

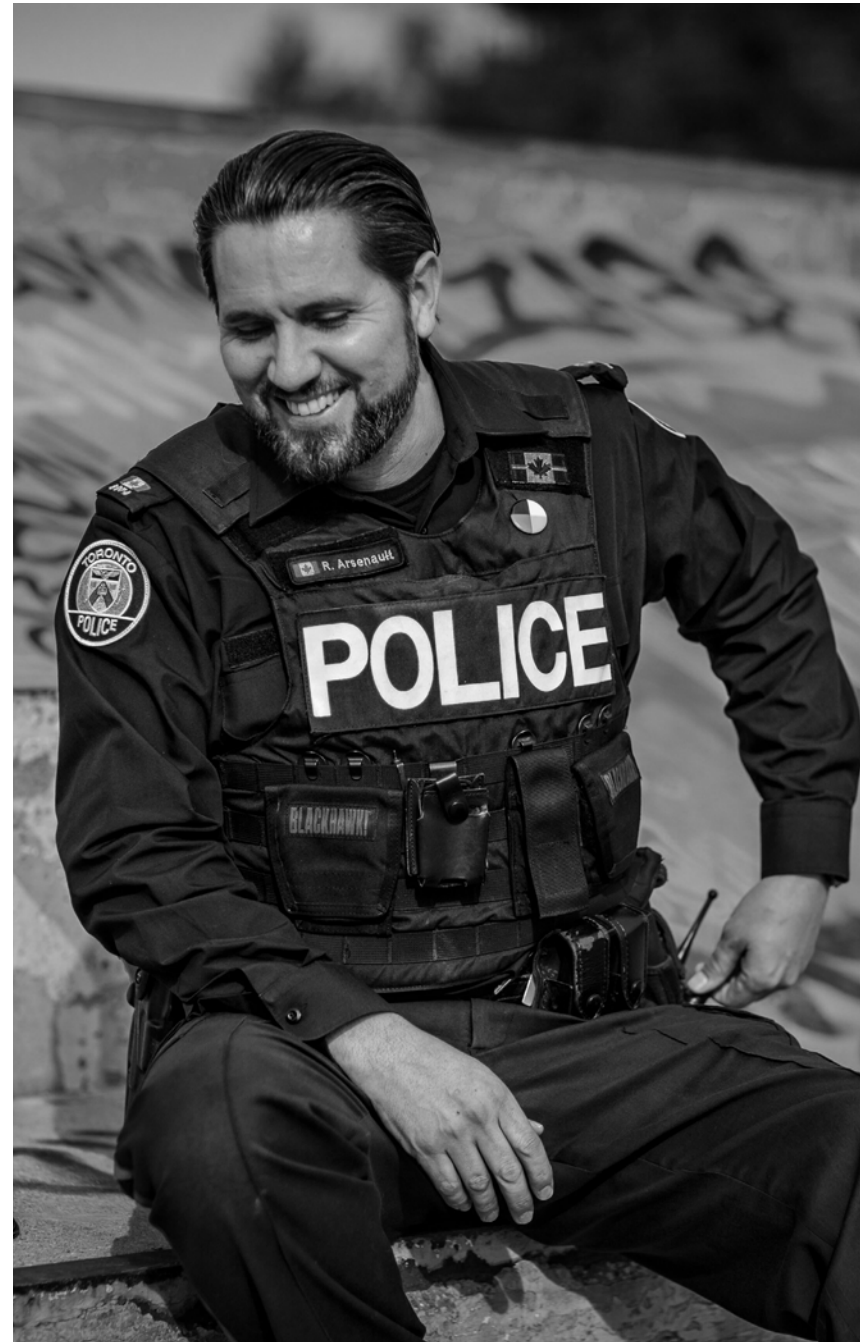
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As I write this letter on the eve of our deadline, I look back at what a wild ride we had this past year. No one anticipated halfway through our PR and Strategic Communications program; we would be flipped to a virtual environment due to a global pandemic.

The world asked a lot from us this past year; we were asked to adapt, remain calm, wear a mask, and stay home. We weren't allowed to see family near or far, to hug the ones we love and were asked to skip out on all holiday celebrations.

Lives were lost, mental health problems were on the rise and the #BLM movement roared after the filmed murder of George Floyd went viral worldwide.

To say that humanity didn't have a rough go this past year would be an understatement. But I'm so proud of the work and perseverance of all my classmates. We made it through this challenging year together by leaning on each other, lifting each other and most importantly, working together to make it to this final assignment moment.

The stories featured were written by an incredible group of students who gave a voice to outstanding graduates and staff of Durham College. We hear from real heroes who were on the frontlines of the COVID-19 virus, essential workers whose job directly impacted the production of ventilators and most importantly, inspirational stories on the importance of doing what you love.

On behalf of the management team, we wish our peers, all those who came before us and all who will come after, all the best in chasing their dreams.



Jenna Peace

Managing Editor

Jenna Peace, student



Editor-in-Chief

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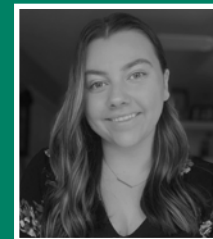
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The New Normal

By Rebecca Pilkey

The journey from graduation to a position in a dream career can be a long and winding path, especially when a worldwide pandemic makes its way into the forefront of everyone's lives and minds. That is what Leah Erwin, a Durham College (DC) practical nursing (PN) graduate, has had to adapt to since graduating.

Before applying to DC, Erwin knew finding a career that focused on helping people was her goal. Through personal experiences and by observing health-care professionals working with her family members, she discovered that nursing was what she wanted to pursue.

"I enjoy working with people," says Erwin. "That's the best part of the job; that's what makes nursing the best profession to be in."

Erwin chose to attend DC because she heard that their PN program was one of the best in Ontario. After completing the pre-health sciences pathways

to certificates and diplomas (PHSC) program, also offered at DC, she knew staying close to home would be the best option for her to succeed.

"I enjoy working with people. That's the best part of the job."

After completing her final semester consolidation, she immediately got a position on the oncology/nephrology floor at Lakeridge Health Oshawa. Shortly after completing her first year working as a nurse, the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and she started a temporary contract at a Toronto nursing home.

DC provided a hands-on experience that allowed her to feel confident and competent while working in the field. To her this was crucial when adapting to the new rules and regulations that arose during the beginning of the pandemic.

When asked about new procedures due to COVID-19, Erwin says, "The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) was the biggest obstacle



Leah Erwin (Left) with a fellow nurse early on in her nursing career. (Erwin)

to overcome. We are wearing masks for our entire shift and reusing PPE after its been sterilized, which was something that wasn't considered before the pandemic."

“We are wearing masks for our entire shift and reusing PPE after its been sterilized, which is something that wasn't considered before the pandemic. ”

The COVID-19 pandemic has further confirmed her passion for nursing. To stop outbreaks throughout nursing homes, residents have had restrictions on how many visitors they can receive. Erwin appreciated the opportunity during her spare time to connect with residents and get to know them personally.

"Residents can't have visitors, so they rely on socializing with staff," explains Erwin. "If I had any spare time, I would sit and listen to their stories. It was a realization I had of why I chose to be a nurse, even through these hard times."

While at DC, Erwin found herself interested in working



Durham College graduate Leah Erwin (left) and Conner Hart (right) celebrate shortly after getting engaged. (Jamie Murphy)

in the mental health field. However, her superiors strongly advised her to work in a department that would

apply more of her skills. Although she took this advice at the beginning of her career, it became clear during the

COVID-19 pandemic that it was still a passion she wanted to pursue.

In August 2020, Erwin had the chance to start working at Ontario Shores, a hospital specialized in assessing and treating those living with complex and severe mental illnesses. Although the job is very demanding, Erwin feels that it's a very rewarding career choice.

“If I had any spare time, I would sit and listen to their stories. It was a realization I had of why I chose to be a nurse, even through these hard times. ”

Erwin is at the beginning of her nursing journey and has already had to face the biggest twist in her dream career—the COVID-19 pandemic. While she navigates the winding path after graduation, she faces unknown obstacles head-on with the skills she achieved at DC. 🍀

**THANK YOU
FRONTLINE
WORKERS!**

Upping Your Professional Game Has Never Been Easier

By Christine Jermakowicz

Every five in six university students will attend college after graduation to feel more secure about entering the workplace of their chosen field of study. OK, those odds weren't provided by Statistics Canada, but it was the case for six university roommates – one of them being Adrian Polidano. After graduating in 2018 from York University's communications and media studies program, which, like most university programs, contained a lot of theory-based work, he wanted to learn the practical implications of his study.

