



# Success Stories

# Tourism SkillsNet

9 Success Stories, April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024

RTO 9 provided the opportunity for training and wage subsidies for eligible businesses in South Eastern Ontario's Tourism and Hospitality sectors through the Tourism SkillsNet 9 (TSN9) program. TSN9 was a collaborative initiative comprising Destination Northern Ontario, Nature and Outdoor Tourism Ontario, Ontario Tourism Education Corporation, RTO 7, and Ontario Employment Service Providers. The TSN9 program addressed specific workforce labour gaps in the Tourism and Hospitality sector by successfully training 91 employees representing 17 employers eligible for wage subsidies within South Eastern Ontario's Tourism and Hospitality sector.

The participating organizations covered a diverse range of sectors, including Accommodation, Agri-Tourism, Attractions, Conservation Authority, Destination Marketing Organization, and Restaurant/Culinary Establishments. The attendees shared their experiences emphasizing the impact on personal and professional growth, team support capabilities, and the ability to navigate various customer interactions effectively.

Success Stories:

# Accommodation

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**04**

**Hampton Inn by Hilton Kingston**

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**05**

**The June Motel**

# Hampton Inn by Hilton Kingston

Hampton Inn in Kingston is located off Highway 15, east of the St. Lawrence River, and is 10 minutes from Fort Henry National Historic Site, CFB Kingston, and the Royal Military College of Canada. Downtown Kingston and Queen's University are 15 minutes away.

 [hilton.com](https://www.hilton.com)

 Watch the [video testimonial](#) of Esther Boyadjian-Cruz, one of TSN9 program graduates.




ACCOMMODATION

# The June Motel

The June Motel is a boutique 16-room establishment in Prince Edward County with an additional location in Sauble Beach and are presently in the process of opening a third motel in Beaver Valley. The Prince Edward County property features a Lobby Bar and Patio showcasing a menu of local snacks and drinks. Notably, an outdoor yoga deck hosts weekly classes for guests.

 [thejunemotel.com](https://thejunemotel.com)

 Watch the [video testimonial](#) of Amal Mustafa, one of TSN9 program graduates.



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The Tourism SkillsNet 9 training enhanced our team’s customer service and communication skills with graduates feeling more empowered and confident to deliver top-notch hospitality to our guests. A particular benefit highlighted by the graduates was the focus on communication styles that could be applied both to guest interactions as well as internally which gave our staff the tools to interact with people more effectively and professionally in the workplace.

– Melanie Bible, The June Motel



Success Stories:

# Agri-Tourism

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**08**

**Topsy Farms**

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**10**

**Wynn Farms**

# Topsy Farms

Topsy Farms, a well-established family-owned business, not only engages in sustainable agriculture and sheep farming but also plays a pivotal role in tourism by offering authentic and educational experiences.

- **Farm Tours:** We offer self-guided farm tours (we have our own downloadable App), allowing visitors to see our sheep, learn about our sustainable farming practices, and witness aspects of our wool production process firsthand.
- **Farm Store:** Visitors can explore our farm store The Wool Shed, which features our wool products, including yarn, clothing, and blankets. This supports local artisans and promotes sustainable, natural fibers.
- **Educational Workshops:** Topsy Farms hosts workshops on topics such as sheep farming, natural yarn dyeing, kayaking, 'forest bathing', and sustainable agriculture. These workshops attract tourists interested in hands-on experiences and rural life.







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We believe in continuous learning and development, and the Tourism SkillsNet 9 program aligns with our commitment to improving the quality of service we offer to our valued visitors.

– Jacob Murray, Topsy Farms

# Wynn Farms

Wynn Farms is an Agri-tourism-based business, offering on-farm experiences. The flower farm is located at 9592 Hwy 33 and is open from mid-July until mid-September for sunflower fields, pick-your-own bouquets, and ice cream. Visitors can enjoy special events like “Bouquet with Your Bestie, a Sunflower Festival, “Field to Vase”, tea parties in the garden, etc.

