

JUMP START

.....A CAREER



Co-op News

January 2016

Where Are They Now?

This newsletter features 'Where Are They Now' articles by former Co-op students reflecting on how their high school Co-op experiences provided them with valuable workplace skills, opportunities to build workplace connections and opened doors to career and work opportunities.

Reflecting back ... students share their thoughts and insights and they all agree that taking Co-op in their high school years gave them a JUMP START on their careers:

"Take every opportunity as a chance to learn and build skills and to always ask questions."

Lina (Sir William Mulock SS)

"The Co-op program gave me courage to chase after my dreams and ambition to keep striving for excellence."

Jenna (Keswick HS)

"Co-op is an opportunity for students to become responsible and independent in the real world."

Mandeep (Middlefield CI)

"Co-op provided opportunities to learn from people employed in the profession I was interested in."

Lindsay (Sir William Mulock SS)

"My overall experience while participating in the Co-op program has been beneficial to my success today."

Carlos (Woodbridge College)

"I learned skills like time management and problem solving in a real-world, hands-on way."

Nick (Alexander Mackenzie HS)

"My career began with being given a chance at success in my high school Co-op class."

Jayden (Milliken Mills HS)

"Make your dream come to life - put your heart and soul into it and prove to the world what you're capable of."

Kevin (Pierre Elliott Trudeau HS)

Where are they now? *Building connections through Co-op!*

By Lina Lozowskij

(former Co-op Student, Sir William Mulock SS)

Now - studying Business Administration at Wilfred Laurier University

Almost three years ago, I completed my Grade 11 Sir William Mulock Co-op term at **BDO Canada LLP**. I am now a second year Wilfrid Laurier Business Administration (BBA) student and was recently accepted into the extremely competitive Business Co-op program - a huge goal of mine since high school. At the preliminary interview to be admitted into this program I was asked, "Why do you want to be in the Co-op program?" I was finally able to express the details of my high school Co-op experience and I knew that this is where my experience would count most. And, because of my experience, I was successfully admitted to the program.

I wanted to send a reflection of my past few years since participating in my Co-op term at Mulock, since I believe it has had an undeniable impact on my path through finishing high school, going on to University and navigating my way through employment. I remember starting my journey in the Mulock Co-op program, where we were told about the experiences of past Co-op students and how the Co-op program had impacted them. I hope my experience can inspire other young students, especially those interested in Business.

Following my Grade 11 year, I continued focusing my studies towards Business in Grade 12 where I graduated with a Business specialization and was extremely fortunate to be accepted into the Laurier BBA program. In the summer after the first year, I was lucky to be employed at York Region Transportation and Community Planning, in the Strategic Business Planning Department. I was the only and youngest student working in the office, which was an opportunity I was able to get from my 'office experience' at BDO. Now, being back at University to start my second year, I have been chosen to be the Junior Executive of the Laurier Accounting Association, where I will be working towards creating experiences for junior students to discover opportunities within the accounting profession.

From my Co-op experience at Mulock, I learned the importance of putting yourself out there to take advantage of any opportunity you can. I learned to take every opportunity as a chance to learn and build skills and to always ask questions. I would like to offer a few pieces of advice that I think are most important for students in the high school Co-op program:

- **Ask questions:** *You are in a phenomenal position to learn from people you aspire to be. Treat every conversation as an informational interview.*
- **Keep in touch with your employer:** *Many industries are hard to break into, but having meaningful contacts will get you further in the long run especially if you're using your Co-op employer as a reference.*
- **Keep a log/diary of the things you do:** *It will help recall experiences when you are building your résumé in the future, or in an interview.*
- **Learn how to network:** *Building confidence in networking is a skill you will need for a long time, so it's important to start practicing young. You are not working in isolation, so try to build relationships with the people around you.*
- **Start building your LinkedIn profile:** *It lets you keep in touch with people you network with and allows them to see how you are changing and growing.*



I wanted to say thank you again for the great experience in Co-op at Mulock. I am 100% an advocate for participation in this program.

Where are they now? *Building connections through Co-op!*



By Jayden Maxwell
(former Co-op / OYAP Student, Milliken Mills HS)
 Now - apprenticing to be a Licensed Plumber

Jayden exceeded all expectations as a Co-op student at **Delgrove Plumbing**. Always punctual, hardworking and genuinely passionate about the plumbing trade, he built on his Co-op connections and look where he is now!



Jayden writes ... After my high school Co-op experience, my placement supervisor offered me work throughout the summer of my graduating year to gain some more experience. After that, I worked for Trouble Shooters Plumbing in the position of Plumbing Helper which allowed me to gain even more experience. After working there for almost a year, I was confident enough in my skills to look elsewhere for work and continue to add to my arsenal of experience. I then found a company in Markham, MGS Mechanical, who saw enough potential in me to assign me my own plumbing service vehicle to be an independent service plumber for the GTA. Being able to now manage my own time and my own jobs, I advertised on the Internet for personal side jobs which allowed me to experience being my own project manager for a change, and after half a year of doing that - is when things all changed.