“College was definitely in my corner to help me be as well-rounded as possible in terms of hands-on skills and technical tools.”

This meant learning how to use computer programs

like Adobe Photoshop and InDesign, ComScore and Hootsuite and building up his skills around search engine optimization, paid advertising, copywriting and graphic design.

“This industry wants you to be a jack-of-all-trades – knowledgeable and well versed,” Polidano says. “College was definitely in my corner to help me be as well-rounded as possible in terms of hands-on skills and technical tools.”

An alumnus from Durham College's (DC) advertising and digital media management graduate program, Polidano entered the workforce with confidence in his knowledge and ability to build on his education. DC's graduate certificate programs are created for that sole purpose – students with prior education or work experience can expand their skills and credentials. Each program takes three



Additional education is always a great thing to pursue, no matter your age or existing merits. (NeONBRAND)

semesters or less to complete, providing students with a wealth of knowledge in a relatively short period of time.

“They give you the skills needed to feel confident in your own abilities so you can improve them moving forward,” he says. “After the program ended, I needed to explore these skills a little more on my own, because if you’re

working on it incrementally every day, you’re only going to get better.”

Polidano currently works as the communications coordinator at Grandview Kids in Oshawa, Ont., where he strives thanks to the skills he gained during his time at DC. He combines his university and college skills every day for projects like website

rebranding, creating consistent social media, analyzing data and presenting monthly reports to others.

“No matter where you go in life, you’re going to end up growing and moving, and things happen,” says Polidano. “You can never predict the future, but as it stands right now, I love where I am, and I’d like to continue growing with them as much as possible.”

Just like Polidano, DC is also striving to improve on its offerings. This September, three new graduate certificate programs are being launched: Environment Health and Safety Management, Esport Business Management and Pharmaceutical Science, with an additional program, Autism and Behavioural Sciences, launching in January 2022.

“No matter where you go in life, you’re going to end up growing and moving.”

With 21 graduate programs being currently offered by DC within the most popular industries, adding to one’s professional education roster has never been easier. 🏆

Check out Durham College’s NEWEST Graduate Certificate Programs

Autism and
Behavioural Science

Environmental
Health and Safety
Management

Esport Business
Management

Pharmaceutical
Science

APPLY TODAY



Adrian Polidano knows the skills he gained with his graduate certificate only elevated the value of his degree. (Adrian Polidano)

Work to Live: Meet a Digital Nomad

By Maria Morales

Photo Credit Joseph Maxim

Imagine waking up in Bali, having breakfast with an amazing view and opening your laptop to work for three hours while enjoying the warm breeze. Then you call it a day and enjoy what the site has to offer you. This is not just a dream – it could be your lifestyle if you planned for it. During the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of people discovered that remote work is productive and offers a better work-life balance. According to the World Economic Forum, remote work will continue after the pandemic for certain jobs, especially in developed economies. Over the past year, many people have left metropolises such as New York City, San Francisco and London to live in the country or smaller cities and some will begin travelling when it is safe, becoming digital nomads.

This is nothing new for



Joseph Maxim working remotely for his software company, Plugmetrics.

Joseph Maxim, a computer programming graduate from Durham College (DC) who has worked remotely for several years. He has travelled as a digital nomad to places like Bali, Singapore, Taipei, Shanghai and Manila. Maxim is

a web consultant and a full-stack developer for his own business, PlasmaCreative. Maxim also developed and manages Plugmetrics, a site uptime and performance monitoring software.

He has embraced the digital

nomad lifestyle to a level where he helps others joining this movement through the creation of a Facebook group called pro-remote-jobs that has more than 25,000 followers.

"I've been working by myself and growing my businesses

to a point where companies reach out to me to do work for them,” he says.

For Maxim, attending DC was a rewarding experience that helped him improve his soft skills.

“DC expanded my network in the computer field,” he says. “It allowed me to work on time

highly skilled, so you can charge for your services based on your expertise.

“Most digital nomads work in the tech industry,” says Maxim. “Examples are engineering, digital marketing, customer support, online teaching, but you can work at anything you can do on your laptop with

“DC expanded my network in the computer field. It allowed me to work on time management, communication and teamwork skills.”

management, communication and teamwork skills.”

Are you interested in jumping on the trend? To become a digital nomad, you not only need location freedom, but also financial freedom. Maxim recommends having a minimalist lifestyle and reducing financial responsibilities like loans or payment plans.

He also recommends making sure that you are passionate about what you do. You should work hard in order to become

Wi-Fi.”

Maxim thinks it is better to work to live than to live to work. He invites DC students to live a meaningful life no matter what kind of work they decide to do.

“Enjoy life and don’t take it too seriously,” says Maxim. “Spend quality time with the people you care about. Work will always be there tomorrow, but friends and family may not.” 🍀

“Most digital nomads work in the tech industry, examples are engineering, digital marketing, customer support, online teaching, but you can work at anything you can do on your laptop with Wi-Fi.”

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Joseph Maxim ready to shoot on a digital nomad trip in Singapore.

Beyond the Fight with Fire

By Scott Armstrong

Photo Credit Scott Armstrong

Have you ever heard the saying “practice makes perfect?” As one of the most competitive programs at Durham College (DC), the firefighter pre-service program equips the next generation of firefighters as they enter into this courageous career. Every day, firefighters must rely on their training when they respond to a call for help.

Jordan Miller, an alumnus from DC and a volunteer firefighter of the Brock Township Fire Department recognizes the importance of applying the skills you learn in the classroom to the workplace. While attending the program from 2018 to 2019, Miller was gaining experience through trained personnel who had been in the field for many years and were involved in high-calibre training exercises.

“I actually did a lot of research in choosing DC and it had one of the higher-ranked programs,” says Miller. “The hands-on training that we



In order for Jordan and his team to save lives, they rely on their fire trucks that are provided by Brock Township.

received was very experience-based and overall phenomenal. The in-class training we received was not all coming from a textbook, but a lot of the experiences were built on that textbook knowledge and created a stronger, larger

knowledge base.”

The interest in becoming a firefighter came from a mentor that was trying to convince Miller to join his department. Miller felt like he needed to give back to his community by serving as a

volunteer firefighter to help those in need. After applying to a couple of local fire departments, Miller had joined an event medical company to help him grow his knowledge with first aid.

“The biggest advantage

that you'll learn are the main aspects of firefighting," says Rick Harrison, Fire Chief of the Brock Township Fire Department. "By doing the course at the college, you're getting the theory plus the hands-on experience of it, which is useful because this type of job has hands-on practical issues."

As Miller reflects on his experience at DC, he encourages new students looking to enter the program to study hard and listen to the instructors. Before he entered in 2018, some advice he received was to have fun and enjoy what you're doing, because there's always something to learn.

"The instructors have been there, they've seen it, and they have the experience to help you become the firefighter that you want to be," says Miller. "When you put that uniform on every day, it's not just school, it's a job interview."

When Miller isn't fighting any fires, he works as a licensed carpenter and spends his spare time with his wife Jenny and their two kids. He continues to credit his family for his success and Jenny for her support throughout the program.



Jordan Miller sets an example to his community through professionalism and commitment as a volunteer firefighter.

"Having Jenny right there cheering me on is something I'm not sure I'll ever be able to thank her for," says Miller. "Pre-service wasn't something I thought I could really ever do, but she motivated me to do my best. By the end of it, I graduated not only with honours, I earned a position on the president's honour roll with an over 90 per cent average in

"When you put that uniform on every day, it's not just school, it's a job interview."

the program."

With one year of experience as a volunteer firefighter, Miller continues to use the training he received from DC as he puts practice into action. With the hopes of pursuing a full-time career as a firefighter, Miller can't think of anything more perfect. 🧯

**THANK YOU
FIRST
RESPONDERS!**

Turning a Side Hustle Into a Lifetime of Work/Life Balance

By Jenna Peace

Photo Credit Patrick Lyver

Would you risk it all for your side hustle? Patrick Lyver became his own boss in 2004 when he opened his own freelance graphic design business two years after graduating from Durham College's (DC) graphic design advanced diploma program in 2002. Lyver's business, Kleurvision, has now been in operations for over 16 years and is still going strong amid the pandemic. Lyver credits his ability to pivot with the ever-changing virtual world to the problem-solving skills learned during his time at DC.

