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Durham College Alumni Magazine

# Reflections

IT'S  
SHOWTIME



SUCCESS  
ON CAMPUS  
AND IN THE  
COMMUNITY



**DURHAM  
COLLEGE**  
SUCCESS MATTERS

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased to share your Alumni Association's latest initiatives and events which include:

- Scholarship and bursary contributions increased to \$21,000 for our current students with a focus on children of alumni;
- Campus holiday food drive donation increased to \$5,000 to assist our campus community. Board members assisted with the packing and delivery of food;
- On behalf of the Board, I attended the Donor-Student Reception at the Centre for Food with over 180 students and donors in attendance. Inspiring stories were shared throughout the night. The Alumni Association has been donating to scholarships and bursaries for over 17 years.
- On Nov. 27, the Durham College Alumni Association hosted their third-annual Alumni Hockey Night. More than 100 alumni, staff and friends watched the Oshawa Generals face off against the Peterborough Petes at the General Motors Centre. Unfortunately, the Generals fell to their rivals with a final score of 4-2. However, that didn't put a damper on spirits in the Medallion suite as alumni celebrated a family-friendly and fun-filled evening while reconnecting over snacks and beverages.
- New benefits have been added for our alumni and current students. I encourage you to check our website [durhamcollege.ca/aumni](http://durhamcollege.ca/aumni) under Benefits and Services to review the list.

We continue to seek new and interesting ways to partner with Durham College that will raise the profile of your Alumni Association throughout North America and beyond. It won't be long before we begin a year-long celebration of activities and events for our upcoming 50th anniversary in 2017 – stay tuned!

Special thanks to those who completed the short survey to provide feedback as we re-construct your Alumni Association



website. Be prepared for a brand new look and easier navigation – we plan to launch the new site in early March.

Follow us on Facebook, join DC Alumni on LinkedIn and check us out at: [durhamcollege.ca/alumni](http://durhamcollege.ca/alumni).

Any DC memories, successes or input you would like to share with us? Please send them to [lori.connor@durhamcollege.ca](mailto:lori.connor@durhamcollege.ca) – we would love to hear from you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Vale". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

*Chris Vale  
President, Alumni Association  
Class of 2003*

## REFLECTIONS

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*Elaine Popp proudly stands in front of Durham College as the new vice-president, Academic*

# Educator leads DC in academic success

BY TIFFANY NOBES

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS YEO

She sits comfortably at her desk, briskly typing away on her computer and looking as if she has made herself at home. One would never guess that Elaine Popp has just arrived at Durham College (DC) to fill the role as the new vice-president, Academic. Given her more than 15 years of progressive experience in academic leadership, DC has high hopes for the newest member of the college family. Her background in education management will most definitely complement the established leadership team at the college.

“I feel that my skills and experience will fit well with what Durham College is seeking to do,” says Popp. “Durham has a great reputation within the system. We are well known and are looking to grow in various ways, and that is something that interests me.”

Popp’s plans for the school are ambitious but certainly attainable. She has been able to narrow the goals for the college into four sections. First, she intends to focus on the quality of academic programs to ensure any new or existing programs are of exceptional quality. This factor will drive the college’s reputation. Second, she will ensure faculty are provided with the resources they need to create an excellent teaching and learning atmosphere where the student experience truly does come first. Next, Popp will concentrate on enhancing DC’s internationalization through incorporating a more inter-cultural focus in programs, as well as creating more mobility programs. These would give the college’s students and faculty the ability to study and teach abroad, while allowing overseas students and faculty the opportunity to study and teach at Durham. Additionally, enrollment management

will become a priority, as will ensuring the college’s research agenda continues to thrive.

“Elaine brings many years of success and experience in the Ontario college system to Durham College and we are very fortunate that she has a progressive vision of post-secondary education,” says Don Lovisa, president of Durham College. “Elaine is ambitious, future-focused and ready to make her mark at DC as she leads our academic team and operations. Durham College has shown it can lead the system in growth and innovation, and I am confident that Elaine will help us continue our success.”

Popp began her career in education in 2001 by teaching a course on Fitness Leadership for the School of Continuing Education at Humber College in the evenings while enrolled in a PhD program for Exercise Physiology. During her time as a part-time instructor, she was asked by a supervisor to write the curriculum for a new diploma program at Humber, which was approved by the Ministry of Education and was coordinated and taught by Popp. From there, she continued to work upwards through the system at Humber, writing another program curriculum, becoming an associate dean and working as the associate vice-president Academic before finally moving to Durham College. Before establishing a career as an educator, Popp herself attended various post-secondary programs for 10 years.

“I have always had a love of learning and I continue to have that today,” she says. “I think when you do love learning, working in education makes a lot of sense.” 

# Strengthening our community

BY AMY NICHOLSON

PHOTOS BY: STELLAR EMPIRES & AMY NICHOLSON

Success is personal. For some, it is about achieving recognition. For others, it is about following a path all their own. Some people define success as overcoming obstacles, while others believe it is excelling in multiple areas of life. Certainly, success can be about finding happiness, but it can also be about helping others.

For Elaine Garnett success started early. She graduated on the Honour Roll of Durham College's Advertising Administration program in 1990. Since then, Garnett has built a successful career for herself through her work in the local community. She was the general sales manager at Channel 12 – CHEX TV Durham for more than 19 years, but recently moved to a job as the community partnerships manager with the City of Oshawa. While exploring different avenues to success in her own career, Garnett encourages future professionals to do the same by building business networks and following their own volunteer interests within the community.

In the years since her graduation, Garnett has been involved in many organizations in Durham Region, including the Durham College Alumni Association, which she now chairs, and the Advertising program advisory committee, which allows her to stay connected and help the program remain current and competitive in a global market.

"The industry has changed so much since I first started and I really think it's harder for students because they're competing on a global level now," says Garnett. "We need our grads to find jobs and have an opportunity to shine in their field. We all benefit from each other's successes and generosity, so giving back to the college any way I can has always been a good experience."

Garnett considers her involvement with the Alumni Association as a perfect way to give back to the Durham College community, but her volunteerism extends far beyond the college campus. She has also been involved with community organizations such as Durham YWCA, the



Elaine Garnett mingles with fellow participants at the OshaWOW fun run/walk, an event benefiting the homeless and hungry youth of Oshawa, Ont. (STELLAR EMPIRES)

Greater Clarington Board of Trade and 100 Women Who Care.

In recognition of her achievements and contribution to the community, the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce named her Business Person of the Year in 2006. Three years later, in 2009, Garnett won the Alumni of Distinction Award from Durham College. The acknowledgement and respect she received from the business and college community remains tremendously important to her, both personally and professionally.

"Elaine is a natural leader because she naturally inspires," says Sue Lupton, Garnett's former client and long-time friend. "She is not quick to find fault in others but rather quick to find their gifts. When she says she is there to support you she actually means it. As leaders we are shy to ask for help, but if and when you ask for help Elaine is there."

Although there is little time left between days at the office and the extra hours spent volunteering in the community, Garnett still finds time for things she loves such as gardening, golf, food, friends and family.

"I love food. I love to grow vegetables. I love to grow herbs in my garden in the summer," says Garnett. "I love to eat. I love to share my food with friends. I just find it's a way of showing people that you care for them and sharing some of the things you love."

Now that's some food for thought. 



Elaine Garnett remains involved with Durham College through the Alumni Association and the Advertising program advisory committee. Her continued commitment to the Advertising program helps the program remain current and competitive.

Angelia Kelly has no fear of getting her hands dirty in her male-dominated field of choice.



# ELECTRICIAN BLAZES TRADES TRAIL

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STORY AND PHOTO BY HALLIE ENTWISTLE

It started with the influential wartime propaganda poster that roared “We Can Do It!” which aimed to empower women to work in the skilled trades while their husbands were fighting abroad. And, although the war is long over, the battle to get females involved in the trades is still going strong.

