

REFLECTIONS

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ALUMNI UPDATE

1970

Ron A. Sheyan

Business Administration
Information Systems

Rob lives in Oshawa, Ont.
with his wife, Beth.

1979

Dennis Stokoe

Food and Drug Technology

Dennis lives in Etobicoke,
Ont. with his wife Jackie
and works as the Quality
Assurance & Regulatory
Affairs Manager with Smith &
Nephew Canada.

1993

Scott Wildman

Sports Management

Scott lives in Maple, Ont.,
with his wife Maria and is
the Business Development
Manager at Copywell
Printing.

2012

Racheal A. O'Callaghan

Personal Support Worker

Racheal lives in Newcastle,
Ont.

2014

Amanda Cunning

Office Administration

Amanda lives in Bowmanville,
Ont. with her husband Shawn,
and works as the Leadership
Administrative Secretary with
the Durham District School
Board.

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Developing the Next Generation of AI Talent

By Mauricio Cuellar

Photo credit: Mauricio Cuellar

Proud of his accomplishments in his 26 years, Amit Maraj is getting ready to become Durham College's (DC) new program co-ordinator of the first and only, one-of-its-kind Artificial Intelligence Analysis, Design and Implementation (AIDI) graduate certificate in Canada.

Maraj believes every company is transitioning into using artificial intelligence (AI) service, but they're not able to get qualified practitioners to build on their unique value proposition as companies.

"Canada is facing a lack of skilled professionals who are able to implement AI projects," says Maraj.

“Without the opportunities I've received from DC, I probably would never have been able to advance my education and career as far as it's come.”

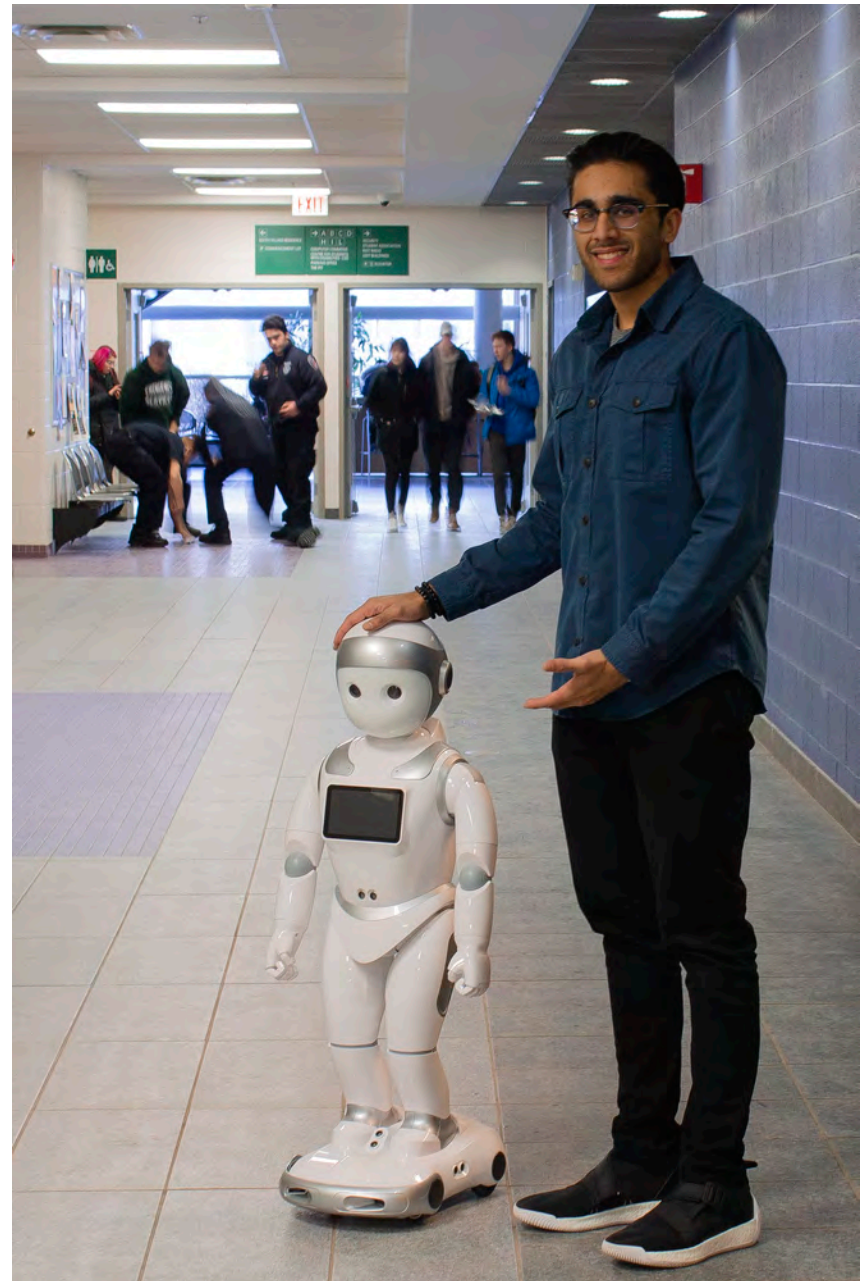
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"Being able to deliver expertise in the domain of AI will create huge economic opportunities for Canada. Our talent can become a domestic export."

According to Indeed, jobs in Canada requiring AI skills have grown by more than 1,000 per cent since 2013. Additionally, the \$125 million Canada is investing through the Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy is focused on increasing the number of AI researchers and skilled graduates.

DC is helping to solve the shortage of talent by launching the AIDI graduate certificate in the fall of 2019. The college has relied in Maraj and his vast experience to lead this challenging milestone.

Graduating from DC's Computer Systems Technician program in 2014, Maraj also holds a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology Security and a Master of Science in Computer Science, both from the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. He is currently completing his PhD in



Maraj has been awarded with the Silver Faculty of Excellence in Leadership by Colleges and Institutions Canada and the Outstanding Faculty Researcher Award by DC.

Computer Science with a specialization in Natural Language Processing.

Maraj is also a principal investigator on the primary research team with DC's Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ORSIE), where he has developed and implemented more than 20 industry-centric projects. However, one of the most rewarding parts of his job is being a faculty member with the School of Business, IT and Management.

"Giving students the opportunity to work with companies in the industry, gain real-world experience and develop things they never knew were possible is the most rewarding part of my job," says Maraj. "Without the opportunities I've received from DC, I probably would never have been able to advance my education and career as far as it's come."

Maraj is proud of his accomplishments, however, he's had to make tough decisions along the way that have prevented him from reaching his ultimate life goal.