“They [CTV] still trusted me enough to do their work, and that gave me the confidence to move forward with my freelance work.”

Upon graduating from DC, Lyver landed a job at CTV as an on-air graphic designer where he worked for The National, Canada AM and

some pilots for the Discovery Channel. He found himself with a lot of free time on his hands.

“When I was working with Canada AM – or an afternoon coverage, we were relatively quiet till the next set got in,” says Lyver. “A big part of our job was just watching the news; monitors were everywhere – lots of coffee and downtime, so I started selling my free time. There's nothing wrong with that, in the media world you wait until the next thing happens, there's no bigger projects or task waiting for me, they just needed me there in case breaking news came in and 90 per cent of my time was spent just clicking through TV shows.”

In 2005, a year into running his side hustle while working part-time at CTV, he was offered a full-time role at Canada AM. Lyver had to make a big decision – to continue working with a secure source of income or take the risk and continue his freelance

work. Lyver wanted the flexibility of time and the full-time job being offered needed him working from 4 a.m. to 12 p.m., Monday through Friday. He declined the offer and gave his resignation in order to pursue the side hustle he started.

His first big client ended up being CTV. Upon his

resignation, there was a project that needed to be done, it wasn't a big job, but it still needed to get done. He offered them his services at the same hourly rate that they were paying him before, and he would be able to deliver the work and not leave his former employer with a problem to solve. “They still trusted me



Patrick Lyver standing in front of his company booth, Kleurvision, at the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) Real Estate Conference, REALiTY 2020.

enough to do their work, and that gave me the confidence to move forward with my freelance work," he says.

Having CTV in his profile really set him up for success. The first whole year of being incorporated was busy. His team grew, he grew and set up shop in Port Perry, Ont. Over the years, the graphic design agency became a digital media agency. By 2012, Lyver decided to go back to the roots of his why and established Kleurvision as a brand agency that focused on building online and in-person experiences.

The flexibility of working for yourself and having a graphic design diploma created the foundation to where Lyver is today. He didn't need to go back to school and learn new tricks because DC taught him problem-solving skills that were essential to have in an industry that's always changing.

Lyver is in charge of his own schedule and has enough time to be a present husband and father. More time being present is still the core to his decision making, taking the risk to do freelance never left him with any regrets. 🍀

#SideHustle



Patrick Lyver sitting in his new workspace setup running a virtual event in result of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.



Patrick Lyver setting up a product photoshoot for brand and marketing materials at his office in Port Perry, Ont.

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make sure your
message is heard.**



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Nothing is Impossible

By Akshay Verma

Photo Credit Dustin Kellow

Dustin Kellow's career journey began at Durham College (DC) in 1999. He chose to pursue marketing-business administration, which is a three-year program. He graduated in 2001 with good merits and earned his first marketing job in Toronto shortly after.

Kellow grew up in a small town on Vancouver Island, B.C., with dreams of being a hockey player. He had family living in Port Perry, Ont., and eventually made the move to stay with them because

there were better hockey opportunities in Ontario. Unfortunately, shortly after arriving, he was involved in a major car accident that severely damaged his back and ended his dream of pursuing a hockey career.

After graduating high school, Kellow began working in the manufacturing industry in Peterborough, Ont., and his grandfather (whom he greatly admired) pulled him aside and suggested he meet with a career counsellor. He met Rory Cruickshank, who performed several evaluations

and suggested he would be very strong in business. He did some research and learned about DC's reputation for its business administration program.

“I love Durham Region, and I've had the good fortune of travelling and living in different cities, including Australia. Every time I come back to Durham, it just feels like home. I love this place, and I'm committed to making it better.”

Throughout his career, he climbed the corporate ladder by gaining exposure to marketing research, branding, advertising and communications. Kellow has worked with some of the world's largest brands such as Coca-Cola, Nestle and Toyota. He also had the opportunity to work and live in Australia for three years. He and his wife Diane always wanted their own business, so they used

their career experience to form the organization Durham Recruiting in 2017.

“I love Durham Region, and I've had the good fortune of travelling and living in different cities, including Australia,” says Kellow, while describing how he feels whenever he returns home. “Every time I come back to Durham, it just feels like home. I love this place, and I'm committed to making it better.”

A great experience shared by Kellow is the reason he is part of the alumni marketing



Nothing was impossible for Dustin Kellow.

committee.

He's also working with the team at DC's Artificial Intelligence Hub to develop advanced AI that better



Dustin Kellow and his wife began their successful journey together.



Dustin Kellow and his team celebrating the success of their HR startup.

matches local candidates with local businesses.

“They just couldn’t see me in business. They couldn’t see me in a boardroom doing a presentation, and that just added to the fuel. I was driven. When I graduated, I had a job within a month in the city.”

At the start of his career, he did face resistance from some friends and family. For many, they couldn’t get their heads around a local recruitment company that didn’t focus on temporary staffing. Although it was a bit nerve-racking in the beginning, he and his wife pushed ahead and believed in

what they were doing. Their vision was simple: be the local champions connecting local businesses with local talent. In 2019, they were ranked as the 15th fastest growing startup in Canada and 1st for human resources.

“They just couldn’t see me in business,” says Kellow. “They couldn’t see me in a boardroom doing a presentation, and that just added to the fuel. I was driven. When I graduated, I had a job within a month in the city.”

One of the most valuable things Kellow has learned throughout his life and from his experience at DC is that you can achieve anything you set your sights on. Nothing is impossible. 🍀



Dustin and Diane Kellow, the co-owners and founders of Durham Recruiting.

Be Yourself and the World Will Recognize You

By Navdeep Kaur Narula

Photo Credit Diane El-Hachem

A communicator, storyteller and a strong speaker are a few of the many traits exemplified by Diane El-Hachem. From finding a job in public relations (PR) to starting her own PR company, El-Hachem is building her career with a never-give-up attitude toward her goals and dreams.

Growing up, El-Hachem aspired to build wealth while affording the luxuries of life, and she wanted a career to help her achieve that. She decided to step into PR, believing she could build her career as a communicator by using her strengths to stand out in the field.

“Become incredibly self-aware and know who you are—that’s how you are going to stand out,” says

El-Hachem. “This world is full of people, and PR is only growing. The one way to set yourself apart is to be extremely you. Be extremely who you are.”

“I love cars. I love the thrill of racing. During my placement days, I would be in my office and could hear race cars zipping around the racetracks, and it was super interesting to be part of that world.”

In addition to her profession as a communicator, she is also passionate about cars. During her studies in the PR and strategic communications program at Durham College (DC), she did her co-op placement at Canadian Tire



Durham College public relations alumini Daine El-Hachem is currently working as a co-ordinator of communications and community outreach at CNIB.

Motorsport Park, a racetrack in Bowmanville, Ont.

After receiving her diploma, she applied for a job at Mercedes-Benz Canada Inc.

Unfortunately she got turned down, but realized she wanted to dream big rather than just settle for any job. She had faith in herself and her skills,

which led her to create her own company, Empathic Relations. This freelance organization offers PR services to other companies.

“I created Empathic Relations. I made its website and logos—all those little skills we learned in the PR program, I utilized to create my brand. ”

Because of Empathic Relations, El-Hachem was able to secure a spot at the media centre for the Toronto Motorcycle Show, which was a big win for her and her company.

For El-Hachem, one must be self-aware and genuine in their work to be successful in their career. Her natural ability to communicate with people sociably and on paper means she can represent herself authentically in everything she does, whether it be her in personal or work life.

Currently, El-Hachem is working as the co-ordinator of communications and

community outreach for CNIB Lake Joe, Canada's only fully-accessible camp in Muskoka, Ont. A big part of her job at CNIB is interviewing people and writing stories. She enjoys her role at because it gives her opportunities to meet new people and build more connections, which is one of the major roles of a PR professional.

“It's not always about going out there and making money, but networking with people and having the right conversations with the right people. ”

So far, she has enjoyed every bit of her role as a PR professional and looks forward to channelling her authenticity and that never-give-up attitude towards even bigger opportunities in life. 🍀

CHECK OUT
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TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE PROGRAM!



Diane El-Hachem posing in front of the camera for a class assignment when she was a full time student of the public relations program at Durham College.

