



MAY 2016

SURVEY RESULTS NEW ALUMNI WEBSITE AVAILABLE **OPERATION GIVE BACK A SUCCESS**

STAY CONNECTED



ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The award-winning DC Alumni magazine is written, designed and published by the Communications and Marketing department to complement the Reflections publication prepared three times a year by students in Durham College's (DC) Public Relations program. Both are available by visiting our [Alumni publications page](#).

Do you have a story idea or something to share? Is there anything you would like to read about? We would love to hear from you!

Please [email us](#) with your comments, questions or suggestions.



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

If you've been following Durham College (DC) on social media or had an opportunity to spend time on our website, you've probably noticed the flurry of activity that's been happening on campus since our February issue.

This includes events such as our Spring Open House in March, which saw many of you return to campus as volunteers to share your personal DC experience with potential students and their families.

It's this kind of interaction between our past and future generations that is at the heart of what makes DC such a great place. We truly are a family, and even though our members come and go, we are always looking for ways to reconnect with our alumni and learn more about the positive impact you are making at work, at home and in your communities.

As we lead up to our 50th anniversary in 2017, the importance of bridging our past with our future has never been stronger. In particular, I am proud to share the exciting news about a new legacy project at DC.

On April 19, Reza Moridi, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, announced an investment of \$22 million in funding toward the construction of the new Centre for Collaborative Education (CFCE) at the Oshawa campus.

A 21st century approach to education that will serve as a hub for DC and the entire Durham Region, the CFCE will replace our Simcoe building, which has reached its end of life. Providing a up-to-date learning environment, it will bring together local, Indigenous and global communities and provide a new home for several of our innovative and ground-breaking programs.

While I know that many of you have fond memories of the Simcoe building, which stood at the heart of our Oshawa campus for almost five decades, it's time to plan for our future – for our students and our community.

As we finalize construction plans for the CFCE and work toward our goal of breaking ground this fall, we will also be launching a fundraising campaign in support of the new building. Please stay tuned for details in the coming months.

In closing, I'd like to share a final thought on last week's announcement – every day is a good day at DC, but some days can only be classified as awesome. The day our CFCE funding was announced was certainly one of those days!

As we move closer to our 50th anniversary, I know there will be many more days to celebrate so let's keep in touch!

Don



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The arrival of spring means big life changes are ahead for thousands of Durham College (DC) students who are coming to the end of their time at the college. While they've been focused on exams, job hunting or furthering their education, your Alumni Association has been playing an active role in helping soon-to-be graduates begin the next phase of their lives on a positive and confident note.

This includes supporting and attending events such as Countdown to Grad and the School Cup Challenge as well as financial contributions to the college and its students via initiatives such as Operation Give Back. I hope this month's stories will inspire you to become more involved with the Alumni Association as we work to further the connection between our graduates and potential and current students while providing an opportunity for you to further your own DC experience.

This month's edition also features some unique student initiatives, including an idea from a student in the [Sport Management](#) program that attracted the attention of local and national media earlier this year, as he went the extra mile to make a difference in the lives of more than 200 Syrian refugees who are in the process of settling in Canada.

I also want to thank everyone who has taken the time to fill out our alumni surveys over the past several months. Collectively you have provided us with excellent feedback on how we can improve communications with our members and help maintain the links that were forged during your student days. The results of these surveys are highlighted in this edition of DC Alumni, and based on your feedback we will be rolling out some exciting new initiatives in the coming months.

It's been another exciting year here at DC, and I believe the best is yet to come. Have a wonderful summer.

Chris Vale, president
DC Alumni Association



Christine McClelland, class of 2004

Prize Winner at the Oshawa Generals game, November 2015, presented by Chris Vale

DC TO BUILD CENTRE FOR COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION AT OSHAWA CAMPUS

Local and provincial dignitaries joined students and employees at Durham College's (DC's) Oshawa campus on April 19 as Reza Moridi, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, announced a \$22 million funding commitment from the provincial government towards the new Centre for Collaborative Education (CFCE).

The CFCE will replace the college's aging Simcoe building at the Oshawa campus, which opened in 1969 as a temporary structure. The new three-storey facility, a legacy project tied to DC's 50th anniversary in 2017, will bring together local, Indigenous and global communities, providing a new home for several of the college's innovative and ground-breaking programs.