"I've always wanted to be a dad," says Maraj. "That's my



With the ORSIE, Maraj helped establish the Applied Research in Artificial Intelligence for Business Systems (AI Hub) at Durham College, and created boot camps, workshops as well as several fully documented machine learning examples, which are hosted publicly for students.


goal in life. By sacrificing some of my time now, it will allow me to dedicate more time to the things that are going to be super important to me in the future, like becoming a father."

For now, Maraj is prepared to launch the AIDI program in September 2019 to help

students become familiar working with AI-based technologies, algorithms and frameworks, and to give them a practical advantage over their competition in developing AI solutions for companies.

Despite his talent and the huge responsibilities on

his shoulders to develop the next AI export-quality talent, he simply wants to be remembered as a friend.

"I would like to be remembered as someone that people can rely on. I want everybody to remember me as their friend", Maraj says. 

Durham College's Very Own Fundraising Prodigy, Linda Flynn

By: Diane El-Hachem

It took her a few years to get there, but Linda Flynn landed her dream job at Durham College as associate vice-president of the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs. Flynn consistently delivers devotion, passion and love to all her work. She is part of a breakthrough in the digital revolution and brought rare, highly sought-after skills to the workplace.



Linda Flynn speaking at the Building Something Amazing Campaign that raised funds for the CFCE. (Durham College)

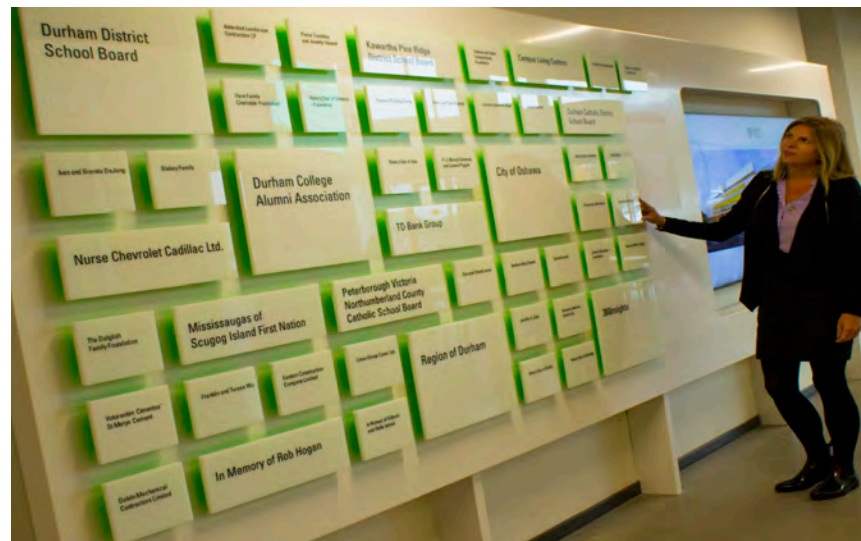
"Our class was the first to graduate with desktop publishing skills in the program. I was hired at my first job right out of school," said Flynn.

"Having graduated 30 years ago in 1988 and then to come back now in a leadership role has been amazing," said Flynn.

Flynn says her most memorable career highlights were the community engagements and the relationships made along the way. Flynn and her team recently raised \$5-million towards Durham College's new Centre For Collaborative Education (CFCE).

"I am passionate about the school and the amazing things happening here, and also about bringing alumni back because of the excitement they get from coming back here," said Flynn.

Flynn strategically looks at how Durham College should be engaging with the communities it serves as well as working with alumni. Of course, it helps that she is doing what she loves. It's no surprise she plans on staying.




Linda Flynn stands before the newly installed donor wall in the CFCE lobby.
(Diane El-Hachem)

"I would say as long as it's interesting, I'm really happy where I am," said Flynn.

Linda advises those in their last year of their program to continue networking and learning.

"Get to know as many people as you can, learn as much as you can and soak it up," said Flynn.

Flynn is an extraordinary example of an alumni that is leading a fulfilling career. She is a wonderful person that is inflamed with passion and charisma.

"Do what you love, follow your passion. Sometimes it takes a while to get there at times but follow your love. I've been really fortunate to be able to do that," said Flynn. 

“I would say as long as it’s interesting, I’m really happy where I am.”

How She Gained The Experience

Story and photo by
Lauren Crummey

Lively, motivated and compassionate — three words that describe Nicole Weller to a tee. A 2017 graduate of the Social Service Worker (SSW) program at Durham College (DC), she is currently attending the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) for Forensic Psychology. When she's not being a full-time student, she's working at one of her two jobs — running after-school programming at the YMCA or creating delicious drinks as a Starbucks barista.

Her journey began back in 2015, when she started the two-year SSW program.

"I entered into the program because I liked the idea of being a social worker and helping someone get through a tough situation," says Weller. "The things you learned in class, you practiced in class, so I felt like I was really learning and not just taking notes."

As part of the program, she was tasked with finding and completing a placement each year.

Her placements were at Youth Connections, a youth program geared toward under-18 male sex offenders, and at the Simcoe Hall Settlement House, a non-profit community resource centre.

“These placements stretched my comfort zone and allowed me to get hands-on experience in the field.”

During her time at Youth Connections, she worked days and nights, providing one-on-one guidance sessions for the young men around things such as school and home life, while

gaining valuable knowledge of what it would be like in the field. While at Simcoe Hall Settlement House, she ran a cooking class, did intakes and distributed food to the community.

"These placements stretched my comfort zone and allowed me to get hands-on experience in the field," says Weller. "It also helped choosing two things that were very different from each other. By completing my first placement, it made me realize that I didn't necessarily want to do social work, but I wanted to be more involved in the legal aspect."

That's when she found DC offered a bridge program,

allowing her to transfer her credits to UOIT's Forensic program. This allowed her to complete both a diploma and degree in four and a half years. Her interest in getting to know people and seeing the world through their eyes helped encourage her to take the Forensic Psychology program.

Her new career path was something Weller didn't expect. And like many young adults, she knows it's tough choosing the right one. Her advice for anyone embarking on their career journey?

"Take all of the experiences you can and ask a lot of questions in school," says Weller. "Ask your professors how they got to where they are. And know it's OK to not know what you want to do."

In the future, Weller hopes to take what she's learned at DC and UOIT and apply it to a full-time legal position working with people in distress. With the amazing qualities she brings to the table, Weller is ready to take on anything that comes her way, with a smile on her face. 🌱



Weller, content, as she continues her exciting journey through post-secondary education.