The Definition of Success

By Valentina Suarez

Photo Credit Andrew Aldridge

With the big dream of living a life with no regrets and following his professional passion, Andrew Aldridge, a Durham College (DC) graduate from the business administration-supply chain and operations management program, has confirmed there are no barriers to achieving dreams and finding success. His most recent promotion at Celestica, a well-known electronic manufacturing company, has been a big jump in his career as he continues striving for more fulfilling experiences.

“DC gave me the first step towards success in my life,” says Aldridge. “Now it’s my turn to use the tools that I learned at DC to be a better professional every day. In the future, I want to be able to look back at my life without regrets because I did my best when I had the opportunity.”

Starting post-secondary education was not easy, but his DC professors gave him a big push to improve his learning.

Aldridge went from achieving borderline grades during the beginning of his studies and almost dropping out to being placed on the college honour roll for two consecutive years. This massive academic

progression gave him an incredible perspective on overcoming obstacles in the future.

“I’m grateful to my professors for being so patient with me,” says Aldridge. “They just felt

“DC gave me the first step towards success in my life. Now it’s my turn to use the tools that I learned at DC to be a better professional every day. In the future, I want to be able to look back at my life without regrets because I did my best when I had the opportunity.”



Andrew Aldridge, a happy DC alumnus of the business administration-supply chain and operations management program.

like real people giving me real-world advice with academic credentials behind it. Since my first day at DC, they cared about me as a student and helped me when I felt stuck. I will always remember that.”

Aldridge’s family also played an essential role in his professional development. His motivation to study business administration in supply chain and operations management was primarily driven by them. He comes from a family of entrepreneurs and business owners that did not attend college or university. However, post-secondary education was always supported. For Aldridge, it was fundamental to get that diploma under his belt and be the first one in his family to achieve that goal.

“My family is very impressed at how fast I’m accelerating with my career and the growth that I have had,” says Aldridge. “I appreciate everything they’ve done for me because they are the ones that have allowed that growth.”

**THANK YOU
ESSENTIAL WORKERS!**



Andrew Aldridge explains a chart of complex solutions at Celestica.

At present, Aldridge plays an essential role in equipping frontline workers in the fight against COVID-19. Specifically, he helps with the construction of ventilators. Finding the best

companies to buy ventilator parts, releasing those parts to factories and finishing the ventilator assembly are the main components of Aldridge's job.

"The world's situation right now is devastating," says Aldridge. "However, I feel lucky in some way for having a job opportunity where I can contribute to the recovery of people battling the COVID-19 virus."

Aldridge appreciates the company he is working for. Every day, he sees an

Celestica. "It was a pleasure to work with him. He always hit the ground running as he displayed knowledge that could apply to his role. He's a real contributor to the organization's success. I think that I speak for many people at Celestica in saying that we are glad to have him as a teammate."

"The world's situation right now is devastating. However, I feel lucky in some way for having a job opportunity where I can contribute to the recovery of people battling against the COVID-19 virus."

opportunity to evolve within the company and improve his professional skills. Additionally, Aldridge is appreciative of the program partnership created by DC and Celestica, which is how he connected with the company. His goal is to share his progress and experiences with future DC alumni because this agreement gave him and other DC graduates the first chance of getting immersed in a real-work environment.

"Both Andrew and I were colleagues for the same account," says Kyle Crowells, a DC student interning as a production planner at

In the end, Aldridge considers his path through DC as one of the most important components of his professional life, and that is why he wants to give an important piece of advice to future DC graduates.

"Use all the tools DC gives," says Aldridge. "Use them to learn without stopping and to network with people as much as you can. This opens the doors to new experiences. There's no perfect job, but if you can find happiness in it and you work with good people, then that is a success."



The Ladies Behind the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs

Story Kristin Michel

Photos Credit Ian Goodall

For over 50 years, Durham College (DC) has long demonstrated a strong commitment to student and alumni success. Servicing over 95,000 graduates, the staff of the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs (ODAA) is responsible for maintaining communication with alumni and keeping them connected to the DC community one way or another. The team of the ODAA do this in a variety of ways including co-ordinating alumni events, affinity programs, maintaining current alumni records, serving as the liaison between campus and the Alumni Association, along with managing the institution's relationships with charitable donors who make scholarships and bursaries possible.

Continue reading to learn a little more about the friendly faces supporting you and your peers at Durham College's Office of Development and Alumni Affairs...

MEET LINDA FLYNN

Associate Vice-President of Development and Alumni Relations



An Oshawa local and Durham College alumni, Linda Flynn, graduated in 1988 from the Public Relations Program, now known as the PR & Strategic Communications program. Having initially chosen to study at the college in part because of its hometown familiarity, the career she has

since built at DC now allows her to actively participate in bettering the lives of those in her community. Operating as the department's Associate Vice-President, Flynn works alongside her five team members on topics like fundraising, alumni engagement and community relations. She acknowledges that the efforts of her offices often stretch across all programs, academic schools and facilities. In addition to her responsibilities within the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, she is also the Executive Director of the Durham College Foundation.

"People might view fundraising as challenging, but it's also incredibly rewarding," says Flynn.

"The opportunity to see philanthropy in action and to spend time with these incredibly generous people is inspiring, even if you get a lot of rejection along the way."

Flynn gives praise to the college for having a

supportive and welcoming approach, highlighting staff and leadership work hard to provide an innovative learning environment with many opportunities for student success.

MEET SALLY HILLIS

Manager, Alumni Development



Sally Hillis is also considered a DC Alumna having graduated from one of DC's certificate programs - Teaching and Training Adults. She was originally hired as a part-time instructor in the school of Business, IT & Management and has been working full-time for the ODAA for the

past eight years. A few of her many responsibilities include working with the DCAA Board of Directors, a talented and diverse group of alumni who are elected from its membership. She also has the pleasure of re-connecting with alumni to learn more about their work and life after DC, recognizing their career success and community involvement through award programs such as Alumni of Distinction and Premier's Awards. Hillis encourages grads to stay connected to DC through the Alumni Mentoring and Alumni guest speaker programs, as well as engages them to participate in alumni events such as DC Talks: Alumni Series, a panel discussion where alumni, faculty, staff and students discuss interesting global issues in the Global Classroom. On top of alumni recognition and engagement, her role also involves cultivating relationships with alumni donors regarding philanthropic fundraising and capital projects.

"We have a small but mighty team," she says. "Each person plays an important role in supporting our students

and graduates by keeping them connected to the DC community."

As for the part of the job she favours most as Manager of Alumni Development? Hillis stresses she really enjoys working with her teammates and loves being able to meet DC graduates. She finds the process of developing new ways to better serve alumni and students very rewarding.

MEET JENNIFER CLARK

Senior Development Officer



Jennifer Clark may not be a former Durham College student, but the choice to

pursue a career within the school was highly motivated by her appreciation for its focus on applied education, career preparation and continuous professional development for students and alumni. Working under the title of Senior Development Officer, Clark's role centres around community-focused fundraising, currently for the Building for Skills campaign, which supports an expansion of the skills training centre at DC's Whitby Campus to allow for 750 more students and apprentices per year. Similar to her colleagues, Clark believes the foundation for a strong community is made possible when a college like DC can give students a high-quality education that results in alumni who are motivated to further the community's ongoing success.

"In addition to maintaining relationships with alumni, our office develops relationships with non-alumni, or "friends" as we consider them, who see the great value to the community of the education that DC provides," Clark says. "They may be employers, parents, or children of our alumni or simply members of

our community, who want to contribute to the continued excellence of DC."

What's her advice for future students and those hesitant to apply? Don't leave skill-building and academic learning for a later date. She notes changes within most industries and the economy are happening at a faster rate than before and that it's always important to have a skill set that is up to date.

MEET JANA FORSYTH

Program Co-ordinator



With a background in career planning and development, adult education and a MA in Interdisciplinary Studies,

Jana Forsyth now serves as Program Co-ordinator for the Weston Family Scholarship Program, overseeing many different areas of focus that allow for the promotion and recruitment of certain Durham College students to receive the generous financial supports of Weston Family. In addition to recruitment, Forsyth works diligently on the complete onboarding process and training of new students to the scholarship program. Although her support is primarily sourced to trade students attending DC's Whitby, Ont. campus, Forsyth recognizes the value in working in connection with the Alumni Association as she too aims to maintain long-lasting relationships with scholars after graduation.