Angelia Kelly, graduate of the Registered Electrician Apprenticeship Training program at Durham College (DC), hopes to blaze a new trail in the male-dominated field and encourage young girls to get their hands dirty in the trades.

As women make up only five per cent of the skilled-trade workforce, Kelly is no stranger to the difficulties that come with such a career choice. It is because of her own trying experiences that she began working with the Durham Workforce Authority and the “Let’s Do Lunch” ladies of Durham in order to tackle the issue of gender bias in the trades.

“Women in the trades are still not as accepted as they should be in 2015,” says Kelly. “There are a lot of people not wanting to work with you, and not wanting you there. With that comes a lot of disappointment. It’s a hard thing to do to become one of the boys.”

Kelly’s role as women’s chair of the Durham Workforce Authority gives her the opportunity to visit schools across Durham Region and speak to students, teachers and parents. Her goal is to not only inspire young girls but also motivate their educators to participate in her mission. During these seminars, Kelly shares the story of how she got started in the trades, and other personal experiences she has had throughout her career.

Kelly explains that as she had gone through a difficult divorce 10 years prior, the mother of four was finding it difficult

to stay positive, that is until she chose to take advantage of an opportunity that changed her life. She began assisting with heavy labour, such as lifting hefty materials, in order to make more money for her family. Later, she made the onerous but vital decision to return to school. Despite sleepless nights and juggling her life as a mother and student, Kelly graduated from DC in 2006 at the age of 36, and has never looked back.

There are many misconceptions that lead people to believe the trades are not suitable for women, among them lower wages, physically demanding work, and dirty environments. Unfortunately, these outdated notions make it exceedingly difficult for women to excel in the industry.

There have been many occasions where Kelly has had to battle to stay positive in discouraging situations as a journey person. Her most exasperating experience was one that she believed would drain any enthusiasm to continue her career. During her early years in the trades, Kelly had been working with a group of men who refused to take her seriously. They would laugh at any questions she had, make sexist remarks during lunch hour, and did not even bother to learn her name.

She took their negativity as a challenge and worked harder than anyone else on the job, which eventually earned the respect of her coworkers. With her eager outlook and electric personality, this experience inspired her to begin teaching young girls and women that the trades are a viable career for everyone.

“Work hard and show up like you want to work,” she says. “Show them that you’re willing to learn and try. That’s all you can ask of any apprentice.”



*Sherri Taylor helps PR student Larissa Newberry develop her plan for success.*

# Here for the Students

STORY AND PHOTO BY MEGHAN MICHAEL

Life happens. Things don't always go as planned. This can leave students feeling alone, discouraged and completely off track. That's why Durham College (DC) has staff members like Sherri Taylor, who are readily available to come up with a strategy to get students back to where they want to be.

As a student advisor in the School of Media, Art & Design (MAD), Taylor helps students customize academic plans to suit their individual needs. She is available to provide guidance regarding academic decisions in accordance with a student's goals, while alleviating some of the pressure they may feel by breaking down the options and helping find the best one for the individual.

"Sometimes students come in and they're just upset, so we try to help them decompress and guide them towards solving the issue at hand," Taylor says. "Ninety per cent of our time is spent making a plan for success."

Taylor has been working at the college for over 28 years, making her a seasoned pro when it comes to advising students. With 18 years experience at the Office of the Registrar, Taylor has a deep understanding of how course requirements work and applies this knowledge to her current position. She takes the guesswork out of the equation for overwhelmed students who stop by her office.

"Student advising is something I've always wanted to do. It's a warm, rewarding job. I get a lot of enjoyment out of it," says

Taylor. It's neat to see students who once (came to see me with a problem) and then come back and tell me about their success."

In addition to the happiness her job brings her, Taylor has brought a lot of happiness and hope to her students.

For instance, Laura Kidd, a second-year Public Relations (PR) student, had a very special experience with Taylor last year. "During my first year at Durham College I suffered three losses in my family. When I thought I couldn't continue to move forward in my year, Sherri reminded me that bad things happen to good people and my loved ones would want to see me continue on my career path," says Kidd. "Sherri taught me how strong I really am, and

just when I thought I was at my breaking point, she reminded me that with hard work and determination you can get through anything that life throws at you. Because of Sherri, I am now studying in my second year of PR."

It is obvious that Taylor does not treat her role as merely a nine-to-five job. Her commitment to her students shows her desire to truly see them succeed at whatever it is they want to do.

"The bottom line is we are here to support the student. We're very relaxed," she says, "It's not like going to the principal's office...I don't take it personally when students don't follow the path they have set to success. But I do want each student to find their path. If it's not the one they're on, we'll find another one." 

**“...just when I thought I was at my breaking point, she reminded me that with hard work and determination you can get through anything that life throws at you.”**

*DC alumn Ryan Scrivens' rough past led him to study a side of the law he avoided at all costs as a child.*



# FROM ACADEMIC PROBATION TO PhD CANDIDATE

BY EDWARD RHODES  
PHOTO BY SHANE ROBERTS

Every student remembers those all-nighters of studying for finals, writing endless papers and cramming for exams. Most can attest to the dog days of college where they wanted to drop out at some point or another. That was the same for PhD candidate Ryan Scrivens, whose road to higher education was nearly halted soon after it began, less than a year into college.

Entering secondary school, Scrivens, like many other teenagers, found himself entering his rebellious stage by looking anywhere for excitement. He'll be the first to admit that he was more interested in partying than pursuing academics. In fact, avoiding school at all costs was his priority, and he claims if you were to tell his high school teachers that he is now a college graduate, they would be in shock. Scrivens barely graduated from high school and, due to parental pressure, enrolled at Durham College to study Law and Security Administration (LASA) in the fall of 2007. After numerous previous encounters with law enforcement, Scrivens' interest in the legal field came from an attempt to protect himself when confronted by authorities.

"I didn't do particularly well in school at the time, and was hanging out with some questionable people to say the least. In short, back when we were in high school, we were hanging out in fields and going to parties, and we were sick and tired of cops pushing us around. So the reason I took Law and Security was so I could know my rights. That's all it was," he says, chuckling.

During his first year at Durham, Scrivens was put on academic probation. He quickly pulled up his socks and learned the importance of higher education as a means to provide for himself and his future family. The turnaround allowed him to graduate from college and continue his studies in university.

Fortunately for Scrivens, LASA is a bridge program connecting successful applicants from DC to the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT), which allowed him to work toward his undergraduate degree in Criminology and Justice in just two years. He continued to excel academically and became most interested in studying criminal behavior. One professor in particular, Dr. Barbara Perry, played an instrumental role in his achievement.

"She's a big-time scholar and inspired me to continue on with it. It was basically the inspiration of people around me. It was by far the professors at Durham and UOIT who really kept me going," says the PhD candidate.

Scrivens wrote his honours thesis on the topic of hate crime. After completing his Masters and pondering whether or not to work towards his PhD, he became employed as a teacher's assistant at UOIT. He eventually applied to Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C., where his journey to become a recognized scholar has delighted some of his most influential supporters, including Perry, one of his biggest supporters.

"Now that he's in a PhD program and becoming a recognized scholar, I continue to be amazed by his trajectory. He's made DC and UOIT — and me — very proud," Perry says.

Today, Scrivens finds himself enrolled in the top criminology program in Canada, working alongside some of the most respected people in the field. His road to success is a reminder to not give up on people. Anyone can change and make something of themselves even when all seems grim. Those heading down the wrong path can look to the soon-to-be Dr. Scrivens as an inspiration. It was a path he knew all too well, one that is now many miles behind him. 