"Although our Simcoe building has served us very well over the past 50 years, leaving behind a wonderful legacy of teaching, learning and memories for our students, faculty members and administrative staff, it has reached its end of life," said Don Lovisa, president, DC. "As we prepare to celebrate DC's 50th anniversary in 2017, we are excited to bridge our past with our future through the creation of a new facility where students, employees and the broader community can work together in ways that transcend traditional concepts of education. On behalf of everyone at

DC, I extend my sincere thanks to the provincial government for its wonderful support in bringing our vision for the Centre for Collaborative Education to life."

DC has continued to experience tremendous growth year after year. It has added more than 40 new programs in high-demand and emerging areas of study; expanded its daily academic hours; increased the number of students enrolled in both summer and winter-month programs; and added more than 3,000 post-secondary registration spaces since 2008.

"In addition to creating a strong need for physical infrastructure at the Oshawa campus, our significant growth has positioned Durham College as a college of choice for students in Durham Region and beyond," said Lovisa. "The new CFCE is a direct reflection of that growth combined with our ongoing commitment to building a high-quality and sustainable post-secondary education system that meets the needs of our students, the local community and today's economy."



Durham College President Don Lovisa joined DC students and local and provincial representatives at the \$22-million funding announcement at DC's Oshawa campus on April 19.

When completed, the CFCE will house the following:

- The Aboriginal Student Centre.
- The Entrepreneurship Centre including the Spark Centre.
- Global, Open and Collaborative Space to allow faculty, students and the broader community to use technology in creative ways to gain unprecedented access to students, educators, thought leaders, subject matter experts and other visionaries from more than 40 countries around the world.

- Health science facilities including state-of-the-art classrooms and labs.
- Foundation programs designed to prepare students to continue their post-secondary education at college or university.

Final plans and costs for the project are still being determined including ongoing work with the provincial government to obtain additional funding. In addition, the college will be launching a capital campaign to raise funds for the construction of the building in partnership with individuals, corporations, community partners and alumni over a two-year period.

OPERATION GIVE BACK – STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM ALUMNI GENEROSITY

Students at the Marketplace Cafeteria at DC's Oshawa campus and the cafeteria at the Whitby campus now have a shorter wait time to use the microwaves thanks to the generosity of both current students and the DC Alumni Association.

The story began in January 2015, when a group of students approached the college's [Office of Development and Alumni Affairs](#) to set up Operation Give Back, a program that works to help alumni find creative ways to develop new friendships and give back to the college. After identifying a number of options, the group decided that students needed to spend less time waiting in line to heat and eat their meals between classes. From there, a decision was made to raise money for new microwaves that would be added to both campuses.

To raise the money needed to buy the microwaves the team, supported by the Student Association, held a St. Patrick's Day bake sale and offered funnel cakes and other sweet treats to DC's hungry lunchtime crowd. The \$300 raised by the event was matched by the Alumni Association, which then made an additional financial contribution to enable the purchase of two new microwaves.

“THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HAD NO HESITATION IN AGREEING TO MATCH THE GENEROUS DONATION MADE BY OPERATION GIVE BACK,” SAID CHRIS VALE, PRESIDENT OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION. “THE THEME OF ‘STUDENTS HELPING STUDENTS’, WHICH IS AT THE CORE OF THE TEAM’S MISSION, REALLY RESONATED WITH US.”

The microwaves are now set up at both campuses, and signs posted on the doors highlight the success of Operation Give Back and the generosity of Durham College's alumni.

“The gift came from the heart as a sincere desire by Operation Give Back and the Alumni Association to help students lessen their stress load in a small, but meaningful way,” said Sally Hillis, annual development and alumni operations administrator, DC. “I’m sure it will lead to more success for the group in the months ahead.”



SURVEY RESULTS SHED LIGHT ON SUCCESS OF DC ALUMNI

The results are in and they look good! According to the results of the first-ever DC alumni survey, an overwhelming majority of graduates are employed in fields related to their areas of study and want to maintain and build their connection with the college.

