

LASTING

The magazine for Loyalist College Alumni & Friends

# CONNECTIONS

Summer 2016

Candace Kourounis

At Play  
*with the*  
Penguins

Renée Rodgers

Made  
*for* TV

Brendan Mertens' feature documentary Ghostheads

Tribeca  
Film Festival, NY

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Brendan Mertens, 2007 Television and New Media Production graduate

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**LASTING CONNECTIONS** is distributed twice a year and is available free of charge to alumni, staff, faculty and other members of the Loyalist family. Additional copies may be obtained by contacting the Alumni Office at 1-800-99-ALUMNI. The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Alumni Office or of Loyalist College. The editors of LASTING CONNECTIONS reserve the right to edit all submissions.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear fellow alumni,

Like each of you, I am extremely proud to be a graduate of this great College. As a graduate, it has been an exceptional privilege and pleasure to serve as President for the past 11 and a half years, and one for which I am very grateful.

As I prepare to retire at the end of August, I want to take this opportunity to thank you, my fellow alumni, for your ongoing dedication to, and advocacy for, Loyalist College. The Loyalist Connection is alive and well! Everywhere I go I am constantly reminded of the amazing work of Loyalist graduates – in the fields of health and human services, in media, science and technology, skills, business and justice. I am so proud of your engagement, your contributions, and your leadership, and so appreciative of the commitment and expertise of our excellent faculty and staff, who create the Loyalist environment, programming, and experience to support student achievement and success. Many thanks also to the numerous volunteers and partners who support us all along the way – partners on our Advisory Committees, in our businesses and communities, in government at all levels, and those who provide guidance and direction as members of the Board of Governors.

As we look forward to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of both our College, and the exceptional Ontario college system, in 2017, I know that many stories of your Loyalist journeys will be shared, and will form an important part of our celebrations. Our

website [loyalistconnections.com](http://loyalistconnections.com) will be a great spot to share those stories. I'll be there, and I hope that you'll join me – I hope that you will also participate in some of the special events organized during our anniversary year. Please watch for more news and the calendar for the year.

It will be a great time to reflect, to celebrate, and to feel excited about the next 50 years in Ontario colleges. Loyalist, along with other Ontario colleges, is ready to help the next generation make the most of the future! The provincial theme for the year is "The Start of Something Amazing." We have all had the opportunity to be part of that amazing story; let's tell everyone about how Loyalist College changed our lives for the better.

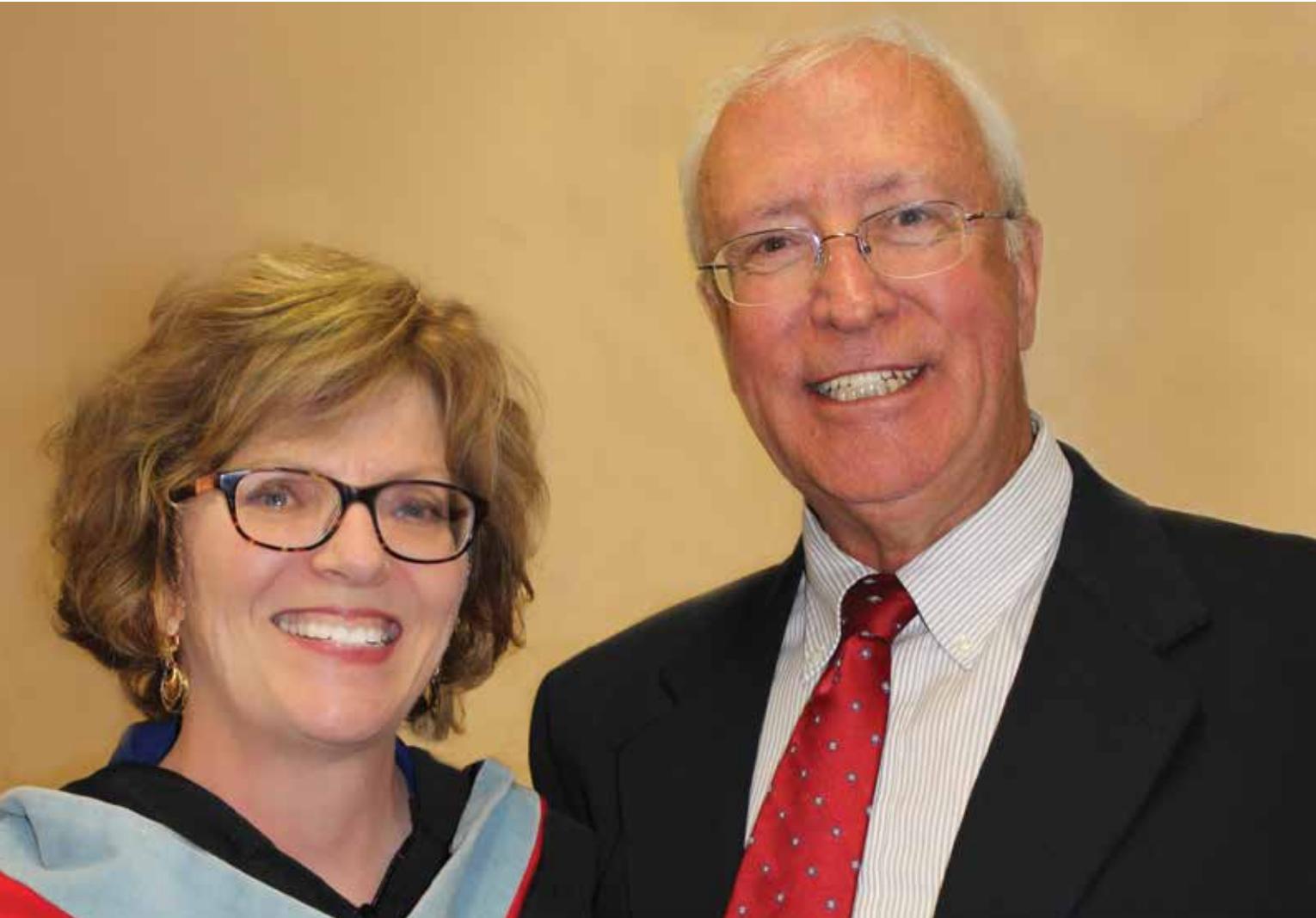
Please keep your Loyalist Connection strong through your working and personal lives – I certainly plan to!