# Creating a Spark

BY KRYSZYNA PAPATZIKAKIS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KRYSZYNA PAPATZIKAKIS & JASON CHOW

Everyday, Andrea Kennedy dedicates herself toward building a better community within Durham Region. She does so through her work as an advisor at Spark Centre – a non-profit innovation centre that works with entrepreneurs to develop unique business plans – and as founder and chief strategist at Spread Your Word (SYW), a small-business marketing agency.

SYW was an entrepreneurial leap of faith Kennedy took over five years ago. Since she knows first-hand what it takes to start a business, she is able to share the experience she's gained with other hopeful entrepreneurs, like some of the students at Durham College and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT). Recently, Spark Centre announced the opening of a student entrepreneurship contact centre at the north campus, where students are able to receive direct guidance on their own turf.



At Spark Centre, Andrea Kennedy (above) speaks about her role in the organization and her passion for the community and marketing. (Papatzikakis)

Although she will continue to work from the Spark Centre office in downtown Oshawa, Kennedy can be found on campus as an instructor of the Management Development Centre (MDC) at UOIT, which is geared toward people who want to pursue alternative professional avenues and are looking to build the skills to achieve them – much like an opportunity she seized in order to complete Project Management and Marketing and Sales courses at Durham College in 2006. Despite the wealth of knowledge she gained from working in corporate environments, her desire to pursue a new path in marketing while living a family-first life eventually formed the foundation of her own business in 2011.

“There are systems and processes about big businesses that I am so grateful I had an opportunity to learn. But I also learned that big businesses tend to distance themselves from the people they're actually impacting,” says Kennedy. “Having seen how much time it took away from me being able to have a really solid connection to my life and my children – I was really looking for a way to balance that out.”



An inside look at the Spark Centre in 2015. Students can expect the same welcoming environment on campus this year. (Chow)

Before focusing on an ideal work-life balance, Kennedy took time to build stability outside of the office, which she began to acquire by teaching yoga for over 12 years. The insight gained from this practice allowed her to develop a strong character that continues to fuel the skills she possesses today. Utilizing her natural ability to educate makes every encounter an exchange of knowledge, whether it's during yoga practice or meeting with a client. By continuing to learn and support positive change within the community, Kennedy continues to achieve personal and professional goals.

“Having both corporate and entrepreneurial experience, Andrea brings a unique blend of skills to Spark Centre,” says Braden Kemp, director of client services at Spark Centre. “Andrea's direct and down-to-earth advisory style connects well with our clients who share the ‘get it done’ mentality.”

Although she admits that her passion for community involvement and marketing came later in life, Kennedy recognizes the advantages of getting a head start. The student contact centre will provide access to professional feedback and help students determine if they have what it takes to build a business. However, just because Kennedy strives to live in a thriving business community, it doesn't mean she won't ask the hard questions entrepreneurs must answer in order to be successful.

“We're all people who have gone through it here at Spark Centre, so we're going to give you really honest feedback about what you can expect. And I want for people to fall in love with their business and keep going when it gets hard,” says Kennedy. “My job isn't to tell you that everything you're going to do is amazing. My job is to help you see some of the obstacles and then help you to overcome them.”



Janice Tanton, interdisciplinary artist, takes part in Art Champions Congress to enhance Calgary's culture.

# Strengthening Relationships Through Art

BY MASHIAT MASWOOD

PHOTO COURTESY OF CRAIG DOUCE

Her art is a fusion of two cultures, two traditions and her dual identity. Known to the world as Janice Iniskimaki Tanton, she incorporates her emotions, values and beliefs into her creativity. A talented artist, she is also a mother, a successful entrepreneur and a full-time humanitarian.

An artist at heart, Tanton's first outlet came in the form of a course at the University of Windsor before her passion

took her to the Graphic Design program at Durham College. This program channeled her talent, giving her the tools of the trade to cover a broad spectrum of visual communications in corporate, editorial and advertising design.

"The program gave me the basic design principles and a strong knowledge in the terminology of colour theory. These tools helped me to diversify and expand. As an artist, you should crave to create. The need must drive you beyond all other needs. It is as if you would die if you can't express what is inside of you. That love and passion for creating should reflect through art in a way that it converses with the viewers and stirs their emotions," says the native of Oshawa. "If you are creating for any other reason, you're in the wrong line of work. I have prepared paintings of the relationships that I have with just some beings, things and places that have touched my life and are very personal to me."

Her metamorphosis as an artist happened by chance when she moved to Canmore, Alta. Setting aside her career to devote time to her family, she accepted a position as manager of the Aboriginal Leadership program at The Banff Centre in Alberta. The role allowed Tanton to cherish close relationships with the aboriginal communities, which helped inspire her acclaimed works of art. She reached another milestone when she received a grant from the Canada Council of Arts for a community fusion project, which allowed her to celebrate and explore various forms of art. Retiring from The Banff Centre, she redirected her focus into her art studio and her work.

"Janice has a clear idea of what she explores in her artwork and wants to practise and develop skill-wise. She is very driven, has the clarity and focus to achieve her vision," says husband Kevin Nuxoll. "She is a pretty strong individual, well focused in her artwork, extremely generous and very loving towards her family."

Currently, Tanton's artwork is based on contemporary themes, set primarily in oil and centering around a kaleidoscopic view of cross-cultural and intergenerational themes. After battling with cancer for many years, she is back in the studio working full-time, doing what she loves the most. Her painting "Undercurrent" recently debuted in the Whyte Museum in Banff, Alta. It focuses on water and its historical connection to the Canadian identity — namely, how the waterways supported indigenous communities, the fur trade and explorers whose travels led to settlement, urbanization and economic prosperity, along with a major mode of transportation during the birth of the nation.



Tanton prides "Undercurrent" as her best work yet. (Tanton)

In coming years, Tanton wants to learn something new and wishes to find what she calls the "daily musing space" that only her canvas can offer. Along the way, she will continue to paint pictures worth thousands of words. 

# Photography professor captures a lifestyle

BY MELANIE GRANT

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOEL CLEMENTS



Joel Clements, left, with Dr. Michael Goldstein, middle, and Dr. Sherri Leung, right, are all smiles during a dental relief mission in Ecuador.

The setup is almost complete. The background is impeccable and the lighting is perfect. After moving his camera to get the right angle, his students look on with anticipation as he steps back to examine the elements of his composition. All he needs to do is click a button for that moment to be captured forever. Whether he is teaching the subject of visual arts or positioning a subject in focus, Durham College part-time professor Joel Clements knows all about photography.

Growing up in Richmond Hill, Ont., Clements was exposed to photography from a young age. Inspired by childhood memories of his father taking photographs and showcasing his work at family gatherings, Clements joined the family tradition at eight years old and purchased his first camera at a yard sale. From the very first time he pressed the shutter button, he was captured by the art of photography.

While fulfilling a high school placement at the Richmond Hill Liberal Newspaper, Clements covered Junior A Hockey during the winter and had his photography published on the front page of the Sports section. It was during this time that he decided to pursue photography as a profession.

After earning a degree in fine arts from York University in 1993, Clements was ready to leave the education environment and begin his career. Little did he know he would be

returning to school in the near future. With guidance from former colleague Paul Koidis, who was then the acting associate dean in the school of Media, Art & Design, Clements was offered a part-time position teaching photography in the Public Relations (PR) program.

“I think it’s an important part of the program for these students to develop a visual vocabulary,” says Clements. “Some elements of design like texture and colour have emotional attributes that are connected socially and can’t be ignored. That’s a very important part of photography and a very important part of creating a successful photograph that communicates a specific message or idea.”