In February, the [Office of Development and Alumni Affairs](#), together with the [Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship \(ORSIE\)](#), sent out an online survey to thousands of DC alumni to gauge their interest in a variety of topics and learn about their life after college. More than 800 responses were received indicating that:

- More than 80 per cent of respondents are employed, and the majority are working in fields that are fully or partially related to their areas of study at DC
- Forty-two per cent of graduates are employed in Durham Region, with 38 per cent employed elsewhere in the Greater Toronto Area
- Education, law, government, business, finance and administration are the top occupation categories for graduates
- DC alumni maintain their connection to the college largely by staying in touch with former classmates and faculty members



The survey also asked respondents to provide information on what DC can do to enhance the alumni experience for graduates, with the responses indicating a desire to create more two-way communication. This includes:

- Improved communications about benefits and services offered to alumni
- An increased number of alumni events, both in Durham Region and beyond, to provide graduates with more opportunities for networking and experience sharing
- More information about post-graduation employment services offered by the college, as well as opportunities for volunteering and teaching

“WE’RE VERY GRATEFUL TO THE ALUMNI WHO TOOK THE TIME TO RESPOND TO OUR FIRST-EVER SURVEY,” SAID SALLY HILLIS, DC’S ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR. “WE’LL BE TAKING THE INFORMATION WE RECEIVED AND USING IT TO **CONTINUALLY IMPROVE** THE ALUMNI EXPERIENCE.”

CHANGES AHEAD FOR DC ALUMNI WEBSITE

Visitors to DC's [alumni website](#) can now take advantage of some exciting and informative changes, thanks to feedback received from alumni.

The site, which has been identified as one of the college's key channels for communicating with graduates, has been re-designed following the results of a recent alumni survey indicating the need for improved communication in a number of areas.

Based on the feedback, the website has been given a simplified and more contemporary look, a more user-friendly navigation, and quick links to alumni connections on social media, including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Information on the site is organized into six categories including:

- Stay Connected – links to the college's alumni social media sites, as well as other sites of interest for alumni
- Benefits and Resources – information on affinity offers and other benefits, including employment counselling and referral services available to graduates
- Giving to DC – information on how to volunteer at the college and other ways to give back
- Notable Alumni – updates on DC alumni and their activities, both in Canada and around the world
- FAQs – answers to questions about alumni-related issues and how to stay in touch with classmates
- Contact Us – details on how to contact the [Office of Development and Alumni Affairs](#) and the Alumni Association

Be sure to visit the [alumni website](#) and take time to view these new content portals. We hope you'll find them useful and informative as you maintain your connection to the DC family.



PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENTS TAKE REFLECTIONS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Providing alumni with new ways to continue to enjoy the DC experience is the impetus behind a new initiative from students in the [Public Relations](#) program housed under the college's [School of Media, Art & Design](#). With support from faculty and staff in the [Office of Development and Alumni Affairs](#), students have set up a [YouTube channel](#) to highlight video content drawn from Reflections magazine – the student-run alumni publication.

Jacque Hoornweg, editor-in-chief of Reflections and a professor with the School of Media, Art & Design, explains that the new online channel will use video that was shot and edited by students to help bring stories to life in a way that goes beyond the printed page. It's an extension of a saying that's frequently used in the Public Relations program – 'creativity with purpose.'

"Our job is to innovate and stay relevant for our readers because we want them to feel as excited about Reflections as we do," said Hoornweg. "At the end of the day the objective is the same in print, web, video and audio: tell compelling stories for our community in an accessible way. In this case, our community is more than 73,000 alumni."

Students participating in the new video effort gain valuable hands-on skills, preparing them to take on a wide range of challenges in their future careers. Hoornweg added that the students also receive an important opportunity to see which tactics work and which don't in a magazine production process, while operating in a safe, academic environment.

"COLLEGE IS A TERRIFIC TIME FOR EXPERIMENTATION," HOORNWEG SAID. "THERE IS A CERTAIN FREEDOM IN A MEDIA INCUBATOR, LIKE THE ONE WE ARE CREATING HERE IN THE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND JOURNALISM PROGRAMS. IT IS A SAFE PLACE TO EXPLORE IDEAS, TO SUCCEED AND TO LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE."



Reflections subscribers should look for video links to stories in upcoming editions of the magazine, starting in June. With plans to establish separate Facebook and Twitter feeds, Hoornweg says alumni will soon have other ways to access updated video content outside the regular issues of the magazine.

And in the future? “The School of Media, Art & Design has an [Animation](#) program and a new [Advanced Filmmaking](#) graduate certificate program,” Hoornweg said. “So, who knows, a year or two from now you may be hearing about our new Reflections virtual reality experience. Stay tuned!”

