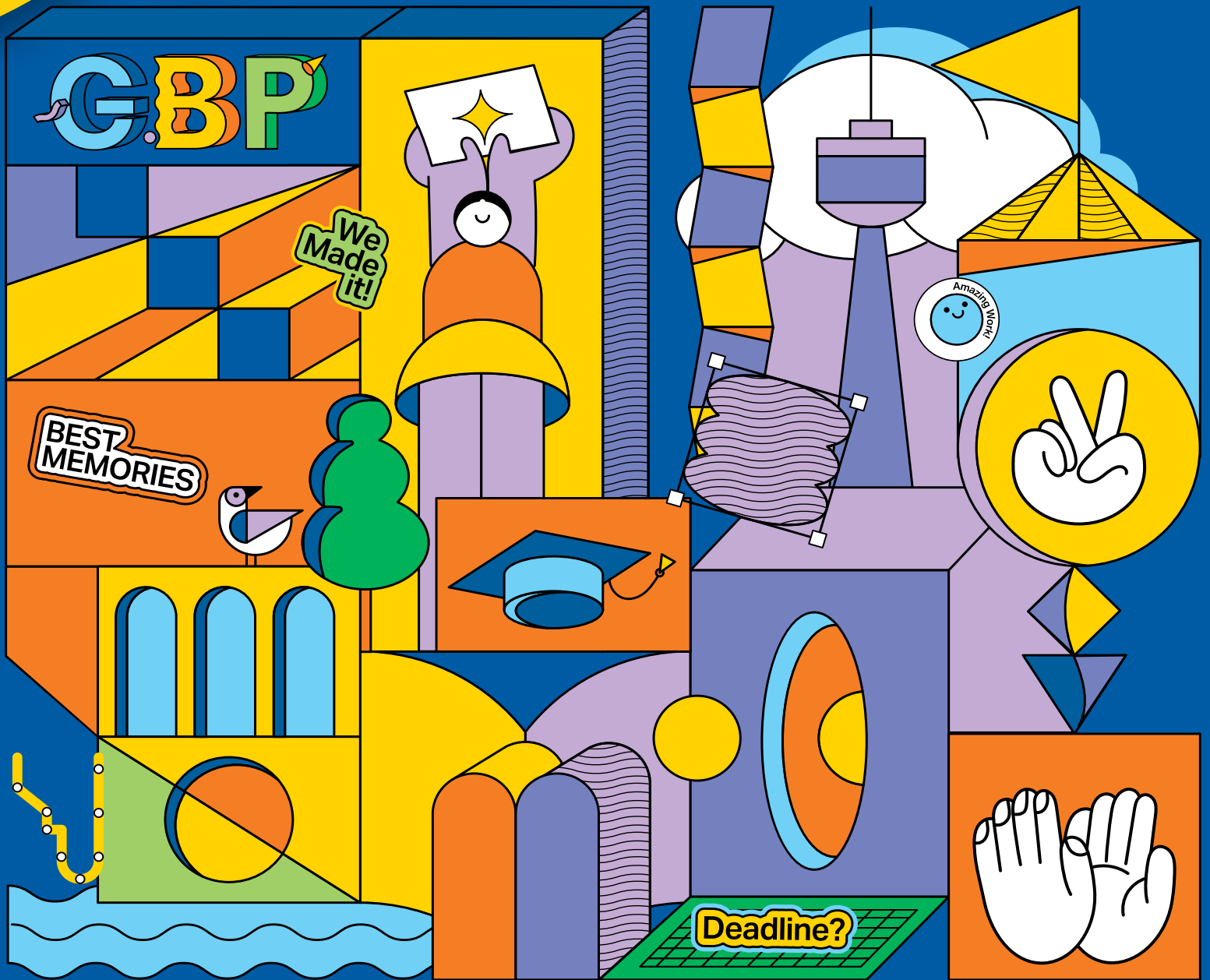


# BEYOND

## THE CAMPUS



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# Message from the President



At [George Brown Polytechnic](#) (GBP), we take immense pride in fostering a dynamic and supportive community that brings together our faculty, learners, partners, and neighbours.

In 2025, we had the honor of hosting the Congress of Humanities and the Arts, a landmark event that united academic and community leaders from across the nation. This was a historic occasion as GBP became the first college to host Congress in its 94-year history – a privilege previously reserved for universities. Many of our alumni actively participated and volunteered, showcasing the strength of our community.

As GBP alumni, you are an important part of fulfilling our core mission: to help students realize their potential, build their careers, and make meaningful contributions to society.

I hope this publication inspires you as much as your achievements inspire us. As our alumni network grows, I look forward to hearing many more of your stories and to continuing to celebrate your successes.

Remember, GBP will always be your home. Whether you return to share your experiences or to enhance your skills in a rapidly evolving world, you will always have a place here. Learning is a lifelong journey, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

Your well-being is important to us. We remain dedicated to equity, inclusion, Indigenous knowledge, anti-racism, and accessibility – values we hope have made a lasting impact on your time with us and on your future path.

Please stay connected with our Alumni Relations team to learn about upcoming events, career development opportunities, and new initiatives. Also, don't forget to update your contact details through our Alumni Relations [Profile Centre](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#). Explore the [Lifelong Learning](#) section of our alumni website for programs and resources designed to help you stay engaged and moving forward.

Thank you for staying connected and for all you do to uplift the George Brown Polytechnic community. Together, we are making a lasting impact.

**Dr. Gervan Fearon**

President, George Brown Polytechnic

# Building connections and celebrating alumni success



GBP proud partner of Toronto Waterfront Festival



GBP staff and alumni participated in Pride Parade 2025



GBP alum Cary Lewis (2nd from left) celebrating BAFTA Award for directing *The Jury* on Channel 4 in the UK



GBP alum Carys Lewis celebrating her BAFTA win!