Outside the classroom, Clements applies his skill in creating a specific message using photography through his participation with Kindness in Action, an organization that conducts dental relief missions in Third World countries every three years. Participating in two missions, Clements documents these trips by capturing the daily operations of a dental team consisting of 23 professionals who care for hundreds of children while on the mission.

Clements shows dedication in every photography endeavour whether he is inside or outside the classroom. He certainly chose a profession that matches his personality, and his enthusiasm for visual arts has remained consistent throughout his career.

“I’ve known Joel since fifth grade. He was always stylish, creative and social,” says Koidis. “When we reconnected 30 years later, he was exactly the same and put his passion to work as a gifted designer, photographer and teacher.”

Prior to taking his photography course, many PR students have never used a professional-quality camera. With the expert knowledge taught by Clements, students are able to confidently utilize their photography skills and embrace the digital world. Their teacher encourages them to continue photography in their everyday lives, regardless of their equipment.

“It doesn’t matter what camera you’re taking a photograph with,” says Clements. “The genius and the art comes from the brain and the mind that’s behind the camera.”



Children waiting in line during a Kindness in Action dental relief mission in Ecuador.

# READY FOR SHOWTIME

STORY AND PHOTO BY MANINDER CHAHAL

Full-time student and full-time president Yasmin Singh is ready to show the world that she can Bhangra her way through anything that crosses her path.

Since the tender age of five, Singh has had her dancing shoes tied tightly on her feet. She would practise in front of her mirror and put on a grand show for her family. These family shows landed her a few performances in banquet halls and eventually led her to Shiamak's Dance Academy, currently Canada's leading multicultural dance academy, where she stayed enrolled for about five years, performing in numerous shows and building a name for herself in the dance world.

Unfortunately, due to personal issues she had to put away her dancing shoes for the academy, and when she did, she put them away for good. But, in September 2013, dance knocked on her door once again when a friend pushed her to audition for the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) and Durham College dance team. This team consists of four genres of dance — Bollywood, Fusion, Indian Classical and Bhangra. The team competes with over 10 different post-secondary schools in numerous cities such as Toronto and Niagara Falls.

Two years later, she is the president of the team and has already brought it to a new level with amazing new choreographers, a fresh set of multi-talented dancers and an executive team of exceedingly creative individuals. Singh has managed to successfully change the dynamics of the team as a whole while still keeping up with her academics in the Legal Studies program.

"Last year, we had a new president. He did an amazing job and because he was one of my good friends I was able to pick up on what he was doing and follow in his footsteps," says Singh. "This year, when the opportunity presented itself when he came up to me and asked me if I wanted to be president I thought it was a great opportunity, and yeah, I took it."

Singh has already shown her many talents and made an impact on the new dancers. Many feel that she is just what the team needed in order to win. Looking at the future, Singh knows that this team is sure to place first this year.

Lovepreet Nagra, secretary of the team, has never been more proud of

her friend, roommate and now colleague. She is certain that with 60 people now, the team will definitely win this year.

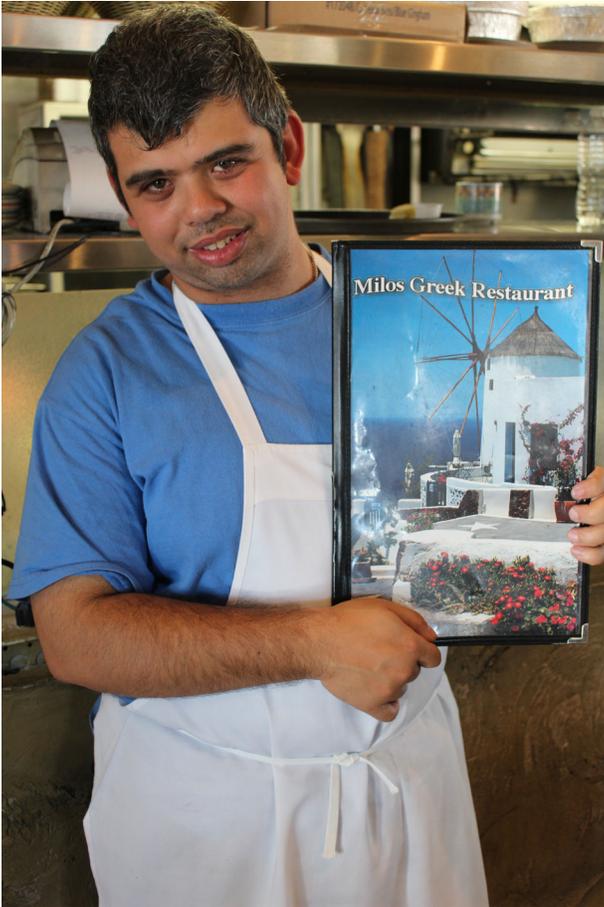
"I'm actually really proud of her for taking on this responsibility because she is the perfect fit for it and I can see a change in her. She is now showing more authority and getting things done," says Nagra. "Definitely I was really proud of the genre [fusion] that came in first place last year, and even second place [Indian classical], but this time I want all the genres to do their best and aim for the moon and I want to place first."

This year has been quite the workout for Singh, from being incredibly stressful to a pocketful of sunshine. She has loved every moment as president thus far as it has given her a taste of what is yet to come, and she is ready to take it on with a smile on her face.

"More than anything I just want students to have fun. I want them to love it as much as I do. I want them to enjoy it," says Singh. "They are all here because dance is their passion and I want them to continue that passion." ❧



Yasmin Singh struts her moves in the Bhangra uniform, also known as a Vardi, with a Shika in hand.



Michael Constantinou volunteers his time every Thursday at Milos Greek Restaurant in Pickering, as an assistant chef.

# Cooking up friendships

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CANDACE DARBYSHIRE

Motivational speaker Robert Kiyosaki once said, “Passion pushes you to learn more, create more and to create better. Best of all, it’s contagious.” This is what attracts many people to Michael Constantinou – his passionate personality and motivation to succeed, all while tackling everyday obstacles associated with a genetic condition called William’s Syndrome.

Constantinou is a Durham College alumni who graduated from the Community Integration Through Cooperative Education (CICE) program in 2012. Through the program’s co-op placement, he was able to practise his passion for cooking at Milos Greek Restaurant in Pickering, where he is still a volunteer chef today. Upon completion of his studies at Durham College, Constantinou knew that he wanted to continue learning and growing within the cooking industry, so he decided to go back to school to study culinary arts. Although he graduated

three years ago, one might still see Constantinou roaming the hallways of Durham College today, as he loves coming back to visit his friends and meet new people.

“I visit my friends because they motivate me. They’re amazing and they’re awesome; I wouldn’t be where I am today without them,” he says. A common characteristic of William’s Syndrome is a personality that includes being highly social, friendly and endearing, which Constantinou says is a blessing to have. “My friends are amazing and they drive me crazy, but hey, that’s what friendship is for.”

Constantinou was born with William’s Syndrome, a genetic condition characterized by medical problems including cardiovascular disease, developmental delays, and learning disabilities, but he doesn’t let it get in the way of his passions. Although he says there are some negatives to having William’s Syndrome, such as discrimination, he insists there are many more positives to the condition. This past summer, Constantinou had the opportunity to travel to Greece, where his family is from, to meet other families affected by William’s Syndrome. “They’re the brightest people you will ever meet,” says Constantinou. “They’re so welcoming. They welcomed me with open arms.”

“My friends are amazing and they drive me crazy, but hey, that’s what friendship is for.”

“Michael is the sweetest person I know. He is so passionate about everything he does in life. He loves cooking, sports and, most of all, his friends,” says Sydney Dwyer, one of Constantinou’s close friends. “He motivates me to be a better person and to embrace everything that I have in this life. Michael will accomplish great things throughout his life because of his burning passion and motivation to succeed.”

