

Phone line disconnected

CLOSING OF TTEC CALL CENTRE THROWING 170 EMPLOYEES OUT OF WORK

TROY SHANTZ
THE JOURNAL

About 170 workers will be out of work when a call centre at the Western Sarnia-Lambton Research Park closes April 30.

TTEC Canada is shutting down the centre because the client no longer needs its services, said general manager and vice-president Thomas Monaghan.

"It's not a question of the space or the location, it's really just down to client needs, that's the only reason," he told The Journal.

At its peak, 350 workers filled the 40,000-square-foot facility on Modeland Road, which opened as the Atelka Contact Centre in June of 2014.

TTEC Holdings acquired the Sarnia site in 2016. There are no plans to close any of the company's six other Canadian centres, Monaghan said.

The local employees are being offered job placement and career transition services, he said.

In addition to the lost jobs, the company's departure will leave a big space to fill at the Research Park.

Executive director Katherine Albion said they hope to find a new tenant quickly.

"(It) gives us some more opportunities for development, and to help new and growing companies become established at the park."

The Modeland Road complex was 97% full at the end of last year, she said. Its 40 tenants include Nova Chemicals, the Sarnia Lambton Economic Partnership and many smaller start-ups affiliated with Western University and Lambton College.

Upgrades at TTEC's open-concept unit, including a new LED lighting system, were completed two years ago.

"It's what I would call one of our prime locations," she said.

Colorado-based TTEC Holdings has 89 customer service centres around the world with revenue of \$1.5 billion last year.

Against all odds



AFTER LOSING A lung three years ago, 12-year-old athlete Sammy Kabat is about to represent Canada at the world cheer championships in Florida. For more on her remarkable story, please see page 3.

GLENN OGILVIE The Journal

High school refurbished

NEW AND IMPROVED GREAT LAKES SECONDARY WILL BE READY THIS FALL, BOARD SAYS

TROY SHANTZ
THE JOURNAL

The new and improved Great Lakes Secondary School will be ready and waiting for students this fall, officials say.

A refurbishing of the original high school on Murphy Road will be complete by May, and a new addition housing a 550-seat auditorium and other amenities will be ready for students and staff by September, said Brian McKay, business superintendent with the Lambton Kent District School Board.

"We're just excited to get our students and staff into the new building. (The contractors) know our dates, they know we need to get our students back in."

The former St. Clair Secondary building is also getting an updated library, indigenous studies room and a larger cafeteria.

The school, whose 1,000 students are temporarily taking classes at the former SCITS building on Wellington Street, was supposed to reopen last September at a cost of \$16 million.

But the board acknowledged 14 months ago the project was delayed by higher material prices and difficulty securing enough skilled tradespeople, adding nearly \$6 million to the price tag.

McKay said Concord-based Jasper Construction Corp. has since been able to acquire sufficient workers and push through any weather-related delays.

The total project cost, including demolition, stands at \$24.5 million, unchanged from the 2018 update, McKay said.

"We haven't had to bring any more money to the table."

He said the parking lot and landscaping have been a challenge due to this winter's conditions, but the contractor has advised the site exterior will be ready by early summer.

Continued on 2



Honda dream garage Event



2019 CR-V LX NEW LOWER PAYMENT
FROM **\$84/3.99%** APR
WEEKLY LEASE FOR 60 MONTHS⁹
\$0 DOWN PAYMENT/OAC \$0 SECURITY DEPOSIT

Proudly built in Ontario
The 2018 best-selling SUV in Ontario[^]

*Based on DesRosiers Sport Utility segmentation for the sales period January 1, 2018 - December 31, 2018

AUTO HOUSE HONDA
SARNIA 519-344-1123

SINCE 1969 · 50 YEARS · HONDA



honda.ca

LEASE PAYMENTS INCLUDE FREIGHT AND PDI. EXCLUDES LICENCE AND HST. DEALER TRADE MAY BE NECESSARY.

Limited time lease offers available through Honda Financial Services Inc. (HFS), to qualified retail customers on approved credit. Weekly payments include freight and PDI (ranges from \$1,655 to \$1,795 depending on model), tire & environmental fee (\$21) [This fee covers the cost to Honda Canada of collecting and recycling tires], A/C charge (\$100), and OMVIC fee (\$10). Taxes, licence, insurance and registration are extra. ⁹Representative weekly lease example: 2019 CR-V LX 2WD CVT (Model RW1H3KES) // 2019 Civic LX Sedan 6MT (Model FC2E5KEX) // 2019 Accord LX-HS Sedan (Model CV1F1KE) on a 60-month term with 260 weekly payments at 3.99% // 1.99% // 2.99% lease APR. Weekly payment is \$83.68 // \$59.78 // \$82.62 with \$0 down or equivalent trade-in and \$0 total lease incentive included. Down payments, \$0 security deposit and first weekly payments due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is \$21,757.01 // \$15,541.58 // \$21,480.32. 100,000 kilometre allowance; charge of \$0.12/km for excess kilometres. PPSA lien registration fee of \$45.93 and lien registering agent's fee of \$5.65, due at time of delivery are not included. For all offers: licence, insurance, PPSA, other taxes (including HST) and excess wear and tear are extra. Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price. Offers only valid for Ontario residents at participating Ontario Honda Dealers. Dealer may lease for less. Dealer order/trade may be necessary but may not be available in all cases. Colour availability may vary by dealer. Vehicles and accessories are for illustration purposes only. Offers, prices and features subject to change without notice. See your Ontario Honda Dealer or visit HondaOntario.com for full details.

