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Durham College Alumni Magazine

# Reflections

## DIANA WESSELS WOOD

CONTRIBUTING TO  
STUDENT SUCCESS FOR  
OVER THREE DECADES



**DURHAM  
COLLEGE**  
SUCCESS MATTERS



# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

## *Reflecting as an eventful term concludes*



The 2017-18 academic year brings many exciting changes to the Durham College (DC) community. This year also concludes my time as president of the DC Alumni Association (DCAA).

It has been an absolute pleasure playing a role in strengthening the connections between DC alumni while also helping the association provide them with valuable services, resources and opportunities. Over the past two years, we have seen incredible growth and development across and beyond campus.

On September 15, alumni had the opportunity to reflect on those accomplishments during our Annual General Meeting. Members came together to provide updates on the work that has already been done while also reviewing the direction the association is headed in. For those who missed it, the DCAA Annual Report is available for download.

Elaine Garnett will be taking over as association president. I sincerely hope that one of the first acts in her new role will be announcing DC alumni as Premier's Award winner(s). This year two graduates have been nominated:

- Joyce Hunter, a 2003 graduate of the Journalism - Print program and Alumni of Distinction winner, was nominated in the Community Services category.
- Brent Lessard, a 2014 graduate of the Mechanical and Engineering Technology program and Alumni of Distinction winner, was nominated in the Recent Graduate category.

DC is extremely proud of their accomplishments as they represent the college on the provincial stage. The winners will be announced in November — stay tuned!

Thank you again to everyone for an incredible term. I could not have served in my role as president without the support of the board members, our talented staff in the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, and DC President Don Lovisa. I now look forward to shifting back into my role as an association member where I will continue to maintain my connection with DC and enjoy all the benefits that come with being part of the college and alumni family.

Sincerely,



**Chris Vale, Class of 2003**  
**President, DC Alumni Association**

### REFLECTIONS

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# For the Love of Music

## The world is a stage for international student

STORY AND PHOTO BY MEINA LUTFI

**W**hen there are bumps along the way to reaching your dream, one must find another route to meet the destination.

Originally from Malaysia, Jordan Tan has taken a circuitous path to Durham College after travelling for six years between Europe, Canada and America performing on concert and opera stages while completing his studies in classical singing.

He always had a passion for music. As a child, Tan enjoyed listening to his sister play the piano. He joined his sister in taking lessons and was soon noticed by his parents, who acted later as his agent, as his talent in music grew. However, playing piano is not his only musical talent; Tan traveled across Malaysia to participate in singing competitions since the age of eight. Performing on stages was something Tan knew he wanted to continue doing in his future.

Tan first found his way to Canada six years ago when he was cast in his first opera production in Newfoundland. This gave him a taste of what he envisioned for his future. However, Tan went to school and graduated with a degree in opera from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. He had a chance to live out his dream, and it was everything he hoped it to be. He enjoyed singing, dancing and interacting with the cast and crew. In the moment, it was where he was meant to be, until the final curtain call. After the rush, Tan's career hit a wall. He had no luck finding a job in his field to secure him a performing artist work visa.

"I felt like my teenage life was stolen from me," said Tan. "I had to work 80 hours each week between four different part-time jobs and had no time for myself. It's hard to secure a job in the industry. Also, I love to come home to my own bed and kitchen. I can't commit to a lifestyle that's on the road. That's why the choice to go back to school wasn't a hard one to make."

He wanted to continue studying music, however, rather than

being in the spotlight he decided to work behind the scenes. He did his research and found a profession he knew would suit him and is currently studying Music Business Management at Durham College. Also, Tan had visited Canada a few times before for performance purposes and has enjoyed the people, food and vibe.

For an international student the application process is harder. Applying for a visa and finding a place to live took a toll on him. This is when the International Education Office (IEO) at the college stepped in and helped Tan settle into student life. The IEO provides various student support services to Tan such as arrival services, academic support, temporary housing and more.



*Even though Tan has not played the piano in years, his fingers remember the keys as if he has never stopped playing.*



*Tan will always be grateful that his parents encouraged him to play the piano as the instrument is the foundation of his love for music.*

"Coming to Canada for the first time was a little scary because I was alone," says Tan. "The International Education Office was there for me from the start. I was greeted by another international student; it was something I didn't expect. It was the support I needed to make me feel like I wasn't alone anymore."

After Tan graduates, he plans on making Canada his permanent home. He feels there are more opportunities for him to grow as an individual and move up in the industry. His love for music will always be within him and when he graduates he plans on helping other talents succeed in the industry.

"I'm looking forward to graduating from this program but until then I believe in good karma," says Tan. He finds making connections with new international students is becoming the most important part of his experience at DC.

"I was an airport greeter during the past winter break and am currently working as an office assistant at the Vice President Academic office. It was important for me to experience the welcome I got from the International Education Office so it's only natural for me to share the experience with future students." 🍵



Paramedic students listen to a classmate's presentation on burnout. The students listen actively, as they will likely encounter this issue in the workplace.