A plumbing company, Nu-Mun Contracting Ltd., saw my numerous adds on the Internet and was interested enough in me to inquire whether I'd be interested in working for their plumbing contracting company as a full-time registered plumber. I jumped at the opportunity and was on a one way flight to Calgary, Alberta to begin my career. Upon arriving, and as promised, my new employer registered me with the Alberta Apprenticeship Board as a Plumber/Gas Fitter. Based on my knowledge of the trade and tool know-how, I was credited with the hours towards my apprenticeship to become a second year plumber.

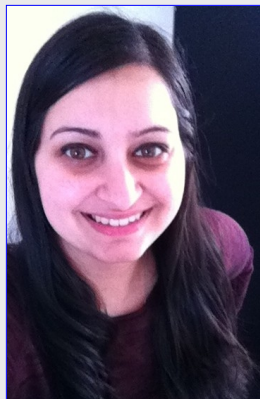
Now that I am registered, every hour in work goes towards becoming a licensed Master Plumber/ Gas Fitter which shouldn't take more than 3-4 years at this point. Once I am licensed and have my Interprovincial Red Seal certification, I will be able to work throughout Canada as a licensed plumber as well as start a plumbing company of my own - which is the actual plan. And, it all began with being given a chance at success in my high school Co-op class!

Where are they now? Co-op experience leads to Teaching Career!

By Mandeep Kaur Parmar

(former Co-op / OYAP Student, Middlefield CI)

Now - Teacher at Durham District School Board



Cooperative Education is a great opportunity that every student should experience because it's hands-on and allows students to become responsible while being independent in the real world. I'm thankful that Mrs. Badiani, Community-Based Education (Co-op) Dept. Head, Middlefield CI, gave me the push to participate in the Accelerated Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), so that I was able to begin my Early Childhood Education (ECE) program through Seneca College while also completing my Co-op placement at **Middlefield Child Care**.

I completed various tasks during my placement; such as, assisting in the routine to ensure smooth transitions, preparing centres, supervising children both in and outside of the classroom, maintaining a fun and safe environment for all, serving lunch and snacks and many other tasks. While being a part of the Accelerated OYAP, I found that I needed to balance my placement at Middlefield Child Care and my course load at Seneca College. I found this to be a great experience as life is about balance which is a key skill in order to be successful in the real world.

When I look back, I realize that had I not looked further into Cooperative Education I would not be where I am today. It was through my Co-op placement that I was able to gain valuable hands-on experience and enlighten myself on what it's like to be an educator in the ECE field. While this experience was a crucial aspect to where I stand today, I found myself coming to the realization that although I wanted to work with children, I wanted to continue working towards the dream of becoming an elementary teacher.

Any student who chooses to participate in an Accelerated OYAP will also be able to get a head start at completing their post-secondary program. After I graduated from high school in June 2007, with credits from the Accelerated OYAP, I continued to work towards the ECE diploma program which was completed in August 2009. I then pursued a Bachelor of Arts program in Sociology which I completed in April 2013. At this point I had two options, either work with a Board as a Registered Early Childhood Educator or continue towards being an elementary teacher. I decided to accomplish my dream, so I was thankfully accepted to Trent University's Bachelor of Education program which I completed in May 2014. I was very fortunate to have been placed on the occasional teacher list for Durham District School Board in June 2014.

I know that without my Cooperative Education experience I would not have had that extra upper hand at getting into a Teacher's College program in Ontario, as the standards are high and there is quite a lot of competition. This is why I highly recommend every student to participate in this valuable program, because we are lucky to have it offered to us and not everyone has this opportunity. It will always be a valuable experience that I will always remember.

Thank you Co-op!

Dual Credit Accelerated Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

Accelerated OYAP combines the Co-op experience with instruction at the college / training institute. It is offered in Semester 2 and is open to students in their graduating year.

www.yrdsb.ca/oyap

<http://www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/Coop/Pages/Community-Based-Education-OYAP-General-Information.aspx>

www.oyap.com

<http://oyap.com/splash/>



Where are they now? Co-op experience leads to Teaching Career!



