

## *New Skills Pays Off*

**MARGARET ARMSWORTHY** lives in Canso but grew up in the village of Little Dover in Guysborough County. Marg was the youngest of three girls in her family. She attended school in her community until she reached Grade 7. She then transferred to the high school in Guysborough.

Marg was a shy, quiet girl. She was completely overwhelmed in this large school with students from all over the county. Riding the bus 30 miles each way didn't make it any easier. Marg struggled to stay in school but eventually dropped out and went to work.



She married and had two sons. Marg and her husband worked at the local fish processing plant; he was a supervisor and she was on the processing line. Over the years, Marg balanced working at the plant and raising her family. Her two sons finished school in Canso and moved out west to further their education.

In the early 1990s, the plant began operating on a seasonal basis only. Marg and her husband no longer had full-time work. By 2003, Marg was getting very few hours. That's when the Older Worker Pilot Project Initiative was announced for Guysborough County. Marg wasn't sure she should apply. She was worried she didn't have enough education to qualify. Luckily she did apply. Not only was she accepted but she succeeded in the program.

In the early weeks of the session, Marg was hesitant to participate. She preferred to watch others in their role-playing for job interviews. Their enthusiasm was so contagious that she found herself caught up in the activities and joining in after all.

Marg was especially impressed with the computer training she received. Before entering the program, she hadn't so much as typed her name. Now she's e-mailing her family and friends, and surfing the net.

*M arg knows now that she can learn new things. Her training has paid off.*

Once Marg completed the industry-based training components of the program, she took part in a two-week work placement at the local Riff's department store. Marg did so well during her work placement that the manager asked her to stay as a part-time

employee to help with the Christmas season and to fill in for other employees.

Marg knows now that she can learn new things. Her customer service training, along with her new communication skills, has paid off.

Submitted by Pat Rhynold  
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