Thank you for everything, best wishes to each of you for happiness and health,

*Maureen Piercy*

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# THANK YOU PRESIDENT PIERCY!



Loyalist College President and CEO Maureen Piercy with Loyalist Alumni Association President George Reddom at the Loyalist Bancroft Campus 16<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony on October 8, 2015.

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As you may know, President Piercy is retiring this summer after having served as our College President since January 2005. President Piercy, who is a 1979 Loyalist Print Journalism graduate, has been a tireless advocate of students, the College and the Alumni Association and she will be greatly missed. The Alumni Association will be recognizing President Piercy for her outstanding service. If you would like to add a personal note of congratulations and best wishes, please email [alumni@loyalstc.on.ca](mailto:alumni@loyalstc.on.ca).

As summer approaches, our thoughts turn to spending more time outside and enjoying the warmer weather. As Loyalist College alumni, our thoughts may also be about getting together with classmates and staff from our College days. We may have thoughts of visiting the campus where our lives were enriched with fond memories of the friendships that developed and the things we learned. I encourage you to follow through on reconnecting. It may lead to many benefits. Whether it be networking for job opportunities

and advancement, or enhancement of lifetime social connections, both of which will add value to your life.

Reconnecting can be as simple as calling up an old classmate to get together for a coffee or meal. That call may lead to a class reunion where you can catch up with more friends on where life has taken you. Consider combining your get-together with a campus tour and you will be amazed at the changes that have transpired on campus. It may reignite your passion for learning through in-class or online distance studies. Whatever your summer plans, be safe and enjoy.

Sincerely,

George E. Reddom  
President, Loyalist College Alumni Association



In February 2013, Federal Liberal leader candidate Justin Trudeau toured Loyalist's School of Media, Arts + Design with President Piercy before speaking with students in Alumni Hall.



In August 2009, President Piercy was appointed by Former Minister of National Defence Peter MacKay to serve as Honorary Colonel of 8 Air Communication and Control Squadron, 8 Wing, CFB Trenton, a position she held until April 2014.



President Piercy was recognized as a recipient of the prestigious 2012 Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Award from the Women's Executive Network.



President Piercy was pleased to welcome the Honourable Reza Moridi, Minister of Research and Innovation and Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities to Loyalist during a visit and tour of the College in October 2014.

# Fitness from the Ground up

For as long as Rhea Sabatine can remember, she's lived an active life.

At five years old, she was scrimmaging with her father as they played hockey. In high school, her focus narrowed to the fitness and training aspect of sport.

"It started with soccer," said Rhea. "I was trying to get stronger. I was researching fitness and getting more involved. I was eating healthier."

As the end of high school neared, she considered her post-secondary options and chose to study Fitness and Health Promotion at Loyalist College. During her first year, she became a Lancer and joined the College's varsity volleyball team. Academically, she was immersed in all of her courses.

As part of the program's two 160-hour work placement opportunities, Rhea went back to Madawaska Valley District High School, her former high school in Barry's Bay, to gain hands-on experience in the school's fitness facility. Much like her fitness ambitions, Rhea had always dreamed of living in a big city. Originally from Madawaska, she was familiar with rural life and was looking for a change. In the spring of 2015, before graduating College, she completed her second placement opportunity at the Nepean Sportsplex, a large training facility in Ottawa.

Realizing she would have to learn another language to stay competitive in the Capital, Rhea decided to move back home to Madawaska, lace up her hiking boots and spend a season in Algonquin Park working as an outfitter, carrying canoes. Then she received a call that changed everything. Rhea was offered a two-year fitness facility coordinator position at the Madawaska Valley Fitness Centre, located in Madawaska Valley District High School – the same fitness facility she worked in as a student.

"I didn't actually think I would get the job," she said. "I thought I would be the youngest, least experienced person applying – and I probably was – but this is the kind of opportunity you have to apply for. You can't pass something like this up."

