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For Immediate Release

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**A new technology-focused approach to assist youth in securing employment**

***Humber College - Community Employment Services to deliver ALiGN hospitality skills training program in the Toronto region as part of provincial ALiGN network***

In response to the critical labour shortages facing many of Ontario’s key sectors, OTEC, in partnership with the Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA), has announced an innovative youth-targeted employment model called the ALiGN Network. Recently launched across Ontario, the initiative has brought together industry partners from across the province to develop a psychometric-based talent-to-role fit assessment and job-matching model designed, initially, for the hospitality and tourism industry.

The ALiGN pre-employment skills training program will be delivered at Humber College – Community Employment Services. Employers throughout the Toronto region can connect with Humber College, or, directly with OTEC, to identify and recruit ALiGN graduates.

“The ALiGN Network is in line with Humber’s beliefs in life-long learning and helping people meet their personal career and employment goals,” says Lynn Van Lieshout, Manager, Community Projects - in Humber College’s Community Outreach and Workforce Development Department. “By ensuring essential linkages with industry and external stakeholders, Humber is delivering on a coordinated and effective strategy to support business and industry through training opportunities that develop a skilled workforce.”

The ALiGN network will be supported by Ryerson University’s Magnet platform to bring this first-of-its-kind youth employment model online, making ALiGN accessible to businesses and job seekers anywhere in Ontario. Through the ALiGN Network, youth will be matched to live job postings based on their own unique personality attributes and interests. Work-ready job seekers will be fast-tracked into employment. Candidates with skills or qualifications gaps, based on the assessment process, will receive industry-designed training and certification, either through the network of regional training partners, or, through an online suite of industry training programs that can be accessed remotely.

“The fact that our youth unemployment rate is over 14 per cent in this province while employers are struggling to fill entry-level positions demands that we start looking at things differently” says Adam Morrison, V.P. Projects and Partnerships, OTEC. “Businesses have been telling us for years that, if candidates are the right fit, they will hire them and train them for advancement. We now have a system that matches youth to real opportunities based on their unique attributes, attitudes and goals.”

Key industry partners include Magnet/Ryerson University, ORHMA, Mobilize Jobs, and a roster of prominent, independent and global brands. ORHMA which represents over 11,000 hospitality employers across the province has partnered with ALiGN. Since the assessment methodology is based on a behavioural and attitudinal benchmark established by industry, it will enable ALiGN’s employment and training partners to refer candidates to participating employers with confidence in the job seeker’s suitability for the position. It will also open up a new pool of potential candidates for employers - youth who might not have experience in the role, but are a natural fit for the work and the industry culture.

“The ALiGN Network will support our members and unemployed youth in the Toronto area,” says Tony Elenis, President, ORHMA. “By working with key industry stakeholders and partners, we will address the issues of youth underemployment and labour shortages in the hospitality industry.”

Funded in part by the Government of Ontario, with support from the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth, the ALiGN project will represent a significant investment in hospitality training programming for four other regions including Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Niagara and Algoma, while also seeking to address the overall labour shortage Ontario is facing for front line hospitality roles.

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**For more information about the ALiGN network, please contact:**

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**ABOUT OTEC:**

OTEC is an Ontario-based independent, not-for-profit training, consulting & workforce development organization that delivers high quality, creative and branded solutions for the development and growth of a professional, skilled workforce. It is the leading source support for communities to build workforce capacity and for companies to attract, retain, and develop high performing employees and become Employer of Choice organizations.

OTEC is the premier source for Customer Service training and strategy development, Tourism Ambassador training, leadership skills training and certifications and education products and services for tourism, hospitality and service oriented organizations in a wide range of industry sectors both nationally and internationally.

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**ABOUT ORHMA:**

The Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association (ORHMA) is the largest provincial hospitality association in Canada. With over 4,000 members, representing more than 11,000 establishments across the province, the ORHMA is uniquely positioned to represent the issues that most impact your business.

ORHMA represents the industry's interests at both the Provincial and Municipal levels of government. Through our specialized in-house government relations experts, our provincial Board of Directors and our local Regional Boards, the Association provides pertinent and timely advice on industry-specific issues to politicians across the province.    The Association's dedicated and professional Membership Team provides ORHMA members with meaningful cost-saving programs and unique educational services.

ORHMA is dedicated to fostering a positive business climate for Ontario's hospitality industry, while providing value-added services to its members.

E. [www.orhma.com](http://www.orhma.com) T. 905.361.0268

**ABOUT HUMBER COLLEGE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

Humber College Community Employment Services provides a full range of employment and training services for job seekers and employers, supporting them to achieve their employment goals. We connect people looking for work with employers looking for workers.

We help job seekers with free job search assistance, workshops, guided access to training and job postings. Employers can benefit from our free recruitment services, customized training and customized recruitment events.

Our service is provided by a team of professional, knowledgeable, responsive and client-centered staff in five locations across the Greater Toronto Area

These Employment Ontario services are funded in part by the Government of Canada.

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