Business Alumni Chapter Committee participating in the mentorship event



Michael Herrera, Sr VP, Institutional Planning & CFO presents alum Marin Hickox, keynote speaker of the Business Alumni Chapter launch event with a special alumni gift



Career Work Counsellor and Career Development Practitioner (CWC/CDP) graduates with Student Association representatives at the Alumni Chapter Summer Social Reunion



Dr Cindy Gouveia, VP Advancement & Strategic Partnerships and Dr Gervan Fearon, GBP President, pictured with Alumni Recognition Award Winners 2025



Alumni judges at the Roots & Recipes Black Futures culinary event



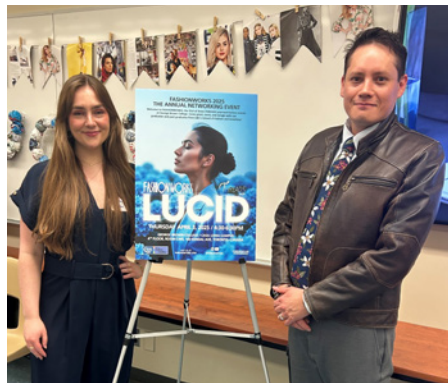
Convocation 2025 alumni selfie



Alum Keith Maa who graduated in 1988 with current students (middle)



Alum Shamilla Mathew (3rd from left) raises funds to support children in STEM programs at St. Benedict's College



Welcoming back graduates Sebrina Bender and Luis Matute at the GBP Fashion Works event



Student Association Virtual Clinic grand opening 2025



Game Design Alumni Chapter Launch at the School of Design



Celebrating alum entrepreneur, Scott Sanchon's opening of ChaTraMue in Toronto



Many Tee (2nd from right), Business Program alumna meeting with Alumni Relations and Dr Gervan Fearon, GBP President at Malaysian Lunar New Year Celebration



Alumnus Siddharth Mehta, videographer at the Canadian National Ballet



Alumni Mentorship Program Orientation Event



Trivia event hosted by the Alumni Business Chapter



Mississauga of the First Credit Nations Exhibition at the Waterfront Campus



Opening night reception of the Siné Film Festival & Industry Conference!



George Brown graduates and founders of Just Goodies participating in the Mabuhay Philippines Festival



Dr Gervan Fearon, GBP President at the GBP Open House with alum Hakeem Elhigzi (middle) and current student Vernon Wiggan Schulich Builders



Alumni Relations featured alumni Shweta Shukla & Sandeep Pandey and Jeremy & Cassie Austin as part of a Valentine's Day celebration



Game Design Fireside Chat event speakers Mackenzie Wilson (1st from left) and Jason Lacuna (4th from left) with Alumni Chapter Committee



Dr Adel Esayed, Dean with alumni at the FASCET summer social reunion event



Chef Christine Cushing, Junior League of Toronto Trailblazer Award 2025 winner



School of Fashion and Jewellery Alumni Chapter Launch



# wanted Desserts

DAIRY FREE & VEGAN OPTIONS

Foreword  
CHEF HARPAL SINGH SOKHI  
Design & Illustrations  
ABHA PRASHANT BAXI  
Photography  
NIRANJAN PATWARDHAN

**Chef Harneet Jolly**

Alum Chef, Harneet Jolly, exciting book release 'The Worlds Most Wanted Desserts'



School of Fashion & Jewellery Alumni Chapter panel discussion event



Alum Jason Miller podcast episode of Crafting Stories with Data

# Forbes' 30 Under 30 names George Brown Polytechnic alumna Danielle Spencer to 2025 honorees



In the bustling world of marketing and advertising, George Brown Polytechnic alumna Danielle Spencer has emerged as a transformative force, recently earning recognition on Forbes' 30 Under 30 list for 2025. Her journey from GBP dual credit student to successful entrepreneur illustrates the power of authentic leadership and community-focused business.

## The spark of educational excellence

Spencer's connection with GBP began during her high school years. "I did a dual credit program solely because I wanted a spare," she laughs, recalling her initial introduction to the polytechnic. However, that strategic choice became a turning point in her educational journey. "It was by far one of the best academic experiences I'd ever had," Spencer recalls. "The practicality of it, the learning space – my professor was absolutely amazing," she says.

"By the time I got to grade 11, I had 32 teachers. Finally, I found one that showed me what teaching could be," Spencer says of GBP Professor Derek Vigar. His practical approach to education made such an impression that Spencer knew exactly where to go to complete her studies when her university courses felt disconnected from real-world application. Enrolling in the Business Administration Project Management program, she discovered a teaching and learning style aligned with her goals and sensibilities.

Spencer's academic journey coincided with both motherhood and the onset of the global pandemic. While many found that time challenging, Spencer discovered unexpected benefits in the virtual learning environment. The polytechnic's flexibility was essential, especially when she needed to take concurrent courses to complete her diploma while expecting her second child.

Continue the story at [georgebrown.ca/daniellespencer](https://georgebrown.ca/daniellespencer)

# The authentic cinematic journey of George Brown Polytechnic grad Fateema Al-Hamaydeh Miller



Upon graduating from George Brown Polytechnic's Screenwriting & Narrative Design program, Fateema Al-Hamaydeh Miller embodied the spirit of a storyteller in perpetual motion. A theatre and English graduate with dreams of performance, she discovered her true passion during some of the most challenging times in recent memory.

"I always wanted to perform, but I hadn't quite found the path that felt the best," she reflects. The pandemic became her unexpected catalyst, transforming her creative journey through screenwriting – a medium that resonated with her artistic sensibilities.

## A nuanced approach to rewriting representation

Al-Hamaydeh Miller's filmmaking philosophy is anything but conventional. Her work is distinctly "soft and subversive," committed to telling Palestinian and Arab stories that celebrate complexity, humour, and human truth. "I think that's an exciting thing about writing," she explains, "you get to envision a world that you haven't gotten to experience through media."

Her approach challenges traditional narrative expectations. "When your stories haven't been told, and you're a marginalized voice in the Canadian industry, there's a specific way you're supposed to tell them," Al-Hamaydeh Miller notes. "But the Palestinian spirit finds humour in everything – that's how people are able to survive. It's a way to take your agency back. Find room for laughter. Having all these different emotions existing is what makes you whole and prevents that kind of dehumanization."

Navigating the sometimes-challenging Canadian film industry has yet to deter Al-Hamaydeh Miller. Instead, she has embraced a grassroots-style approach to storytelling.

Continue the story at [georgebrown.ca/alhamaydehmiller](https://georgebrown.ca/alhamaydehmiller)

# GBP alum J. Felipe Gutierrez turns hospitality dreams into an award-winning production company



When J. Felipe Gutierrez first enrolled at George Brown Polytechnic in 2019, he couldn't have predicted that his journey through the Hotel Operations Management program would lead him to become the CEO of a thriving creative agency. But for Gutierrez, the path to success wasn't about following a straight line; it was about building transferable skills and remaining open to new possibilities.

While at GBP, Gutierrez discovered that his true passion lay not in hotel operations but in creating experiences. Instead of seeing this as a setback, he viewed it as an opportunity. The program's comprehensive approach to business and service excellence gave him crucial foundations in accounting, management, and interpersonal skills – tools that would prove invaluable for his future entrepreneurial ventures. This, paired with a digital video editing program through the polytechnic's Continuing Education offerings, allowed him to discover a new path that would become his professional passion.

