



Winter 2019



CENTENNIAL COLLEGE
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

ascent

**FOR ALUMNI
AND FRIENDS**

**Brandon Ramdial:
A Young Leader Pays it Forward**

**A Seasoned Aviator Provides
a Major Gift to Centennial**

**Yvonne Heath
2018 Alumna of Distinction**

**CENTENNIAL
COLLEGE**

*"I'll stop
chasing mine..."*



INSURANCE SAVINGS THAT'LL GET TAILS WAGGING.

Johnson Insurance would be pleased to provide you with a no obligation quote. As a member of Centennial College Alumni Association you have access to the extensive coverage and fantastic service offered through Johnson Insurance, including:

Home and Car Insurance

1-877-742-7490 | [Johnson.ca/save](https://www.johnson.ca/save)

Provide group code CI

Exclusive savings and offers for preferred customers on car and home insurance

- First car accident forgiveness
- AIR MILES Reward Miles®±
- 24/7 claims handling

MEDOC® Travel Insurance

1.877.413.4391 | [Johnson.ca/medoc](https://www.johnson.ca/medoc)

As part of MEDOC®, you'll also receive:

- Up to \$5 million in emergency medical coverage for every out of province trip
- Up to \$8,000 trip cancellation¹, interruption and delay coverage for every trip
- Access to coverage regardless of your age or health status²
- Up to \$1,500 (\$3,000 for family coverage) for lost, stolen or damaged bags

Johnson Personal Health Plan

1.800.461.4155 | [Johnson.ca/personalhealth](https://www.johnson.ca/personalhealth)

- Plan options that meet your needs; with single, couple, and family rates
- No waiting period for benefits to start
- Automatic renewal, regardless of any changes in health status



Johnson Insurance is a trademark of Johnson Inc. ("Johnson" or "JI"), a licensed insurance intermediary. Home and car policies underwritten by Unifund Assurance Company ("UAC"). Described coverage and benefits applicable only to policies underwritten by UAC in ON. JI and UAC share common ownership. Eligibility requirements, limitations, exclusions, additional costs and/or restrictions on percent savings apply, and/or vary by province/territory. MEDOC® is a Registered Trademark of JI. This insurance product is underwritten by Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Company of Canada ("RSA"). JI and RSA share common ownership. ¹Coverage for Trip Cancellation begins the day of booking your trip provided your insurance is in effect. If a trip is booked prior to Trip Cancellation insurance being in effect, coverage for that trip will begin the day that the insurance premium is paid and the policy is issued. ²A 90-day Health Stability Clause applies to pre-existing medical conditions, and other restrictions may apply. ³Home insurance discount applicable to principal residence only on home policies underwritten by UAC. ⁴AIR MILES® Reward Miles awarded only on regular home and car insurance policies underwritten by Unifund. At the time the premium is paid, one (1) Mile is awarded for each \$20 in premium (including taxes). Miles are not available in SK or MB. ®™Trademarks of AM Royalties Limited Partnership used under license by LoyaltyOne, Co. and Johnson (for Unifund). The Johnson Personal Health Plan is a Health and Dental plan administered by Johnson Inc. Claims and risk are managed by Green Shield Canada.



16

WHAT'S INSIDE

2

A Message from the CCAA President

3

A Message from the President and CEO of Centennial College
Centennial's Bees Make Quick and Sweet Work

5

8

Alumni of Distinction

10

Capturing Convocation Memories

22

Centennial's New Innovation Hub

23

We've Freed the Tampon!

24

Homecoming 2018

26

Q and A with Andrea Harper

27

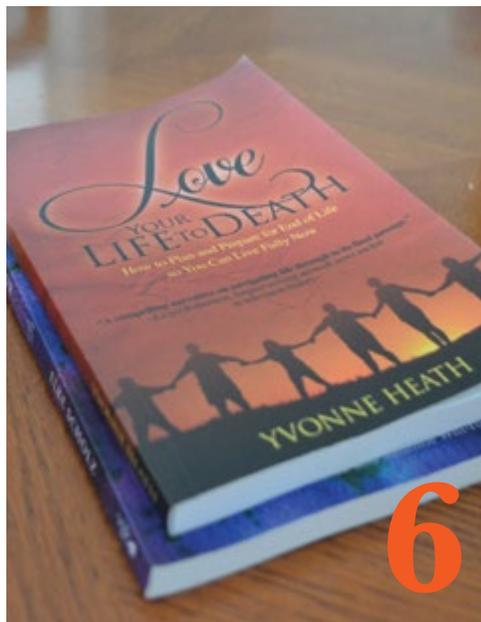
CCAA Board of Directors

28

What's On in 2019



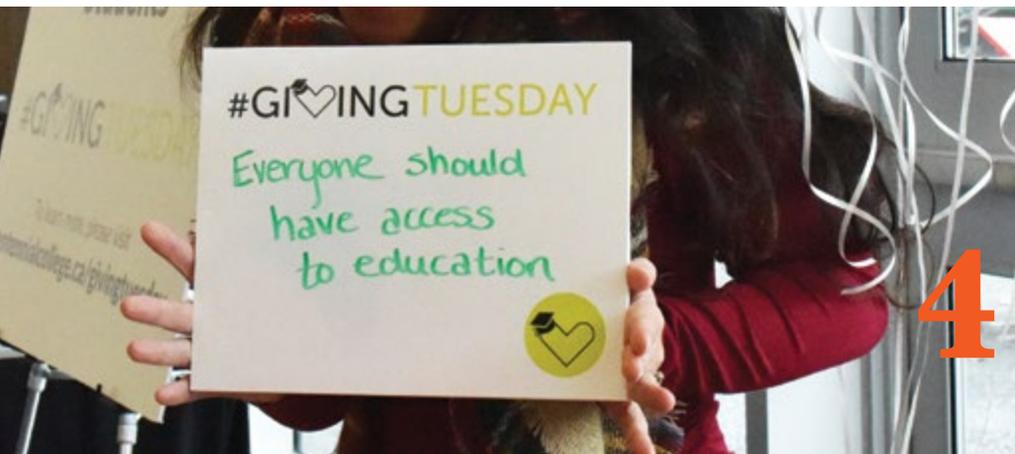
20



6



13



4

A Message From

the Centennial College Alumni Association President



Alvin Guthrie

**President, Centennial
College Alumni Association**

As President of the Centennial College Alumni Association, I am honoured to represent you. As a Centennial alum, you have access to a wide range of opportunities to reconnect with classmates, meet new friends and strengthen your bond with the College.

This year, the Centennial College Alumni Association (CCAA) will continue to host our signature series of special events that appeal to a variety of alumni. Our outings include wine tours, trips to Canada's Wonderland, Toronto Raptors basketball games, theatre shows, family events, a Caribbean trip and Homecoming – the icing on our “event cake.” Not only are these events a great time, they also provide you with an opportunity to network and socialize with your fellow alumni.

If you are interested in playing a more active role in the CCAA, please join us at the Annual General Meeting on **June 22, 2019**. Make your voice heard and elect the alumni that you think can best represent your interests. We are always looking for fresh faces and great ideas! For more information about upcoming events, or to learn how to get involved in the CCAA, please visit our website at **[ccaalife](http://ccaalife.com)**

This edition of Ascent is packed with great articles. Please take a few moments to read about our outstanding alumni, as well as news and updates from the College. If you have a story idea for a future edition of Ascent, please feel free to contact us at alumni@centennialcollege.ca. I would love to hear from you!