# Paramedic student performs rescue

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MICAELA MAY

Some people would run from the scene of an accident, but for Matt West, it's inspiration to rush in and react. The paramedic student is being groomed for a career of saving lives.

"The hiring rate after graduation drew me to Durham College," says West. "Also, the program at Durham enables grads to work anywhere in Canada as opposed to other programs that only train students to work in Ontario."

West hopes to pursue higher education, and obtain training as a paramedic who can perform mountain rescues. The student would like to explore other parts of Canada, so he wants to try living in British Columbia.

Like many young professionals, West appreciates the benefit of having a strong mentor. West's mentor, a man from his church, helped him to understand the basics of the career, and hearing stories first-hand helped West decide it was the right career for him.

With experience as a lifeguard and

swimming instructor for the City of Pickering, West felt he had an advantage entering the program. He recalls jumping into the pool twice to pull out children who were in danger. Although rescuing them can be a challenge, West loves to share his passion for

swimming with the younger generation.

"I love seeing kids get it," West reflects. "Sometimes kids come to swimming lessons scared of the water, and they end up loving it so much they don't want to leave. The only thing I don't like is when one kid starts crying and it triggers all the others."

With a love for children, West is excited about seeing young minds learn and grow around the pool. For this future paramedic, his most difficult challenge is clear. The hardest rescues for West will be when he has to help children in vulnerable situations.

West was required to call 911 himself on more than one occasion. The young man had to assist when his father fell victim to a seizure. West also had to place a call when he witnessed a seizure at the Canadian National Exhibition.

"The job will be different than how it appears when watching paramedics," the young man admits. "I thought more of the job would be about obeying a guidebook, when really I'll end up having to judge each situation individually. For me, the job will be about helping those who really need it. Even if it's only one in 100, I'll be able to give people a second chance." 🙏



Matt West takes time to review his notes between classes. The future paramedic is studying for an upcoming test.

## Paramedic classes

Here's a sneak peek into the paramedic program at Durham College:

- Paramedic Fitness and Wellness: This class trains students how to take care of their own body for strength and good health.
- Paramedic Medical Legal Issues: This class teaches the legal requirements of the practice.
- Paramedic Lab Theory: This class gives students a chance to apply the classroom lessons. Students engage in different scenarios to test their knowledge and ability to react in a crisis.



# OUTSTANDING and VALUABLE SUCCESS

STORY BY MARLEE CAMACHO

PHOTO COURTESY OF DIANA WESSELS WOOD AND DURHAM COLLEGE

It takes dedication to do what you love for 37 years. Diana Wessels Wood, one of Durham College's longest-standing employees, has been creating student success for almost four decades.

Wessels Wood's journey started in 1977 when the college was about 10 years old. Her father began the family's Durham College legacy as a construction worker building the first gym on campus. The following year, Wessels Wood started her studies at the college in the General Business program with the intent to specialize in Accounting. During her first year, she discovered a passion for technology and information and switched her program to Business - Data Processing.

Wessels Wood graduated in 1980, with her dream to work at IBM. She landed an interview with the company and was ecstatic about the opportunity. Even then, her passion for her work came through, as she was thrilled to receive a coveted job offer. Interestingly, that same day she received a second offer. She was presented the opportunity to work at Durham College as a junior program developer.

Wessels Wood still recalls that moment. "I will never forget what the director of IT said to me. 'At IBM, you will only be a number. At Durham College, you'll always be a person first'"

Those words resonated with her and she decided to continue her journey with DC. Little did she know this job would be the foundation for a fulfilling career.



In 2014, Wessels Wood was awarded the most prestigious yearly recognitions, the Award of Excellence. This picture is hanging in the Wall of Fame.

Wessels Wood enjoyed her early years developing in-house systems and helping students in the classrooms and labs. In 1991, she assisted in the implementation of the school's first ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system; Banner. She recalls that 35 years ago, technology was about "mainframes and terminals, tape and disk drives, key punch machines and word processors. Today we are driven by customer requests and the need for web services, system integrations, responsive design for mobile devices, analytics,

## MEMORABLE MOMENTS

- 1978** First time Wood started using punch cards for Assembly Code class
- 1980** Graduation Day at the Civic Auditorium  
Began here career as a junior developer with DC
- 1989** Wood's children started attending DC's Day Care
- 1990** 10 years of service
- 1992** Banner was created (DC Connect)
- 2000** Campus Pipeline was created (MyCampus)
- 2005** 25 years of service
- 2014** Award of Excellence for Administrative Staff
- 2015** 35 years of service



Wessels Wood at the Civic Auditorium for graduation from the Data Processing program with her mother in 1980.



*Wessels Wood received her 35-year anniversary award in 2015, with her is Don Lovisa, President of DC (left) and Pierre Tremblay, Chair of the Board of Governors (right).*

workflows and to be constantly prepared for continued growth through system upgrades. The change of technology is so rapid, it's almost frightening. It's all about instant information at your fingertips".