Mock Media Conference: A Moment of Truth

By Marissa Campbell

It draws from experience gained in every course and project that's come before it, and it's worth a considerable part of your mark. The mock media conference is the capstone assignment of the media relations course in the Public Relations Advanced Diploma program at Durham College (DC).

To succeed in this assignment, students in their second year of the fast-track compressed program utilize skills learned in photography, videography, writing, media relations, research, graphic design, social media, event planning and strategic communications. Saying nothing of the soft skills tested like problem solving, time management, collaboration, creativity and the ability to work under pressure.

Students work in groups and partner with a non-profit organization to create a real-world mock campaign. These

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partners not only advise the group on the viability of the public relations campaign, but they also participate in the event itself by coming to the conference as the featured guest speaker.

“Students work in groups and partner with a non-profit organization to create a real-world mock campaign. These partners not only advise the group on the viability of the public relations campaign, but they also participate in the event itself by coming to the conference as the featured guest speaker.”

Picture it. College spaces transformed into themed media conferences. In 2018, a boardroom functioned as



Public Relations Advanced Diploma Alumni Tasha Jetha and Program Co-ordinator Lynn Gough pose for a Polaroid shot at the #memorymaniac media conference. (Singh)

a stage with a live band, a photo studio became a barn, complete with hay bales and a humble classroom was illuminated by a dynamic light show, turned into a winter wonderland and transformed into an '80s bedroom with iconic posters on the walls and a Polaroid photo booth. No detail is too small.

“The students love this project. It builds their confidence to work in teams, pitch their ideas to clients, as well as the media, and execute professional industry outcomes to build their portfolios. ”

Media are invited to attend, and the mock campaign is announced with speeches by dignitaries and student teams. A press kit is created to hand out to media and attendees, which includes a press release, photo release, image and video bank, fact sheet, bios, poster, speeches and event rollout. Everything, including the press kit folder itself must have consistent, original branding. And, no one walks away

without swag.

In short, from proposal, to planning, to execution, students pool all their resources to create a memorable experience that prepares them for the real-world application of their skills.

The assignment is the brainchild of Program Co-ordinator Lynn Gough. With a strong media background from her experiences working with CBC, she wanted to create a curriculum that contributed to student success by teaching them the transferable skills necessary to ensure their continued success.

“The students love this project,” says Gough. “It builds their confidence to work in teams, pitch their ideas to clients, as well as the media, and execute professional industry outcomes to build their portfolios.”

Last fall, second-year public relations student Mauricio Cuéllar and his team partnered with Huntington Society of Canada to create a fully-implementable campaign that would help raise money and awareness for Huntington Disease. Their concept was to create a barn dance and bring a little fun into the lives



The Walk to Rock media conference crew: back row: Kris Lamb, Garret Christian and Kramer White of DellaRose pose with Kamila Moorji, Kaitlin Romain, Lynn Gough and Police Constables Papadopoulos and Arsenault. (Lamb)



Mauricio Cuéllar, Avijit Singh, Leah Ridpath (Vice President, Huntington Society of Canada - Peterborough Chapter) and Justin Currier highlight the issues facing sufferers of Huntington Disease. (Lamb)



Emma Higgins, Liz Morris, Detective Constable Wayne King, Katrina O'Neill and Marissa Campbell help raise awareness for the Alzheimer Society of Durham Region with the #memorymaniac social media campaign. (Lamb)



Lynn Gough joins the Dog Days of Winter team Diane El-hachem, Lauren Crummey, Emily Edwards and Sarah Abbott along with Cindy Bennett and Christine Murphy from the Humane Society of Durham Region (Lamb)

of those suffering from the debilitating neurodegenerative disease.

"We really felt we had to do this for those suffering from Huntington Disease," says Cuéllar. "It wasn't because we needed a mark. It was because we understood the importance of addressing this challenge. It was a very uplifting opportunity to learn and contribute to the community."

When asked about the importance of hands-on learning, Cuéllar commented, “What I love about studying at DC is their experiential learning philosophy — what you learn in the classroom and how you apply those skills in a real-world environment. The mock media conference is a moment of truth. You walk away knowing you have all the skills needed to be successful.”

Student success is key to DC's mission and values, and the Public Relations Advanced Diploma program prepares students for an engaging, challenging career in communications. Greg Murphy, Executive Dean, School of Media, Arts & Design credits the faculty's high expectations and the program's hands-on learning approach to

student success.

“We really felt we had to do this for those suffering from Huntington Disease. It wasn’t because we needed a mark. It was because we understood the importance of addressing this challenge. It was a very uplifting opportunity to learn and contribute to the community.”

“Lynn Gough, and the faculty she’s worked with over the years, are all adamant about giving you skills that make you competitive,” says Murphy. “When the rubber hits the road, you really get traction on your career, with how you write, how you speak and present and how you research. They make sure you have a whole palette of skills and diversity of experience so your experiences as a student prepares you for professional life. You truly get a targeted overview of all that’s involved in working within public relations.”

The mock media conference is just one example of the

many opportunities DC students are given to practice valuable skills learned throughout their programs. With DC's hands-on approach, students are blazing brilliant trails of success, all because of the knowledge and experiences gleaned in the humble classroom.

“What I love about studying at DC is their experiential learning philosophy — what you learn in the classroom and how you apply those skills in a real-world environment. The mock media conference is a moment of truth. You walk away knowing you have all the skills needed to be successful.”

For more information about the Public Relations Advanced Diploma program visit <https://durhamcollege.ca/programs/public-relations>. 



Madeleine Dender, Alexandria Wilcox, Kayla Mcgray and Emily Sleep collaborate with David Clarke from Durham Mental Health Services as videographers, photographers and an enrapt audience looks on. (Lamb)

But First, Makeup

By Kayla McGray

Rachael Authors proves there is power in owning your insecurities and transforming them into inspiration.

Growing up, Authors had acne-prone skin, which resulted in insecurities and piqued her interest in learning the best methods to manage her skin. In high school, she decided to experiment with makeup as another option to manage the appearance of her skin.

“People weren’t so focused on staring at my acne or scarring anymore, they saw me for who I was instead,” says Authors.

Her friends began to recognize her talent and the technique she had when applying makeup. This led Authors to start working her makeup magic on others for the first time.

After completing her first degree in life sciences, Authors decided she wanted to take her hobby to the next level

and took additional courses to learn professional techniques and special effects makeup.

“People weren’t so focused on staring at my acne or scarring anymore, they saw me for who I was instead.”

“After taking some courses, I was doing beauty and production work, before I landed my first special effects contract at Canada’s Wonderland Halloween Haunt,” explains Authors. “From there, I kept building my skills, working with large brands and doing freelance work.”