"Believe it or not, the most challenging part of my job is getting students to apply for the scholarship," she shares. "I try my best to convince them that it's not a long shot, but students often feel like they aren't eligible candidates and won't have a chance, when in reality they really do!"

Forsyth has a message of reassurance for people contemplating a different

career path or change in programs.

"Take the leap," she says. "You will always benefit from a higher education, even if you find yourself in the wrong program at first. Knowing what you don't want to do is just as important as learning what you want to do. Develop a lifelong learning attitude and never give up. Your career will thank you."

MEET JULIE VANHARTINGSVELDT

Donor & Community Stewardship Officer



Similar to her colleague Linda Flynn, Julie VanHartingsveldt is also a graduate of Durham College's Public Relations program, now known as the PR & Strategic Communications program. Julie recently obtained her CFRE (Certified Fundraising Executive) designation. Leading donor and stewardship initiatives, VanHartingsveldt sits as the department's Donor & Community Stewardship Officer. Her role allows her to thank the individuals, organizations and community groups who have graciously donated to the college; making sure their contributions are recognized and appreciated in a meaningful way. Alongside her other duties, she also delegates time to lead community relations initiatives and partnerships with local non-profit organizations, chamber of commerce and boards of trade.

Although the department is unable to work on-campus at this time, VanHartingsveldt feels her team hasn't missed a beat working remotely and has adapted very well. Sharing that she values the extra time she has with family that working from home has given her,

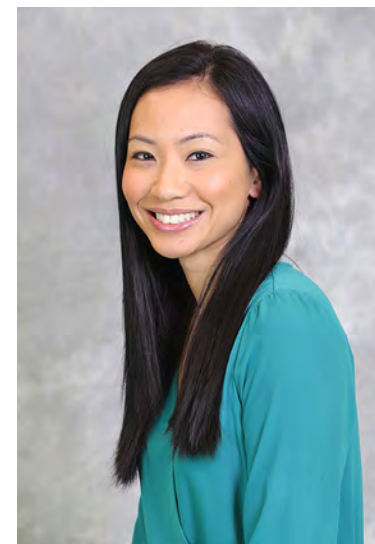
she also expressed missing the normalcy of working with her team on the beautiful DC campus.

Julie's best advice for current students and recent graduates is simple.

"Take advantage of every opportunity presented to you."

MEET CATHERINE HARDMAN

Donor Relations and Operations Officer



With a background in fundraising and volunteer management, Catherine Hardman's current role is that of the department's Donor Relations and Operations Officer. With a primary focus

on operations, Hardman works hard to ensure her colleagues have all the tools necessary to successfully deliver on their tasks. Hardman also works with donors who wish to set up a student award.

As for Catherine's quick tip for current students and recent graduates?

"Most students don't realize they are eligible to receive financial support if they applied for a student award. Take advantage of the services and supports provided to you here

at Durham College," she says. "And make connections with your peers and faculty!"

Whether its co-ordinating events, managing publications, maintaining relationships or serving as a link between DC's campus and the Alumni Association, each team member working behind the scenes of this department plays a major role in the lives of those that have experienced Durham College as a part of their post-secondary education. 🍀

BEING A MEMBER OF THE DURHAM COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HAS ITS PERKS!

Did you know that upon graduation, a Durham College student becomes a lifetime member of the DCAA and has access to benefits, resources and services provided through the ODAA?

Download the free DC Alumni Connect app to create an account. The digital alumni card you get by registering is your exclusive access pass to

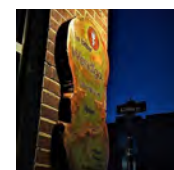
perks and savings at over 100 different restaurants, venues, shops and attractions.

For more information on what benefits you are entitled to as a DC graduate or how the Office of Alumni and Development Affairs can better assist you, get in touch with the team by emailing alumni@durhamcollege.ca.

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City Hair Salon



The Worthwhile Moments

Reflecting on a Professor's Journey



Katie O'Neill smiles as she reflects on the steps she's taken to pursue her passions.

By Somiya Brown

Photo Credit Katie O'Neill

Each year, Katie O'Neill takes a moment to reflect; she reflects on what she's accomplished, what she's learned and where she's moved forward.

“All the little or overlooked moments are the moments that are worthwhile.”

“Not one of those moments is the greatest,” she says, “but I remind myself that all the little or overlooked moments are the moments that are worthwhile.”

For O'Neill, it's important to be proud of the stepping-stones that come from individual moments in our lives to see how far we have come. Her path has led her to start a business she loves and to teach as a Durham College (DC) professor, helping students

pursue their passions. The first moment she reflects on that got her to this point includes a camera and a classroom.

Since childhood, O'Neill has had passion for photography. After getting her hands on her first digital camera, she began attending workshops, teaching herself and even second shooting for another photographer. In a desire to learn all she could, she attended DC's digital photography program and

was instantly inspired by the supportive professors she met.

“There was a group of professors that saw where I was and continued to encourage me to push the envelope of what I was capable of,” she reflects. “They helped me see outside the box.”

Her professors support encouraged her to start her own business, Kayoh Photography, partway through her first year in college.



O'Neill captures her clients' memories, like this moment of a bride with her bridesmaids.

“Seeing students’ passion makes me want to go above and beyond to provide as much material as possible. I want to say I have done my part to help the future photographers and videographers. ”

While photography was her passion, O'Neill discovered that building relationships and capturing her client's steps in their life journeys was the most rewarding part. As she reflects each year on her own moments, she's been able to photograph moments for couples and families to look back on each year too.

While on the journey of developing Kayoh Photography, her path took a turn that led her back to a familiar place. In 2017, O'Neill was asked by her old program co-ordinator to return to DC as a contract professor. It was an easy decision for her to make.

“I enjoyed being pushed to do my own best work


in college, and that left an impression,” she says. “I took that opportunity, threw both feet on the ground and just started running with it.”

O'Neill has taught classes for various programs, including digital photography, media fundamentals and video production. Her goal is to give her students the same support she felt as a student and push them to pursue their passions to the full extent.

“Seeing students’ passion makes me want to go above and beyond to provide as much material as possible,”

says O'Neill. “I want to say I have done my part to help the future photographers and videographers.”

This professor's teaching reflects the DC motto that success matters. Inspired by her interactions with her own DC professors, O'Neill's goal is to do all she can to set up her students for success.

That's why each year she takes a moment to reflect; she reflects on attending college, building her business and inspiring students. These are her worthwhile moments. 

Find Your Motivation

By Meghan Tetford

Photo Credit Meghan Tetford

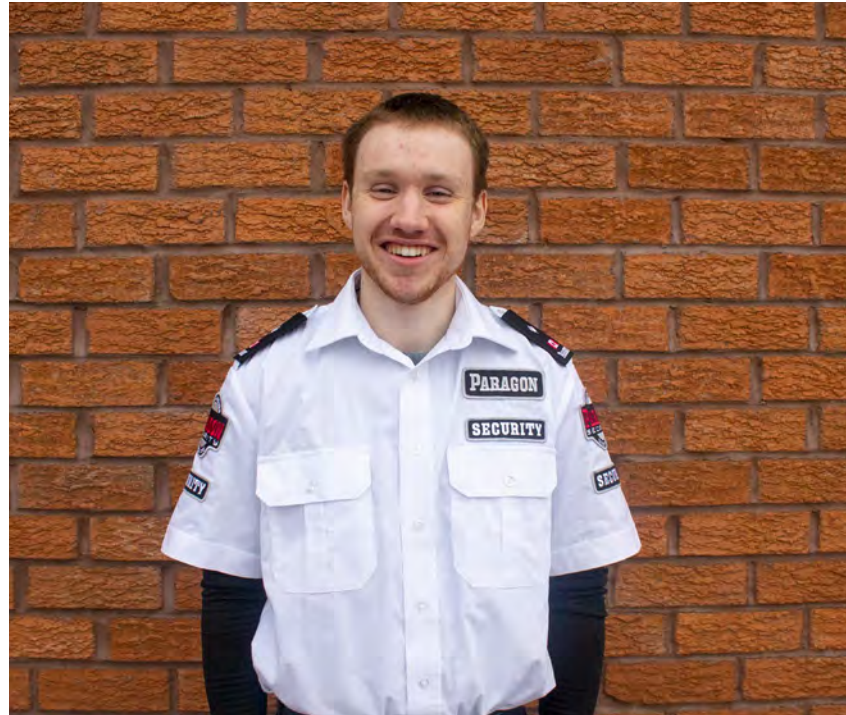
Have you ever lost motivation to work? Not sure what you want to do in life? Imagine waking up one day and realizing what you really want to do with your life.