She goes on to say "The demographics of our students is also constantly changing. When the college system was created in the late sixties, most post-secondary students came directly from high-school and attended school in the day. Today, many adult learners and new-comers to Canada are going back to school. The number of students attending post-secondary has increased significantly. Class sizes are larger and students are being challenged to be more independent in how they learn. The internet has made it possible to obtain information with a click of the mouse and students expect this. This has changed how we have to do business."

In 2001, Wessels Wood became the director of Enterprise

Systems. It is one of three main departments in IT Services. She manages a team of 22 full-time and four part-time employees that are responsible for the administrative and learning management systems used by DC and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT). This was a big change from when she started in 1980 when there were only five employees for all of IT. Today there are approximately 75 in total. Throughout the years Wessels Wood has managed implementations such as online registration and payment systems, DC Connect, My Campus, the Human Resources system, the Financial Aid system, electronic document repositories and enterprise reporting. In 2002, IT Services also began providing services to UOIT.

In addition to her connection with the College through her father, school and career, Wessels Wood is also married to John Wood, manager of Audio, Visual Services here at Durham College. The couple has two girls. While growing up, their daughters

attended daycare and enjoyed going to summer camps and Christmas parties on campus. While attending university, their eldest daughter held a summer job at DC as a grounds keeper. Their second child decided to go into the Photography and Videography programs and became alumni with a dual diploma in 2014.

Following a long history with Durham College, Wessels Wood hopes to travel after she retires. While this is on the horizon, she isn't quite ready to leave her wonderful team.

"We work hard and very well together," Wessels Wood says. "Soon it will be time for someone else to take the reins," Wessels Wood's time at Durham College has been exciting and rewarding. After 37 years she agrees that "at DC you'll always be a person first." 🏆



# Writing specialist helps students prepare for **success**

STORY AND PHOTOS BY **TIANNA FRANCOIS**

To obtain the position of a writing specialist with the Student Academic Learning Services (SALS) one needs to be patient, resourceful and flexible. Leslie Linstrum holds these very important attributes. Linstrum has been working with SALS for seven years and has been a faculty member of Durham College for 15 years.

SALS offers a wide range of services such as workshops, peer tutoring, subject-specific specialists and over 1,000 online resources. Linstrum is a full-time writing specialist who assists students with their writing for up to an hour a week. She also works closely with Durham College faculty, developing resources such as writing modules and other writing tools to help students. Linstrum obtained her Bachelors in Psychology, Diploma in Counseling, Masters in Education and her Teaching English as a Second Language Certificate and has been teaching for 27 years. She has always known she would work at Durham College and has felt welcomed ever since.

"Walking onto the campus I felt like it was a mini city. When meeting all the staff I loved seeing how very smart and committed to their work they were. My first staff meeting with the SALS

department was very welcoming," says Linstrum.

When Linstrum is not working, she volunteers with Girl Guides. Linstrum enjoys traveling when she can and goes camping with her children, husband and family dog. Linstrum is always encouraging students to use the services they pay for in their tuition to the best of their advantage. What better way to be successful? There is help available for every student, enrolled in all programs. More than 2,200 student visited SALS in 2016 alone. The services offered have no extra cost and no extra stigma. With access to their service online and in person there is no reason not to go.

"Come and check us out at SALS. It is a welcoming and non-threatening environment. You do not have to be referred by anybody. Success matters starts here. Be proactive," says Linstrum.

Don't wait until it's too late to use the help with academic assignments. There is a location at the Oshawa campus and Whitby campus. The department is here to help students reach their academic goals. Book your appointment today and get the assistance you need. 📅



Leslie Linstrum is a writing specialist at SALS who has been dedicated to helping students with their writing needs since 2002.



Student Academic Learning Services (SALS) is here to help Durham College students reach their academic goals. SALS has locations at both the Oshawa and the Whitby campus.



# BREW HA HA



Kyle Kornic poses in Brew Wizards Board Game cafe, located in downtown Oshawa. He's one of four co-founders and owners.

STORY AND PHOTO BY ERIN O'SULLIVAN

**T**urning a passion into a business is a dream for many, but as Kyle Kornic will tell you, that dream comes with a lot of hard work.

Brew Wizards Board Game Cafe is a popular establishment in the downtown Oshawa core. As the name might suggest, the café is a mix between a community gaming hub, coffee shop, eatery and of course, a place to grab a cold one.

Patrons have the option of picking from a range of over 300 board games to play from an ever-growing collection, and some of the games coming from Kornic's supply which started around 50 in the beginning. People can enjoy a locally supplied craft beer or brewed coffee while socializing in the large open space surrounded by other gaming enthusiasts.

"Everything we buy, we buy locally," says Kornic. "We're very passionate about doing our research on the companies we buy from, because we want to make sure not only are they a good company, but they put their money where their mouth is."