At the age of 25, Constantinou is continuously improving his skills within the cooking industry. “I’m currently looking for a part-time job with cooking, but I don’t want to leave Milo’s Greek Restaurant because I love it so much,” he says. One thing is for sure, as he searches for further opportunities to grow, Constantinou is sure to have a huge support system of friends and family cheering for him to live out his passion while pushing through his obstacles. 🍴



Constantinou loves cooking chicken souvlaki for restaurant guests.

# Equipped for success

BY ALLISON YAKELEY

PHOTO BY ALLISON YAKELEY

**Y**ou can't keep a good man down, especially Noah Bucholtz. Bucholtz has lofty aspirations of one day becoming a general manager with the National Hockey League. Currently enrolled in the Sports Marketing program at Durham College, he is a hardworking student and a committed video coordinator for the Ontario Hockey League's Peterborough Petes. Previously, he was the equipment manager for the UOIT Ridgebacks men's hockey team.

As a Peterborough, Ont., native, Bucholtz knew early on that he loved hockey. He realized he was not able to have a career as a player. Instead he decided to pursue the business end of hockey.

"Most athletes want to become a professional athlete at one point in their life. Once I realized that playing hockey was no longer attainable, I decided that if I can't play in the sport I might as well work in the sport," Bucholtz explained.

Completing a high school co-op with the Peterborough Petes, Bucholtz was able to network and create a list of contacts that would bring him to his current position as the video coordinator. In 2014, he enrolled at Durham College in the Sports Marketing program and was also offered the position as the equipment manager for the UOIT men's hockey team. He found it very time consuming, as well as difficult balancing both his managerial position and schoolwork. However, having a prominent role with the team helped him grow mentally as well as feeling more confident amongst the team and staff.

It takes someone with exceptional organizational skills, strong social skills and the ability to manage their time to be a successful equipment manager. Defenseman Riley Daly of the UOIT men's team, says Bucholtz possesses all of these qualities, often arriving early and staying late making sure all the players' needs were satisfied. "He would often go out of his way to make sure everyone's specific needs were met," says Daly. "I also speak for all the guys on the team when I say that the players appreciated Noah's hard work and dedication, making



Noah Bucholtz was the equipment manager for the UOIT Ridgebacks men's hockey team before joining the Peterborough Petes.

it a great season for both the players and staff."

The Sports Marketing program has given Bucholtz all the necessary skills to carry into the sports industry. With his professors working closely by his side, Bucholtz feels as though he is actually using the material learned in class towards his positions outside of school. Although the program is mainly geared towards sports, it has many business aspects. Bucholtz appreciates the knowledge he gains in both fields, as they often overlap.

His best advice for future Sports Marketing grads is to volunteer. "It will be a requirement of the program, but will also help with networking," he says. "Volunteering will get your foot in the door, which upon graduation could turn over into a great career."

Bucholtz would like to succeed within the program and with the Peterborough Petes, in hopes of landing a career with the team. With graduation approaching in 2017, he is excited to explore the hockey world in hopes of one day even sitting in the press box of a professional team. 

*Bucholtz reflects on his experiences at the Campus Ice Centre where the UOIT men's hockey team plays.*



# Research 'ACE' sparks new program

BY CARLY CUNNINGHAM

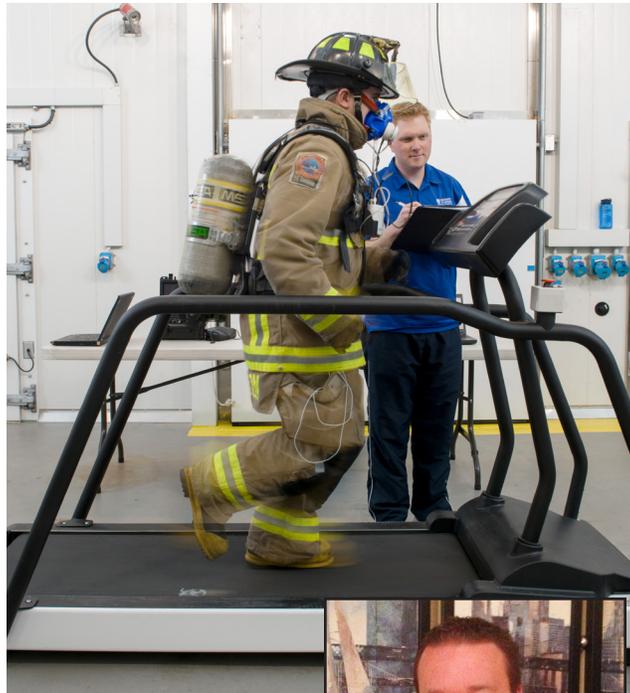
PHOTOS COURTESY OF JUSTIN GAMMAGE AND UOIT

When he isn't setting sail on the Great Lakes or playing volleyball on sandy beaches, Justin Gammage can be found jetting around the world to speak on behalf of the research department at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT). Most recently traveling to China in his new role as industry liaison manager, he has hit the ground running as he transitions into his latest position.

Formerly the chief scientist of General Motors of Canada, Gammage is now representing UOIT on a provincial, national and international scale. In this position he explores potential relationships with external institutions for research collaborations, such as traveling to China in the last month to speak with two leading automotive universities – Tsinghua University in Beijing and Tongji University in Shanghai – about lightweight materials and autonomous vehicles. In his former position, Gammage recognized software technology to be an area of advancement here in Canada, especially in Durham Region.

"I think software is a key area that Canadians can lead, especially in this geographic region. Since we compete with Silicon Valley, people view Canada globally on par with them and believe in our capabilities to develop great things just as they'd expect elsewhere," says Gammage. "UOIT is located in the Ontario innovation corridor, spanning from Windsor to Ottawa. In this area there is ample software expertise and investment from the Canadian government into technology programs. This has been recognized by key participants internationally, and global high-tech companies see this and recognize our capabilities."

Research and teaching are the pillars of any university, and because UOIT is committed to excellence in these areas, it stands out among the rest. The Automotive Centre for Excellence (ACE) is the first facility of its kind in Canada and, in many respects, the world. Located on the UOIT north campus, it is a multi-purpose centre where climate-controlled chambers are used for climatic, structural durability and lifecycle testing, typically on products such as cars and aerospace vehicles. Having access to a facility of this kind allows Gammage to extend relationships not only within the automotive industry but also among other trades of a more unique nature.



Michael Williams-Bell (left in blue) trains with a firefighter from the Toronto Fire Service. Williams-Bell works in the Automotive Centre of Excellence in his role with Durham College and UOIT. (UOIT) Justin Gammage (inset) works in UOIT's research department alongside his ACE colleagues. (Gammage)

"ACE was developed in partnership with the Government of Canada, the Government of the Province of Ontario, and General Motors of Canada to ensure the facility was world class and had the capabilities to become a global leader in automotive research and development," Gammage says. "Everyone wanted good things to happen with it and we are pleased that good things have become of it. Clients are aware of the capabilities ACE has to offer and have been using our facilities for product development, in the automotive industry and in other areas, to be released in the global marketplace."

The ACE has proven to have no limits as it extends itself to a broad range of research potential, often providing a very unique experience, including work with regional fire departments to test the physical and cognitive effects of climate on firefighters. Seeing value in the research for external organizations, UOIT and ACE will be partnering with Durham College's pre-fire services program for a pilot training course utilizing the ACE facilities beginning in January. The program will run on a temporary basis to see if training in a climate-controlled environment can be incorporated into the curriculum permanently. Working with Gammage on potential research and educational opportunities, Michael Williams-Bell, DC Professor of Fitness and Health Promotion and PhD Candidate at UOIT in Applied Bioscience, has been involved in the testing of firefighters and sees great potential for the training opportunity to take off.