Authors eventually started her masters in occupational therapy, but still had the ability to work as a freelance makeup artist.

“The freedom and flexibility of freelance work let me create my own schedule so, I always found time for it,” says Authors. “I couldn’t give the



Authors showing what her makeup kit includes to the students of the Cosmetic Techniques and Management program at DC (McGray).

makeup up, even when I was in school.”

It has been important to her to mesh the two careers – that surprisingly have a lot of crossovers, including building client relationships, self-care and self-esteem – because of the love and passion she has for both.

Most recently, Authors began teaching as a full-time professor in the brand-new Cosmetic Techniques and Management program at Durham College (DC), which launched last September.

The program prepares students for a career in the cosmetics and personal care



Beauty makeup done by Authors for a close friend on her wedding day (Authors).

industry through hands-on experience and a field placement. With a focus on the business side of the industry including, but not limited to, cosmetic selling, marketing, communications and entrepreneurial event planning. Additionally, it offers courses on colour theory, product knowledge and makeup techniques.

“Even though they’ll stop this program at some point, it won’t mean they’ll stop learning.”

“The main reason I chose to teach in this program at DC is because I enjoy the collaboration that happens between different departments,” says Authors. “The culture here is excellent and very innovative.”

Authors is hopeful she will inspire her students to pursue the career they want and teach them the lesson of being a lifelong learner.

“Even though they’ll stop this program at some point, it won’t mean they’ll stop learning,” believes Authors. “The industry is always evolving. Every year there will



Special effects makeup done by Authors for Canada’s Wonderland Halloween Haunt (Authors).

be new products and terms and technology, which is important for the students to recognize.”

With an industry that is always evolving, one thing has stayed the same – Authors was able to turn her insecurities into inspiration to succeed within her career. 🍀



Another special effects makeup look done by Authors for Halloween Haunt (Authors).

From DC To The Snowy Slopes of Brimacombe

Story and Photos By
Alex Wilcox

Taking your lunch break at work, being able to throw on your ski gear and head out for a couple of runs on the slopes is something people dream about doing. Steffan Lemon is able to live this dream as the marketing and communications co-ordinator at Brimacombe.

Lemon graduated in 2015 from Durham College's (DC) three-year Marketing - Business Administration program.

The great thing about DC is it offer placements and co-ops within its programs. These opportunities allow students to apply the skills learned in the classroom and gets hands-on experience to prepare them for the real world.

"I would definitely recommend the Marketing — Business Administration program because I believe the co-op piece made a big difference," says Lemon.

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Lemon standing at the top of the slopes ready to tackle the many hills at Brimacombe. For hill updates head to brimacombe.ca.



Lemon hanging out at the west chalet at Brimacombe. The chalet has a fire, snacks and a patio to enjoy the amazing view. A definite stop the next time you are at Brimacombe.

“Getting real, hands-on work experience is always a good thing and really helps with confidence when applying for jobs and building your resume.”

Lemon did his co-op at A Gift of Art in Newcastle, Ont., a local art gallery that showcases art from local artists.

“It’s a very small non-profit and it the First Frost, Brimfest which happens every February as well as a Puddle Jump in March, so I help out a lot with the planning of those main events.”

As for being ready for the

real world, Lemon believes DC helped prepare him for his current role.

“Not every course that I took taught me a skill that I use on a daily basis, but I did learn a lot in school that would help me in the future. The skills that I accumulated that I can apply to my current each and every day are software such as InDesign and Illustrator. I use these programs to create posters for events and any updates we need for the ski hill.” says Lemon.

There are always going to be ups and downs when starting a new career, but Lemon knows

challenges often come with the job, and he is only going to grow in the long run. Since starting as the marketing and communications co-ordinator, one career high has been handling the donations to different charities.

“It’s such a great feeling when you get to help people raise money for their great causes,” says Lemon. “It always makes me happy getting to do that. But a low would have to be that feeling of not always knowing how to do something, but it’s something everyone goes through and the answers come with more experience.”

“As long you are confident in what you are doing on the job you will feel a lot better about the work you are doing, and that comes with taking in as much as you can in school and in any work experience you may get.”



Lemon taking a break from the slopes on a beautiful sunny day to check out the view from the west chalet at Brimacombe. It's great to take some time to enjoy the view.

For someone thinking about going into the Marketing – Business Administration program, Lemon has a little advice.

“Be open to learning as much as you can and to not be afraid to get out of your comfort zone,” says Lemon. “As long as you are confident in what you are doing on the job you will feel a lot better about

the work you are doing, and that comes with taking in as much as you can in school and in any work experience you may get.”

Job opportunities in the marketing industry are endless. Durham College really helps prepare their students for success and that can be seen with Lemon and all of the great things that will come his way. 🍋

For more information about Brimacombe follow them on social media:

Twitter: @Brimacombe
Instagram: @Brimacombe
Facebook: facebook.com/brimacombe

www.brimacombe.ca

HOW TO GET AHEAD IN ADVERTISING

By: Kris Lamb

Photo credit: Heather Nowak

Advertising grad Cassandra Kim Laviolette keeps growing in her ever-changing field

Several years ago, Cassandra Kim Laviolette wanted to merge her passion for art with a career that would give her perfect work-life balance. She enrolled in the three-year Advertising program at Durham College and today she's a successful e-commerce photographer who has never looked back.

"The advertising industry itself peaked my interest because it offered a wide range of creative possibilities," says Laviolette. "I grew up in a small

community called Grafton and chose Durham College because of its great sense of community and welcoming environment. It reminded me so much of home."

While studying at Durham, Laviolette lived in residence and student housing near the campus, which she says greatly enhanced her college experience.

"There was always a fun event or activity going on," she recalls. "I met so many different and amazing people."



Cassandra Kim Laviolette holds up her SoftMoc business card proudly displaying her passion for her job and company.

Laviolette excelled through her programs, and particularly enjoyed her classes in photography and design theory. She was equally taken by her courses in Sales Techniques, in large part due to the teaching methods of professor (and now Advertising program co-ordinator) Dawn Salter.

"Dawn always found a way to get students engaged and push them to their limits, which resulted in them producing amazing work for their

portfolios," she says.

The payoff came for Laviolette on graduation day. She was confident and ready to take on the advertising world.

"My program had covered a broad range of topics and a balance of technical and creative skills, so I was ready," she says. "I was familiar with design and media planning and my internship placement had prepared me for the working world. I couldn't wait to get out there."

