



Nira Shearer (left) and Eugenie Cormier-Lassonde at headquarters in Ottawa.

working for six years with the regional economic development board of a county in Quebec. As an industrial commissioner it was my job to help people start their own businesses. So for me there were a lot of similarities between what I was already doing and working in trade, and it was something that I really enjoyed.”

And of course there’s the travel. But first, new TCS officers spend

one to two years at Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade headquarters in Ottawa. There they receive basic training in trade or one of the three other career streams.

For François, it was two years as a media relations officer in the Communications Branch. Nira worked for one year in the Baltic, Central European and Eastern Mediterranean Division, and Eugenie has been with the Eastern European Division for just six months.

New recruits receive training and practical experience at headquarters. They work with various geographic branches in Ottawa and trade offices around the world. And they travel across Canada visiting exporters, industry associations, provincial and municipal trade organizations, and a host of other groups involved in trade.

Once they complete initial training in Ottawa, the recruits can apply to

be posted overseas, submitting a list of three preferred locations. Nira will soon be on her way to Kazakhstan. After only one year at headquarters, she considers this a great opportunity. “I’m looking forward to it,” she says. “My goal was to work abroad, so when the position in Kazakhstan came up, I was eager to pursue it.” She is now learning Russian and will be ready to take up her posting in September 2003.

François is already working at the TCS office in Ankara, Turkey. For him, location was not the most important factor in his decision: “Where I would be posted was important, especially because I have a family. But I was equally interested in the people I would be working with and the type of work I would be doing,” he says. “Turkey is a very interesting post, the people are enthusiastic and dedicated. And the work is challenging since

## YOUTH

# DEVELOP GLOBAL CAREER SKILLS

**F**or youth of Canada interested in gaining career experience abroad, Young Professionals International is a good place to start.

A young woman from the Whitebear Nation in Saskatchewan analyzes Maori interests in New Zealand. A young man from Ontario works on missile proliferation issues for the United Nations in Geneva. A visually impaired youth from Newfoundland and Labrador develops the pedestrian safety for the blind project in Washington, D.C.

Like hundreds of others, these three young Canadians have been sponsored by Young Professionals International (formerly the Youth International Internship Program) of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Part of the Government of Canada’s Youth Employment Strategy, this initiative is designed to help Canada’s youth develop the skills they need in today’s global economy. It offers a first paid career-related work experience in another country. Young Canadians are eligible if they are between 18 and 30 years of age, unemployed or underemployed, not enrolled in an educational program—and are keen for international experience to launch their career.

One program alumnus is David Belluz. He got a start in film production; now he heads his own business.

The aspiring young Saskatchewan filmmaker interested Regina-based Cooper Rock Pictures in a documentary demo reel he had shot. With the assistance of Young Professionals International and the Canadian Film and Television Production Association,

Belluz trained at Cooper Rock and filmed several documentaries in Gulu, northern Uganda—including one on the 300,000 displaced persons in that region.

With help from Cooper Rock, Belluz saw his projects through all the stages from development to post-production. He then started his own company, Alethia Productions Inc. Jointly with Cooper Rock, he received full funding from three broadcasters for *Ebola War: The Nurses of Gulu*.

For Belluz and hundreds of others, Young Professionals International has been only the beginning.

The program has placed young Canadians in some 115 countries around the world, in organizations such as the Institute for Education in Democracy in Nairobi, Kenya, or the Commonwealth Youth Program of the Caribbean Regional Centre in