On behalf of the Alumni Board, thank you for supporting your alumni association. Centennial First, Alumni Forever!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alvin Guthrie', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

A Message From

the President and CEO of Centennial College



Ann Buller

**President and CEO,
Centennial College**

My college education opened doors that I never imagined when I graduated so many years ago. It led to my first role in the system I fell in love with, working with student leaders, first at Humber, then Niagara, then Sheridan. My college diploma brought me to Centennial. It then took me to Nova Scotia, where I fell in love with the rugged beauty of the East Coast and the warmth and the hospitality of the people. In 2004, it brought me back to Centennial. From my early days as a student recruitment officer to my final term as President, it has been the journey of a lifetime.

I am incredibly proud of our College's achievements. While we are recognized as being one of the most diverse postsecondary institutions in Canada, it's our internationalization efforts that have made us a truly global college. We have established groundbreaking global citizenship and leadership development programs that open students' hearts and minds to the social justice issues that affect our world.

We have become one of Canada's leading applied research colleges and are cultivating talent, innovation and entrepreneurship in our local communities.

Whether you graduated 50 years ago, five years ago, or five months ago, Centennial is still your College. Our new Book of Commitments, Third Edition, charts a powerful course, ensuring Centennial remains relevant and vibrant. This strategic plan offers a bold and powerful vision. And, no matter where you are in your career, there is a place for you here; a role for you to play in ensuring Centennial's star continues to shine.

As of May 31, 2019, I'll no longer be the president of Centennial College. I'm still not sure how I will say goodbye. But no matter where life takes me next, I'll know I'll always be a part of this incredible community. Like you, I have a powerful and life-long connection.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Buller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A Message from Sandra Harris

The New Executive Director of Centennial's Office of Development and Alumni Engagement



I'm thrilled to be a part of Centennial's truly unique and vibrant community – one that is global and diverse, yet also familial and close-knit. It's a place where anyone can feel at home, and in my short time here, I'm happy to report that I do.

Centennial's alumni, 165,000 graduates and counting, are a big part of what makes our community so special. I had the pleasure of meeting many alumni at Homecoming 2018, and I look forward to more opportunities to engage with you in 2019.

One of my top priorities as Executive Director is to work with Alvin Guthrie and the Centennial College Alumni Association (CCAA) to strengthen the student experience for future alumni, and to help provide new and exciting opportunities for current alumni to stay connected to the College. I would encourage you to stay active and involved with the CCAA. You're an important part of student success – now and in the future!

On behalf of everyone at Centennial, please accept my heartfelt thanks for your ongoing support of the College. If you have any questions or feedback regarding the Office of Development and Alumni Engagement (ODAE), please feel free to reach out to me at **416-289-5148** or **sharris@centennialcollege.ca**

Sandra Harris

Executive Director, ODAE, Centennial College



GivingTuesday

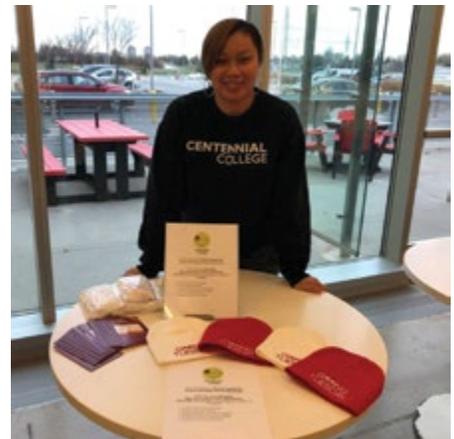
A Campaign to Help Change the Lives of Centennial Students

The Centennial College community has a big heart, and this generosity was on full display during our first-ever GivingTuesday campaign on November 27, 2018.

Fundraising initiatives took place over the month of November, including our on-campus cookie sale (the CCAA generously paid for the cost of the cookies) and the Alumni VIP Movie Night.

Together, we raised over \$7,000 – enough funds to establish six Community Outreach and Access Scholarships, and help change the lives of six Centennial students.

A sincere thank you to our partners, the CCAA and the CCSAI, and all of our generous alumni donors!



Centennial's Bees Make Quick and Sweet Work

This summer, students and staff at Centennial College's Progress Campus gathered to celebrate a new local creation: Honey! Thanks to the establishment of four bee colonies, the buzzy little workers were unusually quick in gathering enough flower nectar to produce the college's first harvest of golden sweetness.

"It was entirely unexpected," says Chef Samuel Glass of the college's School of Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts, who originally proposed the idea of bringing beehives to the campus. "Nobody expected honey this early in the process, not even our expert beekeepers."

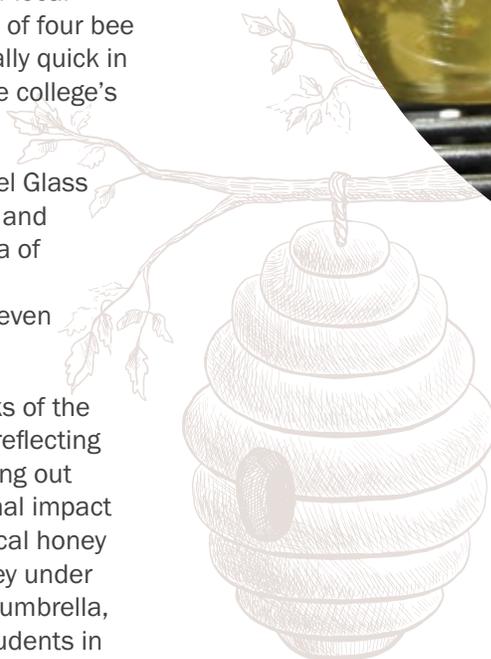
Local and sustainable are becoming hallmarks of the culinary and baking programs at Centennial, reflecting the industry trend that sees consumers seeking out local food products that are grown with minimal impact on the ecosystem. Whether it is integrating local honey into the college's kitchens, or discussing honey under the sustainability and food theory curriculum umbrella, having an apiary provides great benefits to students in the culinary programs.

Rather than just lecturing about it, Chef Glass and Centennial chose to demonstrate and lead by example. Through the efforts of the Associate Vice President, Shannon Brooks, the college found the funds to establish four commercial hives at Progress Campus next to a grouping of crabapple trees that proved to be popular with the bees. Two professional beekeepers were hired to manage the hives and ensure the bees are healthy and happy.

"The bees are doing extremely well," says Glass. The first harvest took place in early July, mere weeks after the colonies were established. The beekeepers spun the hive trays in a centrifuge machine and filtered about eight litres of honey. On July 20, culinary students packaged the honey in the college's kitchens. There was enough to fill thirty 250 ml jars, which were immediately sold out.

"It's the complexity of the honey that makes it different from any other honey," says Glass. "The crabapple trees were instrumental in that, as well as the variety of other vegetation growing around the campus that's conducive to beekeeping."

