

REFLECTIONS

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Following his Passion

By: Kelly Baldini

Photo Credit: Meagan Mcphee

For some, post-secondary education may be a minor set back into their future, but for Durham College (DC) alumni Jamie Baldini, it was exactly what he needed to help him into his dream career in the entertainment industry.

“Always make time for what you love, I know it sounds cliché, but whatever your passion may be, exercise, reading or another hobby, you need to prioritize yourself. Luckily for me, what I love is in my work every single day.”

An aspiring musician with a keen sense for business, Baldini felt it was a perfect decision to pursue the Durham College Music Business Management/Administration program. The college opened



Jamie Baldini playing his guitar at his cottage.

doors for the young musician when he landed his corporate placement at MDM Recordings Inc, an artist management company and record label located in Toronto.

“MDM stood out because it was a small company with very close team members and a practically sized roster of artists,” says Baldini. “It let me get to know everyone very

quickly.”

After attending Durham College, Baldini felt as though a career in the music industry was set on hold. He knew that he had to keep his goals practical. The young musician realized the only way he would be close to the entertainment industry was through a record label. Residing in the small town of Cobourg, Ont., made

Baldini’s dreams feel difficult to turn into a reality. However, that wouldn’t stop him from finding his way into his dream career. Baldini had a quick taste of success by the age of 22.

“MDM stood out because it was a small company with very close team members and a practically sized roster of artists. It let me get to know everyone very quickly.”

A short five months after graduating from DC, he was formally offered a full-time position with MDM Recordings. Through his dedication, accomplishments and passion during his corporate placement, MDM recognized the assets he brought to the table and offered him the position.

“I’m not sure I’d be where I am right now in my career without Durham College,” says

Baldini. "The placement gave me a giant foot in the door with MDM."

A day in the life for Baldini is nothing shy of entertaining in itself. He's currently the Label Co-ordinator for MDM Recordings. He's in charge of the label's digital set-up worldwide of new songs and singles, metadata management, marketing plan creation and the record label's social media management.

“I’m not sure I’d be where I am right now in my career without Durham College. The placement gave me a giant foot in the door with MDM.”

Although Baldini keeps busy with his work schedule, he still finds a way to do what he loves most — play his guitar and make music. He suggests that to keep the right balance in your life, you must prioritize yourself.

"Always make time for what you love," says Baldini. "I know it sounds cliché, but whatever your passion may be, exercise, reading or another hobby, you need to prioritize yourself."

Luckily for me, what I love is in my work every single day."

Reflecting on his years at DC, Baldini is grateful for the opportunity he was presented. He suggests for soon to be graduates that he wants people to strive for success.

"Go against the grain when choosing your corporate placement," he says. "Don't settle for an easy option, and make sure it is something you may like. Always consider the growth possibilities in the industry you are looking at. If it is generally shrinking like the music industry, jobs will be hard to find. There are a lot of people with more experience than a new graduate that you are competing with. Being in a small business means you can come in, know everyone and quickly make a good impression with the whole company."

Baldini is planning on staying with MDM Recording Inc for as long as possible. He wants to continue to learn from the best and excel in his current career. As they always say, you can't be the best if you don't learn from the best. 🍀



Headshot of Jamie Baldini

The Not-So-Secret Perks of Being an Alumni

Story by: Madison Jeffrey

Photo by: Durham College

Did you know that becoming a Durham College (DC) alumni has its perks?

Since 1967, DC has been committed to student success. The Office of Development and Alumni Affairs supports the Durham College Alumni Association (DCAA) consisting of over 91,000 graduates that have had exceptional career success. The Office of Development and Alumni Affairs is responsible for

“This revenue is used to support students through scholarships and bursaries and provides funding to support special alumni and student activities such as the backpack2Briefcase and Alumni Guest Speaker programmes.”

continuing support and communication with alumni.

Once you cross the graduation stage and with your diploma in hand, your tie to the college does not end. DC cares about your individual and career success, which is why

there are many perks set in place for you. These benefits include things like access to exclusive savings, valuable volunteer opportunities, networking and career development.

With a DC Alumni Connect membership, you have access to exclusive savings at over 100 different restaurants, venues and attractions where you can save on food, fashion, entertainment and more.

“There are so many perks,” says Sally Hillis, Manager,

Alumni Development. “When you graduate from Durham College, our Alumni office will send you a package to congratulate and advise you of the benefits including instructions for downloading the DC Connect app to access



All you need to do is create an account, download the app and show your card at participating locations to receive your exclusive perks.

the variety of discounts and perks.”

Royal Ontario Museum, Ripley's Aquarium of Canada, Tribute Community Centre and Ontario Science Centre are just a few of the many discounts offered to alumni.

As a DC graduate, you know the student experience comes first. That's why our Affinity Partners, Manulife and TD Insurance offer preferred rates on insurance policies.

“When grads take advantage of this preferred rate, our

Affinity Partners give a share of revenue back to the DCAA,” says Hillis. “This revenue is used to support students through scholarships and bursaries and provides funding to support special alumni and student activities such as the backpack2Briefcase and Alumni Guest Speaker programmes.”

Alumni now have the opportunity to connect with current students based on specific interests, all over a freshly brewed cup of coffee. Coffee Conversations offers

a networking and mentoring platform to connect and chat.

"We wanted to provide students with the opportunity to network with alumni and for alumni to give back to students," says Lisa McInerney, manager, Alumni Engagement. "Essentially, we want to give both students and alumni new connections to learn, share and grow."

It's never too late to upgrade, change, or develop in your professional career. As alumni, you have continuous access to the Career Development site, Hired Portal. There are over 7,000 employers using this site to boost their organizations and recruit new employees. By using the Hired Portal, you can search job postings, use career resources, meet with a career advisor, learn about upcoming career events, attend workshops and seek help with resumés, cover letters, interviews, job search and portfolios.

If you have an interesting story to tell, visit the DC alumni website where you can share your story for a chance to be featured in an issue of the DC Alumni Magazine.


"Keeping your contact information up to date is



Convocation is the first step in accessing exclusive perks.

important," says Hillis. "This is how we send you the DC Alumni publication online to read about the great things happening at your alma mater and interesting stories about our alumni."

Stay in touch and take advantage of the many services and perks available. You can stay connected on the Durham College Alumni LinkedIn page by visiting [linkedin.com/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/durham-college-alumni/)

[company/durham-college-alumni/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/durham-college-alumni/), Instagram at @alumni_dc, Twitter at @AlumniDC as well as the DC Alumni Facebook page for updates on alumni events and networking activities. For more information on all things alumni, go to durhamcollege.ca/info-for/alumni to see what perks interest you. 