ALUMNI PROFILE – HARRY AND JANET WORSLEY, UXBRIDGE NURSERIES

Harry Worsley, president of [Uxbridge Nurseries](#), has deep roots at DC even though he's not a graduate of one of the school's full-time programs.

"I've taken some courses there over the years, and I've played squash at the athletic centre, but it's my wife who is the DC graduate," he said with a laugh, noting that his wife Janet was not only a 1979 graduate of the college's [Office Administration](#) program, but also worked at DC for a number of years.

Over the past few years, the Worsley family has made a significant contribution to enhancing the learning experience at DC's Whitby campus. Through the college's gift-in-kind donation program at the Centre For Food (CFF), Uxbridge Nurseries has donated more than 40 trees, planted primarily along the front and west side of the CFF. The trees, which include maples, oaks, firs and spruces, not only make the campus look more attractive, they also provide excellent experiential learning opportunities for the [Horticulture Technician](#) and [Horticulture – Food and Farming](#) programs. Worsley says he strongly endorses the college's commitment to provide an outdoor extension to indoor classroom instruction.

“OUR WHOLE INDUSTRY IS BASED ON THE IDEA OF KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING WHICH TYPES OF TREES AND PLANTS CAN GROW AND THRIVE UNDER VARIOUS CONDITIONS,” WORSLEY SAID. “IT’S NOT THE KIND OF THING YOU CAN LEARN IN A CLASSROOM. YOU HAVE TO GET OUT AND GET YOUR HANDS IN THE SOIL AND PLANT TREES TO UNDERSTAND HOW THEY’LL FIT INTO A LARGER LANDSCAPE PROJECT.”

To learn more about Durham College's gift-in-kind donation program, contact the [Office of Development and Alumni Affairs](#).



SCHOOL CUP CHALLENGE – SHARING MEMORIES HELPS EVERYONE WIN

Sharing memories of your time at DC is a big part of the alumni experience, and we're proud that thousands of former students in Canada and around the world keep in touch with each other after their post-secondary days are over.

In addition, for the past three years, students on the verge of graduating can get their first taste of the alumni experience through the School Cup Challenge.

Sponsored by the Alumni Association, the challenge is a friendly competition between the college's seven academic schools and the Centre for Food. It is designed to give spring or fall graduates the opportunity to reflect on their time at DC, share their favourite memories of the college and enter for a chance to win valuable prizes. The school with the highest level of student participation is declared the winner and for 2016, more than 500 students filled out entry forms at various events at the Oshawa and Whitby campuses, the Pickering Learning Site and via the DC website.

For the second consecutive year, the Centre for Food won the challenge with the highest participation rate, with the School of Science & Engineering Technology (SET) coming in second.

In addition to winning bragging rights, the winning school also had its name engraved on a trophy and the first- and second-place schools earned bursaries to be awarded during the 2016-2017 academic year. Individual student winners included Jelena Petrovic, a student in the [Biomedical Engineering Technology](#) program who won the first prize of \$500 for sharing her favourite memory, and Kyle Mundy, a student in the [Construction and Hoisting Techniques](#) program with the School of Skilled Trades, Apprenticeship & Renewable Technology, who won a pair of tickets to see the Toronto Maple Leafs.

"The School Cup Challenge is a great way for soon-to-be-grads to share their fond memories of their time here at DC and, through the bursary program, give back to their fellow students still in school," said Sally Hillis, DC's annual development and alumni operations administrator. "We hope that the students who participated will become active members of our Alumni Association as they move into the next phase of their lives."



From left to right: Don Lovisa, president, Durham College; student winner Jelena Petrovic; Rob Grieve, professor and program co-ordinator, Hospitality and Events programs; Maureen Calhoun, associate dean, SET. Photo credit: Jenn Amaro.

ALUMNI LEND A HAND AT COUNTDOWN TO GRAD EVENTS

With job hunting and preparations for a life after college well underway, graduation can sometimes be a little stressful, but the [Office of Development and Alumni Affairs](#), in conjunction with the Alumni Association, helped ease the burden by hosting Countdown to Grad events throughout the month of March.