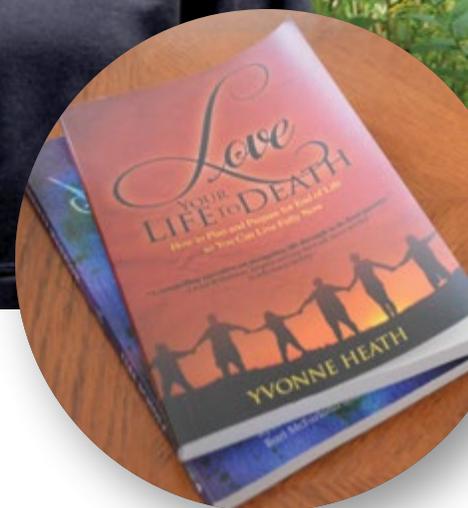
Centennial's honey has an almost zero carbon footprint, as there's no transportation involved. By using the honey as a natural sweetener in recipes – along with crabapple byproduct that could be used for jams and jellies – it's a small, but positive, step towards "field-to-fork" cooking, says Glass.



Yvonne Heath

2018 alumna
of distinction

Registered Nursing, Class of 1987



A small town girl in the big city

In 1985, with her sights set on Centennial College, Yvonne Heath made the leap from Huntsville, a quiet town in Muskoka cottage country, right into to the heart of Toronto.

Initially unsure about what post-secondary program to pursue, Yvonne was inspired to apply to Centennial's registered nursing program after spending a summer working at an institute where she provided care to individuals with severe physical and developmental disabilities. Not only did she realize she was good at it, she also loved the work.

Following in the footsteps of her mother, who was also a nurse, Yvonne was aware of the many challenges of her chosen career path – a stressful lifestyle, long hours, shift work, and perhaps worst of all, having to administer needles. In spite of being a “petrified student nurse,” she persisted and crossed the graduation stage in 1987, a moment she marks as one of the proudest in her life.

Seek out people who treat you well

Looking back on her two years at Centennial, Yvonne recalls a special connection with Mrs. Porter, one of her favourite instructors. As a student, Yvonne was terrified of public speaking. Instead of giving a class presentation, she would simply opt out and take a 0 grade on the project. Yvonne recalls how Mrs. Porter saw the potential in her, and gently (but persistently) encouraged her to overcome her fear of speaking in front of people.

Thirty years later, this encouragement still resonates. Not only has she conquered her fear of public speaking, Yvonne is a popular keynote speaker who has delivered empowering workshops and presentations to medical professionals, business leaders and volunteer organizations across North America.

Ignore logic and create a second act in your life

Throughout her nursing career – and in particular the 12 years she worked in a chemotherapy unit – Yvonne repeatedly observed our society’s reluctance to talk about, plan and prepare for grief, death and dying, and she saw how that avoidance contributes to suffering. She saw an opportunity to help, and so began her transition from nurse to author.

Love Your Life to Death, Yvonne’s first publication, includes heartfelt stories of those who have been deeply impacted by loss and found happiness again. It also features interviews of professionals who deal with grief, death and dying. The book explores why we have become a death-phobic society and provides guidance on how to start discussions about end-of-life wishes and planning. It’s also about living life to the fullest, and is told with heart and humour.

Just Show Up

In addition to her book, Yvonne is spreading her message of awareness and hope by leading the #IJustShowedUp movement. #IJustShowedUp teaches people of all ages to Just Show Up for themselves and others, so they are empowered and resilient when grief arrives. She also explains that grief extends beyond death, and can include life events such as divorce, job loss, or mental health issues.

Yvonne explains that in order to Just Show Up for someone else, you need to Show Up for Yourself First. We must create a “soft landing” for ourselves by building self-care and a strong support network into our lives. She also shares that showing up can take different forms – there is no one correct way. A phone call, a text, a hug, or even a cup of coffee can all make a positive difference to someone who is grieving.



Yvonne, pictured with her husband and children



Yvonne’s Centennial College Alumnae of Distinction award

Find your post and hold onto it

Minnie, a dear friend of Yvonne’s, recently died at the incredible age of 105. Before her passing, when she was 101, Minnie shared some words of wisdom.

“We all need a post. Something to hang onto in times of despair. Something that will be there for us, no matter what. So find your post and hold onto it.”

For some people, their post might be religion or spirituality, for others, it might be yoga, nature or music. Through her book and the #IJustShowedUp movement, Yvonne’s heartfelt and empowering messages will undoubtedly become that all-important post for many people.

Yvonne Heath has been a registered nurse since 1988, working in 10 different hospitals, in departments ranging from obstetrics to chemotherapy and hospice. She is a sought-after speaker and the author of "Love Your Life to Death." Yvonne is a proud mother of Tyler, and twins Jady and Tanner. She is married to Geordie, a paramedic who is also a Centennial alum (Paramedic, Class of 1998).

For more information about Yvonne or her book, please visit loveyourlifetodeath.com

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of "Love Your Life to Death" will be donated to Centennial College to support student scholarships. For more information about how you can support Centennial, please contact:

**Fiona Bedlington at
FBedlington@centennialcollege.ca
or 416-289-5000, ext. 3558**



Nadia Narine

Industrial Microbiology – Biological Technician Class of 2000

Nadia's plan was to become a doctor when she attended the University of Toronto in 1996, but halfway through her Bachelor of Science degree, she realized that path wasn't right for her. She knew she loved the sciences, but wanted an education that provided more of a hands-on learning experience – and that's when she chose Centennial.

After graduating from her program, Nadia established a successful career in food services. In fact, she recently took the bold step of starting her own company, Lumar Food Safety Services Ltd., where she serves as CEO, Auditor, Consultant and Trainer.

Last year, Nadia found herself back at Centennial. As one of the directors of the Ontario Food Protection Association (OFPA), Nadia was invited to present the OFPA scholarship at Student Awards Night where she met Steve Boloudakis, the Chair for the School of Engineering Technology and Applied Science.

After speaking with Steve about how her food safety industry expertise could benefit the students of Centennial, Nadia jumped at the chance to begin teaching Implementing SQF (Safe Quality Food) Systems for Manufacturing part-time at Centennial. She hopes to one day teach other industry-mandated courses such as Brand Reputation and Compliance. Both of these courses teach students skills that she knows are currently in high demand in the food industry.

Nadia's Advice to New Alumni

Be open to veering from what you think is your set career path. Entertain the opportunities that cross your path because you never know where they will take you.



Peter Bambridge

Hospitality Administration, Travel and Tourism Class of 1985

When Peter began the Hospitality Administration, Travel and Tourism program at Centennial, he was immediately struck by how intimate the learning environment was. With only 35 students in the program at the time, he got to know his instructors really well, and this fostered a feeling that they were truly invested in him and his success. He explains that the program curriculum had a high threshold for success, which ensured that graduates entered the workforce savvy, prepared and immediately employable.

Peter has lived and worked in New York, Sydney, Athens, Salt Lake City, Torino and Vancouver over his incredible 30-year hospitality management career.

In his current role as Vice President, Client Services for Jet Set Sports, Peter oversees both staffing and client relationships on multi-million-dollar accounts. He provides executive leadership, master planning, hospitality and strategic marketing activation on behalf of official partners of global sponsorship properties, and in particular the Olympic Games.

Peter has had the honour of being selected as an Official Torchbearer three times: For the Salt Lake City 2002 Olympic Winter Games, the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games and the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

Peter's Advice to New Alumni

Be a good listener, but know when to interject to stay on course. Always keep the goal in focus. And remember that experience is your best guide - gather information and seek knowledge from your colleagues before just jumping into solutions. Most importantly, be authentic. Be a person of your word.



