

ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Program plugs students into Canadian Forces opportunities

Qualified applicants can obtain subsidized education at Okanagan College

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Students interested in becoming a naval electronic technician or naval weapons technician with the Canadian Forces now have a powerful opportunity in the Okanagan.

The Canadian Forces has accredited Okanagan College's Electronic Engineering Technology program. This means qualified applicants have the opportunity to obtain subsidized education at the college level for non-commissioned members.

Students enrolled in the program can apply for the plan, and if accepted, their tuition will not only be covered, but they'll also receive a salary, with benefits, while attending school.

"This is a great opportunity for students to now have this available in the Interior part of the province," said Capt. Brent Thompson, from the Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre in Kelowna.

Students are already showing interest in the program.

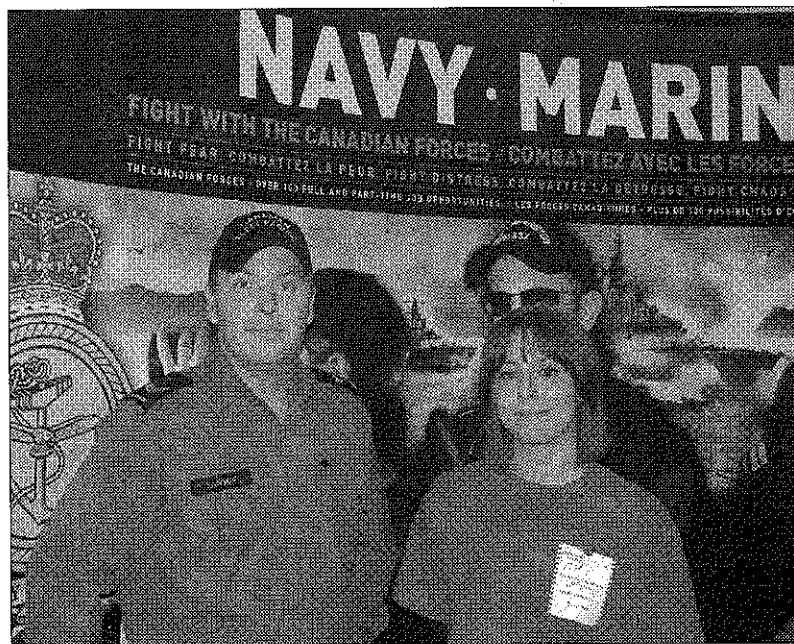


Photo contributed

Chantel Boychuk, right, a first-year student in electronic engineering at Okanagan College, has decided to apply for a program at the college subsidized by the Canadian Forces. She is pictured with Leading Seaman Shawn Hanson of the Canadian Forces.

"One of the officers came to the school and talked about the program. I thought about it for a little bit, and thought why not," said 22-year-old Chantel Boychuk, who likes the idea of working in

the field of sonar.

A first-year student in electronic engineering, she decided to apply. Acceptance is based on aptitude, medical fitness, education and reliability.

"If I'm approved, at the end of it, I won't be in debt and I have a guaranteed job. There really was no downside."

Under the conditions of the plan, eligible students must be Canadian citizens, and are required to attend Basic and Occupation Training during the summer months. They're also required to serve two months of obligatory service for each month of subsidized education once they've graduated from the college program.

Approved candidates receive a salary while going to school. The CF offers very competitive salaries: for non-commissioned members (entering at the rank of Private) the basic annual pay starts at about \$30,000. In addition, tuition, books and academic equipment are funded. The program also provides for a summer job between academic years, and a guaranteed job on completion.

"We are very happy that the Canadian Navy has chosen our program to partner with," said Gary Schwartz, chair of Electronic Engineering Technology.

The college joins an elite list of only 16 post-secondary institutions qualified to provide naval technician training in the country.