

BEYOND

THE CAMPUS



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Message from the President



At George Brown College, we take great pride in bringing people together—our faculty, learners, partners, and neighbours—to create a vibrant, supportive community. Our commitment to you, our learners, is at the heart of everything we do.

We are always advancing boundaries, and our latest innovation—Limberlost Place, a 10-storey mass-timber, net-zero carbon building at our Waterfront Campus—shows just that. This project is a beacon of sustainable design, and I cannot wait to share it with you, our alumni. It is a shining example of how large institutions can reduce their carbon footprint while creating welcoming spaces for learning and connection.

Fundamentally, the heart and soul of GBC lives in you—our alumni. You are the leaders, mentors, creators, and changemakers who carry forward the GBC spirit into the world.

Whether you are building infrastructure, driving innovation, creating jobs, or giving back to your communities, you are playing an essential role in shaping our collective future. Your work inspires us, and as you continue to grow and adapt, you are also stewards of economic and social progress.

I hope this publication brings you as much inspiration as it brings me. As our alumni network continues to grow, I look forward to hearing your stories and celebrating your successes. Please remember, GBC will always be a home for you. Whether you are returning to share your knowledge and experiences or looking to refresh and expand your talents in an ever-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 our top priority. As champions of equity and belonging through inclusion, respect for Indigenous knowledge, and a commitment to anti-racism and accessibility – we hope that your time with us has created lasting positive impact for today and beyond.

Stay connected with our Alumni Relations team to hear about upcoming events, initiatives, and opportunities for career development. Be sure to update your contact information at our [Alumni Relations Profile Centre](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#). Visit the [Lifelong Learning](#) section on our alumni website to explore upcoming opportunities that spark your interest.

Thank you for staying connected and for everything you do to uplift GBC. Together, we are making a lasting difference!

Dr. Gervan Fearon
President, George Brown College

Message from the Vice-President, Office of Advancement and Global Partnerships and Education



George Brown College is a landmark in Toronto's education landscape, currently serving over 30,000 full-time students in the heart of downtown Toronto. We continue to grow, expanding our offerings, our diverse student community, and our engagement with the world at large.

These incredible achievements are thanks to the dedication of our faculty and staff, college leaders, and the determination of our students along with the success and contributions of our alumni. Our students come from all over the world and from a variety of backgrounds, and they bring a host of unique experiences and perspectives with them. When they graduate, they go out into the world and make a difference.

George Brown College students have gone on to have some exceptional careers in their chosen fields. From Toronto to all around the globe our alumni are making an incredible impact worldwide.

There is nothing that makes me prouder!

Our alumni network is large, diverse, and constantly expanding. I am very excited about our continued work around launching Chapters and Networks in various industries which will enable more of our graduates to stay connected with the College and benefit from the support that can be offered.

My hope for our alumni is to stay in touch. George Brown College is ready to connect, to lend a hand, and to open doors in any way we can. Feel free to contact the Alumni Relations team, your chapter leaders or me at any time! Do not miss out on this incredible opportunity to leverage George Brown College's vibrant alumni community, which has 280,000 members, working and living all over the world, each who are making an impact within their communities.

We are waiting for you!

Dr. Cindy Gouveia

Vice-President, Office of Advancement, and
Vice-President, Global Partnerships and Education

Building connections and celebrating alumni success



Alum, Chef David Wolfman's book featured at Indigo



As You Like It - Final Theatre Show & Celebration of graduating class



International Women's Day at Fashion Exchange - Alumni panel



Alumni Team winning 1st place at GBC Staff Badminton Tournament



Alumna Pooja Patel with her scarf design for International Women's Day 2024 at the GBC Fashion Exchange



Alumni & Friends Team winning 1st place at the GBC Softball Tournament



Global Networks - Meet-up with alumni living in New York city



Alum Doug Hietkamp (on left) from class 1986 visiting tool & die shop with Dean Dr. Adel Esayed at Casa Loma campus



Alexis Trejgo, HR program, alumna (2nd) and Shayne Speck, Sheet Metal grad (4th) at Spring Open House



GBC alumni Chris Campbell and Rok Gueye volunteering at humanitarian build in Jamaica