While the Fitness Centre was established, it was used exclusively by students. In partnership with the Township and with a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Centre was set to become a public facility.

"When I was hired, I was told that it was my show," she said. "I had to create everything. I made sure all of the safety regulations were in place before we actually started the gym. That's what I was worried about."

Rhea manages five staff members and supervises three instructors. She's the linchpin keeping the facility together. She's responsible for advertising, marketing



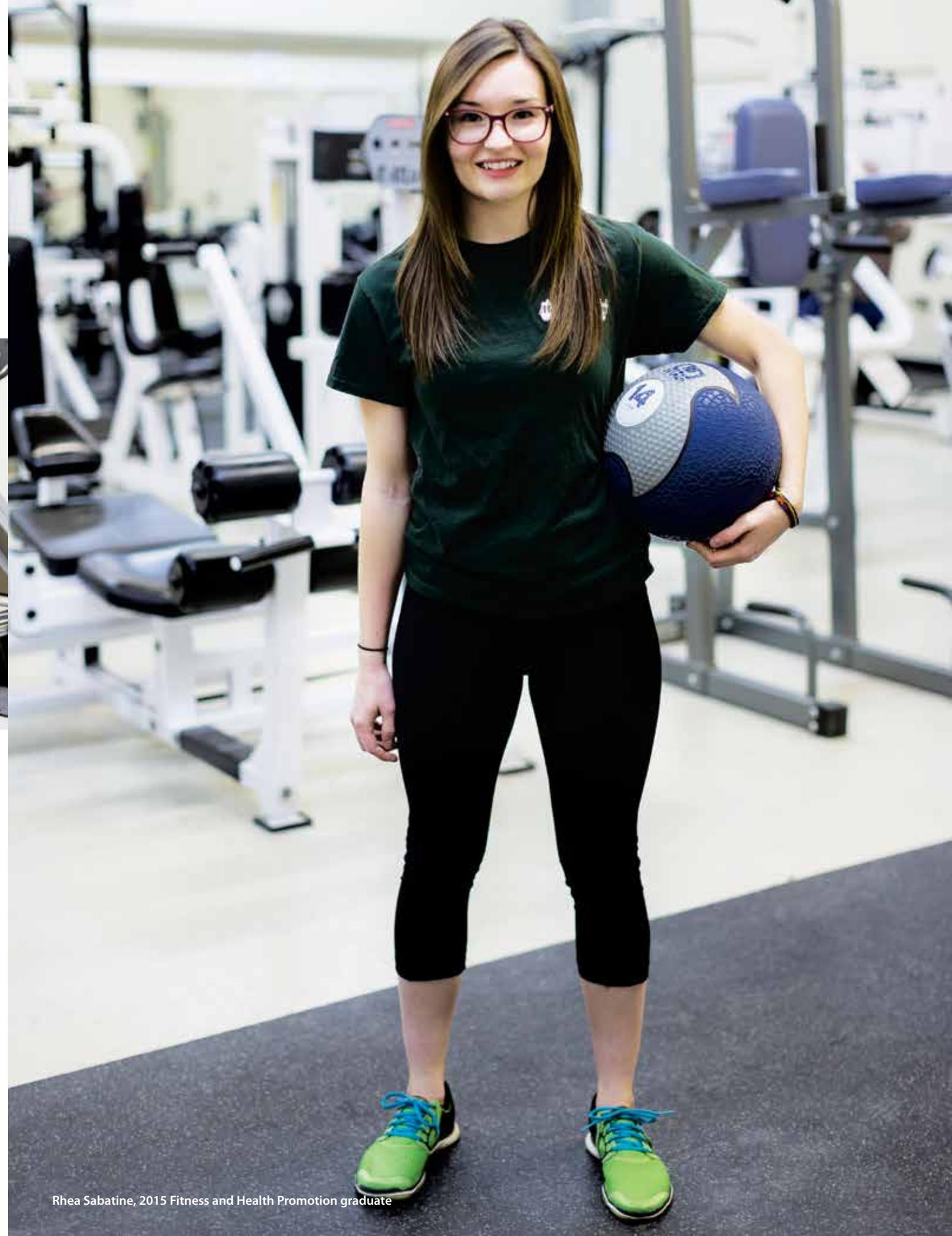
and public relations. She's been on the radio promoting this endeavour and has been featured in newspapers.

"Because it's new, a lot of people in the area don't know about it. I have to get the word out; and when those people come in, I'm greeting them."

On October 2, Rhea hosted the Centre's grand opening and welcomed the community to its new fitness facility; and she is already making improvements. In February, she expanded her team of fitness instructors and changed some of the classes.

"The biggest problem we have is the fitness classes," she said. "A lot of people want different programs, so we're trying to upgrade them. It's about keeping the community happy. That's the biggest challenge."

Loyalist College's Fitness and Health Promotion program trains students to be qualified fitness and health professionals who help people lead better, longer lives through healthy, active lifestyles.



Rhea Sabatine, 2015 Fitness and Health Promotion graduate



Justin Toppings and Ryan Forrester, 2015 Environmental Technology graduates



# A NATURAL FIT

When Ryan Forrester was nine years old, he would get up at four in the morning to milk cows. Having spent his younger years working on a farm, he learned the value of hard work and garnered an appreciation for the environment and the sciences.