## Foundations of success

Reflecting on his journey at GBP, Gutierrez traces his entrepreneurial success to several pivotal elements of his polytechnic experience. The support from faculty members proved instrumental, opening doors to crucial industry connections and helping Gutierrez build a robust professional network. He gained access to a diverse cohort of accomplished mentors who shaped his business acumen. Perhaps the most catalytic was the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management's guest lecture series, where the encounters sparked his ambition to create a venture that would succeed commercially and drive positive change in the community.

Continue the story at [georgebrown.ca/jfelipegutierrez](https://georgebrown.ca/jfelipegutierrez)

# George Brown Polytechnic Class of 1975 nursing graduates celebrate five decades of excellence



Limberlost Place at George Brown Polytechnic's Waterfront campus echoed with laughter, memories, and heartfelt reunions as the institution celebrated a remarkable milestone – the 50th anniversary of its first graduating class in nursing. This momentous occasion brought together trailblazing healthcare professionals who helped establish the foundation of nursing education at one of Ontario's most respected polytechnics.

## A homecoming half a century in the making

The Class of 1975 holds a special place in the polytechnic's history as the inaugural cohort to graduate from what is now known as the Sally Horsfall Eaton School of Nursing. These pioneering graduates returned to campus to reconnect with classmates, reflect on their transformative educational journey, and witness firsthand how their program has evolved over five decades.

The celebration took place at the polytechnic's state-of-the-art Limberlost Place, showcasing the modern facilities that will welcome GBP students this fall.

## Distinguished speakers honour the legacy

The reunion brought together an impressive roster of polytechnic leaders and nursing education luminaries, all of whom had personal connections to the nursing profession. Dr. Wendy Ellis, incoming Dean of Health Sciences and a GBP nursing alumna herself, opened and moderated the celebratory event, while Patricia Chorney-Rubin, the current Dean of Community Services and Health Sciences, delivered welcome remarks that connected the past and present of nursing education at the polytechnic.

Continue the story at [georgebrown.ca/1975nursinggrads](https://georgebrown.ca/1975nursinggrads)



# GBP Foundation and Alumni Relations welcome Mitchell Cohen to Congress for a fireside book talk about urban revitalization



The transformation of Toronto's Regent Park from a stigmatized social housing project into a mixed-income, mixed-use, socially cohesive and vibrant community took centre stage at Limberlost Place on June 5. As part of George Brown Polytechnic's programming for the 94th annual Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Alumni Relations invited Mitchell Cohen, President and CEO of The Daniels Corporation and author of the acclaimed book *Rhythms of Change* to engage in an inspiring conversation with Dr. Gervan Fearon, President of George Brown Polytechnic, about the power of community-driven revitalization.

## Revitalizing a community

Cohen's book earned recognition from UN-Habitat at the World Urban Forum in Cairo and chronicles the nearly two-decade transformation of the 69-acre downtown Toronto housing complex built in the 1940s. What began as a garden city model had become increasingly isolated over time, prompting the approval of a comprehensive revitalization plan. In 2005, The Daniels Corporation (Daniels) was selected as Toronto Community Housing's (TCHC) private-sector development partner to help bring the vision to life.

Drawing on his background as a musician and social activist, Cohen presented the redevelopment as a public-private partnership between community residents, TCHC and Daniels. The evening's discussion highlighted how the project's success stemmed from meaningful community engagement, particularly through the revitalization's "right of return" policy – a commitment by TCHC to ensure displaced tenants are given the opportunity to return and remain part of the transformed neighbourhood.

Continue the story at [georgebrown.ca/rhythmsofchange](https://georgebrown.ca/rhythmsofchange)



# Celebrating 50 years of dance excellence at George Brown Polytechnic



## A legacy of movement and artistry

George Brown Dance is a cornerstone of dance education in Canada, evolving from modest beginnings into one of the country's largest and most successful post-secondary dance institutions. Founded in 1974 by George Brown Polytechnic and the National Ballet of Canada's first Prima Ballerina, Lois Smith C.M., the program began as a focused classical ballet curriculum before expanding to embrace diverse dance styles and performance techniques.

"For 50 years, George Brown Dance has nurtured talent, creativity, and excellence, preparing students for dynamic careers in the performing arts. This milestone celebrates our rich history and also the incredible impact our graduates have had on the dance community and beyond. We are proud to continue fostering the next generation of artists in partnership with Jörgen Dance," says Dr. Gervan Fearon, President of George Brown Polytechnic.



## Evolution through partnership

The partnership with Jörgen Dance transformed the program, expanding its scope and enhancing its professional connections. Today, the program offers specialized streams including Dance Performance, Commercial Dance, and Dance Performance Preparation, with classical ballet, contemporary, jazz, hip-hop, vocal, repertoire, and composition instruction.

Continue the story at [georgebrown.ca/50yearsofdance](https://georgebrown.ca/50yearsofdance)

# George Brown Polytechnic announces its newest chancellor: Geoff Smith



Geoff Smith, Chancellor of George Brown Polytechnic

How do you figure out the right skills to help you succeed in a world of rapid change and constant disruption? George Brown Polytechnic's newest Chancellor and notable construction industry leader, Geoff Smith, plans to leverage his over forty years' experience to support students and the Polytechnic to navigate the evolving landscape of artificial intelligence, automation, and skills development, to name a few.

These challenges aren't new to Smith. The Executive Chair of the Board of Directors for EllisDon, a Canadian-founded global construction services and technology company, has a strong track record and reputation in shaping Toronto's infrastructure and skyline, giving back to the communities they build in, and building great relationships with countless partners and within their organization.

Geoff Smith was installed as Chancellor at the first ceremony of George Brown Polytechnic's Convocation Week, June 9 – 13, 2025, at Toronto's Meridian Hall. Smith shared the stage with George Brown President Dr. Gervan Fearon, faculty, and employees as part of the platform party.

Smith is George Brown Polytechnic's third chancellor, following Noella Milne (2019-2025) and Chancellor Emeritus Sally Horsfall Eaton (2012-2018).

## A city builder for a city polytechnic

Smith and EllisDon have a longstanding relationship with George Brown Polytechnic, both of which have provided real-world work experience for students and have employed our graduates. Smith is also a donor and George Brown honorary credential recipient (Honours Bachelor of Technology - Construction Management, 2023). EllisDon's relationship stretches back to the construction of our first Waterfront Campus building, the Daphne Cockwell Centre for Health Sciences, which opened in 2012, and solidified the Polytechnic as an anchor in the East Bayfront community.