In 2013, Kornic graduated from the Durham College Public Relations program, something he feels has benefited him immensely in his transition to new business owner. "The Public Relations program is worth its weight in gold," says Kornic. "We've

saved thousands because I have that background, we haven't had to pay for a single piece of advertising,"

Kornic will often visit the Artist Den offered at Durham College for all his printing and business needs. The sharing with DC is mutual, the café opens its doors to members of the DC/UOIT Board Games Club and many Durham students looking to try something new downtown.

There is something for everyone at Brew Wizards, a casual game of Girl Talk Jenga to the more serious competitors booking a day for tournaments and competitive play. For Kyle, the best part has been the interaction with new customers and ensuring each person leaves with a good experience.

His extensive background working in the night-life scene has switched gears these days, catering to an earlier crowd that still likes to have fun without all the loud intense music and shots. Bringing together his passion and creativity has been a rewarding learning experience for the young entrepreneur.

The results are incredible and ever growing. From finding new and innovative ways to make their space more efficient while also catering to the customer needs, Brew Wizards is bound for success. 🍻

# Staying true to her

BY CAITLIN MENEELY  
PHOTOS BY RACHEL ENRIGHT

# RÜTS

Just like most little girls Rachel Enright use to sneak into her moms make-up drawer and paint her face full of ridiculous patterns. As she grew older her love for make-up grew stronger; she taught herself all the professional tips to become a self-proclaimed beauty guru.

What started off as a hobby turned into an idea, which evolved into a business when Enright came to Durham College (DC).

Enright was like any other first-year student. When she began at DC, she was nervous to begin the new chapter of her life. But what the Computer Programming student and young mother didn't realize was DC would open a door to more than just her education. During her orientation someone approached her from FastStart, a DC program that provides young entrepreneurs a platform to establish their business.

FastStart is an entrepreneurial training partnership targeted at college and university students. The program was introduced to Durham College in 2014. The program was designed to increase entrepreneurship skills and awareness. FastStart offers classes and workshop that are open to any student with an entrepreneurial spirit. These classes are aimed to help the students enhance their ideas and create business plans to deliver to market. The program is also a great tool for students to build strong business relationships.

Being a make-up enthusiast, Enright has always wanted to develop her own ethically-produced cosmetic line. RÜTS (Pronounced roots) was launched Feb. 26 on Indiegogo. As of now, the cosmetic line consists of six lipsticks and highlighters. As soon as the lipsticks launched, they went flying off the shelves selling over 200 within the week.



Rachel Enright and friends show off the lipstick colours for the cosmetic line.




RÜTS model shows off lip colour Cotton Candy Pink, which can be found online at <https://rutscosmetics.com/collections>.

"I have always wanted to open a cosmetics business but I did not know where to start," says Enright. "When I went into FastStart I didn't think much of it at the time but everything started falling into place. I have always found the process of bringing something that came from imagination to life fascinating. And that's how RÜTS cosmetics was born."

Since the launch of RÜTS, Enright has been busy preparing pitches to business clients. She has also begun to expand her line with highlighters.

"Without FastStart I do not think I would have gotten as far as I have so quickly," says Enright. "The centre has provided me with all the tools to help RÜTS have a successful launch. Everyone in the centre has been so helpful providing me with honest feedback. They don't sugarcoat anything. I have learned so much from the negative feedback to help build and grow by business."

FastStart is available to all Durham College students to help them create and develop solid business plans. To learn more visit <http://www.faststartfs.ca/> 



# Where the jobs are

Durham College knows where the jobs are in today's competitive market and successfully connects its graduates to them. With more than 140 full-time programs that are aligned with the needs of employers, our students gain the expertise and skills they need to hit the ground running.

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accordance with various Canadian civil engineering codes, quality control standards and regulations. A field placement or co-op provide options to gain valuable skills in the workforce.

## Cosmetic Techniques and Management

Ontario College Diploma  
[www.durhamcollege.ca/CTMG](http://www.durhamcollege.ca/CTMG)

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you for a career in this high-demand area by teaching you the skills to support real-world business decision making and planning through data insights, data management and data science.

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### ENGINEER YOUR CAREER

Civil engineering technologists plan, design, construct, maintain and recycle the structures in our communities such as roads, bridges, highways, airports, pipelines and tunnels. These systems keep our transportation systems operating, water flowing and gas and electricity supplied to consumers. Students will be exposed to modern civil technologies and develop skills in computer assisted design and drafting (CAD), geographic information system (GIS), building information modelling (BIM) and safe working principles in

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### YOU'VE GOT THE POWER

Accredited by the Technical Standards & Safety Authority (TSSA), this program is designed to introduce you to theoretical and practical aspects of power generation and plant operation. Theory taught in class will be applied through work in DC's new state-of-the-art registered power plant, where students learn to operate and maintain equipment safely and efficiently while gaining valuable hands-on experience.