HOW IT WORKS

1. Download the DC Alumni Connect app through the Apple App or Google Play Stores or visit www.dcalumniconnect.ca
2. Create an account
3. Simply show your DC Alumni Connect digital alumni card at participating locations to receive your exclusive perks

Adopting a New Kind of Green

By Nicole Lam
Photo Credit Durham College

The world of learning is changing, and so are we. The cannabis industry is one of the most rapidly expanding business opportunities in Canada since its legalization in 2018. Prior to the last decade, there wasn't any place you could go if you wanted to get a credential in cannabis, fortunately this has all changed.

Durham College (DC) first launched its Cannabis Industry Specialization program in 2017 and has been educating students in the ever-growing field since.

As more colleges begin to offer courses and programs on the business and history of the plant, DC's program, the first to launch a cannabis course in post-secondary education, continues to grow its program with the industry.

"I just want to jump in before the market gets any bigger," says John Furlone, Durham

College Cannabis Industry Specialization student.

"Learning about the cannabis industry is not simply learning about drugs," says Debbie Johnston, Dean of the Centre for Professional and Part-time Learning.

“
I have never seen
a industry go from zero
to a thousand miles an
hour in such a short
amount of time. ”

As more of the Canadian population increase their use of cannabis in its many forms, it's becoming more and more accepted to have a career related to marijuana.

However, you'll need more than a google search to know the ins-and-outs of the trade. "There's a need for formal education," says Johnston. "There are a lot of opportunities right now when it comes to licenced producers, and those with real knowledge, and we're expecting that number to go up as the industry does here in Canada." There's a course for pretty much any sector of marijuana you can imagine.

From its medical uses, to the legal aspects of the plant, but the courses aren't the only diverse thing about the program. People in other fields are curious too. "We

themselves about the industry."

No matter what you want to learn, there's something interesting for every student.

DC offers an array of courses in the Cannabis Industry



Debbie Johnston, Dean of the Centre for Professional and Part-time Learning (PPL).

get such an incredibly diverse audience," says Johnston. "There are people from health care, business executives, police, farmers and people who are just genuinely interested in educating

Specialization program taught by instructors with years of experience in the industry.

One of the best things about the program is that there are a variety of different courses to suit your commitment level

and interest.

“Even if students just take the first course, they learn beyond the basic skill set,” says Johnston. “They’re learning about the history of cannabis from all perspectives.”

The program makes it easy to take the learning initiative by offering more than half its

courses online as well as in-person.

“**We talk to employers and employers tell us if they see our courses those resumé’s go to the top of the pile.**”

“Take some education, it will make you stand out,” says Johnston.

The cannabis industry is on track to continue growing and it will be one of the more interesting things to observe as we continue to grow with it and its journey within formal education.

For more information on DC’s Cannabis Industry Specialization program visit the [PPL website.](#) 



A cannabis leaf before harvesting.

Marketing students face the time crunch

By: Jaslin Grove

Photos By: Sheldon Koufman

A room full of industry professionals acting as judges, one case study, and only 30 minutes to prepare a presentation. It's on.

Students from Durham College's (DC) variety of marketing programs endured that time crunch in November 2019 during the Ontario College Marketing Competition (OCMC). Preparations started early with the tryouts for the team occurring in September. Sheldon Koufman, a faculty member for the Marketing program, says students need to search within themselves to know who they are and what they can do.

"In the tryouts, students have to give a one-minute elevator pitch," says Koufman. "They need to tell us why they should be the one to come to the competition, and it requires the students to know themselves well, and be able to communicate their strengths."



Durham College marketing students and faculty pose for a group photo at the Ontario College Marketing Competition.

Of the 35 students who fought for a spot, 15 were selected to go to the competition that was held in Niagara Falls, Ont. The chosen few were then divided up into teams, which competed in a variety of competitions focusing on areas like direct marketing and sales, to job interviews and entrepreneurship, just to name a few. With the teams selected, the students worked with their

faculty coaches a couple of times a week, for up to four-hour sessions at a time. It's in these meetings, says Koufman, where teams came up with their winning strategy that they would use at the competition.

"When you get into that room, it's all about critical thinking," says Koufman. "It's not about the process. That is set in the practice sessions. In the competition, it's just about applying their knowledge and

the process to their current situation."

With only 30 minutes from the moment they are given the case study the teams are asked to review, analyze, and determine the problem. It's that problem that then becomes their presentation to industry professionals that act as judges. It's an intense competition that forces these students outside their comfort zone.

"Every student that gets to do this competition risks being a little uncomfortable," says Koufman. "It's nerve-wracking to be put in a time crunch and present in front of a group of people. But, if you put yourself in that situation it pushes your boundaries, and allows for positive change to happen, like growth."

This kind of event provides invaluable experience for students, from networking with industry professionals and other like-minded learners, to



Kaitlyn Brasier poses with her Lydiatt Award at the 2019 OCMC.

giving them experience pitching ideas and practicing job interviews. One student from last year's competition even networked with an industry professional that later provided them their first job.

Koufman says it's a fantastic way to help students achieve their full potential.

"When I see a student come to the class on their first day, I see ability and capability," he says. "I'm not sure if they see it

“It's nerve-wracking to be put in a time crunch and present in front of a group of people. But, if you put yourself in that situation it pushes your boundaries, and allows for positive change to happen, like growth.”

themselves, but this is an opportunity for them to prove that they can do it.”

Two-time participant Kaitlyn Brasier was awarded the prestigious Lydiatt Award, which is given to a student who is nominated by their teachers and demonstrates student leadership. Seven of Durham College's marketing students placed in the Top 5 of their respective competitions. These students showed that they had what it took to make the cut and prove that DC students have what it takes to hold their own among other colleges. Kudos to:

Brendan Scott – first place, Quiz Bowl Competition, third place, Entrepreneurship Competition
Kaitlyn Brasier – third place, Job Interview Competition
Youssef Zaki – third place, Entrepreneurship Competition
Malcolm Hooper – fourth place, Quiz Bowl Competition
Chin-Ting Sherwin – fifth place, Direct Marketing Competition
Nicholas Bowman – fifth place,

Direct Marketing Competition

It's an exciting time in DC's marketing programs. We can't wait to see what 2020's Ontario College Marketing Competition has in store for them.

Ontario College Marketing Competition

The Ontario College Marketing Competition is hosted by a different college every year and brings in over 250 students from colleges around the province.

These students compete in the two-day event that involves various marketing competitions that span over two days. Students are coached by their faculty and are required to bring their innovative thinking and marketing skills to the table as they compete against each other for first place. This competition is the perfect place for students to gain real-world experience as they present their ideas to industry professionals.