Continue the story at [georgebrown.ca/geoffsmith](https://georgebrown.ca/geoffsmith)

# Making history: polytechnic milestones



Alumnus Ali. K. Rahni with Dr. Gervan Fearon, GBP President during Congress 2025

## Congress 2025

Friday, May 30, 2025, marked the launch of a historic moment for George Brown as we welcomed colleagues from across Canada and the world for the annual [Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences](#) (May 30 – June 6), the nation's largest academic gathering. George Brown Polytechnic was the first ever polytechnic to host this gathering, now in its 94th year. The event theme this year was Reframing Togetherness.

George Brown Polytechnic hosted the event in partnership with the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Thousands of our colleagues from Canadian colleges and universities converged at Waterfront and St. James campuses for a week of knowledge-sharing, networking, and events. Programming included innovative and interdisciplinary talks, demonstrations, and cultural exchange to spark new ways of thinking.

Read more at [georgebrown.ca/congress](https://georgebrown.ca/congress)

## Celebrating a full-circle moment

Ali Kabiri Rahni, a proud graduate of George Brown Polytechnic's Culinary Management and Food & Nutrition Management programs, served as the Event & Logistics Manager at this year's Congress of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences – one of Canada's largest academic gatherings.

Pictured with Dr. Gervan Fearon, GBP President, Ali is a great example of how GBP alumni are helping shape and support the vibrant event landscape in our city.

[Read the LinkedIn post here](#)

## Showcasing alumni profiles

Alumni Relations was proud to showcase 14 outstanding GBP alumni as part of Congress 2025!

View the slide at [georgebrown.ca/alumnisuccess2025](https://georgebrown.ca/alumnisuccess2025)

# Making history: polytechnic milestones



## George Brown Polytechnic helps lead Ontario's mass timber revolution with landmark Limberlost Place project

George Brown Polytechnic has emerged as a pioneering force in Ontario's mass timber construction sector, with its groundbreaking Limberlost Place project serving as a catalyst for significant changes to provincial building codes. The polytechnic's innovative approach has directly supported the Ontario government's Advanced Wood Construction Action Plan, launched on June 26, which aims to increase manufacturing and use of high-quality, made-in-Ontario wood building products.

Read more at [georgebrown.ca/masstimber](https://georgebrown.ca/masstimber)

## Watch the video

[The Women Behind Limberlost Place](#) – George Brown Polytechnic YouTube Channel



# Alumni chapters

George Brown Polytechnic alumni live and work across the globe, and our Alumni Chapters help our graduates stay connected no matter where they are. These chapters provide a space for alumni to meet, share experiences, and reconnect with their alma mater.

Expand your network, build meaningful connections, and engage with a community of like-minded individuals.

Find your alumni chapter at [georgebrown.ca/alumni/events/chapters-networks](https://georgebrown.ca/alumni/events/chapters-networks)



Career Work Counsellor and Career Development Practitioner (CWC/CDP) Alumni Chapter



Ramkumar Arun, President of Information Technology Alumni Chapter



Michelle Walc, Field Placement and Coordinator and Professor (right) with alum Poppy Zhang



Members of the Business Alumni Chapter Core Committee



Game Design Alumni Chapter welcomes back graduates to the School of Design



Fashion and Jewellery graduates pictured in the Uptown Downtown student-run store on campus

# Alumni Summer Socials Reunions

Throughout June, George Brown Polytechnic's Casa Loma Campus was buzzing with energy and connection as Alumni Relations hosted a series of **Summer Social Reunions** – and what a celebration it was!

We were thrilled to welcome back alumni from:

- Faculty of Applied Science, Engineering & Technology
- Faculty of Business, Creative Industries & Culinary Arts
- Career Development Practitioner & Career Work Counsellor programs

Each event brought together grads, faculty, and staff for evenings filled with laughter, meaningful conversations, and shared pride in the journeys that began at GBP. A heartfelt thank you to our Alumni Chapter Committee Members – your leadership and dedication made these events unforgettable.

These reunions were more than just social events – they were a reminder that the GBP community is lifelong, and our alumni network continues to thrive through connection, collaboration, and creativity.

Read more at [georgebrown.ca/alumnireunion2025](https://georgebrown.ca/alumnireunion2025)



*Dr. Adel Esayed, Dean (1st from left) and Melonie de Guzman (3rd from left) with IT graduates*



*Allan Penning, Executive Director (right) of GBP Foundation with friends of alumni*



*Information Technology Alumni Chapter graduates reconnecting at the Casa Loma campus*

# Arts corner



## Acting

School of Media and Performing Arts alum, Wes Malik shining on stage and the small screen. As a dedicated actor and voice artist bringing depth and professionalism to his craft, Wes is carving a name for himself through serious roles in major productions, including Jenny for CBC and Whip Cream, now in its second season on TLN.

Read more at [wesmalik.com](https://wesmalik.com)



## Filmmaking

From GBP's Screenwriting & Narrative Design program to award-winning filmmaker, Fateema Al-Hamaydeh Miller is redefining representation in film. Through her production company, Khafeef Dam Productions, she shares stories with complexity, humour, and human truth.

Read full story at [georgebrown.ca/alhamaydehmiller](https://georgebrown.ca/alhamaydehmiller)



## Highland dancing

Alumna Lise Maher expertly balances her professional and creative passions. By day, she supports students and faculty at George Brown Polytechnic's School of Media and Performing Arts. Outside of work, she channels her artistry into Highland dancing, celebrating the tradition and energy of this historic form.

[Read the LinkedIn post here](#)

# Arts corner



## Art exhibition

Project management alumna Anita Ihonre brought her multidisciplinary artistry to the heart of Toronto. Her work was showcased at two major exhibitions – including a featured artist spot at DMYC's Through Her Eyes show and the Caribana: Emancipation Art Exhibition. Anita's passion lies in blending creativity, culture, and strategy to tell stories that connect people. Through her art, she continues to explore themes of identity, freedom, and community – using her canvas as a powerful voice for storytelling and self-expression.

[Read the LinkedIn post here](#)



## Culinary

Chef Ike, graduate of the Chef Certificate program, is the owner of Descendant Pizza, which has become one of Toronto's most beloved pizza spots. Chef Ike brings passion, skill, and a taste of innovation inspired through his GBP education for his beloved community.

