



## **Parties Need to Take Action on Youth Un- and Underemployment**

**(OTTAWA) September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015**—Canada’s youth are struggling. As parents send their children back to classrooms and young adults hit campuses across the country, many are deeply concerned about employment prospects and student debt. Today, the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) is launching its campaign to urge all parties to make youth un- and under employment a priority in this election.

Canada’s economic success depends on Canadians having decent work and hopeful futures. Many if not most youth need support to make successful transitions from school-to-work and from precarious to decent work. For youth, these transitions are extremely challenging as they look to gain experience and a foothold in the labour market. Since the late 1990s, precarious work (contract, temporary and low-wage jobs) has nearly doubled among Canadians under 30. The impact on youth, families, workplaces, communities and the Canadian economy is significant. In a recent survey, 90% of 18-24 year olds reported excessive stress due to economic instability and underemployment. “Canada has extremely well educated youth, but also has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest youth underemployment rate among OECD countries” said Sareena Hopkins, Co-Executive Director of CCDF. “This is unsettling, particularly in a developed country where labour shortages have been identified in many regions. It is critical to support youth to navigate into work that is commensurate with their education and capacity.”

Employers who invest in youth invest in their bottom line. Governments that support employers to do so invest in growing the Canadian economy. The campaign launched today by CCDF will focus on the ways in which government can help, including support for industry-education partnerships, investments in paid internships, post-secondary co-op programs to ensure youth get the skills and work experience they need to succeed, and employer incentives to hire youth and provide on-the-job training to expand youth access to stable employment.

“When people’s career interests and their job are poorly matched, productivity drops. Underemployment and poor job matches impact employers as much as they impact workers,” added Clinton Nellist, a spokesperson for the campaign and co-founder of *Road to Employment*. “Support for improved access to career services and work experience will benefit youth, employers and the Canadian economy.”

CCDF is encouraging people who share these concerns to support this campaign on social media using #VoteYouthJobs and to send a message to local candidates at [voteyouthjobs.ca](http://voteyouthjobs.ca) in order to raise the issue of youth un- and underemployment as a key priority in this election



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