

SNC summer help gaining practical on site experience

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FINCH - One of the largest summer employment programs in Eastern Ontario is halfway through the 2011 season, providing mentoring and training for future environmental professionals.

This year, South Nation Conservation has about 12 students working out of its Finch headquarters, covering off a variety of responsibilities from conservation area maintenance and improvement to fisheries assistant and finance clerk.

"The SNC experience provides a real advantage for future employment and education," said student Colleen Kennedy, a planning and engineering assistant. "It's a great opportunity to work in a field related to my chosen career."

The summer employment program is made possible through financial support from the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Service Canada, and Job Zone.

In its summer hiring practices, SNC concentrates on students with an envi-

ronmental specialty and strives to ensure the experience enhances their educational direction.

"Students assist with a variety of important projects and public outreach and education activities, which abound during the summer months," said SNC General Manager Dennis O'Grady. "We're determined that the students gain much more than a paycheck during their time with us."

Kennedy of Ottawa is fairly typical of the SNC summer student contingent. She completed environmental studies at the University of Ottawa and plans to pursue certification in ecosystem restoration.

Back for her third summer as a finance clerk handling accounts receivable is Emilee Walker of Cornwall who's pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration degree at Bishop's University, Sherbrooke. Walker's job allows her to put her education to practical use.

"With our summer employment program, we're also planning for the future," O'Grady added. "Some of the students end up with full-time SNC jobs."