[Read the LinkedIn post here](#)



## Graphic design

Graphic Design graduate Yalda Mo is leaving her creative mark in Toronto – quite literally. Her vibrant, diverse, and playful mural outside Meridian Hall greeted grads and guests at George Brown Polytechnic's 2025 Convocation.

Titled Memories Shaped by the City and College, her 8-by-20-foot masterpiece captures the GBP journey – from forging friendships to discovering purpose – all set in the heart of the city.

Read full article at [georgebrown.ca/mural2025](https://georgebrown.ca/mural2025)

# Global Alumni 2025



## North America

### Canada

[David Wolfman](#)  
[Denise B. McLeod](#)  
[Marin Hickox](#)  
[Rokhaya Gueye](#)

### Mexico

[Jose Hadad](#)  
[Luis Valenzuela](#)

### USA

[Barley Chironda](#)  
[Eric Kukucka](#)  
[Marc Pannia](#)

## South America and the Caribbean

### Bahamas

[Raquel Fox](#)

### Brazil

[Marina Ramos](#)  
[Rubia Viana Queiroz](#)  
[Renata Da Costa](#)  
[Teixeira](#)

### Colombia

[Valeria Cáceres](#)

### St. Lucia

[Victoria Alexander](#)

## Europe

### Austria

[Christiane Boeck](#)  
[Jonathan Todorov](#)

### France

[Kevin Fägner Santos](#)

### Hungary

[Szabolcs Pinter](#)

### Italy

[Fabiola Pianese](#)  
[Gabriele Guiducci](#)

### United Kingdom

[Carys Lewis](#)

## Africa

### Ghana

[Emefa Kuadey](#)

### Nigeria

[Temi Fashina](#)

### Tanzania

[Aliya Hirji](#)

## Oceania

### Australia

[Latifa Smujda](#)  
[Nicholas Smujda](#)

### New Zealand

[Patrick Connor](#)

## Asia

### China

[Shuang Wu](#)  
[Vicky Cheng](#)  
[Tom \(Milosz\) Malycha](#)

### Dubai

[Debangshu Dasgupta](#)  
[Matthew Melaragno](#)

## Asia

### India

[Fahd Chowdhury](#)  
[Ramkumar Arun](#)  
[Ramneet Brar](#)  
[Shalini Devi](#)  
[Umachandran](#)

### Iran

[Yalda Mo](#)

### Mongolia

[Tseegii Shinebayar](#)

### South Korea

[Roc Chow](#)

### Taiwan

[Regina Hu](#)

### Thailand

[Kitssada Khongnoon](#)

### Turkey

[Imran Bulgurcu](#)  
[Sulener Ogutcu](#)

### Vietnam

[Chloe Nguyen](#)  
[Vincent Nguyen](#)

## From Campus to the World

Connect with us and share your story!

[GlobalAlumni@georgebrown.ca](mailto:GlobalAlumni@georgebrown.ca)

# Alumni Recognition Awards 2025

The [Alumni Recognition Awards 2025](#) celebrated members of the George Brown Polytechnic alumni community whose contributions and accomplishments have demonstrated leadership and enhanced the reputation of our alumni community and the Polytechnic. The awards are part of our broader alumni recognition activities, aligned with the [Polytechnic's Vision 2030](#). The awards are presented annually.

## Nominate a George Brown alum!

- Alumni Entrepreneur Award
- Alumni Impact Award
- Alumni Innovation Award
- Alumni Leadership Award
- Alumni Mentor Award

We invite you to nominate your alum peer for Alumni Recognition Awards 2026. Click [here](#) to complete a 2026 nomination form.



**Alumni Recognition Awards**

## 2025 Winners

---

**Alumni Entrepreneur Award**



Michael Lam



Rachel Ott

---

**Alumni Impact Award**



Louis Busch



Shemar Jordan

---

**Alumni Innovation Award**



Jackie Dalimonte



Victor Lima

---

**Alumni Leadership Award**



Sandra Damota



Bennett Stableforth

---

**Alumni Mentor Award**



Natasha Burtenshaw-deVries

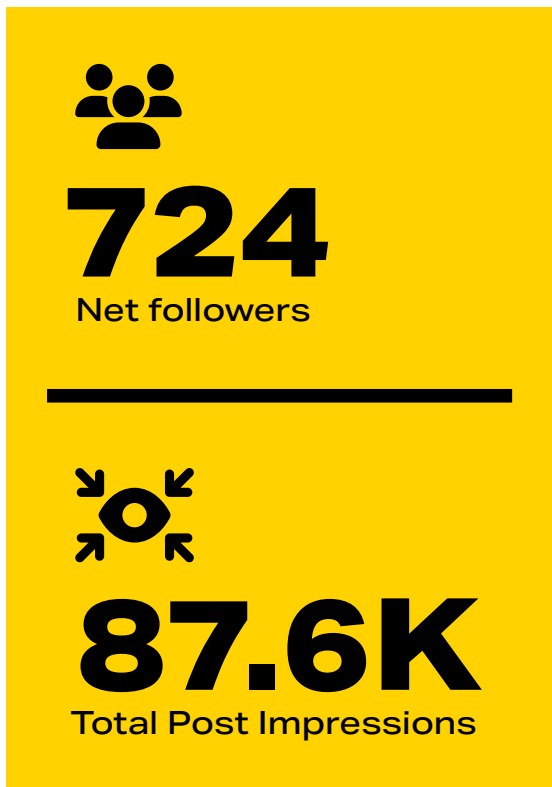


Michael Jacobsen

# Summer in the City campaign



2025



Alumni Relations presented the ‘**Summer in the City**’ campaign on our [LinkedIn page](#), it is an exciting initiative designed to engage with our incredible graduate community and friends of alumni across Toronto.

From May to September 2025, this campaign focused on fostering connections with alumni from a diverse range of fields, including culinary arts, design, construction, skilled trades, business, entrepreneurship and information technology.

Our key objectives were to create meaningful opportunities for alumni to connect with their alma mater and celebrate the remarkable achievements and success stories of our graduates with the George Brown Polytechnic community.

Now in its second year, the campaign continued to build momentum within the alumni community, featuring 36 posts, generated a net follower increase of 724 and over 87.6k post impressions. These results reflect the growing impact of our alumni community and the strong connections we continue to build through initiatives like this.

# Premier's Awards 2025 nominees

Launched in 1992 to mark the 25th anniversary of Ontario colleges, the [Premier's Awards](#) honour outstanding college graduates from Ontario's 24 public colleges.