“The farmer I worked for taught me how to take care of the land,” said Ryan. “He was conscious of the amount of waste that bale wrap generated and contacted a company which produced a recyclable material. It motivated me to be environmentally aware.”

When Ryan was in high school his aunt took him on a tour of remediation and wastewater treatment sites. “I absolutely loved it,” he said. “Since that moment I wanted to be a wastewater operator.”

In 2013, Ryan chose to study Environmental Technology at Loyalist College. “I knew Loyalist had a great Environmental program because my aunt is a graduate,” he said. “She has a successful career. The decision was easy for me.”

Ryan works at the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA). He was hired when he finished his final year at Loyalist in May 2015, only a few short weeks after completing his courses.

“Most of the classes weren’t wastewater related, but they did shape me as a whole and prepare me for my career,” he said. “We studied microbiology, which focuses on microbial life. It’s similar to looking at microbes in a wastewater treatment plant. You have to know what you’re looking for and how to extinguish them.”

Ten minutes down the road from Ryan’s childhood home lived Justin Toppings, a long-time friend of Ryan’s brother. On the first day of school, feeling anxious yet excited, the way most new students do, Ryan was surprised when Justin sat next to him in class.

“It had been a long time since we’d seen each other,” said Ryan. “After that first day, we teamed up because we didn’t know anyone else in the program.”

Choosing Loyalist was a natural fit for Justin. It was close to his Prince Edward County home and after researching similar programs, he was impressed with the amount of lab time students receive in the state-of-the-art Sustainable Skills, Technology and Life Sciences Centre at Loyalist.

Today, Justin works with Ryan as a wastewater operator at OCWA. He completed a placement with the company and was hired in December 2015.

“It was pretty awesome walking into the treatment plant on my first day, listening to my coworkers throw terminology around, and being able to speak the same technical language,” said Justin.

Water and wastewater operators carry a tremendous responsibility. They have to test, treat and disinfect our water to ensure that it is safe to drink. They make sure that plants are compliant, and that the effluent going out is disinfected in such a way that it is safe for the ecosystem. The Environmental Technology program at Loyalist incorporates the Ministry of the Environment’s curriculum for Entry-Level Course for Drinking Water Operators. Students receive their MOE Entry Level Drinking Water Operator Certification upon successful completion of this course, and are eligible to obtain their Operator-in-Training Certification with an additional exam.

As students, Justin and Ryan jested about how neat it would be to work together in the same plant. After all, they worked together in the lab and challenged each other academically throughout their two-year program.

“We never thought it would happen,” said Justin. “But here we are.”

# Rooted SCiENCE

In Loyalist College's Instrumentation Lab, next to peers in white coats and safety glasses, Chiazorkam Ahamefule skillfully analyzes a turquoise-coloured solution in a beaker.

Born in Nigeria, she came to Loyalist to study Biotechnology in 2014 to build on her Pharmacy degree from the University of Benin.

"In university you're taught theory and very little practical," she said. "I wanted to get back to the ground roots of science, to do the experiments about which I read. I wanted to know how they work beyond the pages of a textbook."

Chiazorkam searched for a college that would give her the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in a lab where she could run experiments and understand the rudiments of science.

Her endless curiosity and interest in biosciences began with the stories her mother would tell about the benefits of herbs and how her grandmother would administer them to ease labour during childbirth.

"I discovered there are a lot of herbs in Africa," she said. "But we don't know how to extract them or make them safe without side effects. That's why I decided to study pharmacy. At the end of the day, I discovered I didn't have that ground knowledge or technical skills to get me to where I wanted to be."

With a diploma from Loyalist's Biotechnology program, Chiazorkam is qualified to find employment in the life sciences, agriculture, food production, pharmaceuticals, sanitation and health research. Graduates also find opportunities in biotechnology regulation and enforcement, quality control and sales.

"It's good to have knowledge in every aspect of the field," she said. "You can pull together everything you have learned and forge ahead. That's what I intend to do with this College diploma. It's something for which I'm really grateful. I went out of my comfort zone to get this knowledge and I believe it is going to take me where I really want to go."

By building upon her university education, Chiazorkam is closer to realizing her dream of synthesizing or discovering pharmaceuticals.

**"At Loyalist, your skills are applied while you're in school," she said. "You're not just waiting until you get out there into the job market to apply what you've learned. My confidence has increased because I know I've got what it takes to pursue a successful career."**



# GHOSTHEADS

## Stay Puft Marshmallow Man

That iconic, destructive blob with a boyish grin and wide, inquisitive eyes wrecked New York City on the big screen in the summer of 1984. Each terrifying footstep instilled fear into the mind of every child as they watched what seemed to be an unstoppable monster plodding toward awe-struck Ghostbusters.

Over the years, Ghostbusters morphed into a quotable cult classic and the fans transcended the realm of regular fandom to become the focal point of Brendan Mertens' latest documentary, Ghostheads.