Robert Morrison

Automotive Service Technician – Class of 2000

Rob always had aspirations of attending post-secondary school, but the opportunity never seemed to present itself. Living alone at 18 years old and supporting himself, there was simply no room in the budget for college tuition. But when Rob discovered that Centennial's Automotive Service Technician program allowed him to work and learn at the same time, he knew he finally found his answer.

After graduation, Rob excelled in his automotive service technician career. He was also invited back to Centennial to teach a night course on automotive apprenticeships. It's something he loved doing, and he continued to teach that course for 10 years. And as if that wasn't enough

to keep him busy, he also wrote technical articles for a several automotive magazines.

In 2010, Rob's career transitioned from technician to service management, where he was promoted through the ranks and eventually into his current role as National Director of Aftersales at Pfaff Automotive Partners.

Rob currently sits on the Program Advisory Committee for the Automotive Service Technician Co-op Apprenticeship (in partnership with TADA, the Trillium Automobile Dealers Association) at Centennial College. He thoroughly enjoys his role because it's a unique opportunity to help guide the program from an industry standpoint.

Rob's Advice to New Alumni

Nothing is impossible if you have the dedication to learn your craft and put the effort into advancing. Never turn down an opportunity, even if you think you aren't qualified. If I was worried about my qualifications, I wouldn't be where I am today.

Call for Nominations Alumnus of Distinction Awards 2019

Deadline: Friday, May 17, 2019

Who are Alumnus of Distinction honourees? They are Centennial College graduates who have gone on to make remarkable contributions within their industry or community. They may volunteer their time with the College or work for a not-for-profit community organization.

The Alumnus of Distinction Awards allow us to recognize our stellar alumni at our June convocation ceremonies, showing them how proud we are of their achievements and demonstrating to our new graduates that they too can make a difference.

If you know of a past student who has gone on to doing amazing things, please take a moment to nominate them!

Nomination forms can be found at cca.life

If you have questions about the Alumnus of Distinction Awards, please contact Dana Gour at dgour@centennialcollege.ca





Joel Robertson, photographer

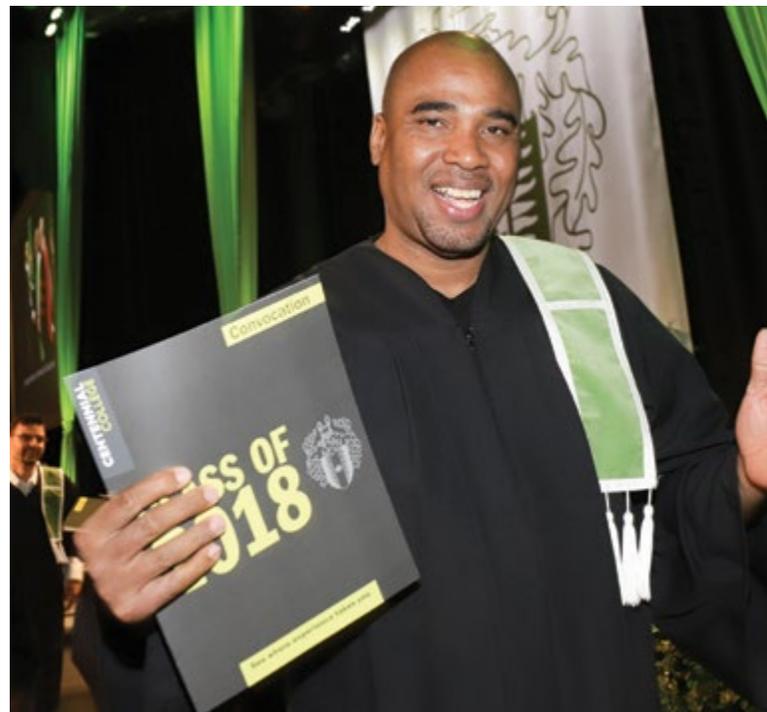
After studying hard, putting hours of work in labs and writing their final exams, thousands of Centennial College students graduate and cross the stage at convocation to be congratulated and receive their degree, diploma or certificate. The CCAA helps students celebrate by capturing that moment as they transition from being a student to a Centennial College alumnus.

“Students really appreciate being able to get a high-quality photograph of this moment,” Alvin Guthrie, president of the Centennial College Alumni Association, says. “Oftentimes their family and friends aren’t able to make the ceremony, or they may not be in a position to take a great photograph. We like to be here to ensure they get a great photograph for their memories and to welcome them to the Centennial College Alumni Association.”



Capturing Convocation Memories

The CCAA ensures that every graduate has a snapshot of their special moment



CENTENNIAL FIRST

ALUMNI FOREVER!

To ensure you get the latest information on new savings and benefits throughout the year, please keep your contact information up to date with us. Be sure to forward your my.centennial email to your personal email address.

The Centennial for Life Card is your permanent identification as a graduate of Centennial College. Carry the card to show your college pride and as a testament to others of your accomplishments. Plus, access a variety of products and services offered by the college and partnering suppliers – exclusive to card-carrying Centennial alumni.

WHY STAY CONNECTED?

Your membership is automatic after graduation! The benefits of becoming a Centennial College Alumni Association member begin at convocation and last a lifetime. Your membership is free and includes benefits and services such as:



Free access to computer labs, libraries and resource centres



Free access to the College's Career Services and Co-operative Education resources



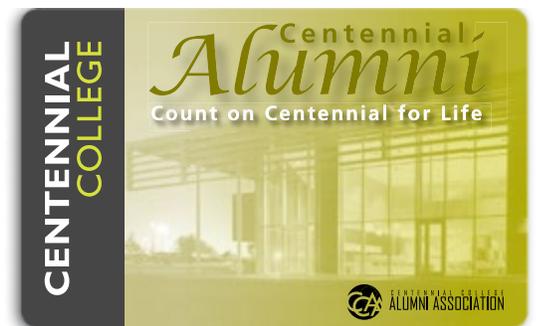
Free subscription to "ascent" alumni magazine



Discounted membership to the Athletic and Wellness facilities



Networking opportunities at industry events, conferences and reunions



CCAALife



CCAALife



CCAALife

#centennialgrad

For more information, visit ► ccaalife or call the Centennial College Alumni Association office at ► **416-289-5218**

20%
OFF

Part-time
Learning Courses

Alumni at Centennial College

Graduation from Centennial College has earned you an official membership in an association of more than **165,000 grads worldwide**. The Centennial College Alumni Association is your official link to the College and all that it will continue to offer you. As a proud Centennial College graduate, you are a lifetime member and eligible to take advantage of the many programs and services offered by the Association.

Alumni Benefits

Your free membership is automatic after graduation! The benefits of becoming a Centennial College Alumni Association member begin at convocation and last a lifetime.

Below are just a few of the services and offers you can take advantage of:

- **Free membership** to Perkopolis for discounted tickets to movies, theatre, entertainment and sporting events
- **Free access** to computer labs, libraries and resource centres
- **Free access** to the College's Career Services and Co-operative Education resources
- **Free subscription** to "ascent" alumni magazine
- **Discounted membership** to the Athletic and Wellness facilities
- **Invitations and opportunities** to attend and network at industry events, conferences and reunions



Centennial First, Alumni Forever.

ccaa.life

ANN BULLER

is leaving the building

Longest-serving Centennial President recounts her 30-year relationship

Ann Buller and Centennial College arrived around the same time, perhaps the consequence of some celestial alignment. She emigrated from Scotland as a young girl not long after Centennial had opened its doors in a hastily-renovated radar factory on Warden Avenue in 1966.