"They're going to get a little bit more real-life experience in a laboratory simulation — where we can now dictate the conditions for the ultimate training outcome," says Williams-Bell. "Students will get an experience that's unlike any other experience they would have in the same program at another college." 

Nigel Charlton  
working hard at  
his desk at Button's  
Heating and Air  
Conditioning.



## BRINGING THE HEAT FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAREER

BY KATELYN BEER

PHOTO COURTESY OF NIGEL CHARLTON

Between 16 scuba diving certifications, golfing with his company, and spending time with his wife, Nigel Charlton, Business Operations Alumni at Durham College (DC), always manages to find time to give his absolute best at work.

Charlton has always been, as he would say, a “freak of nature” or an eager individual. While in attendance at DC, he was a mature student enrolling at the age of 44. Finding himself much older than the rest of his classmates, who were mostly twenty-somethings, he decided to use this age difference to push his limits even further.

His motivation continued to show throughout his work in and out of school. Charlton became the president of the Operations Management Society and, soon after, the president of the entire School of Business, IT and Management Society. He was also recognized with a number of awards, including the DC President’s Honour Roll, DC Leadership Award and the Founder’s Cup Award of Excellence. As Jackie Shemko, Operations Management program coordinator, explains, “Nigel treated being in college as a full-time, professional job. He was on campus early each day and stayed late. He was driven to succeed and he really threw himself whole heartedly into his studies. Nigel made a point of becoming very connected with the campus community.”

“I am a firm believer in the old cliché ‘it’s not what you know, it’s who you know,’” says Charlton. “I take it that one step further with it’s who knows you. You have to market yourself and being involved within the college and becoming well known was one of the things that was on my list to achieve.”

After graduating in 2013, Charlton was faced with the decision of where he wanted to work and what companies to approach, which became difficult since he preferred to stay in Durham Region. He was hired on as a sales associate at Button’s Heating & Air-Conditioning in Pickering, Ont., and within five

months of being hired he was promoted to general manager; his hard work and dedication had shone through once again.

“I did have a lot of job offers. I had my resume on different profiles and websites online, but, at my age, I wanted to seek and secure the correct position for me and set my roots into the company, having this be my last job,” says Charlton. “I was being a bit picky and choosy. It’s not as though I was a 20-year-old graduating college and using different jobs as stepping stones.”

Charlton’s position at Button’s has opened up many opportunities for him and for the company. One of the best parts of the job for him is “implementing and being apart of the changes that were being made that really helped the company flourish and grow,” he explains. Before starting at the company, there wasn’t a general manager in place, so it became stressful to have the three owners all putting their faith in him, not knowing if the changes he wanted to make were going to fall flat or succeed. But Charlton’s dedication and belief in the company have shown how positive his impact has been.

Leadership and management roles have always been a strong suit for Charlton, factoring into both his career and his experiences at DC. His college education gave him the opportunity to do something he passionately enjoys, making a difference in not only his company, but also among the clients with whom he works.

Even though he has graduated from DC, Charlton values his former professors, some of whom he has stayed in touch with. “The faculty knew that Nigel was clearly going to be a graduate of the Operations program who would launch a very successful career,” says Shemko. “We knew that the dedication and hard work he had put into his studies would be replicated in his job search, and then in the workplace. Nigel’s work ethic is absolutely outstanding. He demands the very best of himself, and puts his full effort into everything he does.” 

# Riding the Drift

BY SAMANTHA PENDER

PHOTOS BY ONE KIND PHOTOGRAPHY AND MELYMELL

What do marketing and sliding a car sideways at 100 miles an hour have in common? As it turns out, a lot, and when fast cars and good marketing collide, wheels start to turn on and off the track. Just ask Devaughn Dunbar, a graduate from the Marketing and Advertising program at Durham College in 2015, who slid into a career in the pits of the grassroots Ontario drift scene, something he hopes will continue to grow in his own backyard.

Drifting is a popular motorsport around the world with competitions in Japan, Ireland, the United States and now Canada. It is the specialized skill of driving a car sideways around a turn, refraining from straightening out, and occasionally chasing the doors of fellow drivers in tandem. An avid fan of sideways cars, 21-year-old Dunbar has been drifting recreationally for two years now and has been involved in the scene even longer. With his new career, his entire life revolves around drifting.

“As soon as I was able to drive, I was driving to the track every single weekend, just spectating, taking photos,” Dunbar recalls. “It’s the most fun you could have in a car. It’s like Wonderland but cheaper.”

After years of unintentional networking at the track, Dunbar landed himself a position right after graduation at C17 Media, a printing company compiled of grassroots drifters he frequently hangs out with at ToppDrift events in Shannonville, Ont. With his job, he is able to directly contribute to a driver’s season by printing sponsor stickers to be placed on a car’s livery – the outside of a car that carries advertisements or stickers – for companies that usually



Devaughn Dunbar debates another run on the track while assessing the remaining tread on his tires.

(One Kind Photography)

become a vital part of the build itself. He also works on printing packages for the Canadian Sport Compact Series (CSCS), a competition that hosted Time Attack and CSCS Drift at the Shannonville Motorsport Park this past August. When it comes to the grassroots drift scene’s growth, the possibilities are endless. Kristoff Hemet, a drift enthusiast and driver breaking into professional motorsports, believes the sport is here to stay. “As soon as cars were invented, people were racing them,” he says, expressing his confidence in a similar legacy for drifting. He anticipates the Ontario drift scene will keep getting bigger with time, reaching new fans, drivers, and even auto companies for sponsorships. “It’s a very technical sport, and it’s not just about power sliding a car and smoking tires,” Hemet explains. “I don’t know what it is about the sport, but people just kind of gravitate towards it.”

Hemet and Dunbar are both optimistic about the future of the sport, and each has his own opinion on how to make drifting thrive in Ontario. Factory support and technical knowledge are stressed by Hemet, who hopes his preferred

make of car, BMW, will begin to sponsor the sport and drivers like him. While he plans to keep his skills on the track, Dunbar sees himself staying behind the scenes, using his networking and marketing skills to help fuel the grassroots drift scene in Ontario. He is passionate about his sport and career with no plans of leaving the car scene, recreationally or professionally, anytime soon, and believes his work will help the sport continue to gain popularity.

“When an average person who has never seen drifting ever first sees it,” he says, “our job at our office is to make it look as cool as possible so that they the want to do it.”



Dunbar (right) leads as Kristoff Hemet chases in a tandem drift at the Shannonville Motorsport Park this past summer during a ToppDrift event. (MelyMell)

# TURNING WORK INTO PLAY

BY MORGAN CLARINGBOLD

PHOTO COURTESY OF KAYLEY CHEUNG

Whether she is working the red carpet, or blogging about electrifying college experiences, Kayley Cheung can make any day extraordinary. A graduate of the two-year Public Relations (PR) advanced diploma program at Durham College (DC), she has found her niche — and now she is ready to share it with the world.

The 23-year-old graduate is just starting out in the communications industry, but she has already learned a lot along the way. While enrolled in the University of Toronto, Bachelor of Sciences program, Cheung knew deep down it was not the right fit for her. Researching different programs, she stumbled upon PR and, suddenly, an inner passion was ignited.

Throughout her time at DC, her accomplishments were bountiful. Along with being a full-time student, Cheung was a member of the DC Experience team, a marketing initiative that allows students to share their college experiences through multiple social media platforms. Fundraisers were also in her wheelhouse as she coordinated a number of fundraising events alongside her classmates in order to raise money for a skills development trip to Chicago.