Local

Despite losing lung, city girl now a world-class athlete

CATHY DOBSON
THE JOURNAL

A 12-year-old Sarnia girl with just one lung has defied the odds and will represent Canada at the world junior cheer championships in Florida next month.

Sammy Kabat was told by doctors she might never walk again, let alone play sports, after undergoing surgery to have a tumour and her left lung removed in 2016, said her mother, Jaime Kabat.

"Sammy was very athletic and was in soccer, baseball,

swimming, gymnastics and cheer the year the tumour was detected," she said.

"After her surgery, they told us she would never do athletics again — and definitely not cheer team."

But Sammy's recovery has been remarkable. She began walking while still in hospital and continued to gain strength after returning home.

She missed her teammates at Sarnia's Bluewater Cheer Athletics, however, and so went to watch them practice.

"I remember feeling sad, sitting on the side and watching," said the petite Rosedale

School student. "I like being challenged and I like cheer a lot, because the people there are my friends."

"So I just tried it again." Her coach, Sarah Faubert, said Sammy's determination is what made the comeback possible.

"She is a great cheerleader. I never for a day thought Sammy wasn't going to cheer again," said Faubert, who is also the gym's co-owner.

She and fellow co-owner and coach Jodie Bore worked with Sammy and her team, but never offered special treatment, according to her mom.

"Her coaches worked with her to slowly build up her stamina. We could see it improved Sammy's morale too," she said.

"They never babyed her, so the other kids don't think of her as having one lung."

A year after the surgery Sammy returned to competition.

"You'd never know she doesn't have two lungs," said Faubert. "She shows up and does her job. She does not ask for anything special."

This year, Bluewater Cheer Athletics collaborated with Power Cheer Gym in London to form a single junior co-ed team with 24 members. Sixteen are from Sarnia.

Sammy and her 15-year-old brother Michael both made the team. Sammy is what's known as a flyer and is frequently lifted in the air to perform stunts. It requires skill in gymnastics, dance and acrobatics.

Several weeks ago, the junior co-ed team beat all national competitors and will now represent Canada at the 116-member nation International Cheer Union World Junior Championships. The



TWELVE-YEAR-OLD SAMMY Kabat is the daughter of Jaime and Bryan Kabat.

GLENN OGILVIE The Journal

event runs April 24-26 at Walt Disney World in Orlando.

"It is so special to see this team wearing the Team Canada uniform. It doesn't seem real," said Faubert.

"I was very excited when I heard we were going to Worlds," said Sammy.

"We were screaming," added her mom. "It's far more than we ever expected. I think she's just very determined, very stubborn. She does not like to be seen as different."

Nevertheless, Sammy and her family aren't certain what the future holds.

Doctors hope her single lung will eventually grow to occupy the empty cavity in her chest.

"She isn't a candidate for a transplant unless the second lung fails," Kabat said.

"Right now, her lung is growing but not as fast as she is and that has some complications."

"But the long-term prognosis is very good."



THIS 24-MEMBER JUNIOR coed team comprised of athletes from Bluewater Cheer Athletics (Sarnia) and Power Cheer Gym (London) will represent Canada at the World Cheer Championships in Orlando. Absent was Sammy Kabat, who was in hospital recovering from pneumonia. Her brother, Michael, 15, is standing, third row, far right.

Submitted Photo

The Forecast Calls for

SAFE TIRES

new tires
tire repairs
tire rotations
brake service
wheel alignment

Preventative Maintenance

- Oil Changes
- Fluid Checks
- Wiper Blades
- Tire Inspection
- Batteries
- Parts & Accessories
- Motor Vehicle Inspections

Spring showers bring dangerous driving conditions when your vehicle's tires are worn or bald. Reduce your risk of hydroplaning, accidents and injury with a professional inspection today.

HOURS: MON-FRI 8AM-5PM SAT 8AM-NOON

Sarnia TIRECRAFT
Auto Centre
1341 Plank Rd., Sarnia
519-383-1000
www.sarniatirecraft.com

"CREATING ONTARIO'S SAFEST DRIVERS"
FINDLEY'S DRIVER EDUCATION
397 EXMOUTH ST., SARNIA
519-337-3773

BEST TIME TO LEARN WINTER DRIVING

SPRING SPECIAL
\$599.99 Plus HST
GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

40 HOUR DRIVER EDUCATION PROGRAM
MTO - APPROVED BDE COURSE PROVIDER
Call Now for Class Information

www.findleys.ca

Sarnia Limited

rent•all

LAWN MOWERS STARTING FROM **\$399**
PLUS FREIGHT & POI
HRS2166 PKG

HONDA

OUR SHOWROOM IS FULLY STOCKED AND READY TO GO!

519-336-2300 • 135 Water Street, Sarnia
sarniarentall.com