Ann was the first in her working-class family to attend post-secondary education, but her destination would be college, not university. After graduating from Humber College with a public relations diploma, she worked in student government for a short while before successfully applying to work at Centennial as a recruitment officer. The year was 1989, and the college had established a marketing department for the first time.

“The president called us together and said we’re down 13 per cent in applications. I remember the creativity and the energy around that challenge, and getting the resources to do some good, interesting things,” Ann recalls. Despite being around for two decades, Ontario’s colleges of applied arts and technology were not always top-of-mind. Just arranging visits to talk to high school students was challenging at times.



“I remember calling to book appointments and having high schools tell me, ‘No, we don’t send our students to college.’ It shocked me. I didn’t expect to get that response.”



Visiting a Lucent Technologies display, 2000



President Ann Buller official portrait,

Fortunately, Ann had a knack for giving high-energy presentations, and it wasn't long before she was an in-demand speaker.

"I always felt that if I could get that group riled up about college, then I had succeeded." And after Centennial started tracking where its students came from, she discovered that "our students don't go to college" was a misconception.

"I remember calling some of the high school guidance counsellors back and saying 29 of your students are here at Centennial. So you're not helping them get here, but they are getting here. We had tremendous results from that."

Promoted to Manager of Liaison and Community Relations, she developed new strategies to meet enrolment targets, including personalized direct mail, focused customer service training and closer ties with guidance counsellors and teachers.

As Director of Student Services, Ann addressed the problem of students abandoning their programs with research and policies that earned a Noel-Levitz Retention Excellence Award. She was named Centennial's Vice President of Student Services and Advocacy in 1999. A year later, she got a phone call that would change her career trajectory.

"The president told me that it was not a matter of having NSCC catch up with everyone else, but to leap-frog ahead with some bold ideas," Ann recalls. She relished the challenge and took the job. "It was an unbelievable rollercoaster ride."

Within months of her starting, two airliners crashed into New York's World Trade Centre on 9/11, and the repercussions were felt in Nova Scotia, where thousands of air travellers were redirected after the U.S. closed its airspace.

"We sheltered 1,500 airline passengers by opening our campus to them," Ann says. Much like what had unfolded in Gander, Newfoundland, the response by the local community was extraordinary. Ann and her volunteers worked around the clock to look after their accidental guests during an unforgettable week.

In 2003, Centennial College President Richard Johnston announced he would not be renewing his contract, and the search began for a new leader. Word got back to Ann in Nova Scotia. Centennial was not in great financial shape, and enrolment growth had waned. Ann knew that if she wanted the job, it required a daring proposal.

“We needed to catalyze change at the college, something profound to make it a standout in the market. I came up with the ‘signature academic experience’ at my kitchen table.”

Knowing Centennial's strength is its diversity, she intended to amplify it by building students' understanding of equity and social justice issues, and to give them portfolio learning and cultural competencies to prepare them to work in a global economy.



Samsung Tech Institute opening, 2015

"A search firm called and asked me if I was interested in a vice-president position at Nova Scotia Community College. I said absolutely not. But they kept calling, saying my name kept coming up."

Ann eventually flew to Halifax to see what NSCC, with 13 campuses across Nova Scotia, was all about. To her surprise, her casual visit turned into a job interview. Ann learned the position entailed implementing a strategic review and college education policy for the entire province.



Strong Girls Strong Women event, 2015 HYPE Baking



class graduation, 2013

Ann's audacious vision won her the presidency, a role she began in June 2004. The renamed Signature Learning Experience (SLE) – a product of extensive consultation with 1,000 faculty and staff – formed Centennial's statement of distinction.

Among her first duties was to unveil tuition-free summer courses for "at-risk" youth living in the Malvern neighbourhood in northeast Scarborough. Toronto Mayor David Miller attended the launch and later told the *Globe and Mail* that Centennial's community outreach effort was the highlight of his first year in office.

As SLE took shape – requiring every full-time student to take the innovative GNED 500 Global Citizenship course – Ann mused about offering opportunities for students to travel overseas.

“We know from studies that just eight days in another environment can fundamentally change you – and that's what we set out to do. We want our students to go abroad and see the world, to democratize education so that everyone, regardless of their means, can get out there.”

The first group of students, faculty and staff advisors travelled to rural Dominican Republic. The college paid for the flights and accommodation, and most of the meals were provided by the local agency that was orchestrating the service work.

“We try to partner with established non-profits on the ground who may have experience hosting students. That way we're assured of a safe place in which our learners can perform their work,” says Ann. Increasingly bold adventures have dispatched students to exotic destinations such as the Amazon River basin in Brazil and the Great Rift Valley in Kenya.

“What's incredible is that our international students have really taken advantage of these trips. And the Aboriginal components have grown; we want more opportunities for students to learn about Indigenous cultures right here in Canada.”

Ann has long recognized that Centennial serves a community of learners with financial needs. In response, she created the Lesley Russell Scholarship, the Ann Buller Indigenous Entrance Scholarship and the David and Isabel Buller Scholarship, and also supports the college's annual golf tournament fundraiser.

To list all of Ann's accomplishments, awards and accolades would fill most of these pages. Suffice to say, her vision to transform Centennial has been realized. With her guidance, the college has collaboratively authored three *Book of Commitments*, comprehensive plans that lay out the college's roadmap in five-year increments.

“Our strategic plans describe a college with bolder commitments, reflecting the confidence in, and passion for, the work of transforming lives and communities through learning,” she says. Compared to the complacent school she found in 1989, the transformation has been nothing short of astounding.

This spring Ann Buller will leave Centennial, reluctantly by choice, as its sixth and most impactful president. But she pledges to stay connected to the institution she's inspired and led for most of three decades.

“I have a deep emotional connection to this place. But it's the right time for a change in leadership,” Ann says, as a tremor of emotion crosses her face. “It's going to be hard to leave the building when that day arrives.”



Ann's ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, 2014



Brandon congratulating Francine Telles, the 2018 recipient of the Brandon Ramdial Building Leaders Scholarship

Brandon Ramdial: a young leader pays it forward

Brandon Ramdial graduated from the Community and Justice Services program in 2016, and currently works at the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services in the Youth Justice Services Division. He recently spoke with us about his chosen career path, his passion for leadership and why he gives back to Centennial.

I understand that you have had a desire to work in the field of law and social justice since high school. What about this career path appeals to you so strongly?

I really enjoy being an advocate for those in need and helping to create second chances for people. When you help someone, they get a good feeling about themselves, and that gives you a good feeling too.

Q

Working closely with people in marginalized and low-income communities gives you a unique insight into the challenges they face. Do you think access to higher education is one of those challenges?

Yes, definitely. Many marginalized people have the perception that they might not get accepted to college because of a criminal background, or they simply don't see themselves in a post-secondary setting because they come from a family situation that isn't at all focused on education.

Do you think education is a factor that can improve the lives of individuals living in marginalized and low-income communities?

Absolutely. If anything, going to college can show someone that they aren't alone. The odds are that they will find people on campus who are also working towards something better. Continuing education also helps at-risk individuals realize that they are able to do more than they thought, and that builds their confidence.

You received three different awards as a student at Centennial. The Ed Blazo Memorial Scholarship, the Centennial Citizenship Award and the School of Community and Health Studies "Rising Star" Award. Can you tell me the impact that receiving those awards had on you?