"They're like Star Trek fans, but different," he said. "They have a light sense of humour; they put Ghostbusters second and community and camaraderie first."

Brendan, a 2007 graduate of Loyalist College's Television and New Media Production program, started filming Ghostheads nearly a year ago. On April 23, it was screened at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York. Paul Feig, who co-wrote the screenplay for the 2016 remake of Ghostbusters, introduced the film.

With a team of three, Brendan travelled all over the United States, from the Big Apple to Los Angeles, interviewing the movie's most dedicated fans. He learned that every province and state in North America has a Ghostbusters chapter.

"They're all over the world – in Germany, France and Australia," he said. "The only continent I know of that doesn't have a chapter is Africa. I even found a scientist in Antarctica who brought his flight suit with him to keep his spirits high."



Ghostbusters Director Ivan Reitman, Ghostheads Director Brendan Mertens and Ghostheads Producer Tommy Avallone. Photo by Lee Leshen.

Along the way, Brendan interviewed some of the film's leading stars, including Dan Aykroyd and Ernie Hudson, as well as the Director Ivan Reitman.

"They're just normal people," he said. "I talked with Ivan about football. Dan and I are into the paranormal, so we talked about that."

One of the greatest challenges Brendan faced while completing the film was funding. He launched two Kickstarter campaigns – one to fund the logistics of securing the interviews with the celebrities and the other for post-production.

To aspiring filmmakers, Brendan says, "You either do it, or you don't do it. I hate to paraphrase Yoda, but it's true. There's a big difference between talking about doing something and actually doing it. If you act, people are going to notice. That's what happened here."



(L-R) Cinematographer Derrick Kunzer, Producer Lee Leshen, Actor Ernie Hudson, Director Brendan Mertens, and Producer Tommy Avallone

Photo by Eric Reich

# At Play *with the* Penguins

Candace Kourounis was playing a game of tag with a handful of children the first time she met Sidney Crosby, the captain of the Pittsburgh Penguins.

“He came on the ice and we ran a tag station together,” said Candace. “I got to chat with him. He’s a very nice guy; so down to earth.”

The game was part of the second annual Golden Ticket Event where 94 kids hit the ice with their hockey heroes at UPMC Lemieux Sports Complex in Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania; an occasion Candace helped organize.

Candace is a graduate of Loyalist College’s Sports and Entertainment Sales and Marketing program (SESM). She joined the Penguins as a Youth and Amateur Hockey Development placement student in the spring of 2016 and recently was hired for her current position.

*“That’s what’s great about this one-year post-graduate program,” she said. “You’re in the classroom for four months and then you’re on placement for your second semester. You get to apply everything you’ve learned right away.”*

As part of her position with the Penguins, Candace assists with the organization’s development leagues by coaching the girls’ hockey teams, running practices and scheduling. She has worked on large projects, such as Crosby’s Little Penguins

Learn to Play Hockey Program where 1,000 Pittsburgh-area youth receive free, head-to-toe hockey equipment from CCM.

Candace is from Toronto, where the CN Tower streaks blue and white when the Toronto Maple Leafs score. Everyone who lives in ‘The Six’ is assumed to be a Leafs fan, just as Vancouverites rally behind the Canucks, Ottawans cheer on the Senators and Montrealers champion the Canadiens.

“I actually applied for a placement at Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment first,” she said. “And I didn’t get it. In a way, it was a blessing in disguise because the Penguins were what I really wanted. Hockey is my life. The Penguins are my favourite team and before this program I never thought I’d be here.”

Candace started playing hockey when she was three years old. She recalls catching a few Leafs games, as Torontonians do, but she naturally gravitated to Pittsburgh. When the team drafted ‘Sid the Kid’ from Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, in 2005, she was hooked.

From those early days of learning how to skate, Candace brought her passion for the sport to the University of Windsor. As a student she played on Windsor’s varsity hockey team, the Lancers, and graduated in 2015 with a Bachelor of Sport Studies and History.

“People have asked, ‘Why do you still want to play? You’re not going to go anywhere with it. Women’s hockey doesn’t get you anywhere.’ But it does,” Candace explained. “It may not get you to the pros, but you have those years of experience behind you when you choose to work in the sports industry. I wouldn’t be where I am without my investment in the game.”



Candace Kourounis, 2016 Sports and Entertainment Sales and Marketing graduate



Derek Holota, 2016 Public Relations graduate

# Entrepreneurial Steam



The steam, relaxation and wellness focus of a Nordic spa inspired Roxanne Croteau to create a business model canvas for a spa to call her own.

"I love going to Nordic spas and I've always been interested in everything that has to do with wellness," said Roxanne. "And there isn't one in the Bay of Quinte region."

Originally from Quebec, where Nordic spas are booming, Roxanne decided to enrol in Loyalist College's post-graduate Entrepreneurial Studies – Business Launch program. Having no experience in business, it was the perfect opportunity to learn about the industry.

"The reason I took this program was to find out how I could develop a Nordic spa and that's exactly what the program provided," she said. "It's a really innovative program that follows The Lean Startup philosophy by entrepreneur Eric Ries. It gives you the key to a successful business through a laid out procedure that is very easy to follow."

