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~A Second Chance at a Better Future~



This month Leon Brace completes Grade 12 at the Discovery Centre in Clarenville - one of several high schools in the province specially designed for adults. His story is similar to many Discovery Centre graduates - it's a story of success and a solid foundation for a better future.

Leon attended high school in a small, rural community in Newfoundland in the 1980s. His father was an inshore fisherman when "there was still a good opportunity to make a living in the fishery". Leon believed he wouldn't need a high school diploma to become a fisherman - then the fishery closed and left him without a job. "There I was a high school drop out and no education or training for any type of employment. This left me with no choice but to move away to Ontario in search of work."

For 20 years, Leon lived on the mainland and worked when he could as a factory worker or general labourer. His dream was to move back home with his wife to his beloved outport community and raise their two children as he had been raised - in a clean environment with little crime. "After all the traveling I've done in search of better jobs, I finally realized that I have to get my education and choose a career that will secure me and my family." So Leon's family came back home.

Three years ago, Leon's wife received her high school diploma from the Discovery Centre and is now completing a Criminology program at college.

This month, Leon completes his high school diploma at the Discovery Centre, and will begin training to become a Mobile Crane Operator. Leon's dream is becoming a reality.

"This is the best choice I ever made since I dropped out of high school," says Leon, "and my wife agrees it's her best choice also."

For some, that choice can be frightening, but Leon and hundreds of others say that once you do make that first move, it will "be the beginning of a new life".

Students at each of the Discovery Centres study the provincial Adult Basic Education (ABE) program. Leon credits the helpful instructors and staff at "his" Discovery Centre with the support he and his wife needed to complete this first step of their dream.

Returning to school can be difficult, but for adults who want a second chance at school and a better future, the Discovery Centre is just a phone call away.