Durham College Launches "Are You Ok?" Program

By: Jaelyn Germaine
Photo Credits: Kelly Baldini

Each year over two million students attend universities and colleges across Canada, one of the most stressful times, and most of them aren't even thinking about their mental health. A recent article from The Globe and Mail found, "Post-secondary students feel stressed, overwhelmed, lonely and some have even considered suicide in the last year, a new study released Monday suggested".

To tackle this, Ontario's Universities created an organization that works to create a better student life better by partnering with other organizations. Ontario's Universities found that 75 per cent of mental health problems begin to appear before the age of 25, which is typically when people will be in their post-secondary careers. Ontario's Universities work

towards improving the mental health and physical health of students, the skills students learn for the jobs, as well as creating a better environment for these students. Students are becoming more and more vocal about their struggles which has led some schools, like Durham College (DC) to take the students seriously.



Modler is seen showcasing a bright smile, despite facing obstacles in her life.

"Creating a new program to help students with [mental health] is a huge advantage since there are so many students struggling with their own mental health, being

able to reach out for help at school can be very helpful" says McKenna Modler, who struggles with anxiety and depression, has seen the additional information on the website, but hasn't used the services it offers. She suggests the college promote the program to raise awareness among students.

DC launched the "Are You Ok?" campaign in September 2019 in response to the realization of all the students who are feeling the pressure of the school year, and are having trouble coping. Students struggling with their mental health can look to the college's website or speak to someone from the school who will direct them back to the website for more information.

Should a student need help with a mental health problem while on campus, they can access the Well-Being Centre (Oshawa Campus) or the Coaching and Support Centre

(Whitby Campus). Another one of the on-campus outreach services DC offers is the Sexual Violence and Education Support co-ordinator.

"Creating a new program to help students with [mental health] is a huge advantage since there are so many students struggling with their own mental health, being able to reach out for help at school can be very helpful"

Off-campus services are also available through the Good2Talk helpline; the Integrated Mental Health & Wellness (I.M. Well Student Assistance Program) which provides additional services offered, and Ontario 211 Community and Social Services Help Line.

Good2Talk is a confidential helpline that is able to provide students with professional counselling and further information and/or referrals.

I.M. Well Student Assistance Program provides students with more general help when it comes to dealing with stress factors. There can be further information found about each service offered on their website.

The Ontario 211 Community and Social Services Help Line provides these students or alumni with outreach programs on various topics that can be creating mental health problems.

The I.M. Well Student Assistance Program as well as Ontario 211 Community and Social Services Help Line are available to both DC student and alumni.

Modler feels the “Are You Ok?” program can benefit students when it comes to taking care of their mental health. This outreach program provides students with many different options both on and off campus to reach out for help.

Ontario’s Universities states that student mental health is a societal issue mainly due to the future affects it can have on healthcare, the economy, as well as the future workplaces of these students. According to The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) the economic effects of mental illnesses cost \$51 billion per year. Since 2011 the Ontario government has invested \$27 million in improving mental health services within post-secondary schools.

This “Are You Ok?” program is something that will encourage students to work on themselves as they’re

finishing up school, which will help them as they enter their careers. The program’s hopes are that once students enter the workforce they may begin to educate others about mental health and resources available to them.

“I feel mental health is really, really important to be aware of and to take notice of,” says Modler. “So many people are struggling and you wouldn’t even know that, so I think it’s important to try to take notice of the little things people do”.

Currently, there are multiple colleges in Ontario offering mental health outreach programs, including Centennial

“So many people are struggling and you wouldn’t even know that, so I think it’s important to try to take notice of the little things people do.”

College, Seneca College, and Humber College.

“Are You Ok?” has great potential to continue onto future generations as mental health is becoming something that is talked about a lot more. So, ask yourself the question “Are You Ok?”

CAMPUS STATUS ASK DC

ARE YOU OK? VISIT DONATE HIRE QUICK LINKS APP

DURHAM COLLEGE SUCCESS MATTERS

PROGRAMS AND COURSES ADMISSIONS FINANCIAL INFO STUDENT LIFE ABOUT CONTACT

Homepage Are you okay?

ARE YOU OK?

IMPORTANT: If you are dealing with a life-threatening situation and you are on campus, call ext. 2400 from a campus landline or 905.721.3211 from a mobile phone. If you are off-campus, call 911 immediately.

Are you okay? We ask because we care. If you are a Durham College (DC) student looking for help connected to your mental health or overall wellness, there are several resources and supports available to you right now.

For more information about “Are You Ok?” visit the Durham College Website

durhamcollege.ca/

[are-you-ok](http://durhamcollege.ca/are-you-ok)

For additional helplines visit

good2talk.ca/

[www.studentvip.ca/](http://www.studentvip.ca/SchoolSelect.aspx)

[SchoolSelect.aspx](http://www.studentvip.ca/SchoolSelect.aspx)

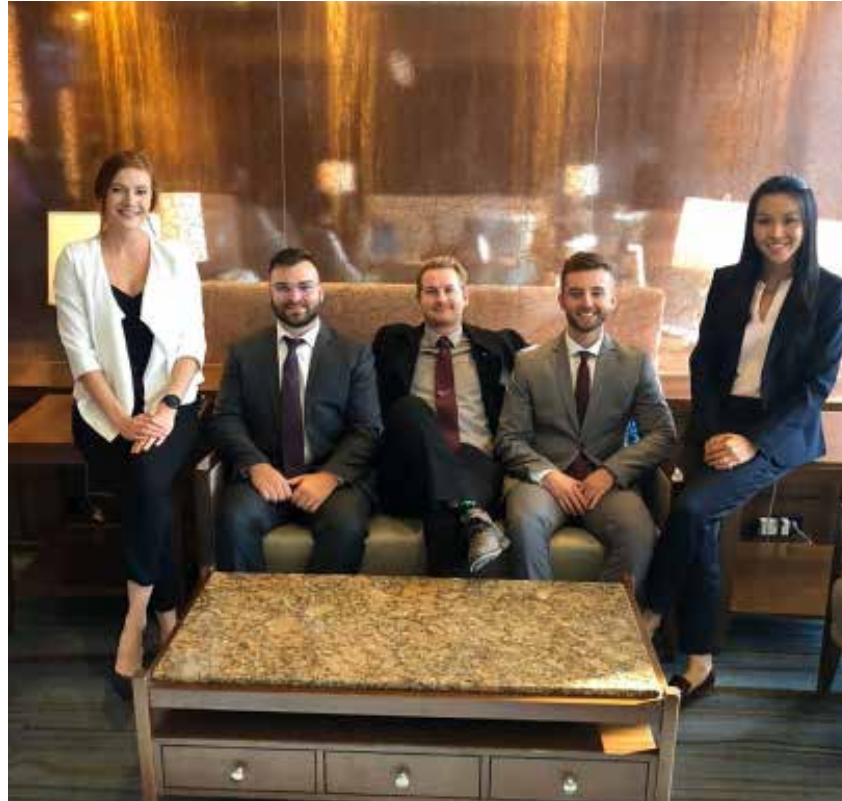
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DC Looks Good on the Podium

By: Jamie Crawford
Photos Credit: Ian Ellis

Just like in any sports competition, landing on the podium is every participant's dream. For five Durham College (DC) Sport Management and Business Administration students, that dream turned into a reality when they scored the third-place title at the 12th annual PrimeTime Sports and Entertainment Sports Management Conference and Tradeshow.