Open to 2016 spring and fall graduates, the events were held at the Oshawa and Whitby campuses and the Pickering Learning Site, enabling students to enjoy free pizza, gather information about their upcoming convocation and learn more about services offered at the college, such as employment counselling. Members of the Alumni Association were available to present the soon-to-be-grads with a graduation gift, and to share the benefits of association membership, including affinity programs with Manulife Financial, TD Insurance and MNBA MasterCard.

More than 850 students attended the Countdown to Grad events and DC's alumni officer, Lori Connor was pleased with the turnout and the comments she heard from participants.

“THE STUDENTS ARE CLEARLY EXCITED TO BE SETTING OUT ON THIS NEW CHAPTER IN THEIR LIVES, SO ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO MAKE THE TRANSITION AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE IS ALWAYS APPRECIATED,” SAID CONNOR.

“WE’RE GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT WE RECEIVE FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FOR EVENTS LIKE THIS, WHICH SHOW WHY SO MANY STUDENTS KEEP THEIR CONNECTION TO DC AFTER THEY GRADUATE.”



SPRING OPEN HOUSE GIVES ALUMNI CHANCE TO MEET PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Durham College alumni were on hand as more than 3,000 prospective students, their families and the community at large got a look inside the college on Saturday, April 2 at DC's annual Spring Open House.

Showcasing the Oshawa and Whitby campuses and the Pickering Learning Site, the event gave attendees an opportunity to learn more about the college's programs, services and facilities first-hand while meeting with current students, employees and alumni.

DC Crew members were on hand to lead tours through the college's state-of-the-art classrooms and laboratories and provide information on DC's extensive list of student services.

Information sessions were also held on topics such as the admissions process, financial aid, academic pathways and career planning. Volunteers from Durham College's alumni community were also there to discuss post-graduation services such as employment counselling and alumni benefits.

"Open House is a great way for potential students and their families to learn more about Durham College while having the opportunity to experience our learning environment for themselves," said Don Lovisa, president, DC. "The entire Durham College family did a great job sharing the DC experience with our visitors."



PROGRAMS FOR SEPTEMBER – IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO APPLY

Are you a DC graduate looking to expand your horizons or add a credential to your resume? Do you want to take your career in a new direction? Or maybe you're just interested in life-long learning, and want to try something completely outside your comfort zone!

If so, why not consider returning to DC to upgrade your existing skills or embark upon a new career path. More than 140 market-driven full-time programs are available, including two- and three-year programs, graduate certificates, and compressed and fast-track programs. Applications are still being accepted for a September 2016 or January 2017 start.

From [Accounting](#) to [Youth Justice and Interventions](#) and everything in between, there's sure to be a program to suit your future goals. Depending upon your course of study and your previous academic record, you may also qualify for some of the more than \$3 million available through student bursaries and scholarships.

Visit www.durhamcollege.ca/September to find out which courses are still accepting students and learn more about the many ways you can, once again, become part of the DC experience.



SPORTS SHORTS

The end of academic year offers a chance to wrap up another successful year for DC's athletic department and its varsity teams. Here's a look at some of the highlights:

- For the second consecutive year, women's basketball player Lindsay Panchan was named to the All-Canadian squad by the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association. The second-year [Sport Management](#) student also broke the college's single-game scoring record by tallying 41 points in a match against Algonquin College last November.
- Two of Durham College's varsity coaches, Tony Clarke (women's volleyball) and David Ashfield (men's soccer), were named coaches of the year in their respective sports by the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA).
- In men's baseball, [Mechanical Engineering Technician](#) student and Durham Lords' third baseman Jake Legros was named the OCAA's rookie of the year.
- The women's softball team won the OCAA championship at home with a 7-3 win over Humber College. In addition, DC hosted both the OCAA championships and the Canadian Collegiate Softball Association (CCSA) championships last October.
- [Special Events Management](#) student Jessica Broad set a new program record for the women's volleyball team as she posted her 538th career kill.

Congratulations to all our teams and players. We look forward to another successful year on the field and on the court in 2016-2017.