Currently, Laviolette is employed as an e-commerce photographer for SoftMoc, one of Canada's largest footwear retailers, which requires her to prepare and style all new product arrivals for pictures and 360 GIF animations. These pictures and animations get uploaded to the SoftMoc website and onto the main Amazon shopping portal. She also writes scripts, record voice overs and shoots product videos. On occasion, she also assists with marketing photos for e-blasts and flyers.

"My field is constantly growing with the ever-evolving world of social media and the internet," she says. "In the e-commerce world, and at my job specifically, we are always updating and changing the way our products are being displayed on the web to better reach consumers."

Above all, Laviolette is a big proponent for creativity in advertising and a believer in embracing change.

"Be open to the endless possibilities and engage yourself in every possible way to learn what is best fit for you," she says. "Be prepared to work in an industry that will forever be evolving." 🌱



Behind the scenes of ecommerce photography at SoftMoc.

PAWS AND CUDDLE

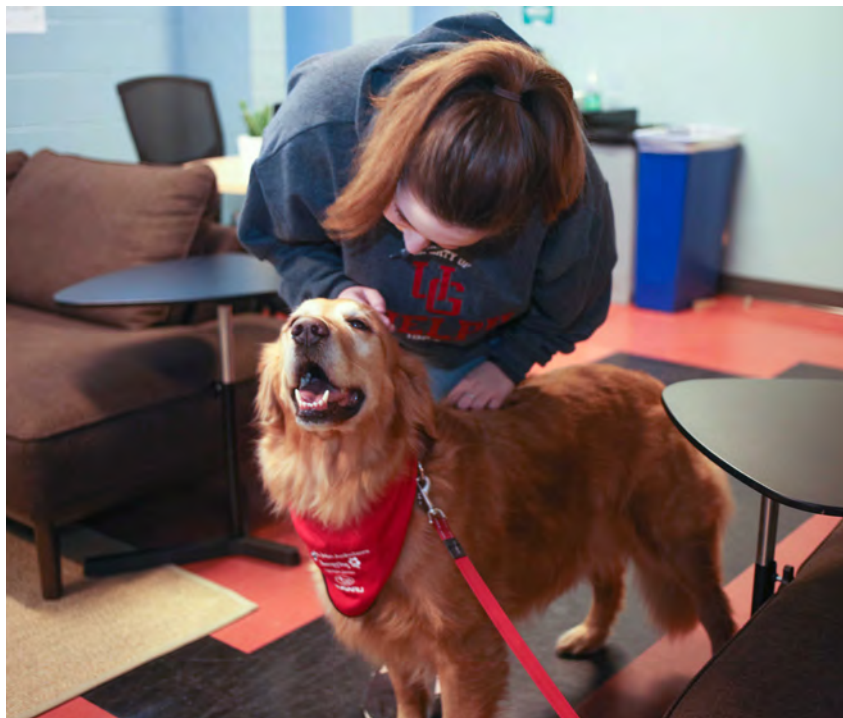
By: Sarah Abbott

Photo Credit: Durham College

College can be a stressful yet rewarding time for students. When they're in the throgs of exams, assignments and presentations, well-deserved breaks are always welcome. In 2018, the Solace Centre at Durham College partnered with St. John Ambulance to bring the "Paws and Cuddle" program, which brings therapy dogs on campus twice a month in their inclusive space.

“When I did a little bit of research, a lot of colleges and universities have a therapy dog program where it's not just once or twice a year, but on a more on-going basis.”

Since being launched in September, the program has taken off and is quite popular among students. These dogs have been on campus in the past, but only to lower stress



A Durham College student interacts with one of St. John Ambulance's therapy dogs at the Solace Centre.

levels on campus during exam season. The positive effects these loving, patient dogs had on students did not go unnoticed. With the huge success of the previous programs, the college decided that having the dogs on campus regularly would boost morale and give students a chance to unwind.

“When I did a little bit of research, a lot of colleges and universities have a therapy dog program where it's not just once or twice a year, but on a more on-going basis,” says Heather Bickle, who is the school's health promotion coordinator. “We looked at trying to make that happen here at Durham College.”

Students who are stressed with assignments, or who just want a break from it all, can come in on specific days of the month to visit the dogs. These canine companions are specifically trained to bring comfort to those in need.

“I work at the Solace Centre, and I've personally seen the effects these dogs have on students who visit.”

“We liked partnering with a well-known, well-established community organization,” says Bickle. “St. John Ambulance has been a partner in the Durham Region community for a long time, so we reached out to them for an on-going partnership. We want students to think about how dogs or animals in general can be part of their on-going wellness practice.”

During the first month of the program, the centre had a large turnout, and thanks to popular demand, the program is here to stay. With the winter months being especially gruelling for college students, having this service at their fingertips has made a significant difference.

"I work at the Solace Centre, and I've personally seen the effects these dogs have on students who visit," says Jackee Pollard, who is currently a student employee at the centre. "Being a student myself, I love the fact that we have a program like this on the campus."

Services offered at the Solace Centre are available to both students and alumni. Next time you're taking a stroll down the hall, stop by and take a load off. You might even meet a new furry friend that will absolutely make your day.

“St. John Ambulance has been a partner in the Durham Region community for a long time, so we reached out to them for an on-going partnership.”

Next time you're taking a stroll down the hall, stop by and take a load off. You might even meet a new furry friend. that will absolutely make your day. 🐾



A St. John Ambulance therapy dog on duty at the Solace Centre for Paws and Cuddle.

The Gains of Giving Back

Don Terry Shows Students the Power of Volunteering

By: Kaitlin Romain

Don Terry isn't your average professor. With almost 33 years as Director of Public Affairs for Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and his current volunteer position as Co-Chair of the Durham Region 2019 Ontario Parasport Games, Terry brings with him a wealth of hands-on experience that allows him to share relevant knowledge with students.

The importance of professors

“There are many rewards that come with volunteering, but ultimately I just believe it's the right thing to do.”

having real-world, up-to-date experience is absolutely vital in today's job market. Giving students relevant knowledge is the only way that the future work force can be prepared to be successful. With an ever-evolving economy and corporate climate, it is

important that students and professors are equipped with the skills to succeed in the modern work force.

“While one can teach based on book smarts, I believe it's valuable for professors to be involved in the field they teach,” says Terry. “This way, they stay current and share personal experiences that are relevant and resonate with students.”

Despite retiring from OPG in 2013, Terry ensures that his knowledge base is up-to-date by volunteering within the community and lending his expertise to the Durham Region 2019 Ontario Parasport Games, Sport Durham, Idea Summit and much more. He is adamant that volunteering isn't just for retirees looking to keep their knowledge base up-to-date.