'Why not me' alumni panel discussion hosted by startGBC



Global Networks - Alumni living in Dubai connecting



Vivid 2024 Fashion Show featuring new alumni designs



Nursing alumni of Class 1975 gathering at The Chefs' House



Alumna, Ming Nguyen presenting her designs at End of Year Jewellery Show



Launch of the School of Computer Technology Alumni Chapter at Casa Loma campus



Alumni team playing at 'Battle at the Square' in Toronto



GBC Student Association celebrating 30th Anniversary



Alumna Natasha Roberts, entrepreneur at her shop, 'Space Vintage', Toronto



Alumni, Mohammad Shiful and Shamila Mathew working at GBC IT Department



Alumni Career Development workshop featuring alumni panel



Celebrating the professional successes of alumni couples on Valentine's Day



Five alumni chefs led by Chef David Wolfman created an Indigenous menu for the CN Tower 360 restaurant



Alum Zvi Katan, (centre) the Raptors Insider, delivering a keynote at the Centre for Business alumni reunion



The Toronto Raptor riding elevator with engineering students at Casa Loma Campus



Alum chocolatier, Diego Mendoza with his sweet creations



Honour song at Convocation by Indigenous Drummer, Albert Therrien



GBC celebrating Pride Month 2024



Stephanie Duong and Bruce Lee co-founders of Roselle Desserts



Dr. Gervan Fearon, GBC President at the grand opening of the Black Student Success Network space at St. James campus



Construction alumni hosting a site tour in Toronto for architectural students



Alum chef, Jose Hadad, founder of Mad Mexican visiting GBC Cafe

How GBC dance training set David Giller up for success



David Giller in his Raptor's jersey

Giller has performed for thousands of fans at Scotiabank Arena as part of the Toronto Raptors North Side Crew, danced in the opening ceremonies of the AFC Asia Cup in Qatar and brought ancient legends to life through dance and live music in Estonia.

His most recent role proved to be a testament to Giller's training and ambition. He taught himself to tango for the production of *Tango for Two*, a romance about a Nova Scotian sailor having to leave his partner behind told through opera and dance. He taught himself a new style and choreographed the show's duet, an experience he said broadened his experience and "knowledge of dance."

Giller also performs a three-minute freestyle solo piece in the show.

"Every person watching it will have a different take on the story and how it made them feel," he said.

Giller leaned into the ballet foundations he built throughout his George Brown training to perfect his tango performance. He graduated from two George Brown dance programs — the one-year Commercial Dance program (2018), where he studied ballet, jazz and hip hop, and returned for the two-year Dance Performance (2022), where he further developed his ballet skills.

From sporty kid to Raptors North Side Crew performer

Giller was a competitive kid who played tennis and other sports. His natural athletic abilities and dance training helped him land a coveted spot on the Toronto Raptors' North Side Crew dance team, performing during NBA games at the Scotiabank Arena.

The rigorous rehearsal schedule and challenging choreography spurred him to push his athletic training to new heights.

Continue the story at georgebrown.ca/davidgiller



GBC students attending 'Tango for Two' show

Evan Alexander Smith's journey from George Brown College to Broadway



Alum Evan Alexander Smith with Dr. Gervan Fearon, GBC President on Broadway

In the heart of Toronto, within the lively performance spaces of George Brown College's [School of Media & Performing Arts](#), Evan Alexander Smith's journey as a rising star began.

His passion for the stage took hold during his high school years, nurtured by frequent visits to Mirvish productions alongside his family. After completing Stratford Festival's summer theatre program, he asked a veteran actor for advice on which theatre schools he should apply to. He told Evan that George Brown's conservatory program was the best acting school in the country. Evan then polled other actors in the industry, and they all said the same thing: if you want to become a great actor, George Brown is the place to be. With this extra encouragement, and following his successful audition, Evan enrolled in GBC's renowned.

Stepping onto the GBC campus, located in the Young Centre for the Performing Arts, Evan was greeted by a whirlwind of opportunity and challenge.

"I struggled when I first started the program," he reflects. "A lot of students had more experience than I did, and I had a lot of growing up to do. I was a sponge, just taking it all in and trying to figure out where I fit in."

In his second year, things started to click for Evan, as he became more comfortable with his surroundings and grew more confident in his abilities. Sharing a building with Soulpepper Theatre, he got to rub shoulders with industry veterans like Nancy Palk, whose casual conversations over coffee left a lasting mark.