George Brown Polytechnic has a fantastic history with the Premier's Awards and proudly celebrates the achievements of our nominees and our winners.

## Entrepreneurship and Economic Development

Project Management (2021)



[in Danielle Spencer](#)

### **Danielle Spencer**

**Founder and CEO, some creative agency**

Danielle Spencer is a highly successful young entrepreneur and advocate for Black women entrepreneurs. She specializes in experiential marketing, helping businesses at all stages of growth redefine how they connect with their audiences for lasting impact. Her firm, 'some creative agency' started as an entrepreneurial development hub in 2022 and is now a full-service marketing agency with five staff operating out of Toronto and New York. Danielle has elevated brand visibility for more than 30 clients across North America. In 2025, she was recognized for her outstanding achievements as one of Forbes Top 30 Under 30 in Marketing & Advertising.

## Workforce and Skilled Trades Advancement

Welding Techniques (2022)



[in Lilly Lazare Greene](#)

### **Lilly Lazare-Greene**

**Lab Operations and Development Technologist (Welding and Millwright), George Brown Polytechnic**

Lilly Lazare-Greene is a passionate Indigenous welder and advocate for women in the skilled trades. She runs three college welding shops, a millwright shop and a fabrication shop where students practice skills necessary to master the trade. "Lock In," an installation project she designed and built with an all-female team, was a central feature of campus tours during Orientation Week, and a symbolic way for students to show their commitment to educational goals. Lilly actively supports women entering the trades through college tours, media, mentorship, and community outreach with the YMCA's Star4Women Program and Tech in the City.

## Health Care and Community Well-being

Restorative Dental Hygiene (2014)



[in Jose Moreno](#)

### **Jose Moreno**

**Founder and Owner, Universal Dental Centre - Mobile Hygiene Clinic**

Jose Moreno is a leader in oral healthcare accessibility and frontline dental hygiene services for vulnerable and underserved communities in Toronto. He worked in dental offices for more than 20 years before launching an independent, mission-driven business, Universal Dental Care, in response to a widening gap in access to oral healthcare. Jose's mobile dental hygiene clinic accommodates clients with restricted mobility, financial constraints or mental health issues that preclude them from receiving care at traditional dental offices or public health clinics. In addition to providing quality care for his clients, Jose is an outspoken advocate for dental hygienists in Ontario.

## Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Innovation

Architectural Technology (1981)



[in Tom Riefesel](#)

### **Tom Riefesel**

#### **Director, Security Operations Division, Canada Border Services Agency**

Tom Riefesel is a seasoned leader in the field of national security, risk management, and defense with technical, engineering and operations expertise and a long-time commitment to mentor the next generation of leaders. He built a distinguished career with the Royal Canadian Navy where he rose through the ranks to Command Chief Petty Officer and with the federal public service as Director for the Canada Border Services Agency, providing strategic direction at a time when border security is a top political priority. Tom was appointed to the prestigious Order of Military Merit and awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

## Community Advancement

Hearing Instrument Dispenser program (2000)

Hearing Instrument Specialist (2002)



[in Lanre Tunji-Ajayi](#)

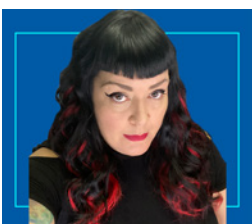
### **Lanre Tunji-Ajayi**

#### **President/CEO, Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario (SCAGO)**

Lanre Tunji-Ajayi is an internationally recognized leader and patient advocate for people living with Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) which is the most common inherited blood disorder in Canada. She is the Founder/President/CEO of the Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario and Co-Founder/Founding President and CEO of the Sickle Cell Disease Association of Canada. Her sustained efforts have provided education, counselling and grant support to the SCD community, and helped raise awareness and advance policy initiatives to improve access and care for patients. Lanre is the recipient of several prestigious awards for her contributions to healthcare policy and patient advocacy.

## Cultural and Creative Achievement

Graphic Design (1989)



[in Rachel Ott](#)

### **Rachel Ott**

#### **Founder/Principal, Varga Girl Design**

As founder of Varga Girl Design, one of North America's most creative graphic design powerhouses, Rachel Ott has spent over two decades transforming design into a force for social change and cultural empowerment. Varga Girl Design has the celebration of women deep in its DNA. Its name and tagline ("Pretty. Powerful.") honour women's strength, resilience, and boldness. Rachel's design has earned her agency numerous prestigious creative awards for branding, website, logo and package design, including a TITAN award, a New York Design Award, three MUSE Creative awards, an NYX award and top rankings by Clutch Co., rated by client reviews.

# Lifelong learning



Career Development Workshop Fall Poster

We believe that education is a lifelong journey. At George Brown Polytechnic, we are committed to offering our graduates ongoing opportunities for skill enhancement and intellectual growth. Whether you participate virtually or join us in person, you will find a wealth of experiential learning opportunities. Engage in stimulating discussions, learn from industry leaders, and expand your professional network. Seize the chance to rekindle your intellectual curiosity and join us in [continuing your lifelong learning](#) journey.

## Career development workshops

George Brown Polytechnic Alumni Relations, in collaboration with Orbit 5, proudly delivered the Postgraduate Career Success Accelerator Workshop series during Winter and Fall! These comprehensive programs have been empowering graduates across diverse fields by offering resources and insights essential for personal branding, job search strategies, and effective resume and cover letter writing.



Career Development Winter Workshop

**“The workshop provided valuable job search strategies, boosting my confidence and helping me navigate opportunities in the job market.”**

— Vidhi Jayesh Sukhadia, Fashion Management (2024)

**“I'm really impressed with this workshop! I realized I had been approaching interviews the wrong way – simply reciting my resume instead of showcasing my value. Now, I understand how to effectively introduce myself by highlighting what I can contribute and how I can make an impact”**

— Chun Kam Wong, Marketing Management – Financial Services (2023)

# Lifelong learning



LIVE WORKSHOP ||| Manulife

**Financial Literacy Workshop Series**

REGISTER NOW GBC ALUMNI RELATIONS

Financial Literacy Workshop Series



Career Development Winter Workshop

## Flashback: online webinars

Alumni Relations was delighted to have partnered with The LinkedIn Guys to offer alumni a series of webinars designed to enhance their LinkedIn expertise and turbocharge career opportunities for graduates. The webinars cover topics ranging from "Interview Hacks" to "Using AI for Job Search" and past recordings are available on the [website](#) for playback.

## Financial Literacy sessions

Alumni Relations is proud to partner with Manulife to bring alumni a series of [Financial Literacy Workshops](#) designed to support their personal and professional growth. The workshop sessions support graduates in building financial confidence, to plan, and better understand investing and help them take control of their financial wellness.

