb. Painter North Bay	Prasanna Mamidi Systems Administrator - Ent. Sys. North Bay	Andrew Robinson Corporate Service Centre Rep North Bay	Ryley Wolfe Engine Attendant North Bay
Joseph Certossi Production Worker North Bay	Justin Hardwick Leadhand Mechanic - Bus Garage North Bay	Cody Mann Track Labourer Englehart	Edmund Santos Internal Audit Specialist North Bay	Hunter Woods Track Labourer Englehart
Thomas Chalykoff Supply Chain Coordinator North Bay	Dennis Higgins Supervisor, MoW- District 1 Englehart	Justice Mathews Poe Warehouseman Cochrane	Jeffrey Schoenberger Bus Operator North Bay	Esmail Zougari Manager, Capital Project North Bay
Taryn Charters Asset Management Specialist North Bay	Patrick Houghton Production Worker North Bay	Giovanni Mazzuchelli Production Worker North Bay	Latika Sharma Manager, Business Planning North Bay	David Zylstra Production Worker North Bay
Colby Cheechoo Chain/Whse/Cashier/Baggage Moosonee	Roger Houle Jr. Production Worker North Bay	Krysta McEwen Bus Operator North Bay	Abigail Shillinglaw Sustainability Specialist Englehart	
Maxwell Church Motor Coach Operator Trainer North Bay	Gavan Jamieson Financial Analyst North Bay	Janie McLeod Indigenous Engagement Coordinator North Bay	Arthur Shrum Bus Operator North Bay	
Benjamin Clark Production Worker North Bay	Kopinath Jeganathan Programmer Analyst North Bay	Tristan Mejia Housekeeper/Front Desk Cochrane	Ravinder Singh Cleaner Cochrane	

Four Mile Lake Road Crossing: A Joint Effort by Ontario Northland



The recent renovation of the Four Mile Lake Road crossing marks another successful collaboration between Ontario Northland and the City of North Bay. This project addressed the long-standing issues of the crossing, which had deteriorated over time due to traffic and weather elements.

At road crossings like Four Mile Lake Road, where road and railway intersect, maintenance and repair responsibilities are typically shared between a railway company and the local government or road authority. In this case, Ontario Northland was tasked with repairing the railway tracks and associated infrastructure. Meanwhile, Miller Paving on behalf of the city, handled the road surface leading up to the crossing, including signage and non-railway safety features.

The double-track crossing at Four Mile Lake Road underwent more than just routine touch-ups; it required a full overhaul. *“We faced challenges like potholes, timbers, and deteriorating asphalt,”* said Jill Cornick, Tech Services Engineer-In-Training, who was responsible for managing

the road crossing capital project. *“The team removed and replaced a critical section of the track. This included renewing the ballast, ties, and rails, overall improving drainage and stability. This time, rather than using timber, the city paved over the entire crossing, creating a smoother and more durable surface.”*

A road closure was necessary to perform the work. To limit the closure time, two Ontario Northland Section Crews worked on the job: North Bay Yard and North Bay North. A notable innovation in our approach was the use of a preassembled rail panel. A section of rails, plates and ties were pre-built and stored on the nearby siding. Once the road was closed and the existing track removed, the panel could be dropped into place and attached at either end to the existing track. While not a standard practice in traditional crossing repairs, this method saved a significant amount of time and effort during the repair process.



The community’s positive response to the renovations reflected the necessity of the work. The temporary two-day closure of the crossing for repairs, though inconvenient, was met with patience from the residents of Four Mile Lake Road.

Best Wishes in Your Retirement

Pensioner	Last Position	Location
Robert Cunningham	Cleaner	North Bay
Paul Dowdall	Painter Technical Support Worker	North Bay
Jean-Claude Genier	Track Technician	Island Falls
Peter Lappage	Engine Attendant	North Bay
John Miller	Track Maintenance Foreman	Hearst
William Paquette	Bus Operator	Sudbury
Danny Roy	Electrician	North Bay

Significant Infrastructure Investment Provides Increased Efficiency & Safety for Train Operations

Submitted by Michael Rennie, Senior Manager, Training & Regulatory Affairs



Commissioning crew (left to right): Signal & Communication Technician Kurtis Westbrook; Sr. Mgr. Training & Regulatory Affairs Michael Rennie; Signal & Communication Manager Kevin Dube; Leading Signal Maintainer Mike Emmell; District Manager Chad Martin; Signal & Communication Technician Craig Jennings

Six days a week, trains pass a switch at Mile 25.6 on the Ramore subdivision. First installed in 1923 during the building of the Kirkland Lake subdivision at Swastika, the position of this switch is significant as it determines whether a movement continues travelling on the Ramore Sub or diverts towards Kirkland Lake.

For many years, daily operations had trains encountering this hand operated switch in the opposite position to what they needed, as the preceding train required it to be set the other way. On some days, Infrastructure employees working nearby would move the switch to the correct position for the next train, however much of time the approaching train would need to come to a complete stop to allow a train crew employee to climb off the engine, throw the switch to the correct position, and then climb back on and start moving again on their intended route. The ongoing need to stop a moving train weighing thousands of tons in order to handle the switch came with significant financial, environmental, and safety impacts including:

- wear on the track structure as the train slowed down;
- wear on brake components to slow down the movement;
- significant fuel consumed (with corresponding GHG emissions) to start moving again;
- delays to customer traffic; and most importantly,
- risk of injury to our employees when climbing on and off the engine and walking on uneven ground to throw the hand switch, regardless of weather conditions.

In early 2022, former Signals & Communication Manager, Michael Rennie (now Sr. Manager of Training & Regulatory Affairs), recognized this inefficiency and

put things in motion to install a radio-operated power switch that could be controlled by oncoming trains and track units, eliminating the need to stop. The first order of business was to secure a power connection to the switch area, as both the switch and winter blower (an important accessory that keeps snow away from the switch components), would need a reliable source of commercial power. With the location of the switch being 1800 feet from the nearest power line, it required Ontario Northland to build a private pole line to extend the Hydro One network down to the switch location. Complicating the pole line build was the fact that this area has extensive rock cover which required careful planning for locating each pole.



