

Seneca WIL's Diversity and Inclusion Activities

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One of the objectives identified by Seneca WIL last year was to provide more in depth, diversity, and inclusion information, resources, support, and opportunities for our WIL students and industry partners. To this end, Seneca signed an MOU with Specialisterne in February 2018 and with SenseAbility in July of 2018.

[Specialisterne Canada Inc.](#) is a not-for-profit Canadian organization focused on services for employers and employees, as well as outreach and public education.

[SenseAbility](#) is Canada's only national, bilingual business network dedicated to helping private and public sector organizations become more accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities.

The goal is to create a template and cyclical process by which employers can hire students who identify as neurodiverse. Seneca WIL is happy to share that our first two ICT students are currently working with Bank of Montreal this winter for their co-op term. Even more exciting, these students have just been offered an extension to complete back-to-back co-ops with BMO.

In addition to these students, another fifty-one (51) WIL students have registered with Specialisterne to support their job search. Recognizing the traditional recruitment process does not work well for neurodiverse individuals,

Specialisterne's *Post-Secondary Bridging Program* offers workshops for students to identify their strengths and skills, resulting in a business profile for the student. This is then presented to employers who are recruiting WIL students through the bridging program. Twenty-seven (27) of our students have participated in the Specialisterne workshops and now have business profiles that can be used to help them secure their WIL employment. The program also offers



a transition program to support the students in their new workplace as well as provide education to the industry partner, so they can better support their new student-employee. This semester, TD Bank, Ericsson, and IBM join BMO as industry partners with Seneca WIL and Specialisterne in this exciting program.

Seneca WIL currently has eleven (11) students registered with SenseAbility. As part of their *Life After School Program*, WIL students register online and complete badges in order to qualify and apply to a job posting. In this program, students are guaranteed an interview once they have earned the required badges for the position. Our students are currently active in this process as they seek their summer co-op/workterm. There are many industry partners committed to the *Life After School Program*, including Air Canada, Deloitte, KPMG, Loblaw, Unilever, and the CBC, to name a few. I look forward to reporting on successful hires for the summer semester!



In addition to providing our students and industry partners with resources and support, it is our intention to increase access to optional WIL streams for students who may not have otherwise participated. We are working to contribute a work-integrated learning experience that is accessible for all students.

View the [March 2019 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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