"Students learn a lot from having that kind of exposure," Trent Scherer, Associate Dean for the School of Media and Performing Arts, says. "The program is demanding with long hours, which inspires an incredible work ethic. But that immersion and opportunity to live and breathe theatre is invaluable."

Continue the story at georgebrown.ca/evanalexandersmith



Bob Rae, Canadian Ambassador to UN; Sarah Tranchina, Actress, Evan's wife; and Dr. Gervan Fearon, GBC President

Kevin Fägner Santos rises to senior leadership at the Education Hub



Fueled by a passion for travel and higher education, George Brown College business graduate Kevin Fagner Santos is living out his dreams – working in Paris for a popular international education community that delivers news, networking events and recruitment strategies.

Santos joined The PIE (Professionals in International Education) in 2019 as a regional business development executive and quickly worked up to his current position as vice president of partnerships. George Brown College provided the knowledge and experience to propel his success. Santos graduated from the Business-Marketing diploma program in 2017 and also completed digital media and social media marketing certificate programs.

“At GBC, I met international students from around the world, and it was wonderful to hear their stories,” he said. “That’s what drove me. I want to make sure I’m an advocate.”

A great GBC experience

Santos has plenty of experience in the field, including being an international student. He moved to Canada from Brazil as a teenager and, after years in the workforce, chose GBC to pursue his education. He completed his diploma program while working full time, also in the international education space, with an international student insurance provider.

“I must say my professors were incredibly supportive,” he said. “George Brown played a huge role in accommodating my career journey. I found the college fun, trendy, intelligent, welcoming, and warm, and the professors are all very engaged. They are there for a mission. They are truly amazing.”

While many of his colleagues have degrees and MBAs, Santos champions the benefits, including the relative affordability, of the practical college education he received at GBC. He earned a diploma to set the foundation and built up other credentials from there.

Continue the story at georgebrown.ca/kevinfagnersantos

“The teaching and learning at the Centre for Business was beyond academic. It was real life, and it was supportive.”

GBC hosts peace icon and Vietnam war survivor Kim Phuc Phan Thi for book launch



Fire Road Book Launch with Kim Phuc Phan Thi



Kim Phuc Phan Thi, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for the Culture of Peace welcomed by Dr. Gervan Fearon, GBC President

For many years, Kim Phuc Phan Thi tried to distance herself from a haunting photograph taken during the Vietnam War. In that photo, a terrified nine-year-old Phan Thi is running away from a napalm attack. The explosions burned off her clothes and caused severe burns on large portions of her skin.

That 1972 image, captured by Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Nick Ut, is called *The Terror of War*, and after its publication, Phan Thi became known as “napalm girl.”

“I wanted to escape that picture,” Phan Thi said. “I didn’t want anyone to recognize me as that little girl anymore.”

After an incredible recovery from her physical injuries and a daring journey to Canada, first to Gander, Newfoundland, then to Toronto and finally to her current home in the Greater Toronto Area, she now embraces the iconic image to promote peace.

Phan Thi shares her experiences at GBC book launch event

Phan Thi, a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for the Culture of Peace and founder of The KIM Foundation International, shared her experiences with George Brown College students and alumni on September 20, 2024, in honour of the International Day of Peace on September 21. The event, hosted by George Brown College Alumni Relations, was also a book launch for her memoir *Fire Road: The Napalm Girl’s Journey through the Horrors of War to Faith, Forgiveness and Peace*.

“It is my honour and privilege to share my story with young people,” she told GBC ahead of her visit to the college. “I can share with them my experiences, not only of the consequences of war but also encourage them to value peace. Each one of them can make a difference. Each student and graduate can do something to build peace for our world.”

Continue the story at georgebrown.ca/kimphucphanthi

Julian Franklin, VP of MLSE celebrates Toronto Raptors' partnership with GBC



Alum, Julian Franklin, Vice President of Global Partnerships at Maple Leaf Sport and Entertainment (MLSE)

A partnership between two quintessential Toronto organizations — the Raptors and George Brown College — represents a “full-circle moment” for Julian Franklin, Vice President of Global Partnerships at Maple Leaf Sport and Entertainment (MLSE).

From a George Brown student to an executive at Toronto’s professional sports empire, Franklin helped set the wheels in motion for the two organizations to do great things together. The Toronto Raptors and George Brown College announced an official partnership in the spring of 2024 to create impactful educational and community-building opportunities.