New pole line being built



Maintenance of Way removing the hand operated switch

With the power line build completed in March 2023, it was time to source a radio-controlled power operated switch meeting the required specs and features. After receiving the new specialized equipment and related parts, an internal work plan was put together between the Signals and Maintenance of Way departments for the installation and commissioning of the switch and blower.

A historic milestone was reached late in the day on November 1st when the new radio-controlled switch was placed in service, ending 100 years of stopping trains at Swastika Junction. Train 512 returning from Rouyn-Noranda that

evening was the first to successfully use the new radio-controlled switch, with train 414 using it 40 minutes later during their return trip from Cochrane. This investment in technology has resulted in an immediate impact to the environment, employee safety, and efficiency of operations, and is an example of Ontario Northland's continued modernization efforts.



Maintenance of Way and Signals employees bolting down the new radio-controlled switch

Northlander Project Team Participates in Algoma University's Powerful Gabagendaadowin Program

On January 25-26, the Northlander project team participated in the Gabagendaadowin training program offered by Algoma University. The program was an enriching opportunity that provided education and greater insight on Canada's colonial history.

The evidence-based, interactive program is designed to foster greater understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, addressing systemic racism and facilitating systemic change. Led by the knowledgeable facilitators, Sylvina Richard and Perry McLeod-Shabogesis, the project team engaged in thought-provoking discussions, interactive activities, and immersive learning experiences that deepened their understanding and appreciation of Indigenous perspectives, history, and culture. The core curriculum provided participants with foundational knowledge of Canada's historical and present-day relationships with Indigenous peoples, and addressed topics such as culture, ceremony, treaty relationships, Indian Act, policies, intergenerational trauma, resilience, and the TRC Calls to Action.

Janie McLeod, Indigenous Engagement Coordinator at Ontario Northland, shared that *"the training was an enlightening experience"*. *"The entire project team was engaged and attentive, and my favourite part of the training was when we took the time to create our*



very own personal reconciliation plan. There cannot be reconciliation without action, so I appreciated that the training challenged us to reflect on what reconciliation looks like in not only our individual roles, but also as an organization. Everyone's participation and enthusiasm gave me confidence that we are on the right track," says Janie.

Since Ontario Northland's current and future service territory is located on multiple treaties and is home to many Indigenous communities, the training offered essential information and lessons. The project team is committed to applying the knowledge and insights gained from this training in their daily roles and in our current and future services offerings. Together, they are embracing the journey of continuous learning and growth.

New Year, New Set of Leaders Participating in our Leadership Development Program



It's officially been a year since Ontario Northland's personalized Leadership Development Program launched. The program has been a resounding success with around 120 leaders completing the training in the Winter and Spring of 2023 including all Directors and Executive Team members. According to survey responses collected from participants following the training sessions, 92% agree or strongly agree that the content was relevant to their role at Ontario Northland.

Open ended responses said that the program was *"fantastic"*, *"brought leadership together to learn and grow as a team"* and that they would love to see more of this type of training within the organization.

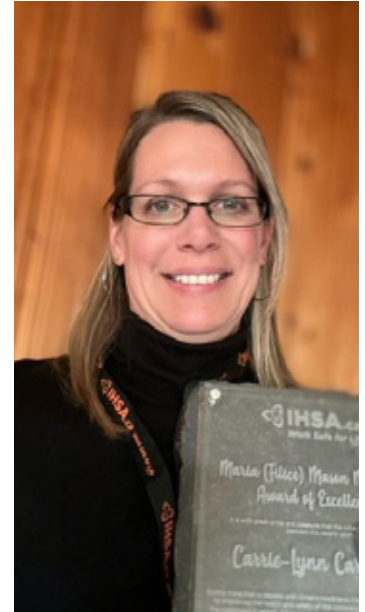
The Learning and Development team is now gearing up for its second round of training this February which will see another 60 to 70 individuals participate in the tailor-made program. Corey Atkinson, Vice-President of Strategic Learning & Development from our partners CSPN will be back again to deliver this interactive training to leaders across the organization. During the four-part, day long training sessions participants can look forward to roleplaying, group work, engaging conversations, and more to help leaders discover and develop their personal management styles.

As an organization we look forward to continuing to equip our Leaders with the best tools and training available so they can ensure their employees are supported each and every day.

Sizzling Success: Employee Appreciation BBQ Tour

September 2023 saw the successful hosting of our Employee Appreciation BBQ 'Grill and Chill' events across many of our locations, including North Bay, Englehart, and Cochrane. These events, organized to acknowledge and celebrate the hard work and dedication of our team members, brought together staff from all departments for an afternoon of food and conversation.





Carrie Carpenter Recognized by IHSA for Her Dedication to Safety

The *Maria (Filice) Mason Memorial Award of Excellence* is presented annually by the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association's (IHSA) Board of Directors to a woman for their outstanding contribution and dedication to occupational health and safety in the construction, electrical utility, or transportation sectors. The recipient is someone who has demonstrated a passionate commitment to preventing workplace injuries and fatalities throughout their career.

When Director of Motor Coach Operations Ken Grube read the words passionate and dedicated to health and safety, one person in particular came to mind. He immediately put pen to paper writing his nomination for Carrie-Lynn Carpenter, Manager of Operations Support and Control.

If you've worked alongside Carrie, you'll know that she has shown a strong commitment to safety during each position she's held throughout her 14 years at Ontario Northland. When Carrie started in 2009 as a Motor Coach Operator, she was quickly identified as a detail oriented, professional and customer service driven employee. Because of this, she was added to the list of Operators who were chosen to train new drivers on daily operations including pre-trip inspections, route training, safe practices for passenger boarding, and wheelchair lift operations.

After being promoted to Control Supervisor in 2020, Carrie was involved in many large projects including the integration of the electronic driver log system and the development of a passenger notification system in which passengers are notified prior to their trip if there are weather advisories that may delay or cancel a trip due to highway closures.