By Jenna Gouveia
(former Co-op Student, Keswick HS)
Now - Teacher at R. L. Graham PS

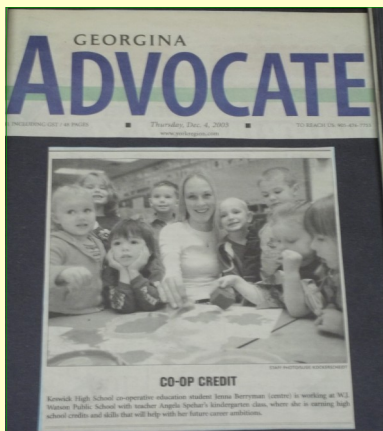
In 2003 I was lucky enough to have the experience as a Co-op student working in a kindergarten classroom at **W. J. Watson Public School** with the York Region District School Board. The Co-op program at Keswick High School truly allowed my dreams to come true right before my eyes. I was able to set a goal and reach it by working hard and having a supportive team of teachers and community members helping me along the way.

For me, I always knew that I wanted to be a teacher. The Co-op program not only provided me with meaningful connections in my field, but also provided me the stepping stone that I needed to go forward in the right direction. I was privileged to work with such an amazing host teacher, who even at my very young age believed in me and made sure that I was recognized for my efforts in the classroom. I felt like I was part of something during my time in the Co-op program and looking back, I can see that I was already making my mark in the world of education.

I am now thrilled to say that I am currently working as a primary teacher with the York Region District School Board and I have recently hosted a Co-op student from Keswick HS in my classroom at R. L. Graham PS. It has now gone full circle! I cannot say enough about the Co-op program and how proud I am that I made the decision to pursue my education in this way. The program has given me courage to chase after my dreams and ambition to keep striving for excellence. I would like to thank Mr. Rod Brown (Co-op Teacher, Keswick HS) and Mr. Paul Myers (Co-op Teacher, Keswick HS) for supporting me along the way and a special shout out to Angela Spehar (Teacher, W. J. Watson PS). She continues to be my inspiration as I continue on this wonderful journey.

In 2003: Jenna, Keswick HS Co-op Student, with kindergarten students at her Co-op placement, W. J. Watson PS.

In 2014: Jenna (right), Teacher at R. L. Graham PS & Co-op Supervisor, with Keswick HS Co-op Student, Kaya Bridge (left).



...Then

Now...

Permission granted by the Advocate for use of this photo.



Where are they now?

Co-op sparks the entrepreneurial spirit!

This article was written by **Jasmine Law** (photo below), former Co-op Student, Pierre Elliott Trudeau HS.

Her Co-op placement in Journalism was at the **Economist & Sun, Markham.**



She wrote this feature article about another Pierre Elliott Trudeau HS Co-op / OYAP Student, Kevin Cheung, and how his Co-op experience helped him 'jumpstart' his career!

Kevin Cheung, former Co-op / OYAP Student, Pierre Elliott Trudeau HS Now - a Business Owner

Kevin Cheung is an example of a youth's success story built from ambition and determination at a young age. His career started in Grade 11 as a Co-op student under Ms. Janet Davis' instruction at Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School. In 6 fast years he graduated from a sheet metal worker in his Co-op at **Trent Metals Inc.**, to a licensed journeyman, and now a business owner.

Kevin was accepted into the Dual Credit Accelerated OYAP program offered through the York Region District School Board. During his Grade 12 year he attended George Brown College to take his Part I (Basic) as a Refrigeration/Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic, along with working 400 hours at **Aire One Heating & Cooling** in Markham. Kevin graduated as a signed apprentice and continued to work in the industry, returning to college for his Part II (Intermediate) and III (Advanced) and his Gas Fitters 3 and 2 licenses, and wrote his final exam just 5 years after graduating from high school.

"In terms of my overall experience, the journey was definitely a bumpy ride," said Kevin. "The whole process of becoming a skilled tradesman is quite the challenge on its own. But, it has become a very positive experience nonetheless and I do not regret making this career choice." Kevin was steadfast in his goals, and makes time to visit his high school periodically to share with other students how to pursue a career as an apprentice and the benefits of starting young and taking advantage of the programs in our high schools.

Finally independent and fully licensed, Kevin and his company Airwise Mechanical Ltd. is ready to take on the world. "If you have a dream, make it come to life," Kevin stated. "Put your heart and soul into it and prove to the world what you're capable of."



By Carlos Paniagua, Real Estate Agent, Royal LePage Maximum Realty (former Co-op Student, Woodbridge College)



Carlos (right) - now as Placement Supervisor with his Co-op Student, **Calvin Tran** (left) from Woodbridge College

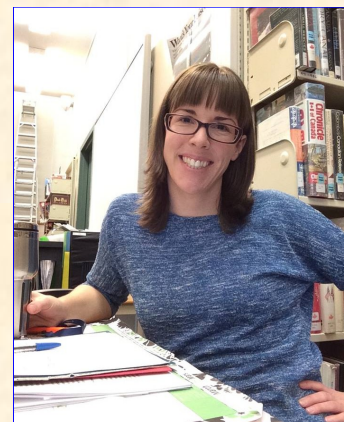
My overall experience while participating in the Co-op program at **Royal LePage** has been beneficial to my success today. In high school at Woodbridge College, I decided to take the Co-op program in the field of Real Estate and it turned out to be the best decision I made in my life. The experience, connections and knowledge I received was priceless. After graduating, I decided to pursue this career and here I am nine years in the making running my own successful business. Today, I am one of the top successful agents for Royal LePage Maximum Realty. I've been featured on television and radio, received many awards for my performance and helped the community in many ways. I am now pleased to say that I am an employer who supports the Co-op program, and I love to make a difference and impact in students' lives which will help them gain the experience they need for their own successful futures.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Bruno, Co-op Teacher from Woodbridge College, because if it wasn't for her hard work and dedication to the program I would not be in the place I am today.