“There are many rewards that come with volunteering, but ultimately I just believe it's the right thing to do,” says Terry. “If we all do what we



Don Terry was co-chair of the Ontario 2019 Parasport Games. Terry wears his official Ontario Parasport Games gear as he encourages fans to “Be the Roar” at upcoming events.

Photos courtesy of Sabrina Byrnes/ Metroland

can, the world will be a better place for everyone.”

But his generosity isn't limited to the community and world of volunteering.

Even during his time with OPG, he enjoyed being able to help others grow and develop within the company.

“My favourite moments in my career stem from my role as a manager,” remembers Terry. “Nothing makes me

happier than to see people I hired and mentored have success in their careers and life in general.” Luckily for his students, the passion Terry has for seeing success in his employees has transferred to the classroom. He takes pride in sharing his knowledge with the future public relations work force and believes that his students teach him as much as he teaches them.

"My favourite part of teaching at Durham College is my time in the classroom with the students and all that they teach me," he says.

In reflection of his own career path, Terry believes volunteering is one of the most important steps a student can take to support their pursuit for a career. He believes volunteering may be the answer to students lacking experience in their field. "Lack of experience is the age old saw," says Terry. "How do you get experience if nobody will give you the opportunity? Your college placements are part of the answer, but I encourage seeking volunteer opportunities to gain experience, build your portfolio, and to network with potential employers."

Ultimately, Terry's lesson for everyone is one of empathy. Volunteering isn't just about getting something in return. It's about helping others, giving back to the community and being human.

"Empathy, if not the most important skill, is one of the most important skills for graduating Public Relations students as they enter the work force," says Terry.

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"Empathy will allow you to understand the needs of your stakeholders, customers, and others. It allows you to understand what motivates them. It allows you to find win/wins."

For Terry, a successful career for him and his much appreciated support to the community are a win/win for everyone and a definite win for Durham College's students who are lucky enough to call him "professor". 🐾



Don Terry encourages the community's support at a press conference for the Durham Region 2019 Ontario Parasport Games. He is accompanied by the games mascot, Pachi.

Photos courtesy of Sabrina Byrnes/ Metroland

Animation Nation

By: Katrina O'Neill

Cameron O'Neill likes to keep his creative options open. On an average day, the Bowmanville, Ont., resident can be found creating everything from new emojis to customized animation pieces. For this graduate of Durham College's Animation program, no two work days are alike.

“When I start creating a story, or a character; my main focus is creating something that I would have been obsessed with when I was younger. I want kids these days to have the same childhood as me.”

O'Neill found his starting point at Durham College. Currently, he is in the midst of a variety of freelancing projects for gamers and online influencers. Although he began the Animation program with the goal of shooting for the stars and – ideally – landing a job at the world-famous Pixar animation studio, O'Neill now



O'Neill hard at work on a freelance animation for popular gamer Nicki Taylor.

says he's enjoying the journey so much that he doesn't want to limit his future career options.

"I chose animation because of how much I loved the movie Toy Story as a child," says O'Neill. "Today, I look around and I feel like kids aren't experiencing the same magic

that I did. When I start creating a story, or a character; my main focus is creating something that I would have been obsessed with when I was younger. I want kids these days to have the same childhood as me."

On most days, O'Neill can be found in his studio

"zombifying" selfies or creating custom animation shorts and designing graphics for custom gamer and influencer merchandise.

O'Neill gives credit to the Durham program for opening his eyes to the possibilities of animation.

"Until then, I never realized how nearly every feature film or television show or even clothing has some form of animation factor," he says. "Durham really helped me combine my love of video games with my passion for animation."

Looking back, O'Neill says Durham College not only helped him prepare for the technical demands of the animation world, but also gave him confidence.

"I love how the program offered the three-year diploma in order to make us really feel confident and ready for the work force," he says. "Durham taught me that, at the end of the day, it's about having pride in your work and not cutting corners." 🎮

Ending The Stigma

The Importance of Mental Health

Story by: Kamila Moorji
Photos by: Seema Jadavji

Addiction and mental health are topics that continues to be stigmatized among many members of society in various communities. Durham College (DC) graduate Seema Jadavji recognizes this as an issue that needs to be tackled.

“I wanted to enter this field because I wanted to provide the same assistance to anyone who was struggling with addictions and mental health problems.”

After struggling with mental health problems in university, Jadavji decided to take the Addictions and Mental Health graduate program at DC to try and help anyone who might be in the same position as her.

“After a really bad year at



Seema Jadavji works on her computer at the Canadian Mental Health Association during her night shift.

university, I decided to take some time off and I began seeing a counselor,” says Jadavji. “It helped me so much to talk about my own struggles and I continued this when I went back to school. I wanted to enter this field because I wanted to provide the same assistance to anyone who was struggling with addictions and mental health problems.”

Currently working as a

residential rehab worker in transitional housing at the Canadian Mental Health Association, she recalls how her time at Durham helped her be more prepared to work in such a demanding industry. Not only were a lot of the courses offered with a hands-on approach, the professors were more than willing to help their students be successful once they left the classroom and were extremely open

about the industry.

“I think the program helped me get into the working mindset of the field from the very first day,” says Jadavji. “The professors I had were extremely approachable and always encouraged us to pick their brain and ask them anything we wanted. They were very honest and blunt about the positive and negative things about the mental health field, so there were little to no surprises after we graduated and began looking for jobs.”

“The most inspiring thing about my job is to see progress withing a client. They inspire me to continue to keep my mental health in check as well and I learn a lot from them every day.”

Jadavji’s role is to help develop lifestyle and wellness

skills with clients living in the residence. This can be anything from teaching someone how to make pasta

“I ask residents and clients to teach me things all the time. I learn a lot of different things from each resident every day.”

or doing laundry to helping someone learn to deal with stress and anxiety. Even though her position can be taxing and requires her to work 12 hour days, she always seems to find inspiration.

“The most inspiring thing about my job is to see the progress within a client,” she says. “I get so proud when a client is able to cook for themselves, clean up without a reminder or is able to talk about a stressful situation in a healthy way. They inspire me to continue to keep my mental health in check as well and I learn a lot from them every day.”

She continues to find ways to build on her relationship with her clients and loves how she’s able to use humour and



Seema Jadavji answers a phone call from a resident at the Canadian Mental Health Association.

disclose things about her own life with them. She also finds asking about their favourite movies, books or what they like to cook has been very positive for their working relationship. Not only does she learn about them, she also learns from them.