Carrie is also a certified facilitator and trainer in Non-Violence Crisis Intervention. This allowed her to provide valuable training and support to front-line employees on de-escalation techniques to diffuse potentially volatile situations quickly and efficiently. When Ontario Northland was preparing to join Busing on the Lookout, an organization that fights against human trafficking, Carrie took this opportunity for further professional development and received her certification in Anti-Human Trafficking. She has since been instrumental in implementing anti-human trafficking measures on our passenger coaches and providing front-line staff, including bus operators, ticket agents and passenger train crews, with this critical training.

Nominator Ken says, "Over the course of her career, Carrie has illustrated a real interest and passion and a commitment to provide our front-line staff with the necessary tools to allow employees to perform their duties and engage with the public in a professional, safe and positive manner".

When Carrie was selected as the recipient of the IHSA's *Maria (Filice) Mason Memorial Award of Excellence*, Ken wanted to keep this fantastic achievement as a surprise until the day of the award presentation. Along with Senior Manager of Motor Coach Operations Earl Segriff, the trio attended the IHSA's AGM on October 4th in Mississauga where a shocked Carpenter was presented with the award.

Congratulations Carrie and thank you for all that you do to enhance the safety of our employees, customers and

Safety Star Winners

Congratulations to our recent Work Safe Recognition and Awards Program winners. The following individuals and groups were presented with Safety Star Awards for going above and beyond their normal job duties to improve health and safety in the workplace.



Group - Howard Faulkner's Wheelhouse Crew (Rail Mechanical)

This team of employees recognized a hazardous situation when employees were obtaining serious injuries caused by improperly selecting lifting devices. By taking the initiative and working together, they developed a tool and process that will have a huge impact in resolving this hazard. They created an intuitive Wheelhouse Lifting Guide which clearly identifies which axle can be lifted with which lifting device. The team has proven that by collaborating to make our workplace safer, you can reduce the likelihood of serious injuries. Congratulations to Fred Scarfone, Howard Faulkner, Jacob Richardson, Jeremy Poeta, Karlo Beecken, Mike Turmel, Claude Charette, Clayton Eccles, Corey Farnsworth, David Tucker and Ethan Plummer.



Individual - Monique Sunstrum, CSU Clerk/Yard Coordinator (Rail Transportation)

While the Maintenance of Way department was performing snow removal duties, Monique took the time to continually check in with multiple work crews around the North Bay Yard to make sure that they were aware of approaching movements. Monique received the Safety Star Award because this is not a one-time event; she is always going above and beyond to watch out for the crews and is proactive in notifying them of the potential dangers in the yard.



Group - Andrew Sauer, Ashley Malherbe, Jessica Leblanc & Rob MacPherson (Rail Transportation)

When working as part of a Train Crew, individuals are trained to move the train safely along the tracks, a stressful job where one error can lead to detrimental consequences. This past winter this crew of four coupled two cars in the Greenfirst facility in Cochrane and, after completing an assessment as a crew, they determined the cars should not be moved due to the amount of ice around the wheels. Greenfirst's crew disagreed with the assessment which caused the second car to derail in their attempt to move them. As a crew this team demonstrated the importance of assessing the risk and what can happen if it is ignored.

If you know someone who has gone above and beyond for safety, nominate them for a Work Safe Award [\[link\]](#)



Group - Ken Grube, Earl Segriff & Marc McMahon (Motor Coach Operations)

Ken, Earl and Marc received the Safety Star Group Award for their part in the creation of the Phantom Rider Program to better support our obligations with the Early Return to Work Program. By creating meaningful work, this program allows injured employees to return to work sooner. The program not only contributes to the significant reduction in WSIB claim costs, but it also enhances the safety of others in support of the anti-human trafficking training of our frontline employees.

First Work Safe Annual Award Winners Announced

As we continue to grow in all areas of our operations, 2023 was the inaugural year of Ontario Northland's Work Safe Awards Program, a recognition program that allows peers and leadership to recognize employees who have gone above and beyond in terms of Health and Safety. The program has been a resounding success with many Safety Star Awards having been presented to groups and individuals throughout the year. It is now time to reveal who has been chosen to win the coveted annual awards!

These annual awards include the Work Safe Champion Award which is presented to an individual or group who consistently demonstrates safe behaviour in the workplace and/or who has accomplished an outstanding achievement. In addition, the Work Safe Leadership Award is presented to an individual in a management position who demonstrates significant leadership in the area of health and safety, who 'walks the talk', gives safety feedback and recognition, holds people accountable and makes positive, sustainable changes for their operations.

We are proud to announce 2023's annual Work Safe Awards Winners: David Beadman and Rob MacPherson.



David Beadman, Work Safe Leadership Award

Dave Beadman is the recipient of the 2023 Work Safe Leadership Award. As Supervisor of Equipment in Cochrane's Mechanical Division Dave is known to always put safety first for himself and his employees. Whether it's leading by example by always wearing his PPE or approaching his daily tailgate meetings with a positive attitude towards safety, Dave is a true leader when it comes to Health and Safety.

As a Supervisor, Dave truly 'walks the talk' when it comes to safety. He has continually supported his employees in approaching each job safely and educating them on proper procedures. Dave also took it upon himself to hold regular monthly safety talks for his team which were not only informative but engaging. When speaking of this initiative and daily involvement, his nominator says, "*Dave represents the level of participation that all leaders should work towards in terms of health and safety*".

When situations arise that need addressing, Dave is able to help employees learn from any mistakes and help them understand how to correct their actions in a way that is kind and not combative. His approachable nature also allows employees to bring forward any safety concerns they may have, which further supports a safe working environment.

Although Dave has very recently retired, we would like to wish him a very big congratulations on this achievement and extend our thanks for all that he has done to support Health and Safety throughout his years at Ontario Northland.



Rob MacPherson, Work Safe Champion Award

Rail operations is fast-paced and high-stakes. Our front-line workers are trusted with operating our equipment safely and noticing when equipment may be faulty - something that can have detrimental effects if they are not. Rob MacPherson is awarded the Work Safe Champion Award for his heroic action during an event in January of 2023 while operating as an Engineman Trainee travelling South from Kidd Creek to Englehart. That afternoon, Rob was operating by the siding at Steele when he noticed the point was open on the Siding South Switch Steel and immediately placed the train into emergency stop. Rob then walked back to the switch to verify that it was defective and saw that it was previously broken. 308's crew promptly notified the RTC of this defect and an Infrastructure Crew was called to replace the switch stand.