Letter from a former Co-op Student ... to prospective Co-op Students

By Lindsay Unterlander
(former Co-op Student, Sir William Mulock SS)
Now - Secondary Teacher in Peterborough, Ontario

Where are they now?



Hi prospective Co-op Students,

I am Lindsay Unterlander, class of 2004. I now live and work in Peterborough, Ontario as a secondary teacher. I received my B.A. hon. from Trent University in 2008 as a student of the Queen's-Trent Concurrent Education program, and completed my B.Ed. at Queen's in 2009. I have always had an interest in working with students at risk, and I currently work at an alternative and continuing education site within my school board. My favourite part is working at the School for Young Moms. I get to cuddle babies and work with young women who have some incredible stories and life experiences. When I'm not at work I can be found playing baseball or hockey, doing community theatre, or enjoying the trails, rivers and lakes that surround and run through Peterborough.

In 2003, at Sir William Mulock SS, I completed my Co-op placement in a kindergarten classroom at **Clearmeadow Public School** which taught me two important lessons - I was passionate about pursuing a career in education, and I was not cut out for a career working with 5 year olds. My Co-op experience gets full credit for where I am today. I earned my first collection of reference letters, learned how to perfect my résumé and cover letter, and I still maintain the portfolio I started over a decade ago for my culminating project. My placement experience provided me with an opportunity to learn from people who were employed in the profession I was interested in. I believe it also gave me an edge when I applied to post-secondary education. Today, emphasis is placed on experience as well as academic performance, with many institutions placing equal value on each.

My experience in Co-op also helped me to grow as an individual. I was in a setting where I was treated as an adult and a colleague, and I thrived in that kind of environment. The skills I gained and the personal growth and development I experienced transferred over to other facets of my life. I became a more focused and motivated student and my relationships improved as a result. I strongly recommend taking Co-op before determining your post-secondary path. It's an excellent way to try out a career and to learn about the different paths you can take to become qualified.

Where are they now?

Nick Delplavignano, former Co-op / OYAP Student, Alexander Mackenzie HS
Now - pursuing his goal of becoming a Mechanical Engineer

Written by Candace Smith, Community-Based Education (Co-op) Dept. Head, Alexander Mackenzie HS

Nick Delplavignano graduated from Alexander Mackenzie HS in June 2014 in pursuit of his goal of becoming a Mechanical Engineer. Today, he is in his second year of the Mechanical Engineering Technology Automotive Manufacturing program at Georgian College. Nick began with Auto Tech courses at Alexander Mackenzie HS, followed by a Co-op/OYAP placement at **Wilson Niblett GM** in the service bay, then Accelerated/Dual Credit OYAP for Automotive Service at Centennial College. Nick passed both the classroom and shop components, earning his Level I certification and was hired by Wilson Niblett. Nick entered the Georgian College Mechanical Engineering Tech program in September 2014. Co-op and OYAP directly supported Nick’s success in both college programs. He explains, “I learned skills like time management and techniques for problem solving in a real-world, hands-on way.” Nick was able to enter both college programs with knowledge of up-to-date equipment, common issues, diagnostic and servicing techniques; “The lab and shop classes allowed students to try out what they had learned in theory, and to learn everything about automotive technology from the moment the ignition was fired up to the moment the car was turned off.”



Nick has just completed the Co-op session of his Georgian College Engineering program at ABC Group, a global Automotive Tier 1 supplier in the design, development and production of plastic automotive systems and components for OEM’s worldwide. Nick was lead tester for 2017/2018 Ford F250/350 running boards. After meeting with engineers to review specs, he designed a procedure to test the parts’ durability under extreme high and low temperatures. After testing, Nick compiled all the data and presented the results to the ABC Group engineers, who took Nick’s results to Ford. Nick feels that the achievement of his dream so far was absolutely supported by his experience in Co-op and OYAP and recommends both to those who want the practical learning and skill to jumpstart their own dreams.



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Interested in hosting a Co-op Student?

Call: 905-727-0022 ext. 3438 or

Online: [Employer Placement Profile](http://www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/Coop/Pages/Employer-Placement-Profiles.aspx)

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