For Durham College (DC) police foundations graduate Nicholas Tetford, that's exactly what happened. He turned his life around within a few years of losing all motivation.

Tetford had issues with sleep and attendance beginning in Grade 10. Shortly after, in Grade 11, he dropped out of high school because of the lack of motivation and no desire to learn.

“You need to ask questions, talk to the other students and discuss your courses. If you're having problems, you need to reach out. If you're not looking for help, then you can't get it.”

However, a year and a half



Nicholas Tetford smiling in front of a brick wall in his Paragon security uniform.

later, he was a completely different person. With more motivation than ever, he was striving to complete his GED. Following a semester at Durham Alternative Secondary School, he heard about DC's Centre for Success and completed his GED there. He was able to earn dual credits and use the college's facilities.

That experience pushed him towards enrolling in the police foundations program at the college.

The program piqued his interest because every day was different and it gave him the ability to get out into the community, talk to people and help out.

DC gave him the speaking experience and fundamentals of law that could be applied to situations he might encounter during a career in policing.

His newfound motivation continued to grow as a student thanks to seeing his friends every day, having access to his amazing professors who answered all of his questions, his desire to attend class and his newly minted internal motivation to learn.

“You need to try hard,” says Tetford. “You need to ask questions, talk to the other students and discuss your courses. If you're having problems, you need to reach out. If you're not looking for help, then you can't get it.”

Before college, Tetford had no work experience and knew he needed it for future job applications. He gained experience in public speaking, presentation skills, mock police events and the skills needed to secure a job in the field.

After learning about career opportunities, he applied to the army. Although he didn't

hear back from the army for 10 months, he finally secured a spot in the army and began training. In the mean time, he decided to take a security course and was hired at Paragon security two months after.

From these positions, he was able to learn valuable lessons through the training and interactions with experienced professionals.

“Even when you have the position of authority. Sometimes you just have to give in. You have to stop yourself and think, how am I going to improve this situation.”

“It’s not always worth it to try and argue,” explains Tetford. “Even when you have the position of authority. Sometimes you just have to give in. You have to stop yourself and think, how am I going to improve this situation.”

Tetford plans to finish university, take army training courses, basic military qualifications, qualifications for the land forces and then developmental phase one. Throughout training, he will continue working in security with Paragon security

at various locations. The ultimate goal for him to become a police officer.

The best part of his job is receiving gratitude from the public. There are plenty of those who will have rude things to say. When they have something great to say, it brightens your day and makes the job worth it.

“Interactions where people tell you they appreciate what

you do,” he says about his favourite part of the job.

“You do encounter negative people because it is customer service, but that one person who can appreciate you and talk to you like a person, can make your day a whole lot better!”

“You do encounter negative people because it is customer service but that one person who can appreciate you and talk to you like a person, can make your day a whole lot better!”

Tetford found his motivation, worked hard every single day to achieve his dreams and is able to see the ultimate goal in his near future thanks to DC! 🇬🇧



Nicholas Tetford posing in front of a brick wall in his Paragon security uniform.

Finding the Paths to Your Destination

By Gurkeerat Singh

Photo Credit Judy Pal

Everyone wants to fulfill their dreams. There are often long and hidden roads to reach them, but hard work can reveal new paths to one's destination.

That's what Judy Pal experienced in her life. Pal wanted to serve in the police department, but due to a height restriction in the 1990s, she didn't qualify. She pursued different paths and gained enough experience and skill to create a strong resumé, which eventually allowed her to attain her dream career.

"There's something great

about every single job that I have had. I wouldn't have taken the job if there wasn't something great."

Pal is the youngest daughter of Hungarian parents and was born and raised in Oshawa, Ont. She went to Durham College (DC) and took the sports and entertainment administration course. She would later get a master of public relations (PR) in her 50s from Mount Saint Vincent University, but not after the certificate in police leadership from Dalhousie University; both schools in Nova Scotia.

Before her dream job in law enforcement, she held many jobs in different industries including working in professional sports, with public relations agencies and even in television news. She approached each job with

years, she moved on to work as a program host, anchor, feature reporter and producer with Global Television in Halifax.

"The experience was still incredibly valuable because what I learned working in a newsroom allowed me to be a better communicator once I went to the police department. I knew all the tips and tricks that the reporters use, and learned what makes good news."

After gaining work experience with several police departments as a communicator, Pal joined the New York City Police Department as an assistant police commissioner. She has also proved herself in leadership by leading huge projects with \$200 million budgets.

opening of Fairmont Hotel Macdonald. She followed that up with first place in the SCAN NATOA Awards (2006) for the City of Irvine's (California) website and Train Station Revitalization public service announcements.

Pal loves to ride motorcycles during her free time, along with camping, gardening, walking and other outdoor activities that help her stay fit and healthy; these activities boost her energy to go back to work with full focus. She stresses that balancing professional and private life is key to being more productive in one's career.

Pal has a lot of personal experience to share with students and newcomers. She also highly recommends that people be aware of their electronic shadow.

Casting a negative electronic shadow is a path no one wants to take. Instead, follow Pal's lead—focus on hard work, getting experience and building a strong resumé to unlock the hidden paths that will one day lead to your dream career destination. 🍀

“Make sure you are networking. You will not get a job because of what you know, you will get a job because of who you know.”

passion.

The first step in her career was directing the media and executive services for a Stanley Cup winning hockey team, the Edmonton Oilers. After five

Pal achieved an award from the Canadian Public Relations Society and International Association of Business Communicators (1991), Edmonton, for the grand re-



Judy Pal.

Online Global Learning Is Our New Normal

Story by Milana Gladilina

Photo Credit Milana Gladilina

Have you ever wondered how it feels to be a part of a multicultural team and have friends from different parts of the world who share the same interests and strive for the same goals? Or maybe you always wanted to work with an international company to make a change on a bigger scale? Many students do not know, but Durham College (DC) provides a lot of opportunities for people who are passionate about gaining international experience by studying, working and collaborating with institutions worldwide, even during the pandemic.

The International Education Office (IEO) has been offering various Education Abroad programs for DC students over the years. Students can travel to countries like Ireland, the Netherlands and Belgium for a couple of weeks as a part of the International Summer Program or study in another country for the whole semester without any additional tuition fee through the Semester



Rogier ten Kate represents DC at the Opening Ceremony of the WAB 2020 initiative.

Abroad program.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, all physical travelling programs were cancelled. However, that provided IEO and DC faculty with an opportunity to make the global learning experience accessible to more students while developing even more

efficient ways of organizing international projects.

Four years ago, DC started the Working Across Borders (WAB) initiative for business students enrolled in Project Management and International Business Management post-graduate programs. The project allows students to

collaborate with different institutions worldwide and work for a real client by creating sustainable business solutions.

“Students can work for a real company and learn to be part of a multicultural business team. It improves their knowledge of globalization in the current workplace and creates a great case for their portfolios.”

“This experience is extremely beneficial for both parties,” says Rogier ten Kate, DC professor and project coach. “Students can work for a real company and learn to be part of a multicultural business team. It improves their knowledge of globalization in the current workplace and creates a great case for their portfolios. At the same time, the client has an opportunity to collaborate with young global minds to explore business perspectives

to achieve the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (17 SDGs)."

In the fall of 2020, more than 500 students from 10 countries, including Germany, Belgium and Finland and over 120 DC students, met

Home-Storytelling project was created by Danielle Harder, DC professor, which unites kids from Guatemala with MAD students to change the world by sharing and creating stories on gender equality, climate action, poverty and

“Taking students abroad is what many people do, but continuing doing this in a new format due to the pandemic shows that you commit to that. We realized that many students cannot travel because of various reasons. Now, we are planning to keep this format even when the pandemic is over and collaborate with other countries to create a better future together.”

each other using the global classroom, DC’s live-stream venue.

Even though the project was created for the online setting, the new virtual world had many unexpected positive outcomes, such as attracting more clients and making global online learning the new normal.

Thanks to the pandemic, students from the business field and those studying in the school of media, art and design (MAD) have had a chance to work with communities across the world. The new FLCA@

more.