“It helped us step up individually with our own personal development and growth. Plus, it also helped us build our team work ethic. We gained a lot of confidence from it and it was a really cool experience.”



Megan Longpre, Colin Shuringa, Trevor Annuss, Bobby Pelleschi, and Jacqeline Tieu at the 12th annual PrimeTime Sports and Entertainment Sports Management Conference and Tradeshow.

The Conference, held in Toronto, features a case study competition that is aimed to provide college and university students with a unique opportunity to work within a

team to provide their analysis and expertise. While all five members on the team work on the analysis, only four get to present at the competition.

The chosen few for the DC

team were Jacqueline Tieu, Trevor Anniss, Colin Shuringa, Megan Longpre, and Bobby Pelleschi. Not only did they represent for Durham College, but they were also the only college competing against five other universities.

But it wasn't an easy road to get selected. Students of the Sport Management and Business Management programs have to tryout to earn a spot on the team. For some students, the tryouts helped increase their confidence and gain experience, for others it was about networking, but the real trophy was making it on the team.

“Everything from marketing knowledge, presentation ability, and confidence in how someone handles themselves under pressure determines who will make the team.”

"We look for the right mix of who is going to make the best team and bring the skills that we are looking for in the competition," says Ian Ellis, Marketing Professor and competition coach. "Everything from marketing knowledge, presentation ability, and confidence in how someone handles themselves under pressure determines who will make the team."

On Nov. 17, 2019, the teams were challenged to create their

analysis on their given case. The 2019 studies were based on growing and enhancing the fan experience of eSports teams. Given only 24 hours to review, analyze, and prepare the presentation, it all came down to 15 minutes in front of the judges.

Following their presentation, the team was confident but anxiously awaited their results to see if they were moving onto the next round. With an email confirmation that they

made it through, the team began work at developing a new plan using feedback that the judges provided. Their hard work paid off when they placed third in the competition against two Master of Business Administration schools. Not too bad for five students from Durham College.

"It was a really amazing, rewarding weekend and overall a great success," says Megan Longpre, second-year student and third place competition

winner. "It helped us step up individually with our own personal development and growth. Plus, it also helped us build our team work ethic. We gained a lot of confidence from it and it was a really cool experience."

"I hope it gives the program and the college as a whole an enhanced level of credibility to build our brand and demonstrate that we can compete with some of the most elite schools in the province."

Competition coach Ellis was also incredibly proud of the team's work and hopes the students will continue to realize their full potential beyond the competition.

"What the students do in a short period of time and under a decent amount of pressure is really amazing, regardless of where they placed," says Ellis. "I hope it gives the program and the college as a whole an enhanced level of credibility to build our brand and demonstrate that we can compete with some of the most elite schools in the province." 🏆



Megan Longpre, Bobby Pelleschi, Trevor Annuss, and Colin Shuringa stand with competition coach Ian Ellis (middle).

About the Competition

The PrimeTime Sports Business Case Competition Presented by Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment (MLSE) is a great opportunity for students to put their experience to the test in the sports industry. Students get the chance to compete against other colleges and universities to prepare an analysis and presentation on a given case in hopes to be declared the winner.

Durham College Takes Fundraising to the Next Level

By: Aaron Mitchell

Photo Credit: Durham College

On August 31, gamers from across the GTA converged on Durham College (DC) to participate in the Extra Life gaming charity event in support of Toronto's Hospital For Sick Children. This 24-hour event took place in the DC Esports Arena, DC's state-of-the-art centre dedicated to gaming. Their quest? To raise money for a great cause through gaming donations.

“Gamers of all types, including console enthusiasts, PC gamers, card game hobbyists and board game players, came out to support the cause”

“There's so much more to gaming than just playing video games,” says Sarah Wagg, manager of the DC Esports Arena, “it's more than what



Durham College students face off in the DC Esports Arena.

people think it is. We want to broaden people's horizons when it comes to the gaming industry.” Gaming still has a lot of stigma in Canada and the United States, where it is often seen as juvenile and delinquent. In other countries like China, Japan and the Philippines, gaming

is a celebrated pastime, and professional gamers can rise to super-stardom. By hosting events like this, Wagg, and Extra Life, aim to destroy the stigma surrounding gaming in Canada. “We want to show that gaming can be a force for good,” says Wagg, “and what better way than to support

Sick Kids Toronto? We get to bring the community together through gaming.” And bring the community together it did. Throughout the event, gamers of all types, including console enthusiasts, PC gamers, card game hobbyists and board game players, came out to support the cause, and through everyone's efforts, DC raised more than \$3,500 for Sick Kids.

Michael Cameron, professor in the School of Business, IT & Management was present at the event, live-streaming on Twitch. tv and drawing in many

donations. Cameron is a huge gamer, and his passion for gaming was a big part of DC's choice to introduce the Esports Business Management program. By the end of the event, Cameron's stream had raised a third of all donations. Twitch.tv is an online platform that allows users to broadcast themselves and the game



Sarah Wagg, manager of the DC Esport Arena.

they're playing. Viewers can then donate money to a streamer to show support and encouragement. For streamers like Cameron at the Extra Life event, all proceeds and donations went directly to Sick Kids.

As the event continued, sponsors arrived from all across the Durham Region in support of Sick Kids. Critical Hit Gaming Lounge, a gaming lounge in Whitby, provided board games and tutorials on card games like Magic the

Gathering and Warhammer 40k; Ontario Power Generation, provided a safety kit; Tribute Community Centre, donated Oshawa Generals tickets; Toronto Defiant, an esports team from Toronto, donated jerseys; Monster Energy, 8-Bit Beans, Pizza Pizza and Tehanos Grill catered the event; and Comic Alley supplied prizes and giveaways.

Events like Extra Life are just the beginning for DC's Esports Arena, and many more events, tournaments and

initiatives are on the horizon, including: a Super Smash Bros. Ultimate tournament, a League of Legends tournament with a grand prize of \$10,000 in tuition, and the Cyberlympics Finals. For more information on these events, visit www.durhamcollege.ca/esports. 🎮

Do You Find The Defendant Guilty?