“When people think of Toronto, for us at MLSE, we want them to think of the Toronto Raptors and think about our teams. We feel that we are the lifeblood of Toronto,” Franklin said.

“George Brown being at the centre of the city and the educational heartbeat of the city of Toronto, we felt that there was a combination there that needed to be unlocked.”

Accelerating existing collaboration

The Raptors and GBC recently came together for a college marketing campaign for the Centre for Business that highlights real-world experience and professional connections. In a video ad featured on television and online, GBC students are shown on the Raptors’ home court at Scotiabank Arena.

GBC and MLSE already have a longstanding relationship. More than 200 alumni have worked with the sports giant, including Centre for Business grad Andrew Fraser and Dance Performance grad David Giller.

Continue the story at georgebrown.ca/julianfranklin



Global Alumni Connections

**From Campus
to the World**

**#GlobalAlumni
#GBCProud**



George Brown College Alumni Relations is delighted to present Chapters and Networks, a platform for graduates to stay connected and continue to be a part of the learning community.

If you are interested in learning more about Chapters and Networks, please contact us at globalalumni@georgebrown.ca.

Global Alumni 2024



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](#)

Colombia

- [Valeria Cáceres](#)

St. Lucia

- [Victoria Alexander](#)

Europe

France

- [Kevin Fägner Santos](#)

Hungary

- [Szabolcs Pinter](#)

Italy

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

Africa

Ghana

- [Emefa Kuadey](#)

Nigeria

- [Temi Fashina](#)

Tanzania

- [Aliya Hirji](#)

Asia

China

- [Shuang Wu](#)
- [Vicky Cheng](#)

Dubai

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

India

- [Fahd Chowdhury](#)
- [Ramkumar Arun](#)
- [Ramneet Brar](#)

Mongolia

- [Tseegii Shinebayar](#)

South Korea

- [Roc Chow](#)

Thailand

- [Kitssada Khongnoon](#)

Turkey

- [Sulenur Ogutcu](#)
- [Imran Bulgurcu](#)

Vietnam

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

Oceania

Australia

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

New Zealand

- [Patrick Connor](#)

Connect with us and share your story!

GlobalAlumni@georgebrown.ca

Alumni Recognition Awards 2024

The [Alumni Recognition Awards 2024](#) celebrated members of the George Brown College alumni community whose contributions and accomplishments have demonstrated leadership and enhanced the reputation of our alumni community and the College. The awards are part of our broader alumni recognition activities, aligned with the [College's Vision 2030](#) and [LEAD values](#). The awards are presented annually.

We invite you to nominate your alum peer. Complete a [2025 Alumni Award nomination form](#).



Alumni Recognition Awards 2024 winners – check out interviews with the winner

Alumni Entrepreneur Award

[Jose Hadad](#)

[Gabriele Guiducci](#)

Alumni Impact Award

[Joey Ma](#)

[Denise B. McLeod](#)

Alumni Innovation Award

[Urvish Patel](#)

[Eric Kukucka](#)

Alumni Leadership Award

[Chris Campbell](#)

[Ray Williams](#)

Alumni Mentor Award

[Aadhar Mehta](#)

[Silvia Rodrigues](#)

Summer in the City campaign



32

Posts



754

Net followers



1.38K

Total Reactions



51.6K

Total Post Impressions

SUMMER IN THE CITY



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

Running from May to September 2024, this campaign focused on fostering connections with alumni from a diverse range of fields, including culinary arts, design, construction, skilled trades, business, entrepreneurship, information technology and a host of other industry sectors.

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.

Premier's Awards 2024 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 College has a fantastic history with the Premier's Awards and proudly celebrates the achievements of our nominees and our winners.

Business

Sport and Event Marketing Program (2002)



[Marin's LinkedIn](#)

Marin Hickox

**Vice-President Women and Girls Hockey, Hockey Canada
Principal, Mpowered Inc. Consulting**

Marin Hickox is a trailblazer in women's hockey, dedicated to expanding opportunities for girls and women in Canadian sports. After discovering her passion in a Sport and Event Marketing program, she advanced through roles at TELUS, MLSE, the NHL, and now Hockey Canada, where she works to grow women's and girls' hockey nationwide.