**“It’s fun and different every day,” says Cheung. “Some questions really throw you for a loop, and you think ‘this is different and challenging.’ I am learning a lot about the college — things we offer, things that have never really occurred to me, or things I have never really thought of. I’ve always liked it here.”**

To comply with the requirements of the PR program, Cheung completed two placements — one non-profit, one corporate. In her fourth semester, she interned at the Toronto Jazz Festival as a publicity coordinator. Her responsibilities included updating social media accounts, copy writing and pitching stories to her superiors. Over the summer, Cheung completed a corporate placement at Bell Media in the Music and Entertainment Specialties department.



*Kayley Cheung has gone from a student to an employee. Durham College offers her more than grades as they take her on as a student recruitment officer.*

“It was great because I love pop culture. You don’t feel like you’re working when you’re on Perez Hilton looking for news,” says Cheung. “It was a great atmosphere. I felt like I was a part of the team. I didn’t feel like I was being treated as an intern.”

The world of communications can be thrilling; one day is never the same as the next. According to Cheung, being detail oriented helps her as she constantly juggles more than one task — which happens frequently in PR. A main benefit of the profession is the vast number of areas where communications skills are applicable.

Along with her love for the entertainment industry, Cheung has also realized how rewarding working in education can be. Soon after she finished her corporate placement, she was offered a position at her alma mater as a student recruitment officer. Her job entails informing prospective students about the different programs DC offers, and the college’s admission process.

“It’s fun and different every day,” says Cheung. “Some questions really throw you for a loop, and you think ‘this is different and challenging.’ I am learning a lot about the college — things we offer, things that have never really occurred to me, or things I have never really thought of. I’ve always liked it here.”

Cheung cherishes her job at DC, and hopes to continue working within the education sector for years to come. There is no doubt in anyone’s mind that she will be anything but a smashing success in the communications industry. PR program coordinator Lynn Gough is a strong believer in Cheung’s future.

“Kayley will go far in the public relations field as she has a ‘can do’ attitude,” says Gough, “combined with a passion for doing well — which are key in the public relations industry.”

# Making a difference one child at a time

BY SOFIA ESQUIVEL

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANGIE GURLEY

Working at an international charity has benefits like no other, and being able to make a difference in the world is definitely one of them. As public relations specialist at Free the Children, Angie Gurley has the opportunity to witness this ambition for change every day.

Free the Children is a non-profit organization founded by Craig Kielburger in 1995. Over the past two decades, it has been growing into a charity of empowerment for human rights. Gurley is very humbled and honored to have landed a career at this charity which she holds very close to her heart.

While working at local movie theatres in Durham Region, Gurley was exposed to the field of public relations through word of mouth from fellow employees. Realizing “the job description highlighted my personality to a tee,” she enrolled in Public Relations at Durham College, where she found the program offered a perfect combination of theory and practice in the field. “Within the classroom, there is only so much that can be taught,” Gurley says. “A lot of it is building those personal relationships to carry on into your future career.”

**“There are no words to describe how much I learned in the agency space. The foundational opportunity was great, but I knew I had to follow my dream in a non-profit”**

While at Durham, she met classmate Donovan Zulauf, who is now her husband. They have a four-year-old daughter, Brooklyn. Upon graduation in 2006, Gurley’s goal was to work in a PR agency where she would be able to apply her new skills. She was fortunate to secure an internship at Ketchum Public Relations Canada in Toronto.

“There are no words to describe how much I learned in the agency space,” Gurley says. “The foundational opportunity was great, but I knew I had to follow my dream in a non-profit charitable organization.” In particular, Gurley wanted to be a part of a non-profit organization so she could personally see the work being done, and the impact it would have on both the business and the individual. This led her to Free the Children.

At first, Gurley’s main focus was the organization’s signature event, WE Day, which is a celebration of youth making a difference in their local and global communities. Gurley says, “It is a beautiful concept in how to make a difference with celebrities, thought leaders, world leaders and more; the energy is incredible.” While expanding 14 different We Days across the globe, Gurley saw the need for a permanent PR person,



Angie Gurley (middle row, right hand side) and her Free the Children team share laughs.

and went for it. She has been the organization’s global head PR professional for seven years, and is eternally grateful that she can take what she knows and apply it to Free the Children to make a difference.

With her portfolio continuously expanding due to her experience in the non-profit sector, Gurley keeps striving to attain larger and more enhanced opportunities for Free the Children. She is grateful to see the organization’s work is making a positive impact on people’s lives.

“We are raising a generation of innocent bystanders,” she says. “We provide tools and support social change for everyone. We want to give people an outlet to know they are not alone.”



Gurley (second from right) and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at WE Day Ottawa on Nov. 10, 2015.

# CURD IS THE WORD

BY MICHAEL PLAYFAIR

PHOTO COURTESY OF JUSTIN SORICHETTI

A career path that started with Music Business Management studies at Durham College (DC) and hopes of managing a band were transformed into an opportunity to gain experience in the restaurant business and develop a brand. Sometimes, lessons taught in a school program are applicable in a variety of entrepreneurial endeavors. Such knowledge, combined with familial connections and a strong work ethic, allowed DC graduate Justin Sorichetti to steadily rise through the ranks of a burgeoning food enterprise known as Smoke's Poutinerie.

For Sorichetti, business acumen ran in his family, and an interest in music made the course at DC seem like an interesting opportunity. However, employment prospects in the music industry were scarce and after graduation in 2008 he landed a position at an insurance company. The job was unfulfilling, and he credits the boredom and monotony of the occupation for inspiring him to look in a new direction. He consulted with his father, who is one of the largest potato suppliers in North America, and learned about Smoke's Poutinerie. The restaurant was a relatively new concept at the time with the original store opening in downtown Toronto in 2008. Sorichetti recognized the potential of the company and contacted its founder, Ryan Smolkin, in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the business.

*Justin Sorichetti helps Smoke's Poutinerie host the world poutine eating championship in Toronto.*



"I started looking into the concept as it has always been a passion of mine to open a chain of restaurants," says Sorichetti. "I learned the ins and outs of the business by being directly involved with every step of Smoke's daily operations."

After months of meetings with Smolkin, Sorichetti finally came on board as a franchisee and took over operations of the second location in London, Ont. He moved to the town in 2010 and devoted his efforts to ensure the business would be a winner. During this time, he participated in promotional events to increase public awareness of the brand and also boost traffic

to his own restaurant. Due to the large student population in London, the location became a huge draw for people killing time between classes. Additionally, the shop became a popular choice among the bar crowd. These factors contributed to the store becoming a massive success and it remains one of the top-performing locations in the franchise to this day.

Once Sorichetti had been involved for a year, Smolkin offered him a job at the Global Headquarters in Ajax, Ont. His new responsibilities included assisting with training for new franchisees and helping them open their restaurants. This gave him the chance to travel throughout North America facilitating new store openings and spreading the message of the brand. Smoke's Poutinerie now has over 100 locations in Canada and the United States, with plans to expand to Europe in the future. The company has already gained notoriety worldwide due to extensive marketing and public relations activities. For instance, Smoke's sponsors a world poutine eating championship in Toronto and regularly participates in promotional initiatives with popular radio stations.

**“In this business, it’s important to surround yourself with the right people,” says Sorichetti. “Continuous improvement is key. We’re an entertainment company, that’s why we’re successful. The poutine eating championship is the largest eating contest in the world right now.”**

“In this business, it’s important to surround yourself with the right people,” says Sorichetti. “Continuous improvement is key. We’re an entertainment company, that’s why we’re successful. The poutine eating championship is the largest eating contest in the world right now.”

The future looks promising for the poutine company, and Sorichetti even helped open a location in the DC cafeteria. The next step for Smoke's Poutinerie is to focus on brand extensions, with plans to open a Weinerie and Burritorie chain moving forward. The opportunity to diversify and create new concepts fits well with Sorichetti's progression over the years.