Rob's lone action of noticing a defective switch at track speed saved a major disaster. The next train through that area would have been a North bound freight train travelling switch point facing though that defective switch. That freight train would have derailed with the potential loss for life and millions of dollars in damage and clean-up costs.

Thank you, Rob, for your quick and crucial action. Congratulations on being awarded the Work Safe Champion Award for 2023.

Ontario Northland: The Company the Yanthas Keep

Ontario Northland has a rich history throughout its 120-year-old existence and much of that stems from



Larissa and Clem in front of the Englehart Office

the people it employs. For many, railroading runs in their family, and it is an honour to continue the family legacy by joining the ranks of skilled tradespeople. Many second and third generations of railroaders have walked through our doors and currently still work at Ontario Northland. This pattern has

been highlighted in our recent recruitment efforts through the 'Company You Keep' campaign which showcases employees and their experiences working at Ontario Northland. When Project Manager Larissa Yantha joined the team in April 2023, she was inspired by this very campaign to share her own story.

Larissa's story with Ontario Northland is a celebration of heritage and personal growth. Growing up in Englehart, Larissa's earliest memories are intertwined with the company. Her father, Clem Yantha, a Locomotive Engineer, introduced her to the world of railroading, fostering a deep connection from a young age. Larissa remembers Clem bringing her along to the Englehart Station to do his paperwork. Being a small community,

the station was the biggest building in town and a young Larissa was fascinated by it saying, "that was the first elevator I had ever been in!"

Clem's journey, starting as a Student Brakeman at just 18-years-old, was inspired by his own father's work at Ontario Northland. At the time, his father Clement Yantha (Sr.) had many years with the company working as a Carman. As Clem worked his way up the ranks, he eventually fulfilled his father's dream of becoming a Locomotive Engineer – something Clem Sr. was unable to fulfill due to being colour blind. Although the position had its challenges, often causing him to be away from family, Larissa fondly remembers how she would listen for the train horn at night, signaling that her Dad was coming home. Clem's involvement in community events, like the Santa Train, and his role in the final run of the Northlander, left a lasting legacy.

Larissa's journey to working at Ontario Northland was a bit different than most third-generation employees, and even she admits that she didn't see this opportunity coming! Larissa always viewed Ontario Northland as a place for the skilled trades and her academic pursuits in Global Studies and a Masters Degree in Religion, Culture and

Clem on the last Northlander run



A newspaper clipping of Clem Yantha and his Rail Crew being presented with the Commissioner's Citation for Bravery from the Province of Ontario and the Englehart & District Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award

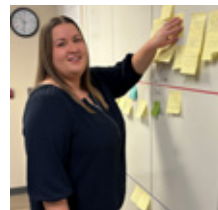
The Citizens of the Year award of the Englehart and District Chamber of Commerce was presented to four Ontario Northland employees who risked their lives to save the lives of apartment residents in Englehart in the fire that destroyed three businesses and ten apartment buildings in April, 1994. Englehart and District Chamber of Commerce secretary Pam Martin said "they put the lives of others before their own." Pictured here, from left to right, are: Sonny Gowlett, Lincoln Peever, Dale Church, Ms. Martin and Clem Yantha. The Englehart Ministerial Association and Bob and Val Mowbray also received Citizens of the Year awards from the Chamber for their actions in the wake of the fire. (Staff photo by Darlene Wroe)



Global Justice seemed unrelated to railroading. However, the North was always close to her heart, and much of her previous academic and professional life centered around the importance of human connections in small communities. Some of her work included publications on anti-racism, reconciliation, population attraction, and regional collaboration in Northern Ontario. This strong passion for Northern communities and her desire to make a positive impact led her to Ontario Northland, bringing a unique perspective to the role of Project Manager.

Breaking into a male-dominated industry, Larissa stands as a proud queer woman and a third-generation railroader.

Her ambition to incorporate inclusion and empathy in her work, coupled with a commitment to mentorship, particularly for young women who aspire to make a positive impact, is a testament to her innovative spirit. While many thought that the next Yantha to work at Ontario Northland would have been her brother Ryley, Larissa decided to break the mold and bring a female addition to the line. Larissa's parents have been incredibly supportive and excited she's carrying on the family's legacy. When Clem heard the news, he was "thrilled and confident she is in good hands".



The Yantha family currently has a combined 70 years (and counting!) with Ontario Northland with both Larissa's grandfather and father spending 35 years with the company. Larissa is determined to bring the family to an even 100 years as she continues to grow in her career with Ontario Northland!

In Memoriam

We would like to extend our condolences to the families and friends of our employees and pensioners who have passed away.

Name	Last Position Held	Department	Years Worked
Harvey Jessup	Principal Communications Clerk	Telecommunications	1969-2004
Laura Turgeon	Billing Clerk	Telecommunications	1978-2008
Edgar Emmell	Roadmaster	Rail Engineering	1961-1996
Fernand Desjardins	Track Maintainer	Rail Engineering	1959-1994
Donald Thurlow	Track Maintainer	Rail Engineering	1967-1996
Stephen Baker	CSSA	Passenger Services	1979-2012
Allan Last	Supervisor Network Services	Telecommunications	1964-1994
Ronald Poulin	Bus Operator	Passenger Services	1997-2018
Jon Harling	Bus Operator	Passenger Services	1980-2011
Preston Proulx	Track Labourer	Infrastructure	2020-2023
Dale Levely	Track Maintainer	Rail Engineering	1995-2015
Sandra Whitehead	Passenger Clerk	Finance	1977-2014

Long Service Award Recipients

Congratulations to the following individuals on their Long Service Award achievements! Ontario Northland is proud to be the Company You Keep! Thank you for your hard work and dedication throughout the years.