“I ask residents and clients to teach me things all the time,” says Jadavji. “I learn a lot of different things from each

“In this field especially, we give so much of ourselves emotionally, we have to remember to re-charge so we can continue to give. Don’t be afraid to set your own boundaries and work at your own pace.”

resident every day, especially when they teach me how to cook because I am still not a good cook!”

Her biggest and most important tip for students wanting to enter the field is self-care.

“The more you practice self-care techniques, the more you can provide for your clients,” she says. “In this field especially, we give so much of ourselves emotionally, we have to remember to re-charge so we can continue to give. Don’t be afraid to set your own boundaries and work at your own pace.”

For more information on mental health, visit:

Canadian Mental Health Association
www.cmha.ca

Mental Health First Aid
www.mhfa.ca

CAMH
www.camh.ca

Eyes on the Prize

Sports Management Grad Andrew

Edwards Takes His game to the Next Level

Story and Photo by: Justin Carrier

The hockey world can be tough both on and off the ice, but Andrew Edwards learned early on the key to survival is perseverance. You have to keep your eyes on the prize.

"In the professional sports world, it's really important to put in the time, to be invested and work hard and good things will come," says Edwards. "Don't give up. Eventually, people will recognize this and it will benefit you."

So far, sticking to that game plan has worked out nicely for the graduate of Durham College's Sports Management program. Currently, Edwards is holding down duties as the director of business operations for five-time Memorial Cup Champions, the Oshawa Generals. He gives full credit to Durham's Sports Management program for preparing him to work in the professional sports field.

"When I graduated, I was 100 per cent prepared to go into the sports industry," he says. "Professors encouraged

us to volunteer with professional sports teams and organizations, which gave us valuable hands-on experience. And they also taught a wide range of subjects, such as accounting, marketing and event management that helped me to be prepared."

While attending Durham, Edwards volunteered his time with the Oshawa Generals as a game-day runner for three seasons. He completed his internship with the team and became co-ordinator of the road tour. He was eventually promoted to manager of game-day presentation, media relations and special events, a title which he held for four years.

He grew up in Durham Region, which allowed him to live at home while attending Durham College.

"I never got to live the campus life too much since I lived in nearby Courtice, [Ont.]," says Edwards. "However, I loved that I was still able to bond with people who truly cared about the



Andrew Edwards speaks at the Durham College Sports Business Conference.

program and were passionate about sports. We were a tight group and rode out the entire three years together."

As for his fondest memories during his three-year program, Edwards cited his positive friendships with his Sports Management classmates.

"Our class was super close," he says. "We toughed out the hard times together and to this day, I still keep in touch with several of them."

Edwards says he's impressed that the Sports Management program is evolving with the changing times.

"Analytical data is such a huge part of the industry and it wasn't when I was going to school," he says. "Now it's a class in the program."

Additionally, the program will now offer internships starting in the new year, rather than a one-semester or full-year internship.

At the end of the day, survival in the professional and amateur sports world requires a team-player approach. Edwards recommends students in the Sports Management program focus on networking, with an eye to the future.

"Build those relationships," he says. "Even if the conversation only lasts 10 seconds. Introduce yourself and ask for a business card, and then send a follow-up after meeting with the person. Networking is a big part of professional and amateur sports today." 🍀

Bon Appétit!

By: Emma Higgins

Photo credit: Durham College

The W. Galen Weston Centre for Food is changing the way people eat at Durham College -- one delicious course at a time.

"The W. Galen Weston Centre for Food has become a true community hub," says Tony Doyle, associate dean at the W. Galen Centre for Food. "We have students who harvest in the morning and are serving customers that evening. Bistro menus are set seasonally and often feature student-created items that have been developed by working with our executive chef."

With programs in culinary, food and farming, horticulture, hospitality, and special events management, the Centre for Food (CFF) is providing students with valuable experience in the classroom through hands-on methods that also serve the community.

The CFF is also home



Guests gather at Durham College's annual Harvest Dinner.

to Bistro '67, a fine-dining restaurant right on campus. The game plan is to provide a well-rounded practical experience for students along with a field-to-fork philosophy.


"Right outside Bistro '67 is a field, greenhouse, orchard, apiary and other growing areas that produce more than 50 types of food, representing thousands of pounds of produce," says Doyle.

Each year, the CFF hosts the annual Harvest Dinner event. This celebration is truly a unique experience for

everyone involved. Students from each CFF program collaborate to plan this event, which provides students the opportunity to execute their knowledge and put forth the skills they have learned all while providing guests with a remarkable dining experience that keeps them coming back each year.

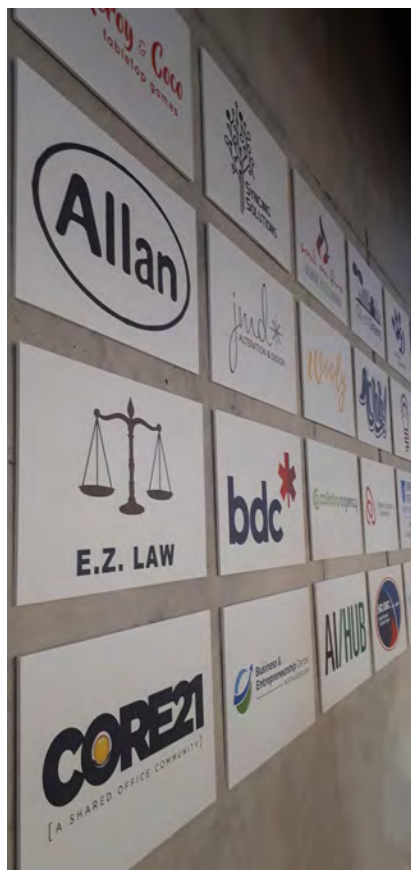
Doyle actually studied at Durham College himself (in the Journalism program) and says he initially chose the college for its solid reputation of preparing graduates to find

"I truly believe I have the best job at Durham College because every day I get to come to an amazing facility and work with extremely passionate students and employees who are dedicated to our post-secondary programs and business operations."

employment. He says that rule still holds true today and takes considerable pride in helping provide students with the skills to learn and grow in their chosen fields. 

HOW FASTSTART TURNS BIG BUSINESS IDEAS INTO REALITY

Durham College's in-house program helps entrepreneurs realize their dreams. Story and photography by Liz Morris



The logos of affiliated organizations and student companies decorate the walls of the new FASTSTART office space providing inspiration to future entrepreneurs.

Every new entrepreneur is faced with the same question: How do they turn their great big idea into a successful business?

At Durham College (DC), these budding entrepreneurs often reach out to the FASTSTART program, which is helping aspiring business hopefuls take the next step toward reality.