By: McKenna Modler

Photo Credit: McKenna Modler & Kristen McKinnon

You anxiously await in a courtroom as the jury walks in. The anticipation builds as the foreman has reached a verdict. Based on the evidence, do you find the defendant guilty?

In this case the defendant Dalton Burger is definitely guilty — guilty of being the Program Co-ordinator of the Paralegal program at Durham College.

All kidding aside, Burger not only teaches at Durham College, but he has been participating with high schools in Durham Region to support students in their mock trials for the Kelly Cup and York Region Judges Cup.

“These competitions give students an opportunity to have that spark for a passion for law,” says Burger. “They get to go to a courthouse with real judges, lawyers and experience the justice system first-hand.”

The mock trial competitions give students the chance to

stand their ground, defend and argue their side in a real-life trial with lawyers and paralegals throughout the region coming together to give real-world insight.

“These competitions give students an opportunity to have that spark for a passion for law.”

“My role in all of this is to help kick off the event for Grade 11 law students,” says Burger. “A number of high school teachers also have the opportunity to engage with different lawyers to prepare students for their trial.”

This year marks 10 years of Burger participating in the competitions. In addition to helping with the trials, he’s involved in the welcome ceremony.

This is both a learning opportunity for high schools and provides Burger’s own students with a chance to share their love for the law to high schoolers.



Dalton Burger is the Program Co-ordinator of the Paralegal program at Durham College. Tyler Gregory is one of Burger’s students and is currently in the process of practising in a real-life setting in a court room. (McKinnon)

Burger can speak from experience as his passion for law started the same way.

After taking law in high school, his love for it only grew through a co-op with a local law firm in his area. The co-op introduced him to several judges in the courthouse, whom Burger developed great relationships with.

“They get to go to a courthouse with real judges, lawyers and experience the justice system first-hand.”

Those connections allowed him to come back for his undergrad to work around youth justice and legislative amendments for the law firm.

Now it comes full circle for Burger, as he has finished where he started, back in the same courtroom where he conducted his trials.

The Grade 11 students get to hear first-hand about the opportunities these trials can provide them in the future through others who have been through it before.

“These mock trials are so important,” says Tyler Gregory, one of Burger’s current paralegal students. “This opportunity gives high school students the best hands-on practice they can get while still in school. My own program conducts mock trials all the time to keep our minds sharp.”

These competitions get intense during the trial period as students battle it out to win.

While winning the case may be the most important thing to lawyers, the real winning for students comes from the

learning opportunity itself.

The mock trials teach students about the justice system and ensuring people’s rights are respected within a courtroom.

“These mock trials are so important. This opportunity gives high school students the best hands-on practice they can get.”

“It was these mock trials that sparked my own interest in law,” says Gregory. “They still play such a huge role in my life today as I’m now studying to become a paralegal.”

Guilty or not guilty, Burger’s passion for law and teaching can’t be denied. From being a high school student himself, to getting help from bright legal minds and then becoming one of those bright legal minds who teaches students, Burger can be rest assured that he’s leading a legal legacy for all future paralegals. 🏛️



Tyler Gregory (right) is a current student of Dalton Burger (left) who is a professor in the Paralegal program at Durham College. (Modler)

IT'S A DOG'S WORLD

Story by Olivia Oldfield

Photography by Mary Zita Payne

The passion for animals that Kaitlin Cooke has is clear from the second you start talking to her. The Durham College veterinary assistant graduate is not only an incredibly successful Manager for Saje, the wellness company, but she also runs a growing dog Instagram account, and she teaches others how to raw feed their dogs.

Although Cooke hasn't taken up a career as a vet assistant since her graduation 12 years ago, her knowledge and understanding of dogs and animals has been

incredibly useful for spreading knowledge of the raw feeding world. Cooke, although is appreciative of her education, made it clear that at the time, the discussion about raw feeding and the nutritional importance of it was not really a part of the curriculum.

"I was still really interested in the nutritional aspect, but I felt like I wasn't being appeased with any education and so that curiosity was always there," says Cooke.

Her real desire for raw

“I just dropped everything. It was like, hey, I'm gonna go, and I'm gonna buy this, and I'm going to start from there..”

feeding came when she got her second dog, Hugo, a French Bulldog, the perfect complement to Ogie, her first dog, a bully breed mix.

"I knew that French Bulldogs did a lot better when eating raw because they have so many digestive issues," she says. "So, when we got Hugo, I just dropped everything, and I made the decision to go raw. I said to myself I'm going to go buy this, and I will start from there."

It took some trial and error to get Cooke to where she is now with raw feeding. As pet stores weren't selling what she needed to keep her dogs healthy, she resulted to going specifically to farmers for food that works perfectly with her dogs' diets. As the years have gone on, more stores are popping up with the product and knowledge to suitably raw

feed your dog.

She became more knowledgeable and confident with raw feeding her dogs and was able to share her journey on her dogs' Instagram Hugo's World. The account has amassed almost 2,500 followers in just under five years. She shares a daily post about what her dogs are eating for the day, their shenanigans and the dogs that she helps to create food plans and dog sits for.

Word of mouth has been imperative to Cooke growing her business. French Bulldog owners tend to only like people who know the breed to look after their dog, which has been incredibly beneficial to her.

At any given time, she might have upwards of four dogs in her house.



Cooke and her dog Ogie

Her desire to care for animals and passion for making sure that they live and have the best life possible is what drives her to do her work. Although Cooke loves what she is doing on a daily basis both with animals and her managerial role with Saje, she hopes

“You feed yourself and survive,” she says. “You can feed a dog. You [always] have the [dogs’] best intentions.”

that one day her raw feeding business could grow into a brick-and-mortar store where she can continue to spread her knowledge.

Raw feeding your dog takes a lot of research and knowledge. She says it is important to

not listen to what one person says and to make sure you are doing your reading to honestly know what is essential for your dog. One piece of critical advice she gives to dog owners wanting to start raw feeding is to trust themselves.

“You feed yourself and survive,” she says. “You can feed a dog. You [always] have the [dogs’] best intentions.”

Cooke and her desire to spread awareness and knowledge about raw feeding dogs is what makes her unique. Not everyone has the passion she does for her animals and the millions of others out there. There is no doubt that she will be incredibly successful in wherever life continues to take her. 🍀



Cooke sitting in the woods with her dogs Ogie and Hugo



Cooke walking in a field with her dogs Ogie and Hugo

Beauty Within the Beast

Story by: Sarmad Shaikh

Photo credit: Al Fournier

What comes to mind when you hear the term girl-sport? Is it volleyball? Maybe softball. What about rugby? No, of course not! That sport is way too aggressive for women to participate in. Well, tell that to second-year Sport Management student, Glory Ezeude.

While Durham College (DC) offers students many different varsity teams to play on, from basketball and soccer to volleyball and Esports, none stood out more to Ezeude than women's rugby.