Well, first of all, I was very shocked and surprised when I won those awards! I certainly wasn't expecting them. It made me feel appreciated, and

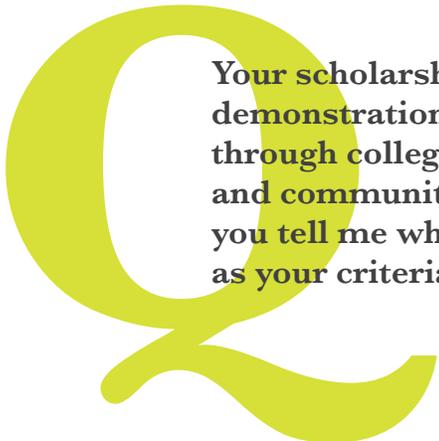
it made me feel like I was being recognized for making a positive impact on campus. The awards have also made a financial impact. I am currently using those funds to further my education. I'm working on my Criminology degree at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Did the impact of receiving those awards inspire you to give back by creating a scholarship of your own (The Brandon Ramdial Building Leaders Scholarship)?

Yes, it definitely did. In fact, a few weeks after I won my first award, I started looking into how I could establish my own scholarship. The Office of Development and Alumni Engagement, along with Financial Services, helped me set it up. I really wanted to use my experience to motivate other students.

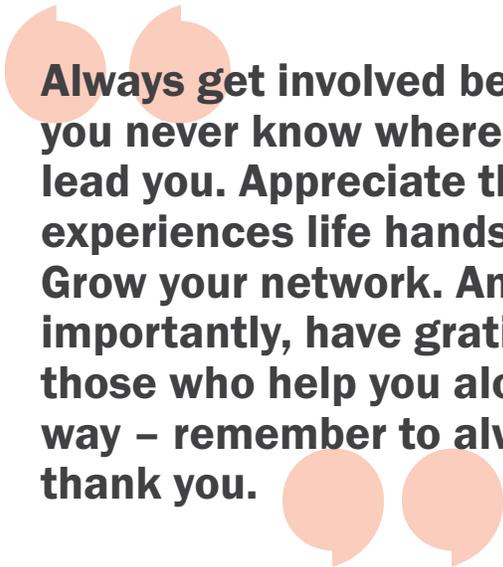


Brandon, pictured here with his proud mother, Sandra

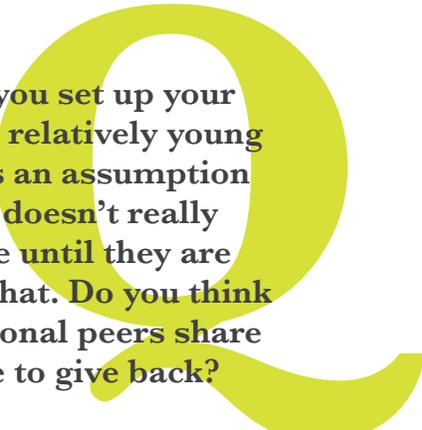


Your scholarship is based on a demonstration of leadership through college involvement and community service. Can you tell me why you chose that as your criteria?

Student leadership was such a big part of my Centennial experience. It set a solid foundation for me, and provided me with opportunities to explore new interests. It was also important to me that this scholarship be open to any student, because I believe that any student can be a leader.



Always get involved because you never know where it will lead you. Appreciate the experiences life hands you. Grow your network. And most importantly, have gratitude for those who help you along the way – remember to always say thank you.



It's amazing that you set up your scholarship at the relatively young age of 20. There is an assumption that philanthropy doesn't really manifest in people until they are much older than that. Do you think that your generational peers share your strong desire to give back?

Yes, I really do think young people want to get involved and give back, but simply might not know how. I definitely see that gap – the desire to help, but not knowing how to. I also believe that some young people might think that they don't have the financial ability to give back, because they assume that they must give large amounts of money in order to help. I think it's all about needing to connect the opportunities to help with the people who want to help – and social media is a great place to do that!



Brandon and his mentor, Romessa Ford, Liaison Officer in Centennial's Enrolment Services department



Are there any words of wisdom that you would like to share with recent graduates or new alumni before we wrap up our conversation today?

If you are interested in establishing or supporting a scholarship at Centennial College, please contact:

**Fiona Bedlington at
FBedlington@centennialcollege.ca or
416-289-5000, ext. 3558**

TARGET YOUR DREAM CAREER.



Enhance your qualifications through a specialized Graduate Certificate program.

Apply today at centennialcollege.ca/graduate-certificates

See where experience takes you.



a seasoned aviator provides a major gift to centennial

Centennial College supporter H. Bruce MacRitchie, whose Aviation Technician Scholarship is named in memory of his late brother Douglas, generously provided a major gift to the college – one of the largest to date by a private individual. His gift, valued at more than \$1 million in total, is comprised of small aircraft, engines, equipment and funds that will greatly enhance the learning experience of students in our Aviation Technician and Aviation Technology programs.

"Aviation has been very good to me. I own half a dozen airplanes myself, and my stepson graduated from Centennial's Aviation Technician program and went on to have a great career with Air Canada," says MacRitchie.

Still spry at age 84, MacRitchie has long been associated with Canada's aviation industry. While working for an electric motor manufacturer in 1955, he enrolled with Central Airways in Toronto to earn his private pilot licence. In 1962, he joined forces with a colleague to form Carldon Aviation, which sold Cessna light aircraft.

By 1968, MacRitchie had obtained his commercial pilot license and the AME Transport Canada licence as an aircraft technician. He left the aircraft dealership

As to join Fleet Industries in Fort Erie, where he was employed in a marketing role to fly and demonstrate a fibreglass float plane.

Fleet was growing as an aerospace component supplier, which meant relocating a company representative to the epicentre of the booming aircraft industry in California. MacRitchie was named Fleet's representative on the Lockheed L1011 airliner program.

"I was also working with Douglas Aircraft in Long Beach because Fleet was producing the DC-9 MD80 flaps and ailerons for Douglas Canada. While I was there, I trained at the Hughes School and received my commercial USA Helicopter endorsement."

Returning to Canada in 1970, MacRitchie resumed his marketing role at Fleet, working with all the major aircraft manufacturers including Boeing, Grumman, Sikorsky, Douglas and others.

"We had displays at several of the big industry shows at Paris and Farnborough, working with prime aircraft companies in North America, Europe, Japan and Israel" says MacRitchie, who once flew a de Havilland Twin Otter plane across the ocean with corporate pilot Tom Appleton.



a change of pace, he started an aviation company out of Welland Airport, which functioned as a flight school, charter and full maintenance facility. MacRitchie also found time to volunteer as director of the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum.

"Our volunteer group, headed by me, restored and donated several aircraft, including the Fleet Fort and Cornell aircraft, which were produced by Fleet during the Second World War." He believes the war effort helped to establish Canada as an industrialized nation.

"When war became inevitable, Canada agreed to be the home of the Commonwealth's pilot training programs because of its safe distance from the war theatre in Europe," says MacRitchie. "More than 100 airports were built across Canada as part of the preparations."

The Canadian headquarters of de Havilland Aircraft of the United Kingdom was established at Downsview airfield just north of Toronto, whose brick buildings and hangars housed an assembly facility for the Moth training plane and the famous plywood Mosquito bomber.