Please note, the 2020 to 2022 awards were presented in 2023 due to limitations brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

2020	Arnold Bailey 35 Years Englehart	Susan Seib 35 Years North Bay
Eric Froelick 35 Years Englehart	Joe Kirkbride 35 Years Englehart	Derrick Lafontaine 35 Years North Bay
Trueman McBean 35 Years Cochrane	Peter Smith 35 Years Englehart	Herb St. George 35 Years North Bay
Jerry Miller Jr. 35 Years Cochrane	Wayne Knight 35 Years Englehart	David Emmell 25 Years North Bay
Wade Nelson 35 Years Cochrane	Larry Schiavo 35 Years North Bay	Paul Courchesne 25 Years North Bay
Roger Hunter 35 Years Timmins/Cochrane	William Etches 35 Years North Bay	Stephen Swant 25 Years North Bay
Jeff Sayer 35 Years North Bay	Claude Levasseur 25 Years North Bay	Marc McMahon 25 Years North Bay
Ron Perrin 35 Years North Bay	Tina Irwin 25 Years North Bay	Darlene Helmer 25 Years Timmins
Chris Demarco 35 Years North Bay	Claude Spalding 25 Years Cochrane	Gerald Mikovitch 25 Years Englehart
Bill Pennell 35 Years North Bay	2022	Christine Charland 25 Years Englehart
Frederick Smith III 25 Years Cochrane	Janet Alexander 35 Years Cochrane	Timothy Cepesko 25 Years Englehart
Darren Martin 25 Years Hearst	Darin Axcell 35 Years Cochrane	Jeffrey Proctor 25 Years Englehart
Terry Loiselle 25 Years Mattice	Richard Fournier 35 Years Cochrane	William Solomon 25 Years Moosonee
2021	John Miller 35 Years Cochrane	Jeremy Girard 25 Years Cochrane
Jean-Claude Genier 35 Years Cochrane	Donald Parker 35 Years Englehart	James Iserhoff 25 Years Cochrane
Brian Martin 35 Years Cochrane	Shawn Harman 35 Years Englehart	Eric Rochon 25 Years Cochrane
Grant Miller 35 Years Cochrane	Tammy Cockerline 35 Years North Bay	





Ontario Northland Hosts Students for 'Take Our Kids to Work Day'

Ontario Northland's 'Take Our Kids to Work Day' hosted ten students for a day of learning and exploration. The event began with a welcome session, followed by tours of the North Bay Car Shop and Motor Coach Maintenance Facility. Students then engaged in a discussion about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The afternoon included resume-building exercises and mock interviews, culminating in shadowing experiences across

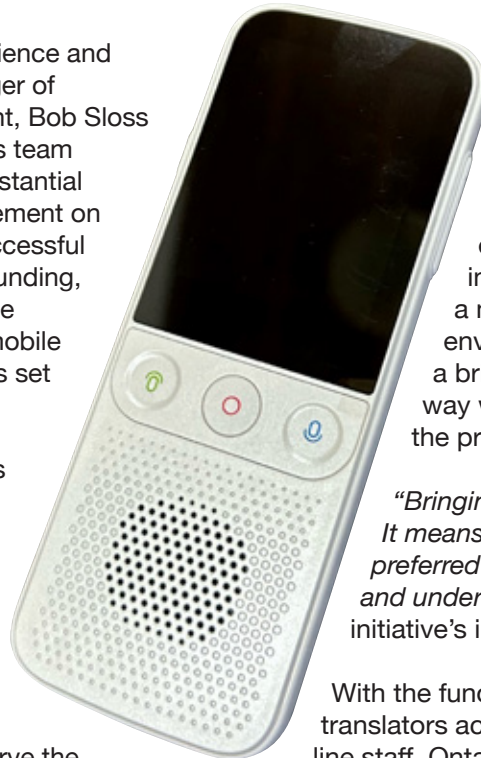
various departments, including shop and corporate roles, providing a comprehensive view of career opportunities at Ontario Northland.

Thank you to all employees for showing the Associate Minister some Northern hospitality and showcasing all the fantastic work you do each day to provide essential transportation services to the North.

Breaking Language Barriers: Ontario Northland's Commitment to Diverse Communication

In a move to enhance customer experience and embrace linguistic diversity, Sr. Manager of Customer Experience and Engagement, Bob Sloss spearheaded an initiative alongside his team in Passenger Services, securing a substantial grant under the Canada-Ontario Agreement on French Language Services. With a successful application for provincial and federal funding, the team's vision of equipping front-line Passenger Services employees with mobile language translators, worth \$37,500, is set to become a reality.

This initiative, part of the government's broader effort to promote linguistic diversity and inclusivity, reflects a growing recognition of the importance of language access in public services. Specifically, the funding aims to support projects like this one, that bridge language barriers in key public services, aligning perfectly with Ontario Northland's mission to serve the community's varied linguistic needs.