For the last eight years, Roxanne has worked as a Search and Rescue Coordinator for the Federal Government of Canada. She has a Bachelor of Nautical Sciences from the Canadian Coast Guard College at Cape Breton University.

Roxanne's goal is to launch her spa within two years. It will offer massage therapy, body treatments and a diversity of saunas, whirlpools and cold pools.

Through Loyalist's program, Roxanne worked on developing her network and connecting with different resources, such as accountants and lawyers. She also focused on a marketing plan and explored the financial aspects of the initiative. Her biggest challenge is financing the project.

"In this program, we developed our ideas to make sure there's a need out there for it, that people want it," she said. "You don't actually spend money before finding out whether your idea is going to work. It's all about learning what a business is and taking all of the expertise from the people you meet to make your idea a reality."

Loyalist's Entrepreneurial Studies – Business Launch program is housed in the Canadian Hybrid Incubator Resource Platform at Strathcona Energy Group's headquarters in Belleville, Ontario. It's part of an innovative economic development initiative. Students have the opportunity to utilize the platform as an incubator for their startup businesses, working alongside international companies as they develop ideas and opportunities for the Bay of Quinte region and beyond.

The Entrepreneurial Studies – Business Launch program is supported by the government of Ontario and Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE), a member of Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs (ONE), with an On-Campus Entrepreneurship Activities (OCEA) grant.



Roxanne Croteau, 2016 post-graduate Entrepreneurial Studies – Business Launch graduate

# Filling the Skills Gap

By Derek Holota

In the summer of 2015 I found myself sitting in the kitchen of my apartment in Calgary, coffee in hand, staring at my résumé. I had lost my job a few weeks earlier after the price of oil plummeted. I had been working as an agency recruiter for the better part of two years, so I knew what it would take to find a new job, even in Calgary's slowing job market. I thought this could be an opportunity to make the career change I had been thinking about.

Before I started updating and reformatting my résumé, I analyzed my skills. I asked myself, what do I know how to do? The answer to that question was sobering. Although I have a degree, I didn't feel prepared to apply for the jobs that piqued my interest. I lacked the hands-on experience so many employers require.

I reached out to my network of family and friends to help me decide what to do next. Many of them had pursued a degree-to-diploma pathway when they faced a similar dilemma and found great success. So I decided to do the same and enrolled in the post-graduate Public Relations program at Loyalist College.

Once at Loyalist, I quickly saw that I was just one small part of an ever-growing trend of university graduates pursuing a college education.

"We're seeing a lot more university students coming to the College to get that hands-on experience," said Lyndsay Kerik, Senior Alumni and Career Services Officer at Loyalist.

Staying competitive in the job market is the main reason so many university grads follow through with a degree-to-diploma pathway.

"There is a demand for workers who have a combination of technical training, formal education and 'soft' skills," she added.

The degree-to-diploma pathway is a great option for university graduates to get their foot in the door. The combination of both a degree and diploma can really set one apart in the job market.

**Loyalist has given me the opportunity to get out of my comfort zone and gain a whole new set of skills in an engaging environment. As I return to the workforce after completing the post-grad PR program at Loyalist, I feel confident and prepared to make an immediate impact in my next job.**



# Made *for* TV



Having returned home, unsure of her next step, Renée learned of a friend who was a student in one of Loyalist College's Media, Arts + Design programs. She was gaining industry experience during a work placement at eTalk Canada.

**"I thought, this is what I need to do," she said. "So I applied to Loyalist's Journalism – Online, Print and Broadcast program and everything fell into place."**

As a student, Renée wrote compelling feature stories, delivered the weather on a green screen, and put together videos for QNet News, the program's student-produced online news service.

During her studies, she worked as a news reporter at Quinte Broadcasting and concentrated on her radio voice.

"Working in radio helped me to get to television," she said. "Even now, people come up to me and comment on my voice. Radio enhanced my pronunciation. I can command different emotions for the various stories I report."

After completing a work placement at CHEX-TV in Peterborough and graduating from Loyalist in 2013, Renée was hired as a general reporter at CHEX. Her childhood ambitions were becoming a reality.

Being a general reporter meant Renée was doing it all – video, interviews, script writing and editing.

"For television, you have to have a lot of technical knowledge, but you need the other side too," she said. "You need to know how to connect with people so that they're comfortable. When you're able to connect with people, you're going to get better stories."

Having been at CHEX for nearly three years, Renée's position has changed. She now reports from the anchor desk and, when asked, delivers the weather. More importantly, she's right where she wants to be – in front of the camera.

When Renée Rodgers graduated with a degree in Film and Media from Queen's University in 2009, she moved back home to Belleville, Ontario, in search of something more.

"I knew there was a missing link" said Renée. "Even though I had this degree, I knew it wouldn't get me a job in television. It helps, but it's not going to get your foot in the door."

Working in television has always been Renée's dream. As a child she spent countless hours in front of the television, completely absorbed in the medium.

"I always loved watching TV," she said. "It was a big part of my life when I was little. And at family events, when someone took out a video camera, I was a ham. I never shied away from the camera."