ALUMNI BENEFIT OF THE MONTH – MANULIFE FINANCIAL

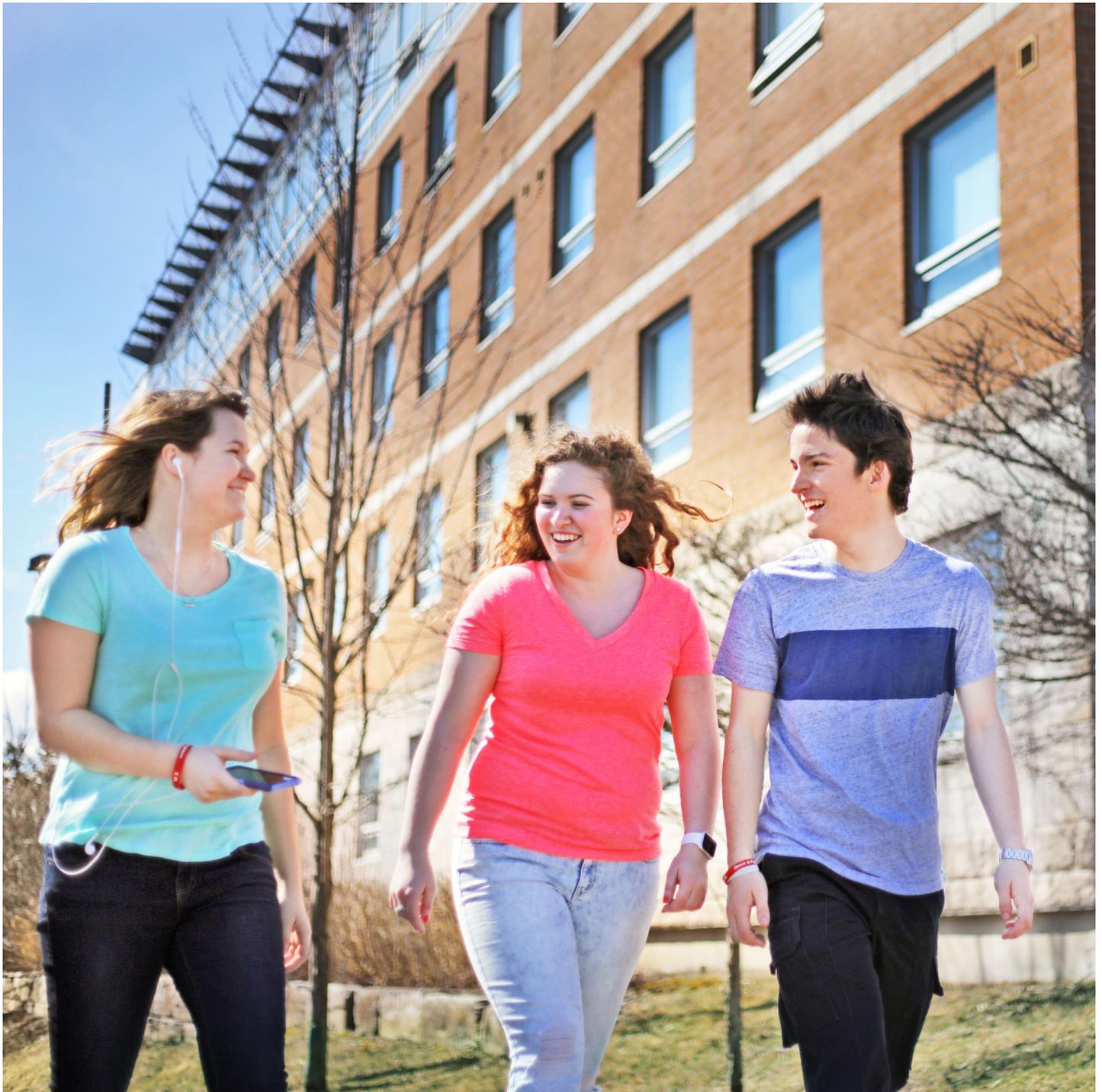
Alumni can take advantage of specially negotiated Manulife Financial rates for:

- Term life insurance
- Income, major accident and critical illness protection
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For more information, call 1.888.913.6333 or visit www.manulife.com/durhamcollege.

While online, alumni can:

- Review available plans and calculate the amount of coverage required
- Get a free, no-obligation quote
- Apply online or download an application



UPCOMING EVENTS: SUMMER 2016

CONVOCAATION FOR SPRING 2016 GRADUATES

Monday, June 13

6:30 p.m.

Schools of Interdisciplinary Studies and
Justice & Emergency Services

Tuesday, June 14

10 a.m.

Centre for Food and
School of Media, Art & Design

2:30 p.m.