## HONOURS BACHELOR OF HEALTH CARE TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

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Technology is the key to optimizing health care delivery in Canada and around the world. As technology advances, there is a need for professionals who speak the language of both the innovators behind the technology and the practitioners who depend on it. Upon graduating, you will be the professional who bridges the two sides with strategic leadership in assessing current and innovative medical technologies and matching them to clinical objectives.



# Patting down her diverse career

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PAIGE DEWAR

**T**wo years of deadlines, assignments and studying paid off when over 20 job opportunities became achievable. This is the reality for 2015 Durham College (DC) graduate Kelsey Willett, who completed the Protection Security Investigation (PSI) program.

For PSI graduates, some of the jobs available include security guard, correctional officer, youth worker, bylaw enforcement officer, customs officer, and private investigator. Willett, who was aware of the spread of jobs within the law enforcement industry, chose PSI for that very reason. Since graduation, Willett has experimented with working in security, contracted bylaw and loss prevention.

Every person has those jobs that stand out for them. For Willett, it is her security job with Subwest “bouncing” at nightclubs and bars. Being a bouncer entails guarding the front door of the bar, patting down patrons and searching for drugs, paraphernalia and weapons. However, for Willett, every night is a different experience.

**“This one time, a very intoxicated man was trying to get in, and we told him that he couldn’t enter unless taking a breathalyzer test... So, I took off my radio and told him he had to blow into it, and he blew into the antenna of the radio thinking it was the test.”**

Bouncing at a nightclub is just one example of how a college program can open up many job opportunities. DC provides a very in-depth PSI program, touching on all things important when learning about law enforcement. Willett claims that getting her education at DC has helped her to achieve multiple positions within the law enforcement. Through her experience in the program, her favourite courses consisted of Advanced Security and Customs class. These included learning about the physical side of security and airport security through customs.

Choosing a career that opens up several options for jobs results in a never-ending learning experience, as well as countless opportunities for fun. Making it through a few years of learning can result in a life-time of enjoyment through one’s career. 📺



*Acting tough is a crucial part of the work Willett does. Because she is a female in security, Willett thinks patrons will sometimes try and take advantage of her.*

**“DC is a very recognized school, especially when applying for jobs, so many people know about it, and employers always have good responses about people who have come out of DC.”**



*A uniform consisting of black boots, black pants and a sweater stating “security” is required for Willett’s bouncing job.*



# The Changing Path

STORY BY STEVIE LOVE

PHOTOS BY STEVIE LOVE & NOVA'S ARK

As we grow up, we constantly change our minds what career path we wish to take. For Michelle Abbatangelo, a child and youth worker transfer student from Durham College, volunteering at Nova's Ark in Brooklin, Ont. changed her life and her career path in ways she could never have thought possible.

Abbatangelo soon realized that her hopes to become a vet were fading. Her focus started changing as she spent more time with the individuals at Nova's Ark, and saw how big the need was for people to support them. Abbatangelo understood the feeling of needing help just as much as the children at Nova's Ark did. When she was in high school, Abbatangelo developed anxiety and depression and was assigned a child youth worker. The child youth worker ensured Abbatangelo didn't fall behind in classes, keeping her on track with schoolwork and support during bad days. This constant support made up Abbatangelo's mind on her future.

"I went into child and youth work because I have always cared about those in need the most," she says. "I had a child and youth worker myself, and she was so helpful in getting me through my daily struggles. I just wished to make a difference for others like she did for me."



*Michelle Abbatangelo enjoys her time at Nova's Ark every day. Although her job can be stressful at times, she always seems to bring things back to a positive state of mind. (LOVE)*

Now eight years later, Abbatangelo is working at Nova's Ark as a full-time staff member. To her, Nova's Ark has become a second family that accepts anyone.

It's about being a part of a team and never being left alone in a situation. There is always someone willing to help and support her. Abbatangelo has had so many positive experiences while working at Nova's Ark, but not every day can be as positive. Sometimes it can be a high-stress environment.

"I worked with a guest three years ago," she says. "I had a tough high-anxiety moment with the guest when they bit me. At the end of the day, I had to talk to her mother about the incident, and her mother cried in my arms telling me nobody ever wants her daughter. Fast forward to this day; I am still working with the same individual and family."

**"I had to talk to her mother about the incident, and her mother cried in my arms telling me nobody ever wants her daughter. Fast forward to this day; I am still working with the same individual and family."**

Abbatangelo is an example of how a career can change depending on your life experiences and interests. Finding out which choices will achieve happiness is crucial but can also change throughout life. We don't always have to stick to one path because life is forever changing. 🍀



Abbatangelo (left), Google the camel (Middle), and Mary-Ann Nova (Right) are about to begin Nova's Ark fundraiser "Friendship Walk." The fundasire happens every June, it consists of a three kilometre walk through the streets of Brooklin, Ont. (NOVA'S ARK)

# A place to call home

STORY AND PHOTO BY EMMA WELLS

For Genevieve Vezina, Durham College (DC) is more than an educational institution. It is a nourishing community where professors become mentors, employees become friends, and peers become family – husband and wife, even.