## LinkedIn Learning for recent graduates (within 1 year of graduation)

George Brown Polytechnic also offers complimentary [LinkedIn Learning](#) to alumni who have graduated within a year. This offers graduates to over thousands of courses in diverse fields to explore the most in-demand skills to enhance their resume, acquire new certifications, and bring their career to new heights.

**"As a result (of the workshops), I was able to secure a full-time job in Calgary a month after moving here. I am immensely grateful to George Brown Polytechnic for providing me with an opportunity to acquire valuable skills that have been instrumental in my professional growth."**

—Helen Nguyen, Hospitality – Hotel Operations Management (2023)

# Hire GBP graduates

## Let us be your first choice

Access a talent pool of 280,000+ skilled graduates

Onboard career-ready professionals

Advertise job vacancies for free




As you begin the recruitment process, consider the wealth of talented George Brown Polytechnic alumni. By choosing GBP graduates, you're hiring individuals with industry-relevant knowledge and skills, real-world experience and an understanding of the importance of innovation. Their experiences at GBP have shaped them into adaptable and resourceful professionals ready to make a lasting impact on your organization.



## Advertise job opportunities on [GBCareers](#)

For employers seeking exceptional talent, GBCareers is the gateway to connecting with our diverse pool of skilled graduates. The platform ensures that your vacancies reach the right candidates and provides a direct link between your organization and the vibrant community of George Brown Polytechnic alumni.

### Start promoting vacancies on [GBCareers](#) in three easy steps:

-  **1** Visit [GBCareers.georgebrown.ca](https://gbcareers.georgebrown.ca)
-  **2** Select "Employers" and choose "Create Employer Account" in the dropdown menu.
-  **3** Begin posting job opportunities upon approval of your account.

For inquiries regarding GBCareers and job postings, you can reach out to our Career Services team at [careerservices@georgebrown.ca](mailto:careerservices@georgebrown.ca)

# Hire GBP graduates

## Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)

Give back by providing GBP students with the hands-on experience that you once benefited from. Offering a work term, co-op, or field placement is a powerful way to fill a short-term position and evaluate high-potential, long-term employees. The GBP curriculum ensures students come with the knowledge and desire to work hard. We encourage alumni employers to host a student through Work-Integrated Learning (WIL).

Connect with Work-Integrated Learning Staff at [learnandwork@georgebrown.ca](mailto:learnandwork@georgebrown.ca)

## Giving back

Employers who are interested in sponsoring an on-campus student events and seminars, please reach out to [alumni@georgebrown.ca](mailto:alumni@georgebrown.ca)

**“The students from this [FASCET] program are fantastic. They are knowledgeable and come with a desire to work hard and do well. They can fill a short-term position for their work term, and their potential as long-term employees is very high.”**

— Soha Bastani, Deltera Inc., member of the Tridel Group

**“There’s a lot of talent at George Brown Polytechnic, and as an industry leader, we will look to hire George Brown students.”**

— Trudy Puls, Senior Sales Representative, Roxul Inc



# Alumni Relations career supports

Over  
**2,341**  
 full-time and part-time jobs added annually on [GBCareers](#)

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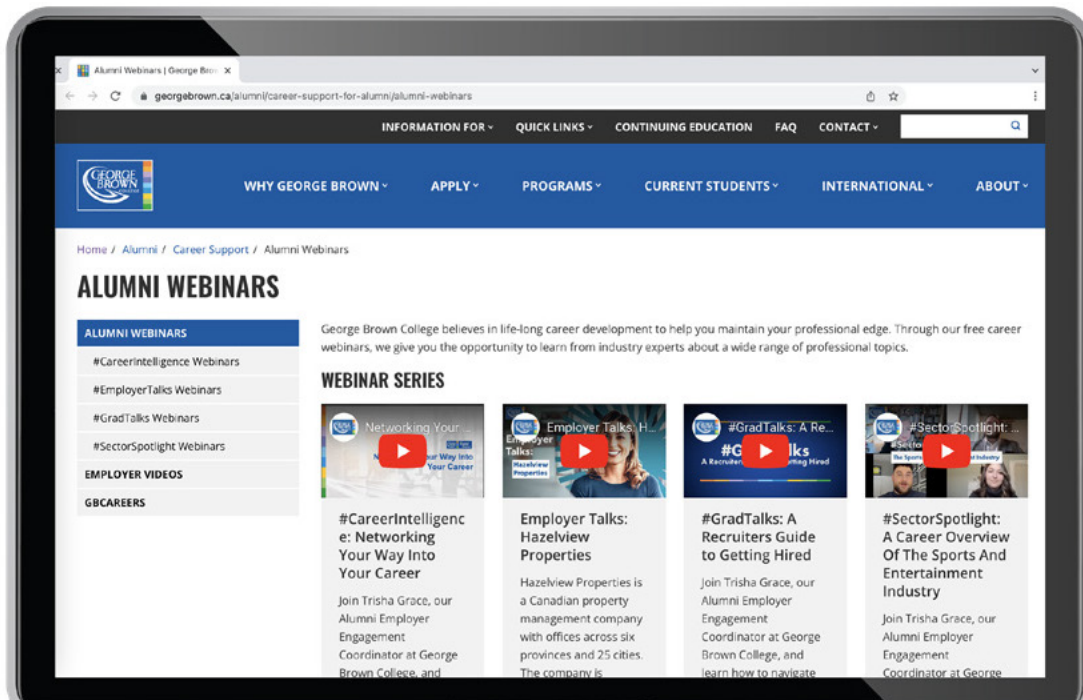
**3,818**  
 Active alumni employers

GBP alumni have access to a wide array of resources and career services.

We offer a series of videos with the most current information on career trends, issues, and developments to support graduates on their career pathway and they are available for viewing on our website through our [Career Support webpage](#).

Graduates can access appointments for Career Support through the polytechnic’s Career Services where they can book an appointment for help with their resume, career exploration, interview practice, LinkedIn development, or any other career support.

[GBCareers](#) is our polytechnic platform for job postings where graduates are sure to find opportunities that match their skills and education.



# Food Court Social 2025

The George Brown Polytechnic Foundation was delighted to host the 12th annual Food Court Social on Thursday, October 2, 2025.

The event was held at George Brown Polytechnic's Waterfront Campus, where guests were treated to an unforgettable culinary and entertainment experience. Most of the participating chefs were graduates of GBP's Chefs School and alumni have also kindly donated items to the event's silent auction.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, Food Court Social raises nearly **\$700,000**.