The Apple Orchard at 8191 Hwy 33 opens mid-August each year until the end of October. This farm location offers an intricately designed corn maze adventure, apple and pumpkin picking. Special events such as family fun weekend, Moonlight Corn Maze, Haunted halloWYNN, and a lively Kids Halloween party.



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The Tourism SkillsNet 9 program provided our tourism-based farm with a fantastic opportunity. We maintained top-notch customer service by ensuring constant full staffing, enhancing the overall farm experience. This not only positively impacted the local economy by employing community members but also garnered positive feedback from guests. The excellent service resulted in repeat customers and attracted new ones through positive social media reviews and word of mouth.

– Sarah Wynn, Wynn Farms



Success Stories:

# Attraction

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**Kingston Theatre Alliance**

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**Improbable Escapes**

# Kingston Theatre Alliance

Kingston Theatre Alliance expressed its gratitude for the program, highlighting its role in providing high-level training that contributed to the success of the Kick & Push Festival.

Kingston Theatre Alliance is the producer of the Kick & Push Festival, a month-long celebration of innovative performance that animates multiple locations throughout downtown Kingston during July & August in unique and unexpected ways. It does so through creating experiential tourism products in collaboration with an increasing amount of regional partners, most of whom operate within attractions, accommodations, and hospitality.



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During our 27-day multi-venue live performance summer festival, we received a significant amount of positive feedback praising the excellent customer care our team provided. This was possible for our small organization because of the excellent, accessible high-level training provided by Tourism SkillsNet 9. Thank you for this invaluable support!