In 2008, Vezina left her home in Newmarket, Ont. to embark on her first diploma, Fitness and Health Promotion. Little did she know, this was the beginning of a new life in Durham Region, and with the college: one that is still evolving today. To date, Vezina has graduated from two diploma programs at DC - Fitness and Health Promotion in 2010, and Office Administrative Executive in 2014. The diversity of the DC's programs is one of the many components of the college that makes Vezina's education unique.

Presently, she works full-time as the head cashier in the Durham College Bookstore while simultaneously completing the three-year Accounting program. As head cashier, Vezina's daily tasks include interacting with customers and bookkeeping.

"In my role at the bookstore I've been able to network with different departments on campus. I am always learning here, both in the classroom and at work," says Vezina. "Durham College is a great environment. Everyone wants to learn and the professors genuinely encourage you to do your best. The most important goal is for everyone to succeed."

“Durham College is a great environment. Everyone wants to learn and the professors genuinely encourage you to do your best. The most important goal is for everyone to succeed.”

Since being hired onto the bookstore staff in 2014, her passion for working with numbers has expanded. Durham College has been incredibly accommodating in her decision to pursue further education in the accounting field.



*Genevieve Vezina feels right at home in the Durham College Bookstore where she works full-time. She is grateful for the lessons she has learned and for the discovery of her love for accounting. Vezina hopes to graduate from DC's three-year Accounting program by 2018.*

More meaningful than the professional connections Vezina has developed at Durham College are the personal relationships she has gained over the years. Most notable is her recent fiancé Steve Brunet, who has also experienced his fair share of Durham College fun as a student and employee. Vezina and Brunet met in 2009 while living in South Village Residence and have continued to create a life in Durham Region together ever since.

Vezina continues to thrive in her position at the bookstore. Brunet has moved on from his employment with the college and is now the ice, sales, and programming manager at Tribute Communities, which he accredits to his networking through the college. The couple are currently planning a wedding for summer 2018.

"Even when I lived outside of residence, I still felt very connected to the Durham community. Once you are a part of the Durham College community, you are forever. Many businesses will give you an interview because you're from Durham College. I will always be a part of the Durham College family." ❧





Glen Harkness and fellow Boys and Girls Club of Hamilton supporters lead today's children and youth by example through staying active and healthy. Harkness participates in countless marathons and races to assist in raising funds for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton.

# Inspiring today's children and youth

STORY BY ALYSSA CONDELLO

PHOTO COURTESY OF GLENN HARKNESS

Glenn Harkness will go to any length to support programs for children. Literally any length, including the North Pole. In 2011 the executive director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton travelled to minus 30-degree conditions to run a marathon in hopes of raising \$100,000 and inspiring Hamilton kids to do things they didn't think they could.

The Durham College alumni strives everyday to instill the values of the Boys and Girls Club mission, vision and values in each child and youth that walks through the doors.

"I strongly believe in the mission, vision and values of this club," says Harkness. "They are not just something posted on the wall, but each day we work to engage, inspire and empower children and youth to achieve their full potential. It's about building positive relationships, providing a safe and supportive place and teaching them skills for life."

Thinking back to his collegiate years, Harkness believes he can attribute part of his career success to his education and experiences obtained at Durham College.

Starting in the Sports Administration program in 1980, he still remembers his first day of class in the sport administration wing, and the nerves he experienced moving from Mount Pleasant, a

small community outside of the City of Brantford.

"I remember when I first moved to Oshawa, went to campus and realized how large it was. I remember thinking to myself what did I sign up for?" says Harkness. "I eventually learned my way around and was able to participate in some cool stuff like running for the College's varsity cross country team, and securing a placement with the Athletics Department. In the end, living away from home and my program at Durham provided me with valuable tools for my position now with the Boys and Girls Club."

Currently, there are 29 service locations and 4,000 children and youth served at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton.

"Working at the Boys and Girls Club is more than just a job," says Harkness. Every day I walk in with a smile on my face and a positive attitude. If I can make a difference in even one child's life today, I'd consider the day a success."

As for his North Pole marathon, Harkness finished 11th out of 25 participants and was able to meet his goal of \$100,000. Most importantly, he was able to send a powerful message to children and youth across the country to be active, eat healthy and pursue their dreams. 🏃‍♂️

# The Teachers C.A.F.E.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH OGUNDARE

**D**urham College is committed to students and their success. The school provides several outlets such as the Student Academic Learning Services (SALS) which, help students to ensure they reach academic goals. However, often times we forget that professors also face challenges and can use help as they strive to provide the best learning experience.