One hundred percent of this is going to the George Brown Polytechnic Augmented Education Program, which aids students with mental health needs and addiction histories. The Augmented Education Program, created in partnership with the Center for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), is an innovative, tuition-free program that helps people with a history of mental illness or addiction overcome barriers to education and training, helping them prepare for employment and to stay employed.

We were delighted to treat our guests to another night filled with delicious food, refreshments, and stellar entertainment.

Read more at [georgebrown.ca/2025foodcourtsocial](https://georgebrown.ca/2025foodcourtsocial)



# Alumnus Pat Lamanna helping to build the future of construction through the Juel Group Scholarship Award



Dr. Adel Esayed, Dean (right) with Juel Group Scholarship recipient student

For nearly a decade, [Pat Lamanna](#), a leader in wholesale building materials and construction solutions, has been supporting George Brown's construction and engineering students with an annual scholarship.

Providing the financial support for the next generation of construction leaders is a full-circle experience for Lamanna, the President of [Juel Group](#) and a George Brown alumnus. He graduated from the Construction Engineering Technology program in 1991.

The [Juel Scholarship Award](#) is available every year to students enrolled in either the Construction Engineering Technology, Honours Bachelor of Technology (Construction Management) or Civil Engineering Technology program. To be eligible, students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average and demonstrate passion for their field of study.



Pat Lamanna (right) with Juel Group Scholarship recipient student

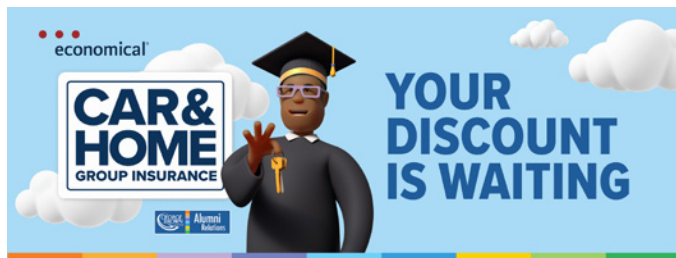
"For nine years, we've been proud to partner with the George Brown Faculty of Applied Science, Engineering & Technology to deliver this distinguished award," said Lamanna. "It's exciting to witness the enthusiasm and passion the students have for this industry, and I congratulate the recipients for their dedication and hard work."

Lamanna also gives back to the greater community. He pledged three years of support, in the form of people power, for volunteer planting events for the [Trees for Life](#) initiative, which aims to increase the leaf canopy with native trees and shrubs.

As president of Juel Group, Lamanna oversees management of the organization, including its five divisions: Brock Aggregates, Earthco Soil Mixtures, Draglam Salt, Draglam Waste and Recycling, and Less Mess.

Stay connected with Alumni Relations for future events, initiatives, and career development opportunities. Update your contact information at our [Alumni Relations Profile Centre](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#). To find out more, check the [Lifelong Learning section](#) on the alumni website and register today for an upcoming session!

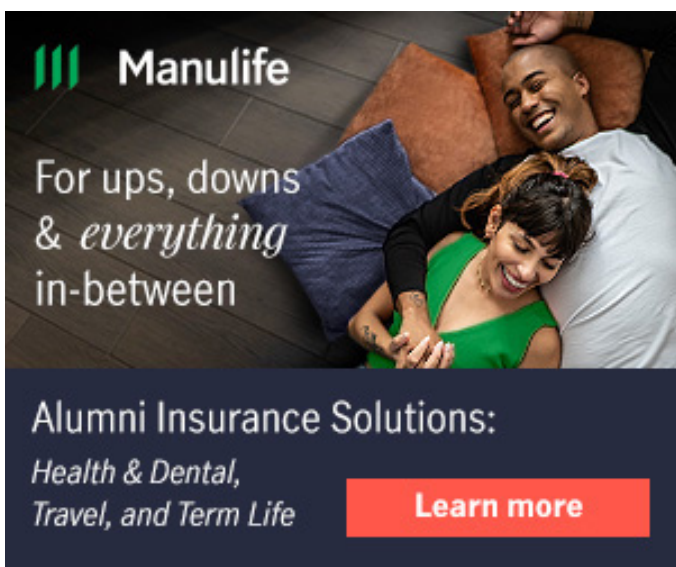
# Affinity partners



George Brown Polytechnic is proud of the partnership and relationship it has with its affinity partners Manulife and Economical.

With a variety of different offers Manulife and Economical have our Alum covered from life and health insurance to home, car and pet insurance. Along with the many perks and privileges of being a GBP Huskey, Manulife and Economical have your insurance needs covered.

Visit [Alumni Benefits](#) to learn more!



# Alumni raffle



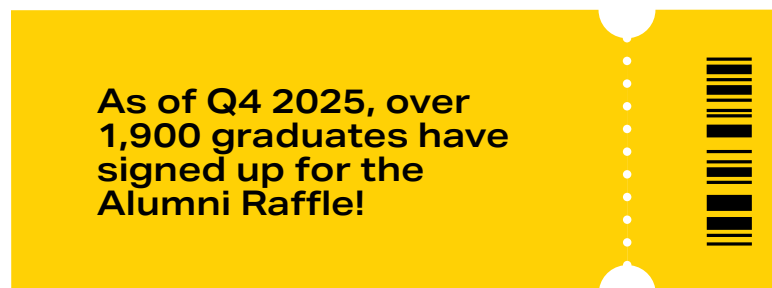
## Why sign up?

By participating in the George Brown Polytechnic Alumni Raffle, you're not just entering for a chance to win exciting prizes each month. You're also opening the door to a world of benefits:

- **Exclusive monthly newsletters:** Receive our monthly newsletters loaded with career insights, personal development tips, and irresistible alumni deals.
- **Stay connected:** No matter where life's journey takes you, you'll remain connected to the George Brown Polytechnic community.
- **Join a thriving network:** Become a part of a dynamic network of alumni who are making waves across diverse fields.

**"What a surprise! I'm very proud to be a GBP alumni!"**

— Shijie Zhao (Business Administration – Marketing, 2020)



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# Update your contact information

George Brown alumni make incredible contributions to companies, communities and individuals every day. You are an important member of a network of George Brown graduates that is more than 280,000 strong and growing every year.

Over the years to come, your life will evolve. Keep the connections that you have made here alive and make new ones through the alumni network.

Stay connected by updating your contact information at [georgebrown.ca/profile](https://www.georgebrown.ca/profile)

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