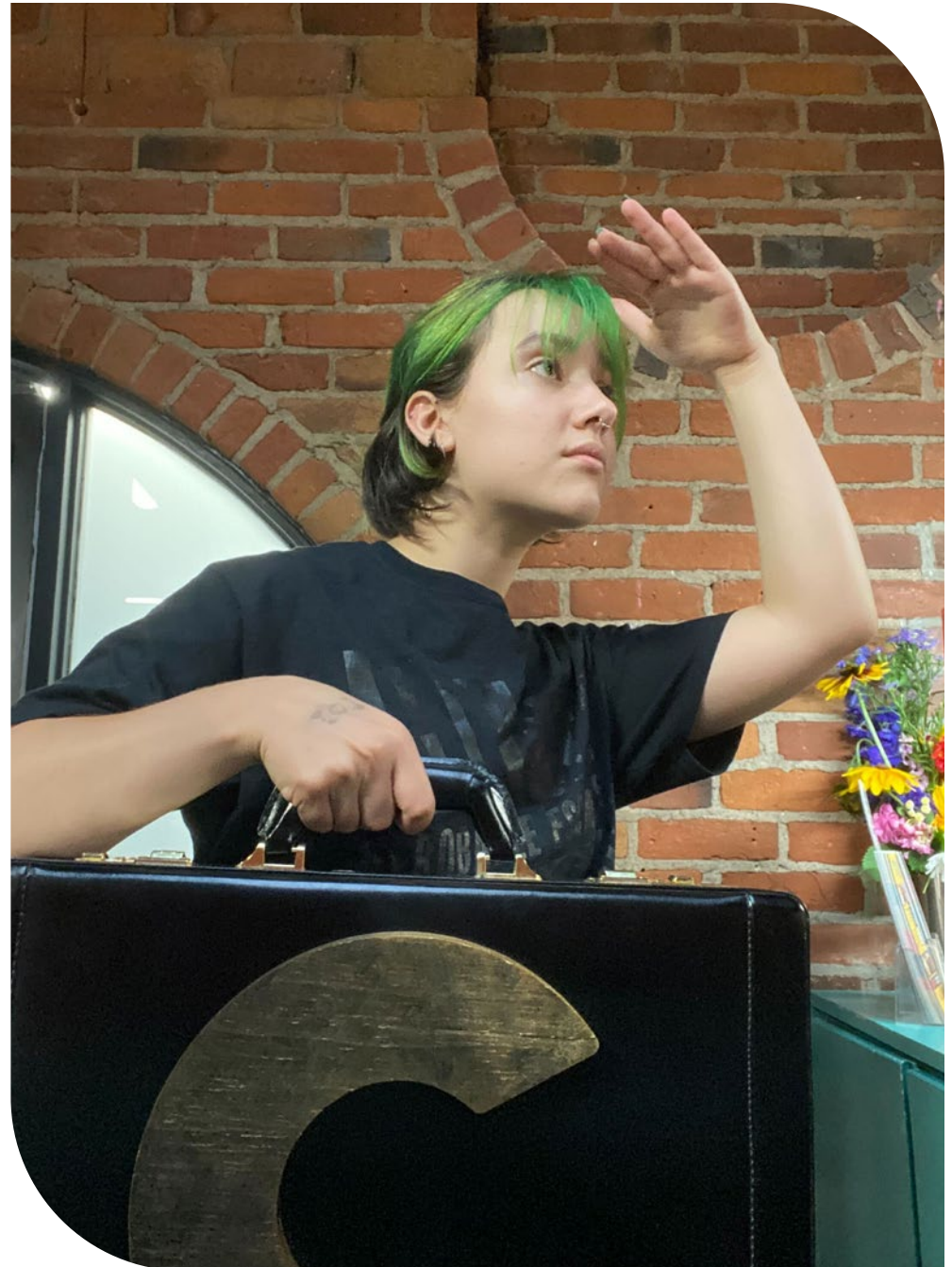
– Liam Karry, Kingston Theatre Alliance



# Improbable Escapes

Improbable Escapes offers collaborative and intriguing entertainment, perfect for all ages. Our experiences are live-action adventures, where players are challenged to use creative and lateral thinking to solve their way out of a “locked” room. Teams work collaboratively, solving puzzles and exploring in order to escape before time runs out.

Escape rooms are perfect for tourists looking to experience new locations in a fun and engaging way, as well as for families, businesses, and co-workers looking for bonding or team-building activities. We offer indoor, outdoor, and virtual experiences from our two brick-and-mortar locations in Kingston, and have partnered with numerous local organizations and agencies to create unique, entertaining, and exciting experiences here in Kingston for locals and tourists alike.



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The Tourism SkillsNet 9 Program ensured that all our new hires began their employment with a solid foundation in delivering the level of service our customers have come to expect. A large portion of our staff are students, some of whom are entering the workforce for the first time. The program helped narrow their skills gap and ease the costs of their required training.

– Liz Orenstein, Improbable Escapes





Success Stories:

# Destination Marketing Organization and Visitor Information Centre

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Tourism Kingston

# Tourism Kingston

Tourism Kingston is the destination marketing and management organization for the City of Kingston. Its work includes the development of strategic marketing and communications plans in support of destination profile and promotion and incentivizing tourism activity within the region through relationship-building, bidding, product development, and coordination of its sales sectors (travel trade, business events, sport, and wellness), visitor services, and film and music production and promotion.

**Photo: left to right:**

Andre Soucy, Director of Visitor Services and Customer Excellence; Colesen Lebrun – Tourism Ambassador, and Tourism SkillsNet 9 graduate. Victoria Brassard Monahan, Visitor Services Team Lead; and Sophie Collins, Tourism Ambassador, and Tourism SkillsNet 9 graduate.



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This experience has enforced my commitment to lead with unwavering professionalism. I am now consistently driven to enhance my team support capabilities through a proactive approach, fostering collaborative discussions, and embracing active listening practices. This dedication not only reinforces my leadership style but also ensures a continuous exploration of opportunities to elevate the team's performance and cohesion.