At Durham College we have a 'C.A.F.E.' to cater to the needs of faculty. The Centre for Academic and Faculty Enrichment (C.A.F.E.) provides teaching and learning expertise, leadership, and support to faculty at Durham. The C.A.F.E.'s goal is to foster relationships with faculty to empower them to create a richer learning environment, whether it is in the classroom or online.

Sandy Odrowski is an educational developer at the C.A.F.E. Odrowski was a professor in the Dental Hygienist program for several years before she began working in the C.A.F.E., three years ago. Her role as an educational developer is to support faculty with education and learning. This can vary from curriculum development to teaching techniques and creating assessment rubrics through classes and workshops.

"The C.A.F.E. gives faculty the support they need to enhance learning for students," says Odrowski. The team also consists of people who watch for quality assurance and ensure each program meets industry standards. Odrowski has a deep passion for students and although she loves her role as an educational developer, she still misses being in the class and teaching students.

Today she can reach thousands of students through the help she provides to their teachers. "I was beginning to miss my students but understood I was still making a positive impact on the students," through the C.A.F.E. 🍏



*Sandy Odrowski, Educational Developer, gives faculty the support they need to enhance learning for students. The team also consists of people who watch for quality assurance and ensure each program meets industry standards.*





# Finding connections through fitness

STORY & PHOTO BY JEFFREY GILL

Going to the gym and working out can be a daunting task but it is one that Angela Wood takes in stride. As the fitness coordinator for the FLEX Centre at Durham College (DC), Wood has fallen in love with her job and finds enjoyment throughout the daily activities and occasional struggles that come with organizing group fitness schedules, personal training and more.

**“It’s such a positive environment because the people who are here want to be here and the administration supports us wholly.”**

As Durham celebrates its 50th anniversary, Wood revels in her tenth year working at the college. Prior to her role as fitness coordinator, she provided services for students with disabilities. At the same time, she began teaching fitness classes and providing personal training; sometimes while still in her work clothes! Her dedication was proven again when the position of Fitness Coordinator became available and Wood volunteered for the position until someone was hired. However, once she arrived at the FLEX, she felt as though she belonged here.

“There’s variety in my job and I love working with the students and staff,” says Wood. “The creativity in designing the group fitness schedules and the connections that I make with people on a daily basis. It’s such a positive environment because the people who are here want to be here and the administration supports us wholly.”

The FLEX Centre offers something for everyone through the various exercise equipment and group fitness activities. The facility offers the latest in equipment and machines as the cardio machines are replaced every three years while strength is renewed every five years respectively. This allows them to keep current in the fitness industry and adapt to any developments made.

Fitness is an important aspect of living a healthy and balanced lifestyle. The FLEX Centre offers a chance to shape yourself physically and mentally and it is open to students, staff and alumni.

Staying connected to Durham is simplified using the FLEX Centre and all current Durham students can use the facilities having already paid for it through tuition. DC retirees have a lifetime membership to the FLEX Centre as well. Alumni can also receive a discounted membership. For more information, visit [campusrecreationcentre.com](http://campusrecreationcentre.com).



*Fitness Co-ordinator Angela Wood (above), is hard at work drafting new and exciting programs for FLEX Centre members. The FLEX Centre offers several options for people of all fitness levels.*

## PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

The FLEX Centre at Durham College provides several programs for people of all ages and physical abilities.

Belly dancing, Core and More, Dance Fitness, Gentle Yoga, Glutes Galaore and Core, Intro to Spinning, Pilates, Pilates IMT, Socacize, Spinning, Strength Yoga, Yoga Flex



# alumni UPDATE

1986

**GLENN LUCKASAVITCH,**

*Business Administration - Industrial,*

lives in Ajax and is a regional manager for Brookfield Condominium Services.

1989

**JEFF HAYES,**

*Business Administration - Marketing,*

lives in Oshawa with his wife Kelly and son Braedon. He is the owner of Hayes Plumbing & Bathroom Renovations.

1990

**VANESSA HUGHES,**

*Business - Human Resources,*

lives in Whitby and is a business change manager at Ontario Power Generation in Pickering.

**DIANNE PRESCOTT,**

*Business - Human Resources,*

lives in Courtice is currently employed as the human resources business partner at Lakeridge Health. She has two sons, Hunter and Logan.

1997

**CHERYL D'ANDRADE (nee VAUGHAN),**

*Sports Administration,*

lives in Whitby with her husband Keith and daughter Briaunna. She is the general manager of Frameworth Sports Marketing.

2001

**GARY PAULIN,**

*Police Foundations,*

lives in Bomanville and has six sons, Brady, Brandon, Austin, Carter, Dawson and Ethan. He works as a front-line manager assistant security officer at Ontario Power Generation.

2003

**SHENG LING,**

*Welder Fitter,*

lives in Surrey, British Columbia and is currently employed with the Vancouver Ship Yard as a ship fitter.

2012

**BRANDON JOHNSTON,**

*Mechanical Engineering Technology,*

lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba and is a manufacturing engineering technologist at Monteferro America.