“He was always a guy who was coming up with ideas for ventures,” says childhood friend Daniel Mowforth. “When I was trying to land a casual job, he was setting up meetings with business owners to pick their brain.”

As the company moves forward, Sorichetti's franchising expertise is pushing the brand into new, hungry markets. Ultimately, the business intends to make eating poutine a worldwide routine. 

# Magazine photographer cultivates his eye for art

BY JACQUELINE ESCANO

PHOTOS BY KAHLIL HERNANDEZ

What started off as a Christmas present became a jumpstart to his career. With his Canon 6D cradled in his hands, Kahlil Hernandez walks the streets of downtown Toronto seeking inspiration for his photos.

Originality and novelty are two words that describe his photographs whether they be portraits, architecture, fashion or products. His passion for photography is what prompted him to start his very own online magazine, *New Currency*. Travelling to different cities to discover artistry, inspiration and creativity within upcoming artists is what brings his online publication together. The magazine features interviews, photos, videos and music of young, up-and-coming artists who have a story to tell.

Having graduated from Durham College in 2013, Hernandez says, “I studied about composition and skill sets for different types of photography. I still use all the skills I learned in Photoshop, skin retouching for portrait shots, the pen tool with product shoots, and categorizing all my work to keep organized.”

Hernandez and his colleagues journeyed to London, England to meet with people from various creative industries. Meeting in person is important for the value of the magazine, much better than back and forth online communication. With this vision, Hernandez photographs the lifestyles of individuals from around the world to show the similarities that each city and person has to offer.

Editor of *New Currency*, Kazeem Kuteyi says, “Kahlil has great taste, and is a perfectionist. He takes his time with each project we do together and he won’t put out mediocre work. I think with each project we do, be it look books for clothing brands or our magazine — it’s the passion he brings to the table that makes each project successful. And I like how he’s open to new ideas; he’s not afraid to collaborate.”

One of Hernandez’ most creative projects is “The Blunt Goddess.” Hernandez and his team of creative directors showcased the model with a samurai outfit made strictly out of Backwoods and Phillies cigar packages. The jacket and headpiece are intricate pieces that also present an owl figure. This photo shoot is one of his favourite because of its originality.

“I don’t want to go [somewhere] just to relax. I want to go



Digital Photography graduate, Kahlil Hernandez (inset) photographed “The Blunt Goddess” (left).

to broadcast my work and meet people,” Hernandez says about his magazine. “The whole premise behind *New Currency* is about travelling around the world and meeting unique people. Having a conversation with them about how they started and where they are now, and just finding something about what’s inspired them, whether it’s through singing, art or photography. It’s all about seeing how they’ve started and finding what motivates them to inspire other upcoming artists.”

Hernandez has recently worked with the Remix Project, a youth-led arts organization. By partnering with this organization, Hernandez was able to have his work featured within a Chicago art gallery. His artwork envisioned Chicago rap artists within Toronto architecture. Together with teams of creative directors, editors and photographers, he is able to spread his art across the world.

With a high level of creativity, a young artist can use passion to design a dream. Hernandez believes in sharing his desire for art and is seeking those who have the same drive. “The fact that we’ve actually made a magazine and it got released is amazing to me,” Hernandez says. “We want people to be inspired by what they see, we want people to be motivated.”

# alumni UPDATE

**1981**

**MARY-ANNE BOYES (née Mauceri),**

*Legal Secretarial,*

lives in Whitby with her husband Bryan and her two children; Michael, 24 and Kathryn, 22. Mary-Anne is currently a sales and marketing coordinator with Metroland Media.

**1993**

**Laura Sims (née Cleary),**

*Business Administration - Accounting,*

lives in Toronto with her husband Steven. Laura is currently a director of finance and administration with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities.

**1994**

**Tracy McMurray,**

*Sports Administration,*

lives in Toronto and is currently a manager in the Early Child Development Branch with Ontario Public Service, Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

**1998**

**Scott Bernier,**

*Operations Management,*

lives in Whitby with his wife Alice and his three daughters; Alexis, 10, Sydney, 7, and Emily, 1.

**2003**

**Kim Mitchell,**

*Business Administration - Accounting,*

lives in Oshawa with her husband Jamie and her children Tristan, 17 and Rowan, 7. Kim is currently an administrative assistant with UOIT.

**Joyce Mohr,**

*Human Services Counsellor,*

lives in Oshawa and is currently a service administrator with Mills Motors.

**2011**

**Thomas Cooper,**

*Computer Systems Technology,*

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**2014**

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Reflections is produced by second-year Public Relations students. When they are telling your story, they are beginning to create their own.

Get in touch by contacting Lori Connor in the alumni office at [lori.connor@durhamcollege.ca](mailto:lori.connor@durhamcollege.ca).



# THE MAN BEHIND THE CUP

BY DYLAN COOPER  
PHOTO COURTESY OF HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

Almost every Canadian dreams about one day hoisting the Stanley Cup over their head. Not many actually accomplish that dream. But what exactly is the next best thing? How about being Phil Pritchard, vice-president of the Hockey Hall of Fame (The Hall) and the guy in charge of the Stanley Cup?

After completing his post-secondary education in accounting at Centennial College, Pritchard was directed to Durham College (DC) for the Sports Administration program because of his desire for sports and business. However, Pritchard landed at DC during the teachers strike in 1984. Fortunately, Pritchard secured a placement through the college prior to the strike with the Ontario Hockey League (OHL) and worked alongside, David Branch, the current commissioner of the OHL. He eventually graduated from Durham in 1985.

“I ended up going to my boss, who is now the commissioner of the OHL, David Branch. I went up to him and said, ‘Mr. Branch, my school went on strike so would I be able to come in every day?’ He said, ‘Phil, you can come in every day as long as we don’t have to pay you. We’ll give you all the experience you need,’” recalls Pritchard. Pritchard insists that working at the OHL was the best experience of his life because he got to learn from some amazing people. These relationships eventually led him to the Canadian Hockey League (CHL) marketing department before jumping to where he is now, the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. There is a saying about “being at the right place at the right time” and that is what happened to Pritchard. After working there for a few years, the Hall understood the Stanley Cup was receiving a lot of attention from the few charity events put on and the cup’s journey around Canada. The hall decided to implement a policy that the cup should receive hands-on treatment at all times and who better to fill those gloves than Pritchard?

“My first week on the job I took the cup up to Newmarket, Ont., for a minor hockey team, and it just went from there,” recalls Pritchard. “The funny thing about it is we did that event and it went well, then we did another event and that was a success, and it just kept going from there.”

Like many Canadians, Pritchard would readily trade his spot as a caretaker to actually win the cup. But he knows he has come to a close second by taking care of the cup every day. Whether it is bringing the trophy to a charity event for children or bringing it onto the ice for the playoff finals, every step with cup is precious. Pritchard has worked with some great people and still stays in contact with employees in the National Hockey League (NHL) Benny Ercolani, Statistician



*Phil Pritchard shows off The Stanley Cup just outside the Confederation Bridge, which runs between New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.*

and Information Officer for the NHL, enjoys the great working relationship he and Pritchard have.

“I have known Phil for about 25 years,” he says. “The thing I like about working with Phil is his easy-going personality. He is one of the best people I have worked with at the league over the years.”

“Pritchard applauds DC for its commitment for internships with students, as it is vital aspect for them to gain experience entering the workforce.”

Pritchard applauds DC for its commitment for internships with students, as it is vital aspect for them to gain experience entering the workforce and has helped the hall hire eight DC graduates. From accounting to being one of the luckiest guys in Canada, Pritchard has had a long journey to where he is now. From his years as an intern at the OHL and CHL head offices, he knows comfortably he can wake up every day and love his job, which is something many people can’t do. 🏒

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