Today, the long-dormant facility is undergoing restoration and expansion to become Centennial College's fifth campus, thanks to generous funding from the Ontario and federal governments. The Centre for Aerospace and Aviation is the new home of Centennial's aerospace faculty, aircraft and related equipment relocated from Ashtonbee Campus. It opened in January 2019.

MacRitchie is energized by the transformation unfolding on Downsview's hallowed ground. As he points out, aviation is inextricably tied to Canada's history – airplanes helped open up the far north to



Bruce MacRitchie with a RFB Fantrainer aircraft

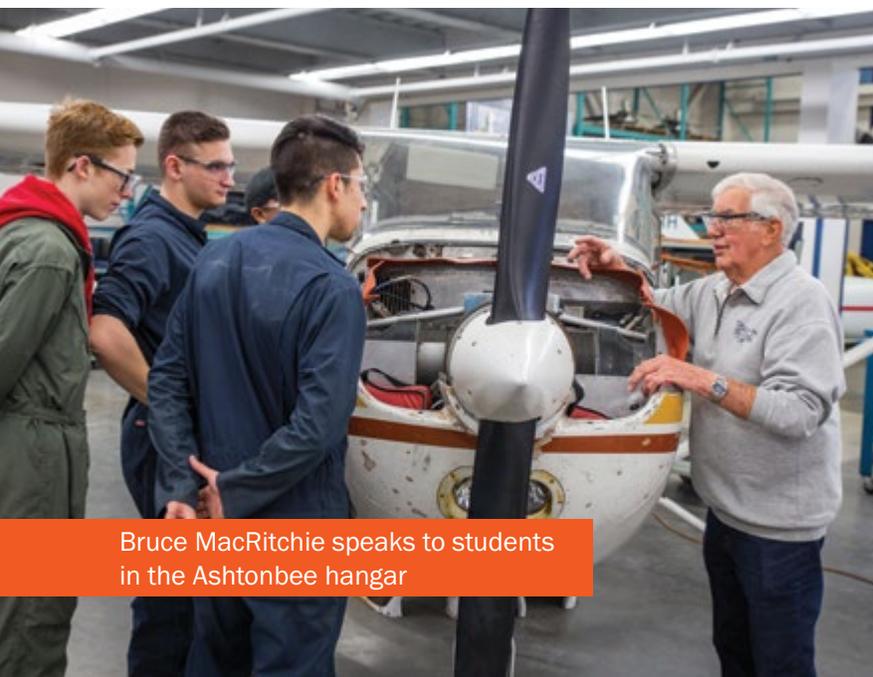
economic activity, including mining and forestry. Now he can witness a chapter of Canada's aviation history restored to its former glory.

"I became involved with Centennial after my brother Douglas was killed in an accident when he was flying his own aircraft to work with me on the Cornell restoration project. That led me to establish a student scholarship in his name at Centennial in 2003." With that selfless gesture, MacRitchie was introduced to the community of learners at Ontario's first college.

I've met many nice, young people in the college's program, and I've often thought: How can I help them further?

This time, Bruce MacRitchie doubled down on his commitment with a record gift to the college.

"This gift represents a better return on my investment," he smiles.



Bruce MacRitchie speaks to students in the Ashtonbee hangar

To learn more about how you can make a gift and support Centennial students, please contact giving@centennialcollege.ca

Experiential Learning at Centennial's New Innovation Hub

November 29, 2018 marked the grand opening of Centennial College's Innovation Hub, located at 305 Milner Avenue, a short distance from our Progress Campus. The Innovation Hub, run by Dr. Eric Blaise, Director of Applied Research and Innovation, is 4,500 square feet of modern, open and collaborative space, where real-life research projects are brought to the table for Centennial students to tackle in paid, part-time positions.

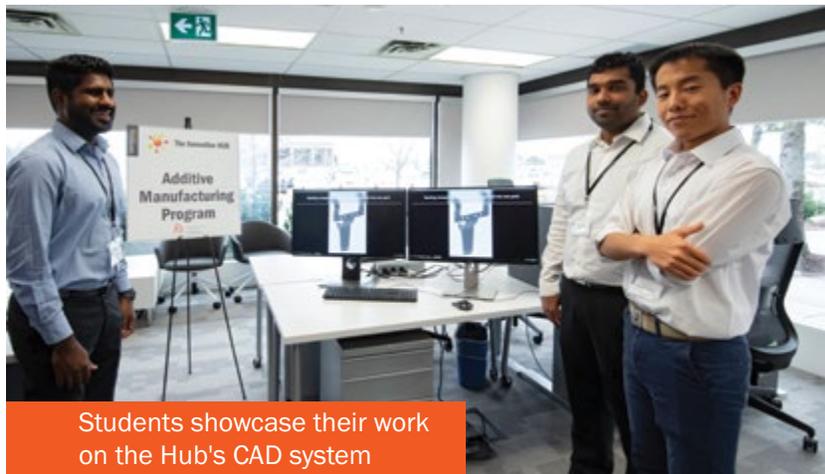
Inside the Innovation Hub, industry partners such as Bombardier and Safran Landing Systems regularly collaborate with students, while Centennial instructors oversee students' work on a daily basis. Not only do our students get incredible experiential learning and a head start on their career, they are also able to earn some extra income, and our industry partners benefit from working with some of Centennial's best and brightest minds.

The Innovation Hub was made a reality thanks in large part to the \$10 million in aerospace research funding Dr. Blaise secured, which came from industry and funding partners, including the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), a federal government agency that provides research funding for the natural sciences and engineering.

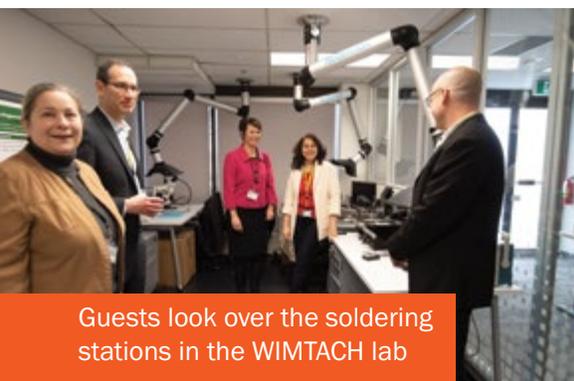
Though the Innovation Hub just launched, Dr. Blaise is already looking to the future with enthusiasm. Right now, the focus is on three areas of applied research: Aerospace, Cyber Security and Wearable Health Technology, but he hopes to continue to bring in more industry partners and expand the program to include the School of Transportation.



Innovation Hub staff and students posing at the grand opening



Students showcase their work on the Hub's CAD system



Guests look over the soldering stations in the WIMTACH lab

If you are interested in learning more about Centennial's Innovation Hub, either as a potential industry partner or to simply tour the space, please contact:

Scott Fairbairn at
SFairbairn@centennialcollege.ca or
416-289-5000, ext. 7110

We've freed the tampon!

At Centennial College, accessibility is important. All students require access to the resources they need to make their days at school healthy and productive. A gap in what we provided learners was recently closed, thanks to Free the Tampon, an initiative to supply free feminine hygiene/menstrual products in women's washrooms.

It all started with Lyle Williams, an Adaptive Technology Specialist, and Keri Banka, a Disability Assistant Technician, who both work at the Centre for Students with Disabilities. They noticed the problem, then kicked off a quest to fix it. "I have never seen free dispensers," Keri says. "Some places I've worked, there's a basket where women put extra stuff in, but that's about it. And it's not sustainable."

