

Employment Model For Success



Left to right: Nancy McNaughton, Brent McNaughton, MLA Kelvin Goertzen, Mayor Chris Goertzen cut the ribbon at the grand opening.

If you're wondering why "Opening Doors to Success" held a ribbon cutting ceremony last week after being open for over a year – it's all because of success!



Nancy McNaughton talks about the program after the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Founder and Director Nancy McNaughton created the program after seeing a need for more individualized help for people seeking employment resources. She started the year-long pilot project in July of 2013, and it was so successful the program was approved to become a permanent service to the community. The permanent program status meant they built more, hired more staff, and last week they hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially "open their doors".

"Part of our success is not about our service – we're not fitting someone into a program, we are working with each, individual person. It's really about seeing where they need help and how we can help them transition into work and reach their goals. We don't put pressure on people, we're not here to get people jobs or go to work with them. We are here to help people, wherever they're at, to take that next step. Even if that means getting out of the house and breaking that comfort zone."

McNaughton says being without a job or a support system is tough on a person mentally. "You've got to have someone believing in you when you don't believe in yourself. We believe in everyone, and that everyone has potential. We give them the tools and support they need and are here for them. But it's up to that person to take what they've learned and go with it."

McNaughton adds that the key to this program is creating a positive mindset in each person. “Until someone sees their own value, that he or she has something to offer, they’re not even going to try. So the first thing we do is really look at those mindsets, labels and barriers that are holding people back and keeping them stuck. We try to empower each other by reinforcing positive characteristics, and try to change a negative mindset to a positive mindset.”

Opening Doors to Success provides a twelve-week program that covers various workshops and individual training which can include class 5 driver training, CPR/ Emergency training, resume and cover letter assistance, employment leads and volunteer opportunities. “People aren’t paid to come here, but they see coming here as an opportunity they are thankful for.”

McNaughton believes approximately 120 people have completed the program and that they are currently working with about 45 people, which includes a class set to graduate at the end of December. Opening Doors to Success is so successful, it is being used as a role model for other employment resource centres.



It was a full house at the Opening Doors to Success-grand opening.



Annette Cannon with her granddaughter and daughter at the grand opening.

A program graduate, Annette Cannon moved to Steinbach from Calgary about a year ago, and was able to complete the program last February. Not knowing many people, Opening Doors staff and fellow participants provided her with a much needed support system. “The program’s helped build up my self confidence, and now I’m not afraid, so I can do things on my own. There’s a lot of ‘self work’ and getting to know yourself.”

Cannon said once she she has learned a lot from the program. “Before, if I’d get too frustrated, I would just quit. But this program helped me Annette Cannon with her granddaughter and daughter at the grand opening. work through issues, and now I face challenges better. And if I ever get stuck, I can drop by because they’re always here to talk, even if my file is closed.”

She is currently attending Red River College and will finish a Health Care Aide program in two years. Cannon says without the help and encouragement of Opening Doors to Success, she wouldn’t have ever gone to college. “School is going really well. I couldn’t have done it without them!”

Opening Doors to Success is located at 2-90 Brandt St. in Steinbach. For more information, stop by their office or visit Opening Doors to Success website or contact Nancy McNaughton by either email or phone: 204-346-9840.