2013

**MARK ANTAYA,**

*Advertising,*

lives in Oshawa and is currently employed as an ad operations specialist at GroupM - Catalyst.

**BRIAN HERBERT,**

*Mechanical Engineering Technology,*

lives in Oshawa and works in research and development at EHC Global.

2012

**CRYSTAL GALLANT,**

*Office Administration - Legal,*

lives in Bomanville with her two daughters Kabriya and Avaiah.

**JOSHUA MACDONALD,**

*Hospitality - Hotel, Restaurant & Tourism,*

lives in Bomanville with his wife Amanda and is an operations manager at the Tribute Communities Centre.



# alumni UPDATE

2015

**TAYLOR HUNT,**

*Graphic Design,*

lives in Ajax and is a graphic designer for Vibrant Marketing.

2016

**THERESA BATE,**

*Office Administration - Executive,*

lives in Pickering and is an administrative assistant at RBC Dominion Securities.

**LINDSAY TUCKER,**

*Motive Power Technician - Service and Maintenance,*

lives in Oshawa and is a service advisor at Menzies Chrysler Dodge.

2017

**MARIEL DAVIDSON,**

*Digital Photography,*

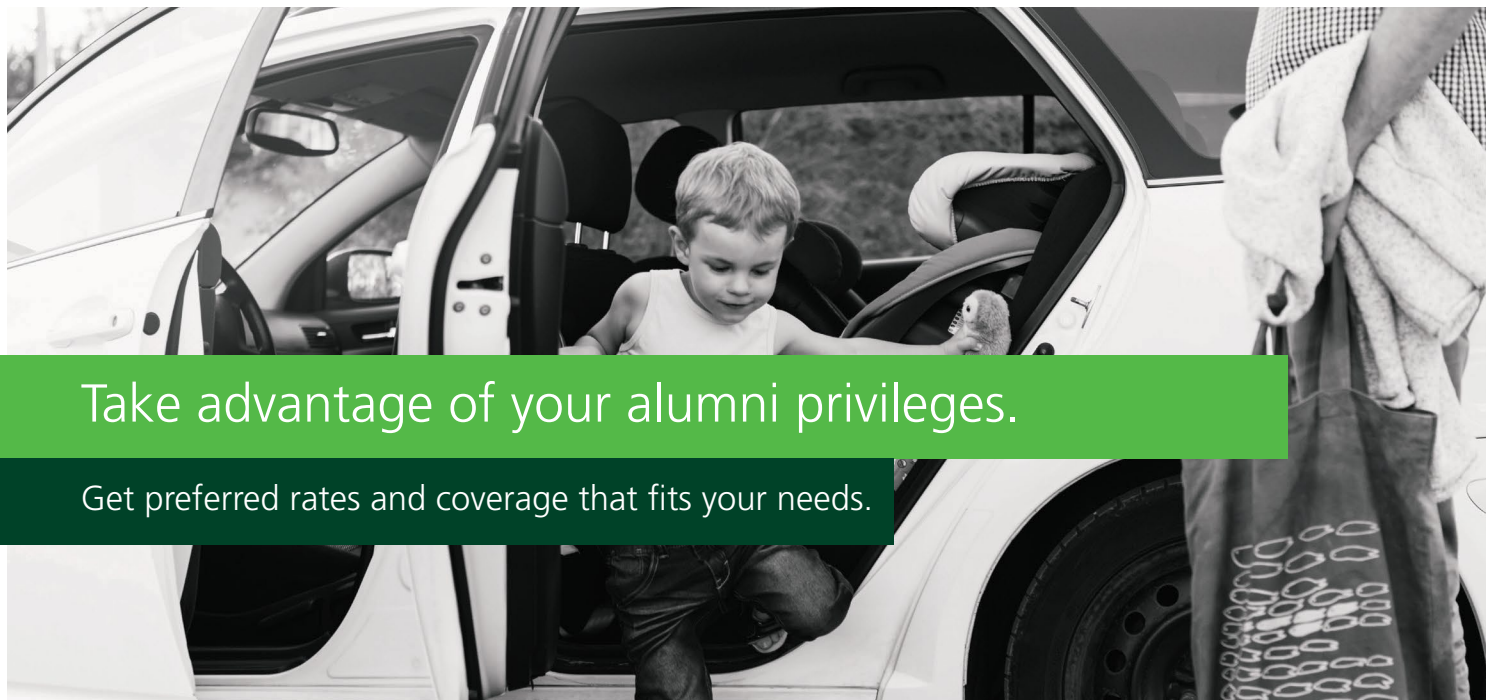
is currently living in Oshawa.

**MORGAN STEINMILLER,**

*Paramedic,*

lives in Peterborough and is employed by Northumberland County paramedics as a primary care paramedic in Cobourg.

Contact Isabella Gennuso in the Alumni Office  
[isabella.gennuso@durhamcollege.ca](mailto:isabella.gennuso@durhamcollege.ca)  
to share your news.



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