– Kally Lalka, Tourism SkillsNet 9 graduate



Success Stories:

# Restaurant/Culinary Establishment

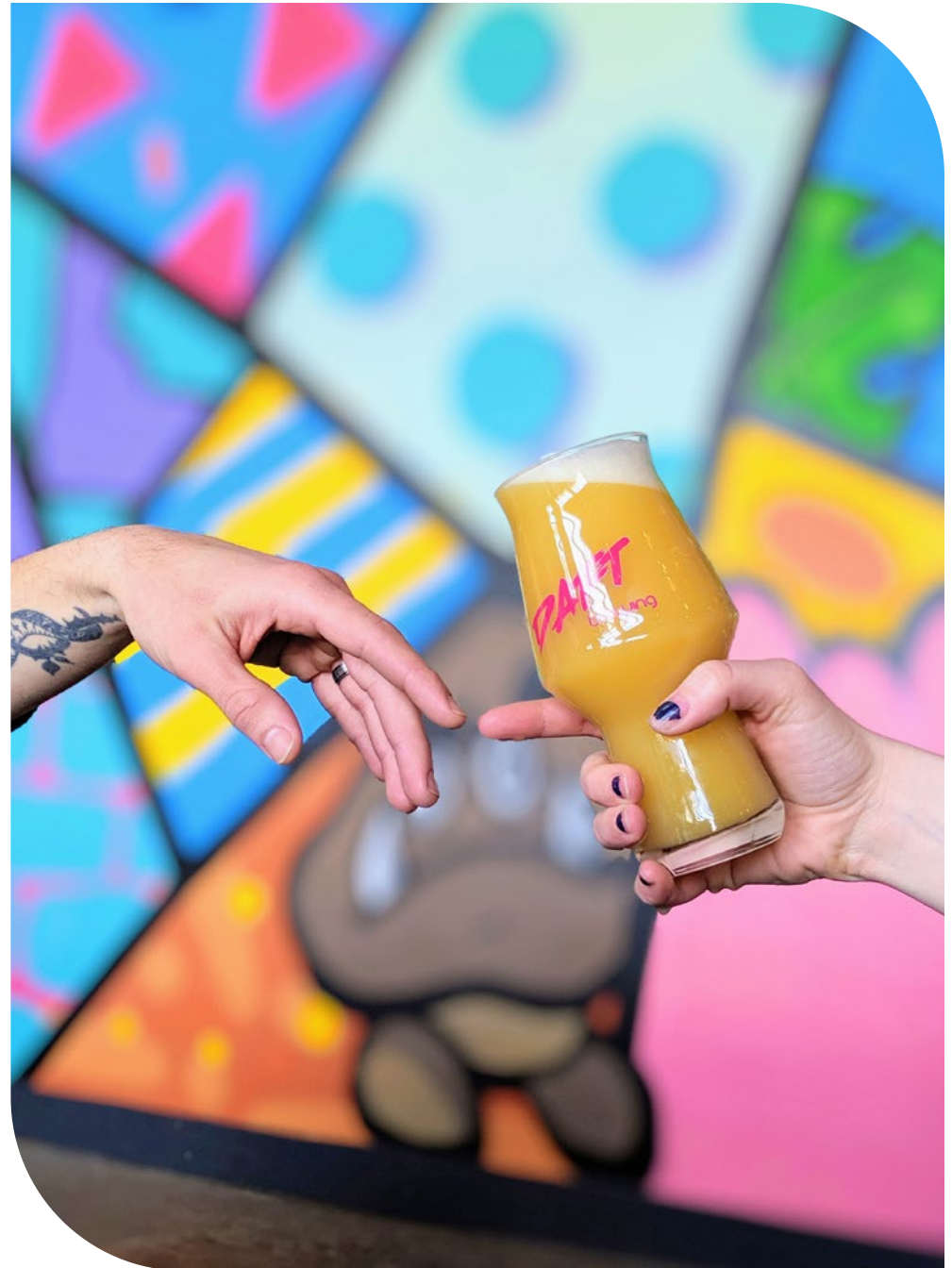
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**Daft Brewing Company**

# Daft Brewing Company

Daft Brewing, a Craft Brewing Company in Kingston, is a must-visit for tourists, offering a dynamic taproom experience with daily events and collaborations with local businesses. Beyond crafting exceptional beers, Daft Brewing creates a vibrant cultural hub, showcasing the talents of the community. It's not just a place for craft beer; it's an essential stop for tourists seeking a unique blend of local flavors, community engagement, and the lively spirit of Kingston.