Making it happen

In their research to seek funding for this initiative, Keri and Lyle talked to Tyrone Gangoo in the Facilities Department and Shannon Brooks, Associate Vice President of Corporate Services, who recognized the inequity of access to menstrual products and decided to convert the college dispensers from coin-operated to complimentary.

Keri and Lyle also submitted a proposal to the Student Association's 'Transforming the Future Fund' (TFF). Penny Kirlik and the CCSAI team recognized the importance of this initiative and also decided to convert their own dispensers from pay-based to complimentary. "This was a huge win," Lyle says.

Why it's important

Keri and Lyle believe Free the Tampon has fueled a conversation about access and equity for hygiene products in public washroom facilities. "It is arguable that most men do not have to question whether a washroom facility will be stocked with the products required for use," Lyle says, including toilet tissue and soap.

"In many cases, women have to plan ahead, bringing necessary hygiene products - possibly concealing these products, have money on their person if necessary, or borrow from a friend" Keri explains. Having access to complimentary dispensers has alleviated many of these challenges. "We give condoms away for free at the school," Keri adds. "Tampons are a mandatory need for women."

This project also supports the needs of those with socioeconomic limits. The cost associated with the acquisition and use of these essential products can be financially burdensome. Menstrual products should not be an added cost for females in the public space.

Centennial is one of the first Canadian institutions to make access to menstrual products a free service on campus. This speaks to Centennial's vision of equity and inclusivity.

It's a great thing for Centennial to pave the way with," Keri says, "especially since feminine hygiene products stopped being taxed as a luxury item in 2015. It's something bigger, part of a movement that Centennial should be proud of.

Homecoming 2018

Centennial College alumni, along with faculty, staff and members of the community celebrated Homecoming on October 13, 2018.



HOMEcoming

PAST. PRESENT. TOGETHER.





Giving Back As A CCAA Board Member



We recently sat down with Andrea Harper, a Director-At-Large with the CCAA and a 2007 graduate of the Child and Youth Worker Program. She joined the board in 2017.

Q Conversely, what have been some of the major benefits for you since joining the CCAA Board of Directors?

Relationships. I've been able to build some great relationships, and it's more than just fellow board members. We've gone out together socially and I've been able to build friendships with people that I wouldn't have crossed paths with. I've also enjoyed getting to work alongside the College and helping them achieve their goals.

Q What was your motivation for joining the CCAA Board of Directors?

I really wanted to give back and find ways to help my fellow Centennial College alumni. I wanted to get connected and help put on great events so other alumni could get connected, too.

Q Have you been able to achieve some of those goals so far?

Yes, in my first year on the CCAA Board of Directors, I hosted one of our events - it was an evening at Playdium. I was really nervous, but the entire team came around me and supported me. I've also been able to help out with Grad Week at the College. I answered questions and gave out information and swag to students.

Q What talents and skills do you have that helps you on the CCAA Board of Directors?

I'm super organized and I work well with other people. When it comes to events and event planning, I'm always willing to help and support others.

Q What skills or values would someone have that would make him or her a great board member?

If you enjoy working in a multidisciplinary environment where you get the opportunity to try a lot of different things, if you enjoy events and "friendraising," then this is definitely for you. If you appreciate that you are raising the collective voice of more than 100,000 Centennial College alumni and have a desire to use that as motivation to get things going, you would really enjoy being a CCAA board member.

Q Have you been able to translate your experience on the board to your professional life?

I work with foster families, foster children and service providers where our goal is to build the best programming for the children. By being on the board, I've grown confident in speaking up and making sure my voice is heard. I'm quicker to take a leadership role now and I recognize the power of working behind the scenes to achieve a goal.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Centennial College
Alumni Association



Alvin Guthrie
President



Marlon Inniss
Vice President



Donna Robertson
Board Chair



Masrine Peart
Director of Marketing



Biljana Gelmanovski
Treasurer



Andrea Harper
Director-At-Large



Michelle Muscatello
Director-At-Large



Carla Reid
Director-At-Large



Allan Ross
Director-At-Large



Odas Samo
Director-At-Large



Amy Sit
Director-At-Large



Erin Spanton
Director-At-Large



Be sure to attend our next Annual General Meeting:
Saturday, June 22, 2019 | 10:00 am
Student Centre, Progress Campus
Check ccaa.life for available positions on the board.

2019 WHAT'S ON

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB



Toronto Raptors

MAR



Caribbean Cruise, Sold Out



Ripley's Aquarium

APR



VIP Cineplex Movie

MAY



Alumni Land Trip

JUN



Convocation



Annual General Meeting

JUL



Canada's Wonderland

AUG



Toronto Blue Jays

OCT



Homecoming 2019

For more information about these events, and all alumni activities, please visit [ccaalife](http://ccaalife.com)

Published by

Centennial College
Alumni Association
P.O. Box 631, Station A
Toronto, ON M1K 5E9

Managing Editor and Advertising

Dana Gour
416-289-5218
dgour@centennialcollege.ca

CCAA Director of Marketing and Communications

Masrine Peart
416-289-5218
alumni@centennialcollege.ca

Editor

Tracy Yan
416-289-5000, ext. 8800
tyan@centennialcollege.ca

Contributors

Alvin Guthrie
Ann Buller
Anthony Geremia
Marie Joseph
Izabela Szydlo
Mark Toljagic
Mathieu Yuill

ascent® magazine, with a circulation of 98,000, is published annually by Centennial College Alumni Association. It is delivered free of charge to Centennial graduates, students and staff to encourage interaction with each other and the college, and to facilitate lifelong learning and career development. The ideas and opinions published herein do not necessarily reflect those of the Association or Centennial College. All material is ©2019 and may be reprinted with permission of the Managing Editor. Advertising rates are also available from the Managing Editor. We do not sell or rent the alumni database to third parties. Please contact the Office of Development and Alumni Engagement at 416-289-5218 if you do not want to receive the magazine or would like to update your mailing address.

UP
TO **40%**
IN SAVINGS
RESERVED
FOR YOU.*



*"In dog savings
that's 280%"*

As the insurance provider for the Centennial College Alumni Association, Johnson Insurance has reserved **exclusive savings** on car insurance for you.

For over 50 years, Johnson has partnered with groups like yours, offering **home and car plans** with you in mind.

CALL US FOR YOUR QUOTE.

1-877-742-7490

OR VISIT: johnson.ca/savings

*Mention Group Code **CI**
for your preferred rates.*



Johnson Insurance is a tradename of Johnson Inc. ("JI"), a licensed insurance intermediary. Home and car policies underwritten by Unifund Assurance Company ("UAC"). Described coverage and benefits applicable only to policies underwritten by UAC in ON. JI and UAC share common ownership. Eligibility requirements, limitations, exclusions, additional costs and/or restrictions may apply. *Full 40% savings amount available on car insurance if the following discounts are applicable: multi-line, conviction free, multi-vehicle, winter tire and qualifying group membership. Percentage savings may vary otherwise.



We are going green, and hope you will join us! To receive further communications from us via email, please go to our website to update your profile. Be sure your information is always up to date and that you stay connected! ccaa.life

Centennial First, Alumni Forever.

3177_JAN18

Return Undeliverable
Canadian Addresses to:
Centennial College
Alumni Association
P.O. Box 631, Station A
Toronto, ON, Canada
M1K 5E9