And each new business requires its own customized recipe for success. The FASTSTART program examines each business idea individually. All interested students need to do is register to gain access to the program.

That's how the road to success began for Ramandeep Rathor, a DC student who launched his own tech company, Syncing Solutions, last year with the assistance of the program.

"They help you find your comfort zone when you're

getting started and there's no pressure," says Rathor. "They'll help you narrow down your path, so you know exactly what you want. It's always objective and they never pressure you into going one way. It feels like you're talking to friends instead of coming in to meet a boss."

Students who join FASTSTART are able to attend a wide range of entrepreneurial events, including workshops and boot camps, and receive access to dedicated presentation rooms and one-on-one coaching sessions. As a result, they benefit from being connected to a network of community programs and funding partners with the goal of helping them further their businesses after graduation.

How it works: The initial stages of FASTSTART include each student completing a dedicated course, called IdeaEngine, that helps them create a comprehensive

business model by guiding them through the basics.

The IdeaEngine course is devoid of due dates or grades and is open year-round to accommodate student schedules. The course culminates with a one-on-one meeting with a FASTSTART advisor to determine what services would benefit the student most and provides tips on how to move the business forward.

"Nobody ever shut me down," says Rathor. "Nobody ever said, 'This idea isn't good, go a different route.' Instead, they'd say things like, 'The train of thought you're on is good but maybe you want to focus more on this one particular aspect.'"

FASTSTART recently opened its doors of its new open-concept workspace in the Centre for Collaborative Education building on college's Oshawa campus. The high-tech work space has already become home to staff offering a multitude of specialties to ensure that students receive everything they need to start

S INTO REALITY

their business.

"If we don't know the topic, we will bring in an expert," says Sofia Mingram, interim program co-ordinator of FASTSTART. "When you're working in the room, you're around so many other entrepreneurs. If you're on a journey they've been on, they can advise you. It's nice to be working in a family environment."

Any business idea is welcome at FASTSTART, which operates as a free service for any Durham College students under the age of 29. More than 60 students are currently enrolled in the service at various stages, and over 12 initiatives have been successfully launched as thriving full-scale businesses.

In addition, FASTSTART currently maintains partnerships with UOIT, Fleming College, Trent University, the Greater Peterborough Innovation Cluster and the Spark Centre. FASTSTART also facilitates connections to other DC programs like Enactus, and



Ramandeep Rathor, a DC student who launched his own tech company, Syncing Solutions, through FASTSTART, and Sofia Mingram, interim program co-ordinator of FASTSTART pose together in the program's new conference room in the CFCE building.

external connections to other organizations including Core21, RBC, and Futurpreneur, among others.

"All of our services are completely free," says Mingram. "If you're a Durham College student, you already have access. Come to the office and as soon as you register, you will be able to have access to all of our rooms and services and come to our workshops. But the student still has to take that first big step toward success." 🧱

“‘Nobody ever shut me down. Nobody ever said, ‘This idea isn’t good, go a different route.’ Instead, they’d say things like, ‘The train of thought you’re on is good but maybe you want to focus more on this one particular aspect.’”

More information about FASTSTART can be found on the Durham College website.

durhamcollege.ca/about/office-of-research-services-innovation-and-entrepreneurship-orsie/fast-start

Questions about FastStart DC can be directed to:

Lindsey Jeremiah,
Entrepreneurship

Co-ordinator,

905-721-2000 ext. 3600

FastStartDC@durhamcollege.ca

WHERE SUCCESS HAPPENS

By: Emily Edwards

Photos by: Randy Nickerson and
Sabrina Byrnes

They say every journey begins with a single step, and for Cameron Osborne the first step toward owning his own successful business began with Durham College (DC).

Currently, the proprietor of the thriving training facility Osborne Academy of Acrobatics Inc. (OAA) in Pickering, Ont., Cameron discovered his enduring passion for gymnastics when he was only 11 years old. Two years later, he was already coaching his fellow gymnasts on a regular basis, all of which made his decision to enroll in DC's Entrepreneurship and Small Business program in 2015 an easy decision.

"Going to Durham was an obvious choice for me," explains Cameron. "They had the most complete curriculum and I could tell the program was designed to help young entrepreneurs make the most of their chosen field. I couldn't

wait to get started."

While attending DC, Cameron put all his energy into his goal of maximizing his business education. He also worked closely with the Business Advisory Centre Durham (BACD) and Durham College Employment Services.

“ Making connections and having that roundtable discussion about something that might take years to be discovered might actually take a few minutes to explain - so always be ready to take that first step and keep networking. ”

Through his involvement with the DC Employment Services, he proposed that the college should offer an in-house program to business students that would help them launch



Gold medalist Rosie MacLennan competing in the Ontario Cup event hosted by OAA

their ideas into reality.

The BACD listened and took action. Today, there is a free initiative called the FastStartDC program, which gives students from any program the chance to develop their business ideas and plans and helps build the marketing assistance required to take their plan to the next level.

"This resource turned out to be really useful for business students because most of them didn't need help getting

jobs, they needed help starting businesses," says Cameron.

On a broad scale, the FastStartDC program takes students out of their comfort zones and drops them into challenging real-world situations. Among other skills, the program teaches students how to deliver business pitches and prepares them to withstand the myriad of challenges that can come with launching any new business plan. In retrospect, Cameron says that the communications



Cameron and Madison from The Osborne Academy of Acrobatics hosted the 2019 Trampoline and Tumbling First Ontario Cup, with various trampoline and apparatuses.

and entrepreneur classes were particularly helpful, as were the instructions on mastering public speaking.

"I never really liked public speaking, so it helped take me out of my shell," he says. "The courses pushed me and helped me develop the skills required to do business pitches. It also taught me how to write compelling letters to sponsors."

No less valuable in helping Cameron achieve his goal

of maximizing his business education was the course he took on HST ruling through the BACD.

Shortly after graduating from DC, Cameron opened the Osborne Academy and hasn't looked back since. The facility currently accommodates 130 athletes, from walking age to grandparents, and his gym is always filled with passionate athletes. In only four short years, the facility has made several expansions and has

plans to expand further in the near future. Cameron is happy to share his experience with fellow entrepreneurs and even offers up some savvy advice for future DC business students. "The most important thing I've learned so far is the importance of networking," he says.

OAA is located at 1420 Bayly St., Unit 16 in Pickering, Ont. 📍

**Osborne
Academy of
Acrobatics
is open from
Monday to Friday
12 p.m. to 7 p.m.
&
Saturday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