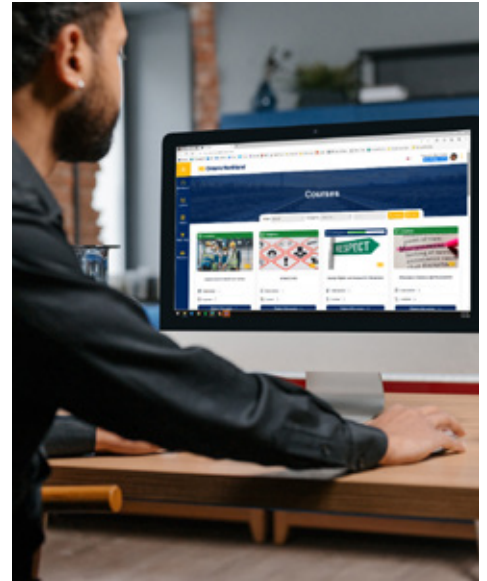
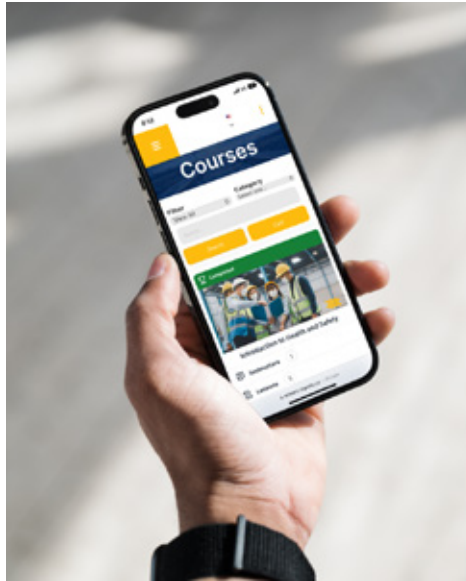
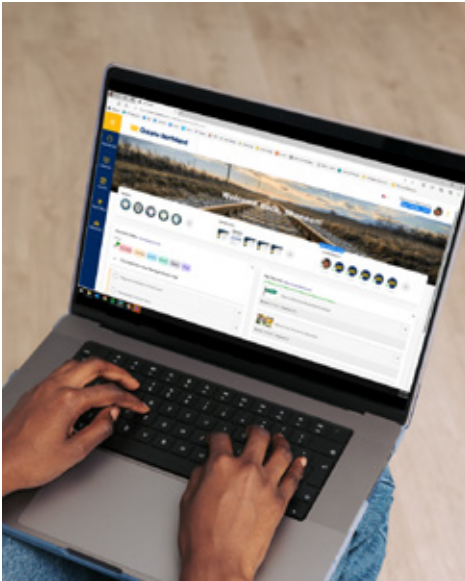


As one of the approved projects under this agreement, the initiative focuses on purchasing offline handheld translation devices for front-line staff and agencies.

The introduction of mobile translators will enable our staff to communicate effectively in multiple languages, thereby fostering a more inclusive and accessible service environment. This is more than just a tool; it's a bridge connecting us to our customers in a way we've never done before, as Bob notes on the project's significance.

"Bringing in these translators is a big step for us. It means we can talk to more passengers in their preferred language, making everyone feel welcome and understood," Bob Sloss commented on the initiative's impact.

With the funding in place and plans to roll out the translators across Passenger Services and other front-line staff, Ontario Northland is ready to welcome and assist customers from all linguistic backgrounds.



ONLearn and Upwards!

Ontario Northland is taking learning and development to the next level with its new customized Learning Management System (LMS).

Across Ontario Northland's various roles and departments there are many different training and certification programs required for employees to conduct work safely and productively. Without a consistent method to monitor when employees finish their training, it can be challenging to know when recertification and retraining is required. Enter, ONLearn.

Ontario Northland's new LMS called ONLearn was implemented to address that challenge and will be used for all training purposes from facilitating to tracking and sending targeted reminders. Launched in Summer 2023, the Project Team consisting of representatives from Health and Safety, Project Management, ITS, Organizational Change and Engagement, Human Resources, and Training and Regulatory Affairs, went through the procurement and testing process to ensure the chosen LMS was a good fit for the organization.

Learning and Development Specialist Shannon MacCarthy says that *"the ultimate goal of ONLearn is to have anything related to training, learning and development added into the system. By having all training in one place, it can be tracked and easily accessible for employees and their managers to see their progress and be alerted when it may be time for a refresher."*

Recently, Shannon and the Human Resources team updated the format of New Employee Orientation and has used the ONLearn system to move six courses that were previously presented during the in-person sessions to the online system. Now, new employees can complete the modules, such as WHMIS and AODA training, before their first day at Ontario Northland.

There are also great learning opportunities for long-standing employees such as training modules for Health and Safety as well as standard certification and re-certification training modules. Still in the early stages, Shannon is excited to continue growing the training and professional development catalogue.

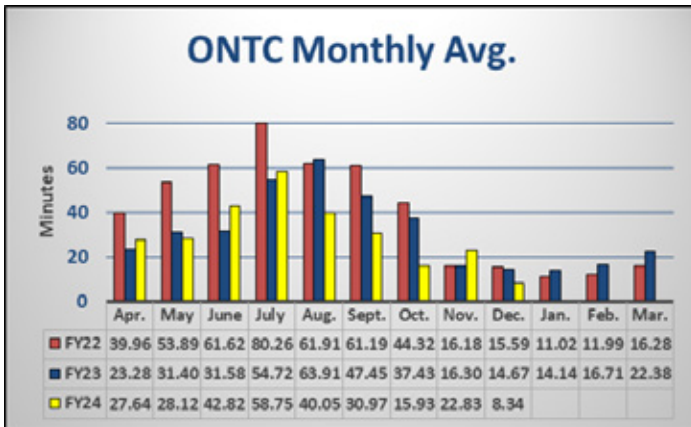
To encourage employees to complete their training and extra professional development opportunities, the system awards employees points for each course they complete. These points can then be exchanged for special Ontario Northland merchandise. For instance, 10 points earned within the system equals one dollar.

To access ONLearn, employees can sign in at onlearn.myontc.ca where they're then brought to a dashboard that shows courses that are due soon, completed courses, certificates, badges and events. To add some friendly competition there's also a leaderboard to show which employees have accumulated the most points. Employees can also make requests through the system including requesting access to specific training courses or programs that are currently built within the system, requesting a new training program to be built and/or developed, and adding any external training that an employee has taken such as First Aid training, Microsoft training, and more.

As this is a brand-new system for the organization, employees are being added to the LMS in phases by division. Currently, Shared Services (previously Corporate Services) and Passenger Services employees have been added to the system. Next in line are Rail Operations, RRC and Rail Mechanical.

Get learning and earning those points!

Another Busy Track Season Brings Improvements and Innovations



Every summer, Ontario Northland undertakes critical infrastructure work along the railway to ensure we meet industry safety standards and continue to provide safe, reliable and efficient transportation services to communities and businesses in the North.

The essence of safe and efficient railway operations lies in meticulous track maintenance. At Ontario Northland, we take this responsibility seriously, ensuring that our commitment to safety and customer satisfaction remains paramount during the busy track season.