Community Services

Assaulted Women & Children's Counselor and Advocate Program (2006)



[Denise's LinkedIn](#)

Denise Booth McLeod

Senior Manger, Indigenous Relations Office at Metrolinx

Denise Booth McLeod, a two-spirited Anishnaabe artist, facilitator, and educator, was raised in a non-Indigenous family and inspired by her college education to preserve Indigenous cultures and advocate against violence and oppression. As Metrolinx's Senior Manager of the Indigenous Relations Office, she is committed to racial equity and is developing a Reconciliation Strategy to renew relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

Creative Arts & Design

Culinary Management Program (2002)



[Jose's LinkedIn](#)

Jose Hadad

Founder and Owner, Mad Mexican

Jose Hadad is a pioneer in the Canadian food industry, bringing authentic Mexican cuisine to life with fresh, natural ingredients. Known for his motto, "Fresh is the DNA of the company," he has built a successful brand, Mad Mexican, which includes a restaurant celebrating its tenth anniversary and a \$7 million packaged food line available in 300 retail outlets across Ontario.

Health Sciences

Practical Nursing Program (2009)


[Barley's LinkedIn](#)
Barley Chironda

**National Infection Preventionist & Clinical Solutions Director,
The Clorox Company of U.S.**

Barley Chironda, a former refugee from Zimbabwe, became a registered practical nurse in Canada and discovered a passion for infection control. Now the National Infection Preventionist and Clinical Solution Director at Clorox, he supports global efforts against superbugs and serves as an international speaker. Barley credits his success to the collaborative skills he developed in college, working with classmates from diverse backgrounds.

Recent Graduate

Activation Co-ordinator/ Gerontology Program (2021)

**Joy Cardinal Flores**

Program Therapist, O'Neill Centre, Toronto

Joy Cardinal Flores, a program therapist and advocate for person-centered care, found her calling in college studying recreational management and gerontology. Formerly a caregiver for her mother, Joy now works at the O'Neill Centre, where she earned the inaugural Person-Centred Language Award from Ontario's CLRI for her compassionate approach to long-term care.

Science, Engineering, and Technology

Denturism Program (2010)


[Eric's LinkedIn](#)
**Eric Kukucka**

Vice President, Clinical Removable & Design Technologies Aspen Dental

Eric Kukucka, a leading expert in digital denture technology, discovered his passion for innovation while studying denturism in college. As a researcher, educator, and author, he develops protocols and materials that improve denture fit and production speed, impacting thousands of patients and collaborating with clinicians worldwide. His goal is to enhance the lives of millions of edentulous patients.

WINNER

Skilled Trades

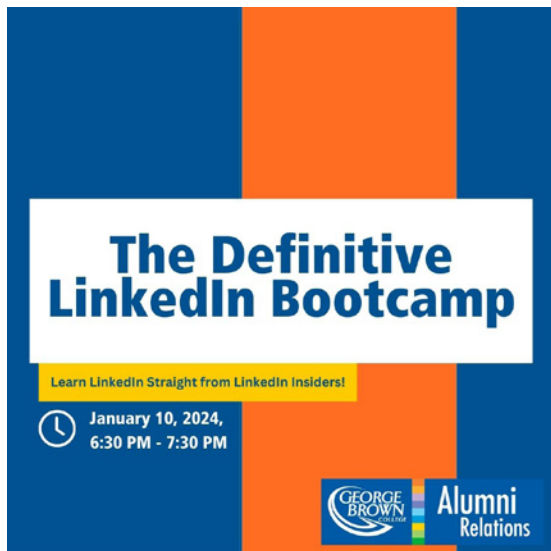
Construction Engineering Management Program (1999)


[Rokhaya's LinkedIn](#)
Rokhaya Gueye

**Community Partnership Coordinator, Ontario Chair,
Sisters In the Brotherhood; Carpenters' Regional Council**

Rokhaya Gueye pursued her dream of becoming a carpenter in college and was the only Black woman on her first large construction job. Now a champion for diversity in skilled trades, she encourages women and people from diverse backgrounds to enter the field. As the Community Partnership Coordinator for the Carpenters' Union, Rokhaya has earned numerous awards for her mentorship and advocacy.