The project started in October 2019 when students from the journalism and mass media program visited Guatemala high school students to create a podcast based on one of the chosen 17 SDGs. The online version of it appeared as a stop due to COVID-19. Still, it allowed all MAD students to have an opportunity to get international experience, gain knowledge of another culture and show students in Guatemala that they have a



Students from Las Arrugas demonstrate a podcast logo for the FLCA project. (DC)

voice in their community.

“Taking students abroad is what many people do, but continuing doing this in a new format due to the pandemic shows that you commit to that,” says Harder. “And that’s what helps DC stand out. We realized that many students couldn’t travel because of various reasons. Now, we are planning to keep this format even when the pandemic is over and collaborate with other countries to create a better future together.”

In the world of globalization, the importance of having an international experience, whether it is travelling, studying, working or just having friends abroad, is essential not only for personal growth but also for developing a more collaborative global community united by the same goal of creating a better tomorrow. Participating in Education Abroad programs at DC a great way to gain this experience. 🌐

@durhamcollegeinternational

The Greatest Feeling of All

By Griffin O'Handley

Photo Credit Kurtis Sisk

When Kurtis Sisk was choosing his education path, he wanted a program that wouldn't limit his career choices, but expand them. Sisk found exactly that with Durham College's (DC) public relations and strategic communications program. In 2000, education in the field of public relations in Canada was very limited. DC was one of the few select schools that offered any formal education in the field. When Sisk found the program, he knew exactly what to do.

"I was torn on what to do with my life," says Sisk when asked why he chose PR. "I was looking for something that had some versatility to it. I didn't want to take a program where I was stuck doing one thing for the rest of my life."

While in the public relations program, Sisk found his passion in fundraising and event planning, particularly in the non-profit world.

"My path started in the non-profit world because of Durham College's public



Kurtis Sisk in his office at the Heart and Stroke Foundation New Brunswick headquarters, where he passionately fulfills his roles as the CEO.

“The greatest feeling of all is knowing you are making a difference in the world.”

relations internship program,” Sisk continues, “I had some great experiences working as a volunteer for the Juno Awards and Gemini Awards.”

His journey is one of trying new things and expanding his horizons. After graduating from the public relations and strategic communications program, Sisk went on to work for the Law Society of Upper Canada. That was a brief stint in the corporate world until he found an event planning job at the 2003 Canada Winter Games in his home province of New Brunswick.

When the Games concluded,

Sisk found a job working for the Canadian Cancer Society. Finding that was what sold him on event planning and fundraising as a career path.


“That’s when I really found my home,” Sisk says. “Events and fundraising events in particular. That’s what I’m passionate about.”

While working for the Cancer Society, he was recruited by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick. He worked his way up the ladder for eight years until being offered the role of CEO. His drive to help families deal with the

tragedy that is heart disease and his willingness to provide better support allowed him to guide the Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick into a period of 10 per cent average growth in annual fundraising.

“Going to Durham College and obtaining such a versatile skillset was the best business decision I ever made, because when I left DC,” Sisk explains. “Some things I’ve taken away from my experience there include attention to detail and seeing through the eye of your customer. In every environment I worked in, I quickly became the go-to person.”

In his career at the Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick, Sisk found an environment where he not only loves what he does, but he also excels at it. With his passion and drive for his work, it’s no wonder he has risen in the workplace hierarchy so quickly.

“The greatest feeling of all is knowing you are making a difference in the world,” says Sisk. 

Elevating Your Dreams

By Valentina Suarez

Photo Credit Valentina Suarez

Gabby De Sousa is the clear example of how she is busting the false stereotypes that society can develop on women who choose to work in the trades.

Growing up, De Sousa realized her artistic talents in the trades while she was creating and fixing objects in her daily life. She discovered the power that she held in her hands to help people differently, which helped establish her first steps in the world of elevating mechanics.

"My favourite part of my job is being able to do something not only for myself but also for the community," said De Sousa. "I make sure safety is a priority, and I'm really proud afterwards that I can do something like that."

Even though De Sousa loves her job and enjoys showing

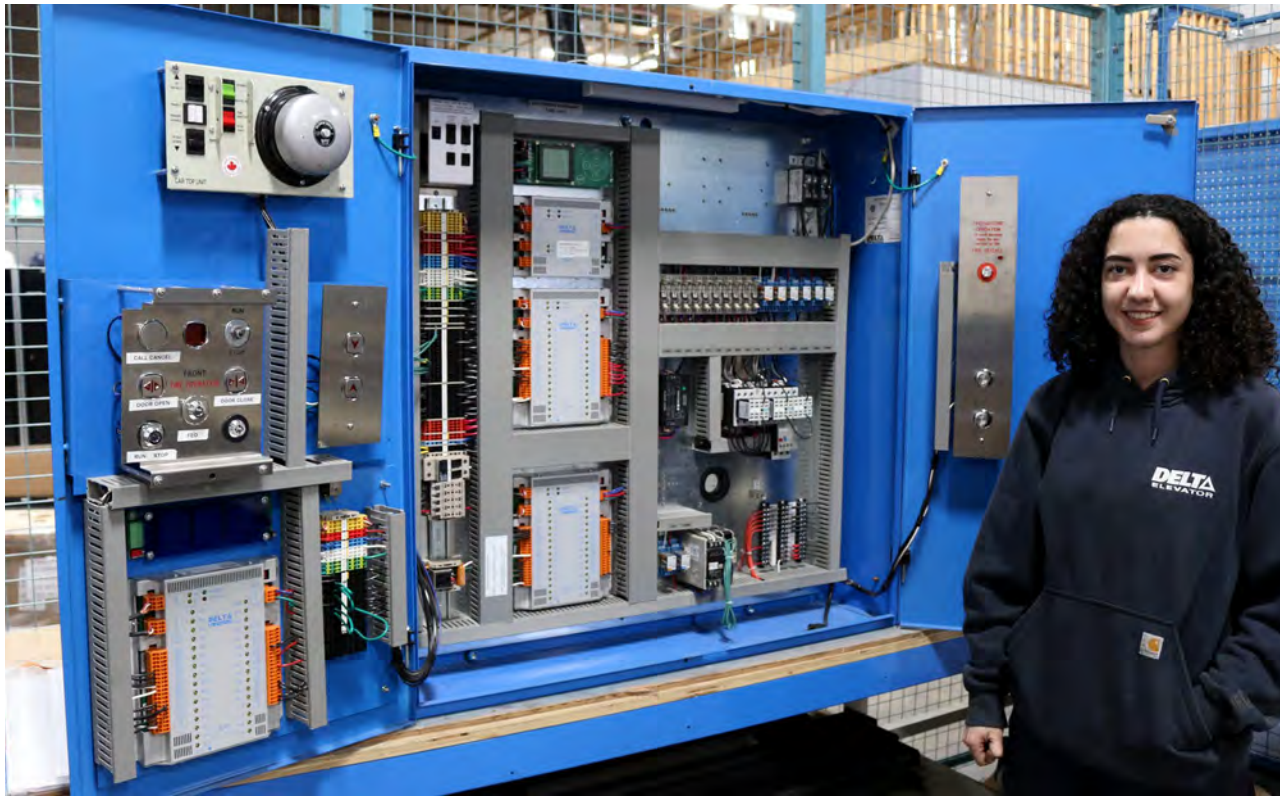
the world her skills, she has attested to the reality of the women's role in society. It all started in college when she was part of a small group of women studying mechanical technician-elevating devices. The men that she studied with bullied her for being in a so-called male-dominant program. That experience turned out to be the motivational push that she needed to not give up on her studies and continue her passion.

"During the mechanical technician-elevating devices program, I was one of three women, but our courses never coincided," De Sousa said. "Being the only girl in my block, I got bullied a lot. The guys were really rough on me, and so from that point, I realized I had to be better than



Gabby De Sousa, a successful DC alumni from the mechanical technician-elevating devices program

“My favourite part of my job is being able to do something not only for myself but also for the community. I make sure safety is a priority, and I’m really proud afterwards that I can do something like that.”



Gabby De Sousa is happy to share with everyone her workplace, where she has been spending a long-time of her life while learning and bringing security to the community.

“I really liked the hands-on program that Durham College has. It is an open space that encourages students to learn. Its environment and labs are perfectly designed to make the difference in education.”

them. I had to do something to show people that bullying is not only a high school element; it could create a mark for your whole life.”