Schools of Science & Engineering Technology,
Continuing Education and
Skilled Trades, Apprenticeship &
Renewable Technology

Wednesday, June 15

10 a.m.

School of Business, IT & Management

2:30 p.m.

School of Health & Community Services

All convocation ceremonies take place at the General Motors Centre, located at 99 Athol Street East in downtown Oshawa. Once again, the Alumni Association is pleased to sponsor a photo booth for graduates on this special day. Souvenir photos will be available to anyone using the booth, which is located at the back of Ice Pad 1.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Location and details will be posted on [the website](#).



NEW AND NOTABLE

CBC'S RICK MERCER VISITS DC TO TAKE PART IN INTERNATIONAL ROBOTICS SHOWDOWN

CBC Television's Rick Mercer visited the Oshawa campus on March 12 as the college and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology co-hosted the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics Canada Greater Toronto East Regional FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC).

Over three days of intense competition, 50 teams from across Ontario, Quebec and Alberta, as well as New York and Texas, demonstrated their engineering skills and knowledge playing [FIRST Stronghold™](#), a robot battle developed for the 2016 competition. The game featured a medieval-themed playing field and each match in the competition saw two competing alliances of teams remotely guide a robot on a quest to capture their opponents' castle. Points were awarded to each team for defending their castle and defeating the other alliance.

Competitors and judges both agreed that Rick Mercer's visit was one of the highlights of this year's event, especially when Rick himself tried to navigate the robots while competing against students in a match. His visit to the FRC competition was featured on the [Tuesday, March 22 episode](#) of the Rick Mercer Report on CBC.

An international, not-for-profit organization dedicated to inspiring young people's interest and participation in science and technology, FIRST hosts several levels of competition for students with FRC being the most senior.

"Not only is FRC an incredible forum for students to learn, compete and improve alongside their peers, it's a celebration of science, technology, engineering and math," said Dr. Elaine Popp, vice-president, Academic at DC. "This is why we love being part of these competitions. It's our privilege to host these science and tech leaders of tomorrow, as well as the educators and families who support them."

After the final match, teams from four high schools, two from Toronto and one each from Stoney Creek, Ontario and League City, Texas, were declared regional champions. Each winning school was awarded a spot at the FRC World Championship, taking place in St. Louis, Missouri from April 27 to April 30. Three other teams that won in specific award categories will also compete at the World Championship.



PLAY VIDEO

NEW AND NOTABLE

DC STUDENT ORGANIZES MAJOR EVENT FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

Like millions of Canadians, DC student Damien Haveliwalla was moved by stories of Syrian refugees who arrived in Canada in search a new life, and decided to do something to help the cause in his own unique way.

Haveliwalla, a third-year student in the [Sport Management](#) program, was doing his field placement in the sales and sponsorship department of the Steelheads – an Ontario Hockey League team based in Mississauga, when an idea hit him. What about inviting some Syrian refugee families, newly arrived in Toronto, to get their first taste of Canada’s national winter sport; hockey?

He took the idea to his team’s management and, after getting their approval, he approached Lifeline Syria, a charitable organization that recruits and trains sponsor groups to help Syrian refugees who are settling in the Greater Toronto Area. The Steelheads supplied tickets to the organization and, as a result, more than 200 Syrian refugees were able to attend their first hockey game as the Steelheads claimed a 5-3 victory over the Peterborough Petes on March 18.

Haveliwalla says he was busy with his regular duties during the game, so he didn’t have much chance to interact with the refugee families who were attending the match, but one story he later heard did stick in his mind. “One of volunteers with Lifeline Syria told me she talked to one of the refugees who told her she was so happy and excited to be at the game and, after everything she’d been through, it felt like the best day of her life,” Haveliwalla said. “Something like that really sticks with you.”

“Damien has exhibited leadership skills and professionalism in his role with the Mississauga Steelheads,” said Janice Robinson, professor, Durham College’s School of Business, IT & Management, “This is a great example for all of our students on how to excel in their field placements and careers.”

As for Haveliwalla himself, he hopes the lessons he’s learned at the college will lead to a successful career in sports management.

“My parents always taught me, and this was reinforced at school, that I should always do the right thing, no matter how much work is involved.” Haveliwalla said. “This really felt like the right thing to do, and I’m glad I was able to help.”





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