“I’m actually gentle off the field but on the field I’ll knock you out.”

As a typically male-dominated sport, rugby is one of the most vigorous games in the world due to the amount of physical contact. It has shortened careers and lives of many athletes. However to



Ezeude in action during a rugby playoff game.

Ezeude, it's just another sport she enjoys playing.

“You can get injured in any sport. Just because there's no helmets or a lot of equipment doesn't mean you're going to get hurt,” she says. “It's about how you play the sport and making sure you're in the right place at the right time.”

Ezeude was introduced to rugby during her basketball season in high school. Her coach advised that she'd play

rugby to condition her body. As time progressed, her love for rugby evolved and eventually decided to play competitively. It didn't take long for Ezeude to adjust but for the people around her, it was a drastic change.

“Everyone was surprised I played rugby and wouldn't picture me playing the sport because of my appearance,” says Ezeude.

She never shies away from shedding light on misconceptions people may have about rugby.

“Our goals aren't seen, only our appearances are.”

“If you play rugby then you're automatically perceived as an aggressive person,” she says. “But I don't believe I display signs of hostile behavior towards anyone. I think I'm a rather friendly person. The reason people join these types of sports is for fun and the teamwork aspect, not the physical contact.”

Ezeude has garnered a fanbase that's been supportive of her throughout her time as a rugby athlete.

“People have been quite motivating,” she says. “They say I'm such a beast on the field and jokingly say it off the field too. I laugh and tell them it's not like that. I'm actually gentle off the field but on the field I'll knock you out.”



Ezeude showcasing her fashion sense by posing in her party dress.

Aside from sports, Ezeude's ambition has also led her to create a YouTube channel that covers multiple topics including beauty and religion.

She posts tutorials on how to style hair and self-care.

Ezeude is an advocate for accepting who you are and how you look. She doesn't

believe in meeting the standards that society places upon women and instead, being happy and comfortable with yourself.

"We're all beautiful regardless of how we look. Beauty is whatever you want it to be," she says.

Although Ezeude hopes to eliminate the stereotype and preconceived notions behind rugby, her real desire is for women to take action on their aspirations and essentially break out.

"Be who you want to be regardless of what people say because people are going to talk," she says. "You can be the next Bianca Andreescu and people won't see it coming because they didn't know who you were, they just knew what they saw. Our goals aren't seen, only our appearances are. At the end of the day you're going to be this huge person later on and people will start looking up to you and won't believe you achieved those certain goals because they doubted you."

In the 2019-20 season, the Durham Lords women's rugby

team had an astounding 10-2 win-loss record, which was the best record in their conference, and the second-best among the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA) rugby teams. Ezeude had a large role on the team as she was one of the top scorers for the Lords. The Lords went on to finish their season with the silver medal in the OCAA tournament.

"We're all beautiful regardless of how we look. Beauty is whatever you want it to be."

Equality between men and women is a situation that is yet to be solved in our world today. Instead of fighting for equality, Ezeude's new approach is through breaking stereotypes and creating her own standards. There is a deeper meaning behind everything she does and she hopes that one day the world will realize that there is more to a woman than the exterior feature. 🌟

Nelson Mandela spirit alive at Durham College

Story and photo by Viya Pisat

Celebration of the 12th Annual Durham Black History Month was held on Feb. 2, 2019 followed by the presentation ceremony of 2019 Madiba Award.

This year, the award was given to Durham College's (DC) own Allison Hector-Alexander, director of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Transitions. Hector-Alexander bagged the prestigious award at J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate in Ajax, Ont.

The Madiba Award, named after Nelson Mandela's ancestral Xhosa clan signifies respect and endearment.

The Cultural Expressions Durham Black History Celebration committee reviews nominations per year to honour a leader of African ancestry in Durham Region whose struggle embodies Nelson Mandela's values, visions and commitment to overcome barriers in their long fight for freedom and equality.

"It is a prestigious award and it means a lot to me," says Hector-Alexander. "I honoured to be recognized as a recipient of the Madiba Award."

Hector-Alexander believes receiving the Madiba Award will have a significant impact on her career, will open doors for collaboration and provide more learning opportunities.

"I am honoured to be recognized as a recipient of the Madiba Award."

This award brings a lot of responsibility for Hector-Alexander as she strives to follow Mandela's principles in all aspects of her life, including the preservation of Black history and its culture.

Hector-Alexander is keen to help people improve access to programs by creating safe spaces for them to participate in groups and access all they need.

"This work may be difficult," says Hector-Alexander. "But that doesn't mean it shouldn't be done."

Hector-Alexander has various tasks and each day is always different. She supports students with concerns or who may be experiencing a crisis situation. She follows up with the team, while providing training on campus and in the community.

According to DC, Hector-Alexander was one of the driving forces behind the creation of Black Student Success Network (BSSN), an initiative that provides opportunities for mentoring, networking and overall support to Black students. The BSSN creates awareness about situations impacting Black students disproportionately compared to other group of students.

Hector-Alexander's focus is on student success and providing tips to students to ensure academic success.



Allison Hector-Alexander, the director of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Transitions with the 2019 Madiba Award.

She tries to make every student feel comfortable when sharing issues, they might be facing and reassures them that they will get the help they need.

Hector-Alexander's contributions to DC and community provide the college's diversity and inclusion services and embody Mandela's values, visions and commitment to overcoming barriers as well as his long fight for freedom and equality. For Hector-Alexander, the award proves her quiet work in the background is appreciated. 🇳🇵

A Boys Club No More

How Lauren LaForge is making a place for herself in the male-dominated world of sports

By: Maddison Lake

Photo Credit: Lauren LaForge

The sports industry has been dominated by men since its inception. But now, women like Lauren LaForge have had enough of it and are hoping to change the narrative.

A graduate of Durham College's Sport Management program, LaForge always enjoyed sports, but didn't see it as a career option. Originally enrolled in a bachelor of arts at Algoma before transferring to the University of Guelph, LaForge knew something felt off.

“Having the program be very male-dominated, it was scary at first, the truth is, you are treated all the same.”

“I withdrew from my university program where I was very unhappy,” she says.

After taking some time off school and receiving a pep talk from a very special person, LaForge found her true passion

for sports and decided to pursue it.

“My late Grandpa always told me, ‘Do something you love... and you’ll never have to work a day in your life,’” says LaForge, “For me, that was sport and nothing else.”

When she started the program, she had feared she made the wrong choice.

“Having the program be very male-dominated, it was scary at first,” admits LaForge, “The truth is, you are treated all the same.”

When asked about what helped her get over her fears and get through the program, she credits her professors.

“They are second to none,” she says. “They helped me hone my existing skills and learn things about myself I never knew before. I would not have had such great success in the program if it wasn’t for them.”