Track Season by the Numbers

Check out these impressive statistics on the work completed by the Track Programs group this year:

- Installed 9 miles of CWR, 2 miles of bolted rail and 6.2 miles of relay rail
- Replaced 68,662 ties
- 450,019 feet of track surfaced
- Disposed of approximately 382,537 scrap ties
- 120.59 track miles of rail ground

Record-Setting Slow Order Penalty Minutes

Recently, a remarkable milestone has been achieved in our track maintenance activities. In December 2023, we observed a significant decrease in slow order penalty minutes, a metric used to gauge the impact of maintenance activities on train schedules. Impressively, this December's average showed a 46% reduction compared to the figures from two years ago (as shown in the chart above). This achievement is not just a number; it reflects the hard work of our employees and the success of our annual capital upgrades.

Replacing rails, ties and surfacing the track are some examples of the work being completed each work season that contribute to this success. Bridge and culvert upgrades also contribute to this reduction in addition to geometry testing and ultrasonic rail testing which helps identify track defects, which are then fixed.

Manager of Track Programs Méric Létourneau says this successful season and record-breaking reduction in slow order penalty minutes was truly a team effort. From the working gangs to the supporting sections, the work was also completed with the due diligence of mechanics and signal maintainers, which reduced the amount of downtime incurred during the projects.

A multitude of different departments and areas come together for these repairs - from detection of the defects, to coordinating the workers and the materials needed to complete the work. Some of the areas Méric credits include;

- Procurement for securing the material and contractors.
- Training staff as they keep our own crews up to date, and train contractors when required.
- Transportation for coordinating train times when required, moving cars in our yards and sidings for repairs, various work trains for distributing material, and freight trains for material distribution.

Community Outreach

While completing infrastructure projects, Ontario Northland makes it a priority to mitigate disruptions to communities and businesses as much as possible as the work is completed. New this year, the Marketing and Communications Team worked with Méric and his team on keeping communities informed of any work being performed within their area.

Communications and Issues Management Specialist, Kate Bondett collaborated with Méric to compile a list of the various rail infrastructure projects - including construction projects, bridge repairs, and building demolitions - happening throughout the track season in order to provide advance notice to neighbouring residences and businesses through targeted mail outs. The full list of projects is also published on the Ontario Northland website where individuals are able to easily filter by community and project type. Visitors can also see more information on the project including the anticipated start and end dates and the community impact (ex. noise disruption).

This outreach has seen positive results, including better relationships with our neighbours and the communities we serve. By being more transparent about the work we are doing, trust is being built with the public.

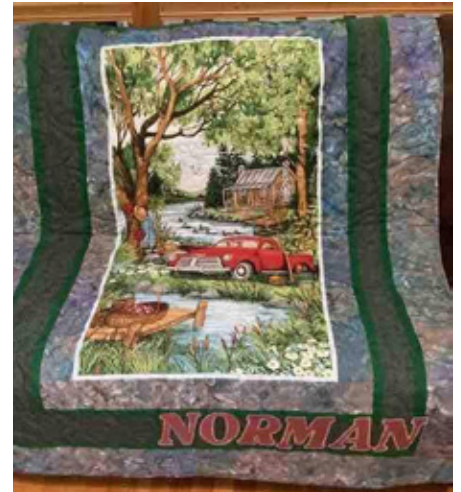
Moving Forward

We're not just keeping goods and people moving; we're ensuring that every journey is safe, reliable, and efficient. These accomplishments are a steppingstone towards even greater achievements in the future.

Ontario Northland In Focus

Manager, Operations Support and Control Carrie Carpenter and Sr. Manager, Motor Coach Operations Earl Segriff surprised a few of our Thunder Bay Motor Coach Operators with their safe driving pins in December 2023. Safe Driver pins are awarded each year to employees that have maintained an accident-free driving record. Congratulations to the following operators:

- Brenda Hayden
- Scott Drinkwalter
- Chris Cavezza,
- Gord Avann
- Sean Brennan
- Jan Soule
- Not pictured are (Albert) Chris Ferguson, Kevin Roper, Rhonda Holmes



CSSA Norm Berube was gifted this beautiful handmade quilt by one of our grateful customers.



Trevor Tobicoe's mom Clara stopped by our Ontario Northland booth at the Explore Your Options job fair in Timmins and spotted a familiar face on the banner.



Signal Maintainer Austin Talbot shared this photo of a friend he and his coworker made on their coffee break, Sam the Safety Snowman.



Congratulations to Peter Chamandy who retired after 30 plus years with Ontario Northland. All the best in your retirement!



Artist Peter Hamel was inspired by the design concepts for the new Northlander trainset in this beautiful piece.



Sabian Darke welding patches inside a gondola in The Rip.

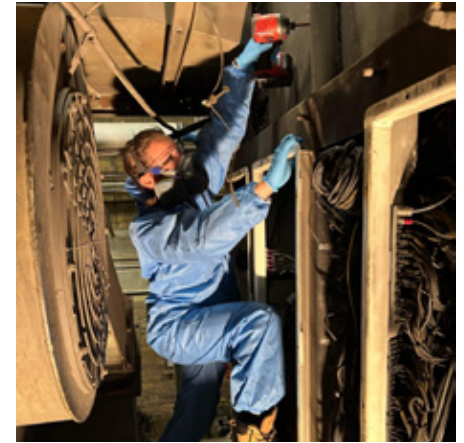


Things got spooky at Ontario Northland this Halloween! A crowd favourite costume was Electrician Josh Williams dressed up as Senior Manager, RRC Josh Dale!

Congratulations to our skilled Painters for the beautiful work performed on CN's Business coach-CN 101 "Montreal". This marked



the ninth business coach painted in their retro color scheme and is a testament as to why CN trusts Ontario Northland with this high-profile work. The Paint Shop, in addition to our Diesel Shop, also received a shoutout in Railway Age for the work they completed on SOPOR (Société du port ferroviaire de Baie-Comeau)'s remanufactured locomotive.



