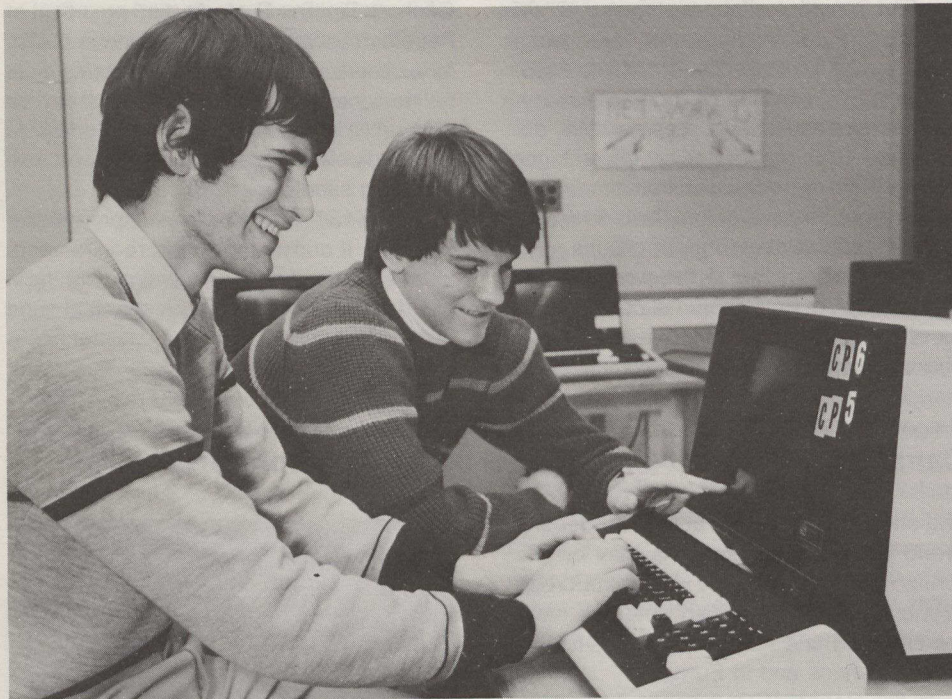


Training future high-tech entrepreneurs



Fred Sherwin, *The Citizen*

David Conibear (left) and Ian Jardine are among the selected students who have found their experiences in the Shad Valley program stimulating and rewarding.

Some of the bright, enterprising and creative Canadian high-school students that are selected to attend the Shad Valley program for gifted teenagers are expected to be among the leading high-technology entrepreneurs of their generation.

Derek Lane-Smith, who operates the program through the Waterloo, Ontario-based Canadian Centre for Creative Technology, said "these kids are so talented that they could acquire qualifications to pursue any career they choose, with great success".

The Shad Valley program is mainly funded by corporate sponsors. Northern Telecom Limited, Bell-Northern Research Limited, Gandalf Technologies Inc., Lumonics Inc. and Computing Devices Company are among the corporations that sponsor one or more students at a cost of \$3 000 each.

Sponsored students also pay \$400 each, to encourage their personal commitment to the program and to subsidize the fees of students who don't get corporate sponsorships. Students without sponsors pay \$1 500.

The program also receives funding from federal and provincial government agencies, industry associations such as the Association of Canadian Venture Capital Companies and the Canadian Advanced Technology Association, and research foundations.

Shad Valley — named after the Shad Creek near Aurora, where Lane-Smith ran the first program for 45 students — is a unique

opportunity for the hand-picked group of high school students from across Canada to learn about business and entrepreneurship.

Most of the students are in grade 11 and 12 and they are recommended by teachers and guidance counsellors. The selection committee of the Shad Valley program looks for students with very high academic achievement, especially in math and sciences, creative ability, initiative and drive, and good interpersonal skills.

During the four weeks on campus, the "shadlings", as they call themselves, take university-level classes in math, business, engineering and computer science. There are also special seminars on computer programming, electronics, business and engineering, as well as guest lectures, sports, music and other recreation activities.

The students live in the same residence as graduate students and professors and they are encouraged to express their ideas, debate issues and suggest their own activities. At the end of the four weeks, they work for one of the high-technology companies that sponsor the program for at least six weeks, and learn about starting their own technology ventures.

Jobs range from junior computer programming tasks to more complex design and software development projects, depending on the company's resources and the skills of each student.

Students in the program are shown that

"the risks of entrepreneurship are much less than they would expect, and that the rewards are far greater than they ever realized", said Mr. Lane-Smith. Students who have participated in the program say they've never experienced anything like it.

Early business ventures

"One of the main things Shad Valley stressed was entrepreneurship," said 16-year-old Steven Poplove, a grade 12 student at Nepean High School who attended the program last summer. He hopes to start his own computer software business.

Sandi McKone, an 18-year-old grade 13 student from Madawaska Valley District High School, who also took part in the program last summer, said she has always wanted to start her own business, and the course gave her some ideas on how to achieve that goal.

Ian Jardine, 19, had already started two "unofficial" companies when he took the program two years ago. Now in second-year physics at Carleton University in Ottawa, Mr. Jardine has registered Tartis Computer Consultants as a small business.

In 1985, more than 400 students applied for 96 spots in two programs at the Universities of Calgary and Waterloo. This year, Mr. Lane-Smith is expecting at least 800 applications for a total of 150 positions at Waterloo, Calgary and the University of New Brunswick.

Successful sales in Panama

The 13 participating Canadian firms at EXPOCOMER 85, held recently in Panama City, were highly successful in marketing their products during the trade fair.

On-site sales by the firms were over \$300 000 and more than \$4-million worth of business was projected by them over the next year as a result of the show.

One Canadian company official said that "group participation in trade fairs by Canadian exporters is one of the most effective ways of reaching Canadian export goals".

For Canada, it was the first full-fledged participation in an international trade fair in Central America. The Canadian firms displayed a wide range of products at the show, including automotive parts, telecommunications systems, hardware and plumbing supplies, pharmaceuticals, security systems, fencing and waterproofing products.

In addition to their success in sales the firms appointed 17 agents and distributors during the show, not only in Panama but in other Latin American countries as well. Negotiations were also begun on three joint ventures in the region.