Renée's appreciation for the small screen evolved into a passion for the news, the way reporters ask meaningful questions, tell gripping stories and become immersed in their communities.



Coordinator and Professor John Grieve, centre, with Welding and Fabrication Technician students



# Path to Sustainability

With files from Rob Alexander, 2016 Public Relations graduate

To promote sustainable transportation and encourage cycling, Loyalist College's Sustainability Committee came up with an idea that would provide much-needed bike parking for City of Belleville residents and visitors.

The Committee approached John Grieve, Coordinator of the College's Welding and Fabrication Technician program, about producing bike corrals, and he immediately put the wheels in motion. Committed to taking his students' learning to the next level, Professor Grieve was on board with the sustainable project, which aligned with the program's learning objectives and had a meaningful place outside the classroom. Developing bike corrals was a real-world enterprise that promised to challenge his second-year students, and further develop their skills.

The goal of the partnership between the College and the community was to provide much-needed bike parking for cyclists in the region and on campus at Loyalist. To fulfill the order for 10 racks, students worked together to follow technical drawings, complete cutting and forming processes, and conduct quality inspection.

As word of the project spread, local businesses, as well as the City and Freedom 55 Financial began requesting bike corrals.

"It was a valuable experiential learning opportunity for students," said Professor Grieve, who had researched and drafted the technical drawings. "They can visit the bike corrals any time and say, 'I built that.'"

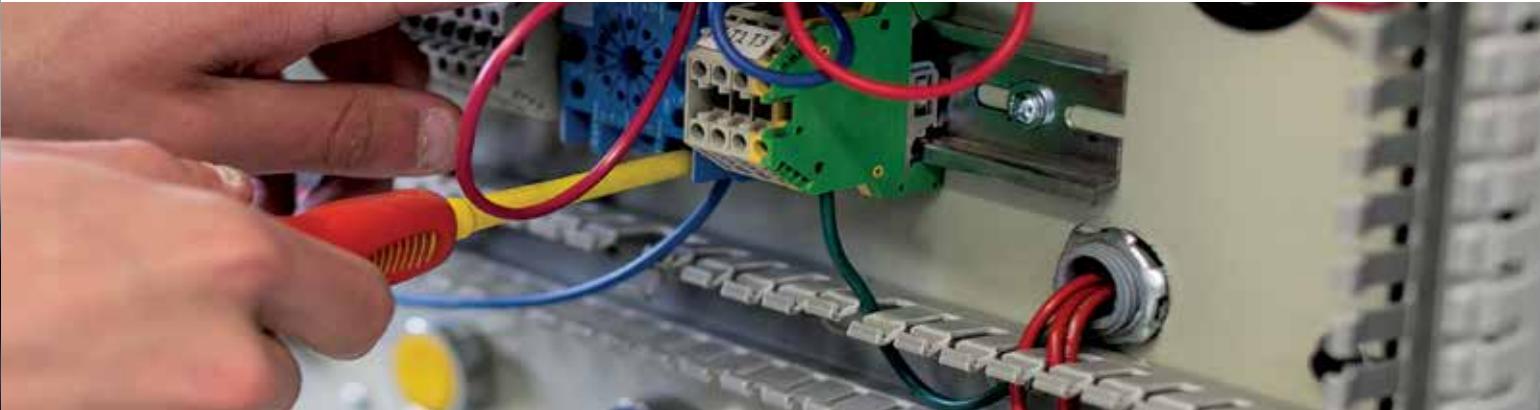
Second-year Welding student Brian Knapp appreciated that, "Something we've made is going into the community and will be used by lots of people."

While other assignments form a foundation of confident skills, working on the bike corrals was a different experience altogether. "It's the attention to detail and the fact that others are going to be viewing this project, so it needs to be right," said Brian. "It needs to be done to specification and look nice."

It's not often that environmental, economic and educational goals come together so seamlessly. Thanks to the support of the College community and enthusiasm of Welding faculty and students, 10 new bike corrals in the Bay of Quinte are an attractive and practical addition to the region.



# Finding Fellowship



When Nathan Conboy was preparing for college, his high school teachers forewarned him about the increased workloads and complexity of learning materials. Having been diagnosed with a learning disability at a young age, Nathan was no stranger to academic hurdles.

“The difference between high school and college is that in college you get to choose what you want to study,” he said. “The workload is challenging, but it isn’t boring. You’re there because you want to be there. Learning something new is easy when you’re interested.”

Nathan studied Electrical Engineering Techniques – Automation at Loyalist College and graduated in June 2015 on the Dean’s List with a 94 percent average. During his studies Loyalist tailored the support he required to meet his specific needs.

“Once I got to Loyalist, I connected with AccessAbility Services to set up various supports,” he said. “And the supports varied. For some assignments, I needed extra time. For others, I needed somebody to talk to; someone to help me get organized and focused. The staff at AccessAbility Services were always available.”

When Nathan applied to Loyalist he also submitted an application for The W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship, an initiative designed to help students succeed in the skilled trades with significant tuition and bursary incentives.

“Fellows are required to embrace mentorship, leadership and community engagement activities,” said Jeremy Braithwaite, Project Lead for The W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship. “Nathan was one of the first Fellows. He’s a great advocate for skills and technology careers and will be a great mentor and resource for the next generation of skilled professionals.”