Work Cell Leader, Corey Farnsworth submitted this photo of Carman Apprentice Isabelle Champagne hard at work getting on-the-job training removing insulation from the heart of the beast (Main Generator room in "RS 60"). Corey says, "having a young Apprentice with me learning new skills and being able to teach her has been a treat. Working towards becoming a full Railcar Technician, she and I have been tackling barring, number boards, window install and removal, and all other Carman work within the Wheel Shop and Diesel Shop. I must say it's great to see young woman getting into and excelling in trades at Ontario Northland!"

In partnership with Ontario Northland, BrokerLink is proud to offer exclusive discounts on personal home and auto insurance to members. If you're trying to save money in different areas of your budget, it's a good idea to look over your insurance policies. Check out BrokerLink's tips on how to save money on your insurance at <https://shorturl.at/gswH4>




10% CLIENT SAVINGS CARD Ontario Northland Railway

Present this card at any Mark's location to receive the above discount on all purchased items.

Card is required to be eligible for discount. Where an item is sale priced, the lower price will apply. This card is not valid for online purchases and is not redeemable for the purchase of gift cards. Not to be combined with any other offer. Purchase must be paid for at point of sale by credit card, debit or cash.

00213037
Account Number



00004238600

Valid at any Mark's
EXPIRES: 30 Sept 2024



Safety Walkabout 2023: A Collective Effort for a Safer Environment



This fall, Ontario Northland reinforced its commitment to safety and employee engagement through the 2023 Safety Walkabout. Held on October 25th and 26th, this initiative saw our executive team, senior leaders, managers, and employees collaborate across various work locations.

The Safety Walkabout serves as a platform for direct observation of safety practices and open discussions about safety concerns and ideas. This bi-annual event is not just a routine check but a vital part of our safety culture, where team members, regardless of their role, come together to contribute to a safer work environment.

Participation in the Safety Walkabout has proven benefits, including heightened safety awareness and proactive engagement in future safety discussions. During the Walkabout, teams visited various work areas, engaging with employees in meaningful conversations about safety, listening to concerns, and discussing potential improvements.

Remember, safety is a team effort, and these Walkabouts are designed to be positive experiences, fostering open dialogue, and strengthening working relationships. Thank you for your participation and support in making Ontario Northland a safer place for all.

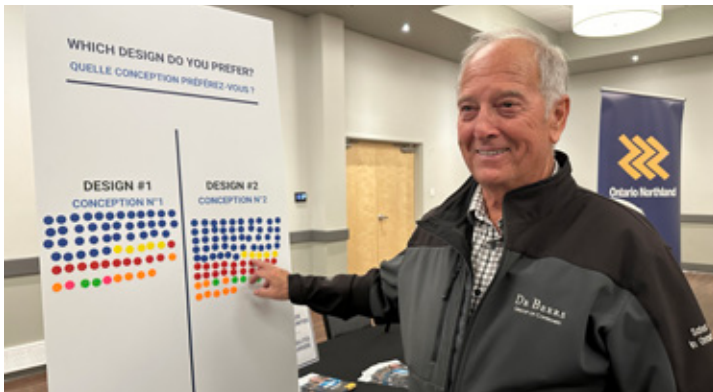
Safety. Full Stop.



Connecting with Communities about the New Era of the Northlander

This Fall our Marketing and Communications Team hit the road to visit 13 communities along the Northlander passenger rail route to connect with community members and gather feedback on the design and amenities of our future passenger rail service. The team also managed to squeeze two virtual events into their busy schedule to make sure everyone had a chance to join in on the excitement! Attendees even had a chance to vote on the train's exterior design! Based on feedback received from community members and our very own employees, the final design will have the most popular elements from both designs.

Take a look at some of the highlights from the events!



Festive Frames



Employees having fun with the photo booth at the Cochrane Christmas Party.



Employees volunteering their time for the North Bay Santa Fund.



As a way to thank employees for their hard work over the past year and wish everyone a Happy Holidays, employees were gifted Ontario Northland themed ornaments by the Senior Leadership Team. if you didn't receive one email Rachel Nerpin at rachel.nerpin@ontarionorthland.ca to be sent one.

Maintenance of Way Unit 889 in Englehart's Parade of Lights.



Thanks to the generosity of our employees, the annual Unifor Local 103 was a huge success with 3 truckloads of toys and \$3,850 raised for the Low Income Peoples Involvement (LIPi).



The Finance Team decking the halls on the 4th floor.



North Bay's Stores and Diesel Shop held delicious holiday potlucks.



Cochrane Stores' welcomes employees with a sweet treat from their candy wreath.



Bob Sloss and Chantal Louiseize delivering Santa Fund totes in our mail van.



Santa (Jason Boucher) spreading cheer at the North Bay Station.



Welcome to Homeweb

Helping you live a healthier life



Homeweb

Homeweb is an innovative online platform that offers members access to personalized health and wellness tools, resources, and support when they want it – anywhere, anytime.

What do I need to know about Homeweb?

Homeweb is part of your Employee and Family Assistance Program. You can access Homeweb on your phone, tablet, or desktop. Homeweb offers you the ability to create an individual profile, receive personalized content recommendations, and access lots of helpful resources.

How to register for Homeweb

Step One: Visit www.homeweb.ca and click 'Sign Up'.

Step Two: Type your company name and click 'Find it!' Select the correct company from the list provided. Enter information into the required fields, choose an email and password, and click 'Next Step'.

Step Three: Let us know how you are covered by Homewood, (e.g. through your organization or the organization of a family member), and let us know your relationship to the organization (e.g. employee, spouse, dependent, etc.). Submit the additional information required and click 'Sign Up' at the bottom of the page.

Homewood Pathfinder
Powered by Homeweb

As a part of Homeweb, you can now access Homewood Pathfinder. You can register with invitation code

ONT192

Homewood Pathfinder
Powered by Homeweb

Respect in the Workplace

This course helps participants learn when unwelcome or confrontational workplace situations "cross the line" and qualify as instances of harassment, discrimination, bullying, and/or violence. The course also helps participants understand the importance of complying with policies regarding respectful workplace conduct.

Welcome to Homeweb!
Search, browse, and get expert support.

Homeweb.ca



Homewood Health