Lifelong Learning



We believe that education is a lifelong journey. At George Brown College, 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 College Alumni Relations, in collaboration with Orbit 5, proudly launched the Navigating Professional & Life Success Beyond Graduation Career Development Workshop Series in November 2023, and held it again in February 2024. A new one, the Postgraduate Career Success Accelerator Workshop Series, was introduced in September 2024. 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.

Online webinars

Alumni Relations has been partnering with The LinkedIn Guys to offer alumni 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 being uploaded to the [GBC website](#) for playback.

LinkedIn Learning for grads one year out

George Brown College Alumni Relations also offers complimentary [LinkedIn Learning](#) to graduates more than one year out. This offers graduates access to over thousands of courses in diverse fields to explore the most in-demand skills to enhance resume, acquire new certifications, and bring their career to new heights.



Centre for Business alumni mentorship orientation session

Hire GBC graduates



Alum, Bennett Stableforth, Project Manager of Limberlost Place with Nerys Rau, Project Director

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 College alumni. By choosing GBC 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 GBC 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 College alumni.

“Students from GBC construction programs 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.

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.

Get updates on the vibrant GBC alumni community and learn how our graduates make an impact across a range of industries on the [Alumni in The News](#) page.

Alumni Relations Career Supports

Over
2,800
full-time and part-time jobs added annually on [GBCareers](#)

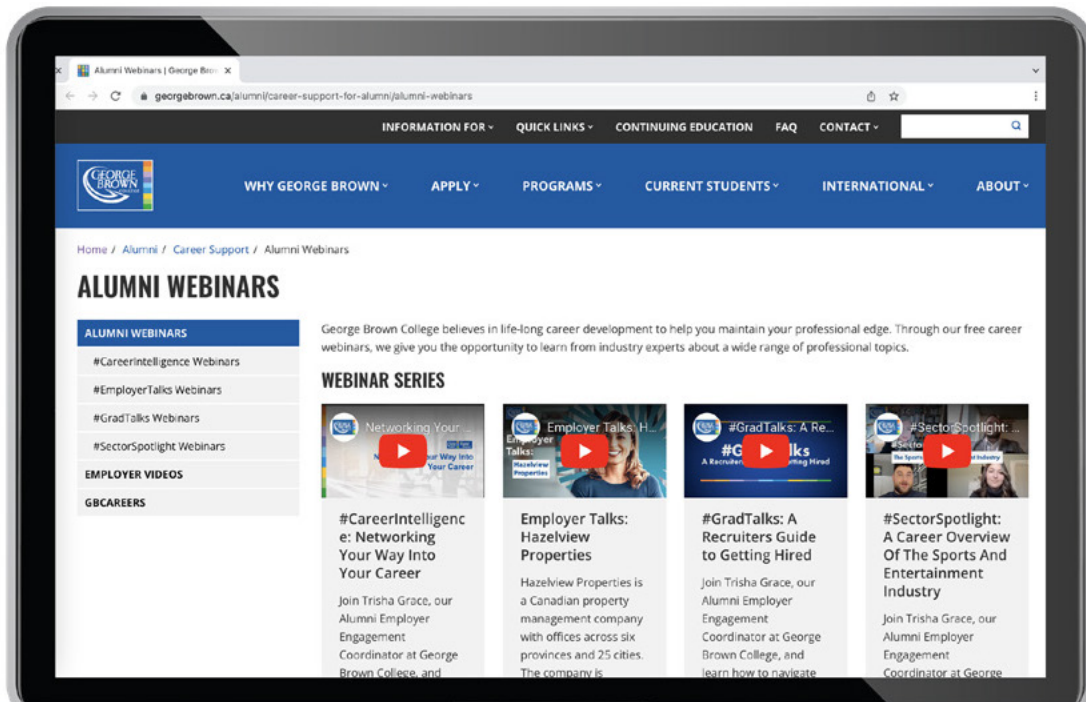
3,756
Active alumni employers

GBC 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 you on your career pathway and they are available for viewing on our website through our [Career Support webpage](#).

As a graduate you can access appointments for Career Support through the college’s Career Services where you can book an appointment for help with your resume, career exploration, interview practice, LinkedIn development, or any other career support.

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



Food Court Social 2024



On October 10, 2024, leading Canadian chefs transformed the Waterfront Campus into a nexus of gastronomic innovation for social change at the George Brown College Foundation's 11th Annual Food Court Social. A powerful catalyst for transformative education, the fundraiser blends culinary excellence with a profound commitment to social responsibility.

