

Virtual college fair helps students make the right choices for their future

It is a challenging time for students to visit colleges to learn more about the programs that might be a key stepping stone to their future, but the Aurora Public Library is stepping up to the plate this week to help make these tough choices a bit easier.

Starting Thursday, August 6, the Aurora Public Library will host a series of Virtual College Fairs for up to 98 students at a time from across the community.

Held over Zoom, these sessions, which will run on select dates and times through August 19, will feature representatives from 13 Ontario colleges highlighting the interesting and exciting programs their schools have to offer for the students of today and tomorrow.

“We just want to give the students the chance to meet recruiters to find out more about the programs, learn more about the colleges they have had offers from, and consider which ones they are looking at because all schools have different offerings,” says coordinator Tim Neale, Adult Librarian for the Aurora Public Library. “A lot of students in Grade 10 and Grade 11 are also thinking about what they are going to do and this gives them an idea of what courses are available, what career options they can think about, and what high school credits they need to get accepted into the program they really want to do.”

The Virtual College Fair is also a good opportunity for people who are “scrambling to find a new way forward” with their careers in rapidly changing and evolving environments.

“Most recruiters agreed that some of the programs they would talk about would be second career-type options where the future is pretty bright in being able to find something going forward,” says Neale.

Sheridan College kicks off the Virtual College Fair series on August 6, with a session from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Humber College takes centre stage on August 7 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., followed that morning by Durham College from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sessions continue on August 11 with Conestoga College from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., and Canadore College from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Presentations the following day kick off from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. with Algonquin College and from 3 ? 5 p.m. with Niagara College.

On August 13, Seneca College presents from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., with Lambton College that afternoon from 3 ? 5 p.m.

Centennial College takes over Zoom on August 14 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. before the program concludes the following week with Loyalist College on August 18 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

“All of these colleges have different strengths and this is really a chance for colleges to tell potential students what is available and what programs they have that should interest them ? and convince them to go to that school!” says Neale. “This is a way for them to get a sense of what is out there, what they might want to do, and some of these colleges have strong connections to universities as well, so it is a way to find out what is happening.”

This is not the first time the Aurora Public Library has held college and university fairs, but the current pandemic has promoted the Library to re-think how the program is delivered. If this month's program proves a success, Neale says he hopes more opportunities will come down the line.

“I want to expand it to include universities around Christmas or sometime in February (around Family Day) because right now it is hard for students to get that kind of information up front,” he says.

To register for any or all of the sessions, contact Adult Librarian Tim Neale at tneale@aurorapl.ca or at 905-727-9494 x290.