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Melissa Martin: computer curiosity to computer technical support

By L.M. VanEvery



Melissa Martin, 35, didn't follow the path of being a 'computer geek' early in life but she was mechanically curious. Whenever something mechanical broke, Melissa, a mother of two teens, was always willing to try to fix it herself. "I wasn't afraid to take risks of trying to fix things," she says. Melissa remembers getting her first computer around 1995. As it happened with computers then and today, it eventually needed repair. Tired of taking her computer to be fixed and sometimes getting it back still not working, Melissa started to try to fix it herself.

Her interest in computers carried on through the years. In 2007, Melissa attended Mohawk College to study in the Computer Graphic Design program. After graduating in 2009, Melissa decided that the highly competitive field of graphic design didn't appeal to her personality. During her job search, Melissa learned about a program at

GREAT so she visited **GREAT** to see what options were available to her. **GREAT** Program Officer, Patti Davis, advised Melissa about a computer program available at the **Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre (OSTTC)**. "**GREAT** is very resourceful," says Melissa. "They have a lot of contacts and networking opportunities."

In April 2010, Melissa enrolled in the Informational Technical Support Agent program available at OSTTC and graduated this past December. During her training, she was placed at an 8-week placement at Working World computer business in Brantford. During the placement, Melissa was further trained to disassemble and diagnose computers as well as trained in other computer software and documentation.

At the end of her placement, Melissa was hired full-time for a year of apprenticeship and now holds the title of Junior Technical Support technician at Working World.

During a typical day at work, Melissa checks 'spam traps' for clients, backs up client information, makes documentation updates and sets up client workstations, servers and training rooms.

She is currently working on a Network A+ certification and plans to investigate other certifications available to her. The most rewarding part of her job is working as part of a team and helping people. Since a big portion of being IT support is helping people, Melissa enjoys hearing the feedback from satisfied customers regarding good customer service she's provided.

The most challenging part of her job involves keeping up with technology, knowing technical terms and the solutions. "My level of knowledge feels basic in where I work," she says. "It's very complex and it's challenging to understand that," Melissa adds. "I have a lot more to learn but I'm excited about learning." Melissa has taken opportunities to keep up with technology by attending trade shows and researching different businesses that require IT services. Melissa is happy that her employment allows her to implement what she's learned over the years. Her advice to others searching for the right job is to "keep on pursuing what you love to do and what comes naturally. That's where you'll be most happy," she says.

For more information about apprenticeship opportunities, contact **GREAT** today.