One of the program’s unique features is a four-month long internship where LaForge was fortunate enough to get her

dream gig.

Going into the program, LaForge goal was to land an internship with an Ontario Hockey League (OHL) team.

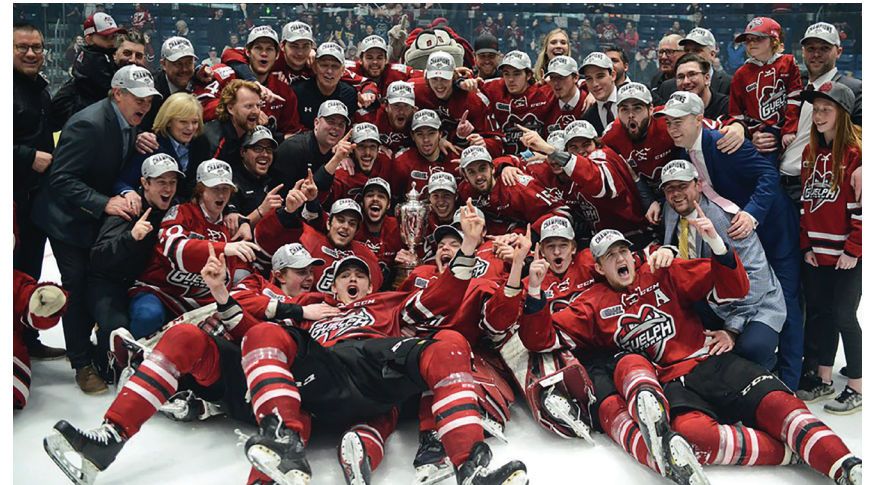
“I’ve been involved in hockey my whole life, but nothing beats this experience...It was like no other.”

“I did my placement with the Guelph Storm doing public and media relations,” she says. “And that’s exactly what

happened!”

She joined the team at an exciting time, just as they were starting their OHL playoff campaign.

“We ended up going all the way to the end after a playoff run that was never seen in the league before,” says LaForge. “To win the championship versus an undefeated [Ottawa 67’s] team.” LaForge called it a true Cinderella story, explaining, “I’ve been involved in hockey my whole life, but



The Guelph Storm players and coaches pose for a group photo shortly after winning the 2019 OHL Championship against the Ottawa 67's on May 12, 2019.

nothing beats this experience... It was like no other."

She noted other valuable experiences she had through the program, like volunteering at the Hockey Hall of Fame's induction ceremony, but her most notable experience was meeting and working with Durham-based golf expert and motivational speaker Todd Kierstead.

"Todd remains my mentor

to this day," says LaForge, "A great thing about this program is that you meet great people in the industry who will help you along the way."

"I see athletes as real people who live normal lives."

After graduation, she took the summer off before getting hired at HockeyTech, a hockey-based technology company, as a full-time broadcast viewer

and customer support worker

"I love where I work now," she says. "The people I work with are amazing. We are growing substantially every year and it is amazing to be a part of."

Looking to the future, LaForge has a strong idea of where she wants to go in the sport industry.

"I want to work in the business side of hockey and

[as] player personnel for a professional team," she says.

With a natural ability for helping people, she would love to not only make a difference in hockey, but to help evolve the game in a positive way.

"I entered the sport industry at a perfect time, a time where women are starting to be represented on a larger scale and are in the spotlight."

"I see athletes as real people who live normal lives," LaForge says. "I would love to work on the athlete side of hockey and to eventually somehow get involved in the study of concussions in sport and CTE [chronic traumatic encephalopathy]."

The sports industry is still very male-dominated, and although she's just starting out, LaForge doesn't feel the same doubt she felt walking into class on her first day.

"I entered the sport industry at a perfect time," she says. "A time where women are starting to be represented on a larger scale and are in the spotlight."



Photo Credit: Lauren LaForge

A final to remember — Guelph Storm players line up against the Ottawa 67's players during the best of seven finals at the Sleeman Centre in Guelph, Ont.



The Long and Winding Road to Becoming Champions

By: Brayden Smith

Photo credit: Al Fournier

The Durham College Men's Soccer team has surpassed all expectations heading into the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) as under dogs, and finishing the tournament as champions.

Pierre Sanz, a graduate from the Durham College (DC) Broadcast Journalism program has attended and reported on every Durham Lord's Men's Soccer game for the last three years of his life. Working so close to the team, he had the opportunity to watch them grow and surpass everyone's expectations. Particularly in 2019, when the team secured the CCAA Championship.

“To go from having 25 to 50 people at our regular games to over one thousand, it was unbelievable.”

The day was Nov. 9, 2019. Sanz woke up and proceeded to Vasco's Field like any other game day, but unlike the other days, this day was different. This would be the day the Durham Lord's men's soccer team would compete for gold

in the CCAA Finals. The team that captured provincial gold two years prior was finally getting their chance to capture gold on Canada's largest stage.

“I just had a feeling something special would happen that day,” says Sanz.

He wasn't wrong. He watched as the stands filled with hundreds of DC fans. Along with him, Nate Paine, one of the team's starting 11, began to notice as the crowd grew to unimaginable numbers.

“It was freezing cold that day,” says Paine. “And to go from having 25 to 50 people at our regular games to over one thousand, it was unbelievable.”

Paine made the easy decision to join the team back in 2017 when he graduated from Premier Elite Athlete Collegiate School for Elite Athletes. Since then, DC's passion to making the student experience come first has helped make player development for him and his teammates a priority, while encouraging them to reach their highest potential.

“You always picture reaching that goal of becoming a national champion. To actually achieve it is something you can truly never prepare for.”

“The addition of Joshua Lee up top was huge this season,” says Sanz. “I would say the defence definitely improved and having that winning experience from the provincial championship really helped the guys have that winning mentality.”

In 2018, it was announced that Durham College would be hosting the prestigious CCAA National Championship. Along with the honour of hosting the tournament, teams are automatically given a position to represent their school. When Dave Ashfield, the team's coach, informed the team they would be placed in the tournament, they immediately got to work.

They spent the whole season practicing five days a week and

playing in countless exhibition games as they worked to eliminate as many mistakes as possible. When the time came, all their hard work came to fruition as they earned the program its first ever CCAA gold medal.

“Working so hard over the last couple years, you always picture reaching that goal of becoming a national champion. To actually achieve it is something you can truly never prepare for. We get to say we're the champions. We've made Durham College a national champion!”



Nate Paine prepares to strike the ball on net just outside the 18 yard box.

Building Friendships Across Cultures

By: Catalina Salas

Photo Credits: DGT Portraits

Have you ever wondered what it's like to be one application away from meeting your new best friend? Durham College's (DC) International Education Office has made this possible by creating the Co-Pilots Intercultural Skills Program. Perfect for adventurous people who love learning about different cultures.

