



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

# Success Story

## Bringing diversity to the workforce for the benefit of all

**T**HE MUNICIPALITY OF CLARINGTON IN Ontario's Durham Region saw the opportunity to advance its diversity and inclusion goals by applying for funding from the CPRA Youth Employment Experience program.



MUNICIPALITY OF CLARINGTON,  
ONTARIO

**Canada**

This project is funded by  
the Government of Canada



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Erica Mittag, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Officer  
in the municipality’s Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Thanks to funding from the Government of Canada, the CPRA Youth Employment Experience program supports a diverse group of young people to gain skills and build experience through employment in the community parks and recreation sector. The municipality’s application to CPRA was successful, and it used the funding to hire Sheldon Gaboury as a summer labourer for the 2022 season. Sheldon was referred for an interview through a partnership with Abilities Centre in Whitby, which delivers programs and services to promote accessibility and build “a better, barrier-free life” for people of all abilities.

“Our goal was to provide experience for someone who might otherwise face barriers to employment, while also broadening our team’s experience in working with a more diverse workforce,” says Erica Mittag, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Officer in the municipality’s Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

Sheldon was responsible for a variety of tasks related to grounds maintenance for parks and other outdoor municipal spaces. “The whole experience was very character-building. Being a member of a team, interacting with my co-workers, was the highlight,” he says. “The support I got from everyone was marvelous. I found a new community of people.”

Sheldon says he appreciated the opportunity to gain work experience to prepare him for future employment. “I learned

how to plan work routines and to accomplish things by co-operating with other people. I’m sure these skills will help me with other jobs.”

At the beginning of his work term, Sheldon took a week off, with the blessing of his team, to pursue one of his passions – rugby. Abilities Centre and the Oshawa Vikings Rugby Club travelled to Ireland to participate in the International Mixed Ability Rugby Tournament. Their team came second in the competition and Sheldon says that success and the beauty of Ireland contributed to his memorable summer of 2022.

After his term with the municipality, Sheldon completed a test at the Abilities Centre to qualify for a position as a janitor. And after that, he was hired by a company to work in outdoor maintenance in the Parry Sound area, getting the opportunity to build on the skills he gained during his term with the Municipality of Clarington.

“As Sheldon noted, everyone came together to create a strong work family,” says Erica. “This CPRA funding supported our goal to build skills in the community and in our team. We hope to have more opportunities like this in the future, broadening everyone’s experience through diversity in our work teams.” 🍁