A photograph of a group of people socializing at a bar. In the foreground, the back of a person's head wearing a pink shirt is visible. In the middle ground, a man in a dark hoodie is smiling and looking towards a woman on the right who is holding a glass of beer. The background features vibrant graffiti art with the word 'RAD' in yellow and blue, and various geometric shapes in purple, blue, and pink. To the left, wooden barrels are stacked, with the number '2228' visible on one of them.

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I have a lot of customer service and tourism/hospitality experience, so I didn't expect to derive much value from taking this course. However, I found that it immediately helped me in my day-to-day work. It's nice to have reminders of all the little things that matter when you are working in this industry. It can be easy to let the little things slip sometimes so I think this course helped bring my service up a level.

– Derek VanVeller, Tourism SkillsNet 9 graduate

# **Program Beneficiaries**

## PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

This list of Tourism SkillsNet 9 program beneficiaries showcases the program's impact and the commitment of organizations to continuous learning, enhancing customer service, and contributing to the growth of the Tourism and Hospitality sector in South Eastern Ontario.

### Accommodation

- 1840 GuestHouse B&B Partnership – 1 trained  
[1840guesthouse.com](http://1840guesthouse.com)
- Chesley's Inn – 1 trained  
[chesleysinn.ca](http://chesleysinn.ca)
- Hampton Inn By Hilton Kingston – 10 trained  
[hilton.com/en/hotels-hampton-kingston](http://hilton.com/en/hotels-hampton-kingston)
- The June Motel – 3 trained  
[thejunemotel.com](http://thejunemotel.com)
- Bear Standing Tall Inc. – 1 trained  
[bearstandingtall.ueniweb.com](http://bearstandingtall.ueniweb.com)

### Agri-Tourism

- Topsy Farms – 1 trained  
[topsyfarms.com](http://topsyfarms.com)
- Wynn Farms – 10 trained  
[wynnfarms.ca](http://wynnfarms.ca)

### Attraction

- Aquatarium – 6 trained  
[aquatarium.ca](http://aquatarium.ca)
- Improbable Escapes – 5 trained  
[improbableescapes.com](http://improbableescapes.com)
- Kingston Theatre Alliance – 10 trained  
[kingstontheatre.ca](http://kingstontheatre.ca)
- Theatre Kingston – 4 trained  
[kingstontheatre.ca](http://kingstontheatre.ca)

### Conservation Authority

- Cataraqui Conservation Area – 2 trained  
[cataraquiconservation.ca](http://cataraquiconservation.ca)
- Raisin Region Conservation Authority – 9 trained  
[rrca.on.ca](http://rrca.on.ca)

### Destination Marketing Organization and Visitor Information Centre

- Tourism Kingston – 9 trained  
[visitkingston.ca/about-tourism-kingston](http://visitkingston.ca/about-tourism-kingston)

### Restaurant/Culinary Establishment

- Catered Affairs – 1 trained  
[cateredaffairs.ca](http://cateredaffairs.ca)
- Daft Brewing Company – 10 trained  
[daftbrewing.com](http://daftbrewing.com)
- Brown Hospitality Corporation – 6 trained  
[ihg.com/holidayinnexpress/hotels/fr/fr/gananoque/yonca/hoteldetail](http://ihg.com/holidayinnexpress/hotels/fr/fr/gananoque/yonca/hoteldetail)



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