The initiative is a multi-cultural friendship program that connects domestic and international students from different cultural backgrounds. It encourages students to explore and engage in different types of activities to develop intercultural skills. Some of these activities include things like taking a walk, going to the movies, attending cultural events and more.

Living in a country as multi-cultural as Canada, learning how to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds is important. "Understanding different cultures is essential when it comes to working with people



Having a better understanding of different cultures can be extremely beneficial not only when you are in school, but after graduation as well.

“After no matter how different we are, there's always that one thing we have in common.”

from different backgrounds,” says Prachi Jindal, International Activities Co-ordinator. “Having friends from different cultures can help you learn about their world, their beliefs, their practices and traditions.”

The process to get involved is simple. Students can fill out an online application indicating their cultural background and areas of interest. Once the pairing process is complete, students receive a package with the instructions and what comes next. The only requirements to participate in this program are to attend two

group meetings, meet your co-pilot at least four times per semester and journal about activities completed.

At the end of the semester, students receive a certificate of completion and a co-curricular record credit. They can take advantage of the experience by mentioning it on their cover letters and resumé.

Cross-cultural friendships can be rewarding for both parties. For domestic students, this can be a great opportunity to gain insight into different cultures without traveling.

For international students who have recently moved to Canada and are feeling homesick, having a friend you can count on from day one can be very valuable. Students also get to work on their communication and language skills by attending conversational circles. From trying new activities to trying exotic food, with the Co-Pilots Program, the opportunities and benefits are endless.

“Joining the program helped me be more aware of all of these other cultures, and how we need to be more open-minded and compassionate,” says Lory-Ann Fowler, emergency communications student. “After all, no matter how different we are, there's always that one thing we have in common.”

While culture shapes the way we identify and behave, cultural diversity can give us a different mindset and show us a different perspective on life. Co-Pilots Program is a great initiative that aims to foster cultural awareness among students, as well as building friendships for life. 🌍

Culinary Simplicity with a Twist

By: Ellie Doe-Demosse

From being a Durham College Public Relations hopeful to pursuing her culinary arts dream at George Brown College, La-toya Fagon has taken the cooking world by storm with her skills, her charm and of course, her food.

The Twist Catering chef has trained in Mexico and Europe, in addition to working in restaurants in Toronto after finishing college. Fagon's love for food started when she was young; a love that soon became her passion, her dream and eventually her career.

"I think self-esteem was a big one," says Fagon. "With food, everybody's always happy to see you. It's something that everybody needs, everybody wants. I'm a creative. I've always had a creative mind and I can't do the norms."

“There came a point where I [wanted to see] the growth of the business.”

Her infatuation with food eventually led her to opening up her own catering business. Prior to launching Twist Catering in 2002, Fagon had her hands full with other cooking endeavours.

"I was working in restaurants my whole career and then I got into the cooking school at Loblaws," says Fagon. "I was their cooking co-ordinator for a few years, then I was doing openings. There came a point where I [wanted to see] the growth of the business. I did want to grow, I really enjoyed it. I realized I had reached the highest level I could go in that area. I had started Twist when I was still there, but [did] little catering gigs and [hustled] at restaurants on the side. On September 9, 2009, I slipped that letter under the door and said this is my two weeks' notice. I had no idea where the money was coming from, I had no idea what I was going to do, but I knew that much that I wasn't doing that anymore."

“I fell asleep around 4 a.m., got up at 6:30 a.m. because I had to get here for 7 a.m.”

But Fagon doesn't just spend her time cooking exquisite gourmet dishes at her kitchen in Scarborough, Ont. She can also add networking, event planning and keeping up with her busy schedule to her list of stellar skills. Not only is she driven but she also has an eye for detail. "I fell asleep

around 4 a.m., got up at 6:30 a.m. because I had to get here for 7 a.m. and start getting all the food prepped for today," says Fagon. "I [waited] for my chefs to arrive. When my chefs arrived, my assistant came. Her and I went down to the Harbourfront Centre to do a walkthrough for Monday. We're doing a TD media launch for Black History Month. On my way back, we stopped to order some chef coats, then came back here."



Photo Credit: Ellie Doe-Demosse

La-toya Fagon planning and communicating with staff and employees for an upcoming media launch event, while at her kitchen in Scarborough, Ont.

I walked into a meeting that wasn't supposed to be happening until later on today. I have another meeting in an hour, and I'm going to try to get some quotes out to get prepped for Friday and Saturday."

Surely, operating on a busy timeline must have its perks for Fagon. In addition to networking and event planning, she appeared as the first food expert on the Marilyn Denis Show, worked as a chef at the famous Sundance Film Festival in Utah,

lived in the Hamptons for almost a month, and has even worked as a personal chef for 2019 NBA Champions, the Toronto Raptors. But the biggest accomplishment in her career so far remains her business, Twist Catering.

“My dreams were so big that I wasn’t focused on one thing at a time. I was like ‘I want to do all of this right now.’ ”



Photo Credit: City Moguls

La-toya Fagon smiles for the camera at her photoshoot with City Moguls for an upcoming entrepreneurial event.

"The pinnacle of my career is Twist," she says. "I did this. I had no partners; I had no lenders besides mortgage. I've refinanced but I did this. I 100 per cent own this. This is the pinnacle of my career — creating Twist, not shutting Twist down and expanding Twist."

In five years, Fagon hopes to expand Twist even further by becoming a one-stop shop for food, decor, rentals, event planning, staffing and so much more. In addition to a business expansion, she hopes to finish a book she started long ago detailing her spontaneous adventures and experiences abroad. For now, Fagon's advice for those who hope to be where she is someday is to do things a little differently than she did.

“If I had also taken time to step back and acknowledge everything I did, it would’ve been different. ”

"Take time," she says. "My dreams were so big that I wasn't focused on one thing at a time. I was like 'I want to do all of this right now', so I was

only giving certain percentages to each thing. Whereas if I'd given like 150 per cent to one particular thing, I would've been a bit further. If I had also taken time to step back and acknowledge everything I did, it would've been different. There was no gratitude; it was almost like expectation." 🍷

Did you know?

In addition to being a chef and running her own catering business, La-toya also does event planning? She had a hand in planning the wrap party to Adam Sandler's 2015 movie Pixels. Her and her team converted a furniture studio into a 1980s gaming arcade.

They brought in vintage gaming machines like Pacman, and even drove in two BMW Beamers for guests to look at when they arrived. With a special request made by the producer, La-toya managed to track down a rare bottle of scotch in Florida and had it shipped to Buffalo! From there, she had a driver sent down to pick the bottle up!