After finishing her diploma at Durham College (DC), De Sousa accepted the

invitation to be part of the DC Alumni Association Board of Directors. This was the perfect opportunity to highlight gender inequality and stereotypes that women experience in this field; she also wanted to give back to the college a

token of appreciation for the exceptional contribution that it made for her personal and professional development. Now, De Sousa is the face of women who want to study mechanical and engineering programs in the future. She

firmly believes in DC’ strengths to inspire the next generation of tradespeople.

“I really liked the hands-on program that Durham College has,” says De Sousa. “It is an open space that encourages students to learn. Its environment and labs are perfectly designed to make the difference in education.”

For De Sousa, the role of her family was an important factor in making her the person she is today. Regardless of being involved in a field that’s uncommon for women, she has received full support from her family.

“I have a lot of tradesmen in my family; however, they are not specialized in elevators. For them, it’s a foreign language, and they are proud of me for sure.”

Now De Sousa is the face of women who want to make a difference by breaking the stereotypes that society has created about what women should or shouldn’t do.

“It’s going to be hard after college, but it’s important not to get discouraged and keep going.”

#WomenInTrades

Experience; Your Biggest Strength in Life

By Preeti Beniwal

Photo Credit Randall Arsenault

A special quality that differentiates a person from others is their decision-making skills. Randall Arsenault is living proof that the dreams you want to fulfill are the results of the choices you make. While you read his story, you will recognize that at different stages of his life, he said yes to opportunities before thinking it over. He grew up around police officers but never thought of joining police force until he was in his early 20s. Out of five of

siblings, four of them joined the force. It wasn't until Arsenault was 25 years old that he found his true calling and joined the Toronto Police Service.

He gradually learned how to handle pressure in the workplace, and after several years of experience, he now sees it as his biggest strength.

Expertise in decision-making and handling pressure comes with experience. After completing high school, he enrolled in a four-year carpentry apprenticeship at Durham College. This helped him acquire a post-secondary

education, which is an essential requirement for anyone looking to become a police officer.

“Be open-minded, adapt, and learn from your mistakes. Leave your ego at home, and you'll be fine.”

After experiencing a lot of ups and downs while executing his duties as a police officer, he never stopped competing with himself to polish his skills. While handling pressure is a huge part of his job, his favourite thing is interacting with the public.

The small, positive moments you have to interact with the public mean a lot to our mental health and make the career choice worthwhile. If you look approachable, you will always get a positive response.

“You're always exposed to negativity and stressful situations,” says Arsenault. “Therefore, these little gestures really make a positive impact. Sometimes kids dream of seeing a police officer up close, so I make a point to stop

and wave at them with a big smile.”

He loves to talk to the public whenever he gets a chance. He prefers to go in-store to grab a cup of coffee instead of using the drive-thru. It allows him to meet people and have a chat with them. Those moments are the best part of his job, and it also works as a stress reliever.

Additionally, he also finds solace in staying in touch with the community he serves.

He suggests, “Be open-minded, adapt and learn from your mistakes, leave your ego at home, and you'll be fine.”

Following his Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) diagnosis, he finds being outside and staying active helps him release his pent-up energy. He spends most of his free time hiking, going on long walks and doing yard work.

Arsenault further added, when you learn what your strengths are, your job will satisfy you. Arsenault believes that we should learn from our mistakes and move forward with a positive attitude. 🍀



Randall Arsenault sitting in a skatepark reflecting on his time with Toronto Police Services.

Strings That Helped Him Fly

By Nikhil Telge

Photo Credit Klinsvin Gilbert

Have you ever heard the phrase “music runs through my veins?” It is just a way of expressing their feelings for music for some people, but for others, like musicians, it becomes more of a reality, as they give their lives for their art.

Someone who lives up to that phrase is Klinsvin Gilbert, a Durham College (DC) alumnus who calls himself a true artist. He not only sings, but he also writes his own lyrics, plays his guitar, records his songs and performs live. He truly is the definition of an artist and musician.

“Guitar is the perfect instrument to express my emotions, It has taught me many things over the years, and it is still teaching me.”

When Gilbert was young, his ambition was to become a soccer player, as he used to spend most of his high school days playing soccer with his



Klinsvin with his favourite guitar.

friends. Playing soccer made him feel happy and satisfied; but he never felt like he stood out from the crowd. So, he kept exploring, until one day he decided to pick up the old acoustic guitar at his house.

Gilbert practiced on the guitar regularly. With a local

teacher's help, he claimed second place in a high school competition.

“Guitar is the perfect instrument to express my emotions,” says Gilbert. “It has taught me many things over the years, and it is still teaching me.”

He comes from an ordinary family living in Calicut, India. As his family is not related to the music industry, he knew that he was by himself to pursue his dreams. After working as a musician for a long time, he had to leave India and travel abroad in search of better opportunities that could help him move up in the industry.

“Always have a goal, keep college in mind as it helps to constantly elevate you, you’ll learn something new, meet new people, and grow as a person, Be an open-minded person, learn and understand new things from your life experiences, always dig deep, and you will fulfill your dreams.”

He already understood how to create music, but he wanted to learn more about the music industry's ins and outs. After extensive research, he found the two-year music business



Klinsvin posing for a portrait photo with his guitar

administration (MBAD) program at DC. But music isn't the only thing that strikes Gilbert's fancy.

For a long time, he has been taking inspiration from Greek

philosophy. He finds both Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Annaeus Seneca's works to be motivating and push him to work harder to achieve his dreams.

But what are the most cherished things to Gilbert outside of music and philosophy?

"The unpredictability of life," he says. "As I am from a fundamentally normal family, I did not have the support system to be in Canada. So, I kept working my way, and with the power of music with me, my life became beautiful."

With his songs now streaming on Spotify, iTunes, YouTube and Instagram, Gilbert is on the brink of fulfilling his dreams. He's so close that even international rock sensation Nikki Sixx shared one of Gilbert's cover videos on his official Twitter account. The video has almost 40,000 views.

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"Always have a goal," he says.



Klinsvin Performing a song

"Keep college in mind as it helps to constantly elevates you; you'll learn something new, meet new people and grow as a person. Be an open-minded person, learn and understand new things from your life experiences, always dig deep and you will fulfill your dreams." 🍀

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JOURNEY
ON INSTAGRAM!
@KLINSVIN**

The Making of Sticker Up Signs

By Samantha Jones

Photo Credit 746 Shop

Having a father in the Canadian Armed Forces meant you travelled a lot. Art and design always seemed to travel with Karen Pennings and she developed a passion for it. Pennings is now a successful business owner in the Kawartha Lakes region. She graduated from Durham College's (DC) graphic design program in 1994 and has since

graphic design department and immediately fell in love with the work.

She chose DC after high school because it had the best graphic design program at the time and a very high job-placement rate of 97 per cent after graduation.

"I enjoyed any hands-on classes, and my first year was very hands-on," explains Pennings. "Colour theory was a lot of fun and we did



Karen Pennings measures and places stickers for a local business in Kawartha Lakes.

DC, Pennings increased and improved her skills at three different locations in graphic design departments. She quickly realized that she didn't love the work she was doing, so she quit her job and moved with her husband to Kawartha Lakes to start their family. At the age of 22, Pennings was pregnant with her first child of five and her husband had started up his own business. He needed advertising decals for his work trucks, so Pennings bought sign equipment to do the decals herself and thus started her own business, Sticker Up Signs.

"You get to deal with many different people while still making your own hours," Pennings says. "Being able to work around my family is important; they are my number one priority."

Pennings has had great success with her business even in such a small town. She has done a lot of local work within Kawartha Lakes and expanded to using heat-transfer equipment to put designs on uniforms and clothing for local businesses. Pennings loves her work and plans to grow her business further in the future.

Follow! @StickerUpSigns

“Never sell yourself short: keep your confidence. There are places out there that will try to shoot you down. You finished a targeted program to prep you for entering the workforce, so stay confident in what you know and learned in school and always keep an open mind about learning new techniques and methods along the way.”

worked hard to grow her business throughout the years.

Before applying to DC, Pennings knew that a career in graphic design is what she wanted to do. A co-op in high school was where she first experienced the graphic design world. She was placed in the Canadian Armed Forces

different experiments with colours. Once, I made five different-coloured cookies and had our class try each cookie to see which one they liked best. There was no difference in taste, but it was a fun interactive test that involved some psychology."

After graduating from

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