The 2024 Food Court Social coincided with the Foundation's 40th anniversary and attracted 50 prominent sponsors and more than 650 guests to celebrate the occasion. Led by co-chairs Ray Williams, Chair and Co-Founder of the Black Opportunities Fund and former Vice Chair of the National Bank, and Damon Murchison, President and CEO of IG Wealth Management, and hosted by GBC alumnus Chef and TV personality Devan Rajkumar, the highly successful event raised crucial funds to support Augmented Education programs.

Supporting Augmented Education programs

A cornerstone of the Foundation's fundraising efforts, the Food Court Social directly funds GBC's Augmented Education Program, an initiative that has been changing lives since 2004. Developed in collaboration with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, this innovative program offers tuition-free, job-focused training in Culinary Arts or Construction Craftwork to individuals overcoming mental health and addiction challenges.

To date, 566 graduates have completed the programs, empowering them to reintegrate and contribute meaningfully to the community.

Continue the story at georgebrown.ca/foodcourtsocial2024

GBC Foundation 40th anniversary



Foundation by the numbers over 40 years

\$100⁺ million raised

29,000⁺ donations received

24,000⁺ scholarships awarded

230⁺ ancillary programs supported

With more than \$100 million raised over four decades, the George Brown College Foundation continues to be a transformational force in students' lives and the direction of its Toronto college with local and global impact.

The Foundation was established as a charity and non-profit organization in 1984 to support fundraising for the college. Over the past 40 years, its work and mandate have expanded to support George Brown and its students through tremendous technological, economic and social changes. The Foundation's structure, with its volunteer board of directors comprised of alumni, business leaders and philanthropists, ensures its agility in working quickly and effectively with college donors to help George Brown College reach its strategic goals.

Approximately 90 per cent of the donations the Foundation receives directly support student scholarships — in 2023, it raised an incredible \$6.2 million. It has also secured significant contributions from generous long-term college supporters, including John C. and Sally Horsfall Eaton, Jack Cockwell and the DelZotto family, among others, who directly support students and encourage exciting growth and innovation across the college.

"I want to congratulate the George Brown College Foundation on its 40-year legacy. Through the activities of the Foundation, George Brown has been able to make significant contributions and be a force for positive change by preparing graduates for successful careers, supporting growing industries and building strong and inclusive communities across Toronto, the province and beyond. The college has been supported and benefited from the efforts of the Foundation, its volunteers, and its generous donors," said George Brown College President Dr. Gervan Fearon. "Thank you, and we know the college and the students and communities we serve will continue to benefit from your future endeavours."

Continue the story at georgebrown.ca/foundation40

Alum Rachel Ott gives back



As an ambitious 18-year-old, Rachel Ott embarked on a transformative journey, leaving Ottawa to pursue a Graphic Design diploma at George Brown College in Toronto. Little did she know then that her grit and determination would shape a decades-long career in an industry she's remained passionate about. Today, she stands as an accomplished graduate and business leader, combining design mastery with a commitment to uplifting the next generation.

When Ott approached her high school guidance counsellor about pursuing a career in graphic design, he told her, "If you're going to do it, you've got to move to Toronto, and you have to go to George Brown," she recalls.

In 1987, Ott embodied the spirit of a determined young artist and did just that. She packed her bags, left her familiar surroundings, and moved to Toronto with a singular focus: to become a graphic designer. While many of her peers relied on family support to fund their education, Ott charted a different path. She embraced a challenging but transformative experience, working multiple jobs to support herself while she pursued her dream. "I was hungry, I was broke," she recalls with candour. "But I was determined."

Learning through practice

Her journey through GBC was more than just an academic pursuit—it was a crucible of professional development. As technologies, software, and design practices evolved over the decades, Ott discovered that the fundamental principles she learned in her classes remain timeless. The hands-on learning and industry insights she gained during her studies laid a robust foundation for her future success.

After graduation, Ott secured a junior designer position at a prominent Toronto print shop. The terms were blunt: "They told me the pay would be terrible, and I'd do all the grunt work," she remembers. "But the lessons would be invaluable." She pauses, then adds, "And they were right."

Continue the story at georgebrown.ca/rachelott

"I was so close to dropping out after the first year because of money. I want to ease that burden for future students, even in a small way."

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