Weston Fellows receive up to \$4,000 in bursaries plus a tuition credit from the College. With the help of Loyalist College’s AccessAbility Services and the Fellowship, Nathan was able to focus on his studies.

**“More people should consider the skilled trades,” said Nathan. “You get to work with your hands, draft plans and use critical thinking skills. And no matter what difficulties you’re facing, Loyalist can help you. They want you to succeed.”**

In 2013, The W. Garfield Weston Foundation introduced the Fellowship at Loyalist College to help participants complete their skilled trades education with significant tuition and bursary incentives. It began as a three-year pilot project with a \$240,000 commitment to provide financial support to 60 skilled trades students. Given the Fellowship’s success in encouraging students to complete skilled trades training, The Foundation extended funding for another two years, bringing the total support to \$520,000 for 130 students through the pilot program at Loyalist College. The application for The W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship programs starting in September 2016 is available at [loyalistcollege.com](http://loyalistcollege.com).

**THE W. GARFIELD WESTON**  
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**For more information on post-secondary and apprenticeship opportunities with The W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship, please visit [loyalistcollege.com](http://loyalistcollege.com).**

Nathan Conboy, 2015 Electrical Engineering Techniques – Automation graduate

# A Human *Touch*

*There's a serene, pastoral beauty to Ste. Anne's Spa.*

Tall floral grasses line the walkways, hammocks lazily sway in the breeze, horses thud the earth in the stables and the sun warms the aged stone of the Main Inn.

From the trails, Lake Ontario glistens on the horizon and the listless Northumberland Hills seem endless.



It's an unforgettable sight Breanne Bench came across in 2012 when her sister, who lives near Ste. Anne's, suggested she visit the historic grounds north of Grafton, Ontario.

"I fell in love with it," said Breanne. "It's more of a wellness spa. It's a relaxed, high-class environment. It's all about healing and focusing on bettering yourself, as opposed to the cosmetic side some spas gravitate toward."

When Breanne visited Ste. Anne's she was studying Esthetics and Spa Management at Loyalist College, seeking a work placement to finish her studies. Having experienced one of the most talked about destination spas in Canada – a unique, nourishing environment quite unlike any place she had ever visited – she knew Ste. Anne's was where she wanted to begin her career.

After graduation in 2012, her placement turned into employment and she was hired as an esthetician and spa technician.

"Depending on the length of the treatments, I can have anywhere from four to nine a day," she said.

Breanne specializes in facials, hand and foot treatments, body wraps, relaxation massages and water treatments. Focused on enhancing her skills, she studied reflexology and Ste. Anne's covered the cost of her training.

"I'd like to study lymphatic drainage next," she said. "It's a bit of a lighter touch. You focus on the lymphatic system to remove toxins to the appropriate place so they have an outlet."

Having worked at Ste. Anne's for three years – an environment where staff appreciate the calming silence of the resort and only engage in conversation at the request of the guests – Breanne has mastered the art of professionalism and customer service.

"You train yourself," she said. "I get into the mindset of focusing on them. Everything is about your client. If you're having a bad day, you focus on that treatment. You do what you can to make them more comfortable."

The rewards of the job, although not always immediate, come from the kindness of the clients and the stories they tell.

"When you have clients who are very relaxed and thankful for a small treatment, when you make them feel a little bit better, it's rewarding," she said. "Life gets busy; it gets stressful. You don't always realize how much you need human touch."

From where Breanne stands, human touch is extremely powerful. Often forgotten or taken for granted, she sees how healing a treatment can be through a myriad of clients.

"Some people – for example, those who have been widows for years – don't realize how much they miss that connection, that touch," she said. "When you have someone who hasn't had something like that for so long and they finally get to experience human touch, they're very grateful."

Ste. Anne's is an all-inclusive resort with eight spa cottages and a Main Inn. It's known to local residents as "the Grafton Castle." The original wing of the Inn was built in 1858 by Samuel Massey and it maintains much of its original charm.



Breanne Bench, 2012 Esthetics and Spa Management graduate



Nathan Blok, 2016 Manufacturing Engineering graduate



# Burning Rubber

**It's the speed of the car on the race track and the energy from the fans cheering in the stands that fuel Nathan Blok's adrenaline each time he slides behind the wheel.**

Nathan was three years old when his father took him to Bowmanville, Ontario, for the American Le Mans Series at Mosport, currently known as Canadian Tire Motorsport Park.

"I was overwhelmed by the sound of tires, the speed of everything," said Nathan. "From that moment on, I was hooked."

Nathan's racing career changed gears when he advanced from go-karting to the F1600 Ontario Formula Ford race circuit in Calabogie, Ontario in 2009, with third and seventh place finishes. In 2010, he returned to the same track, became the youngest driver in the field and rose to the top of the podium to take first place. Racing has become Nathan's life.

At 22 years old, he's a newly minted 2016 graduate of Loyalist College's Manufacturing Engineering program; a field of study he chose due to ample skilled trades employment opportunities. It also helps him on the track.

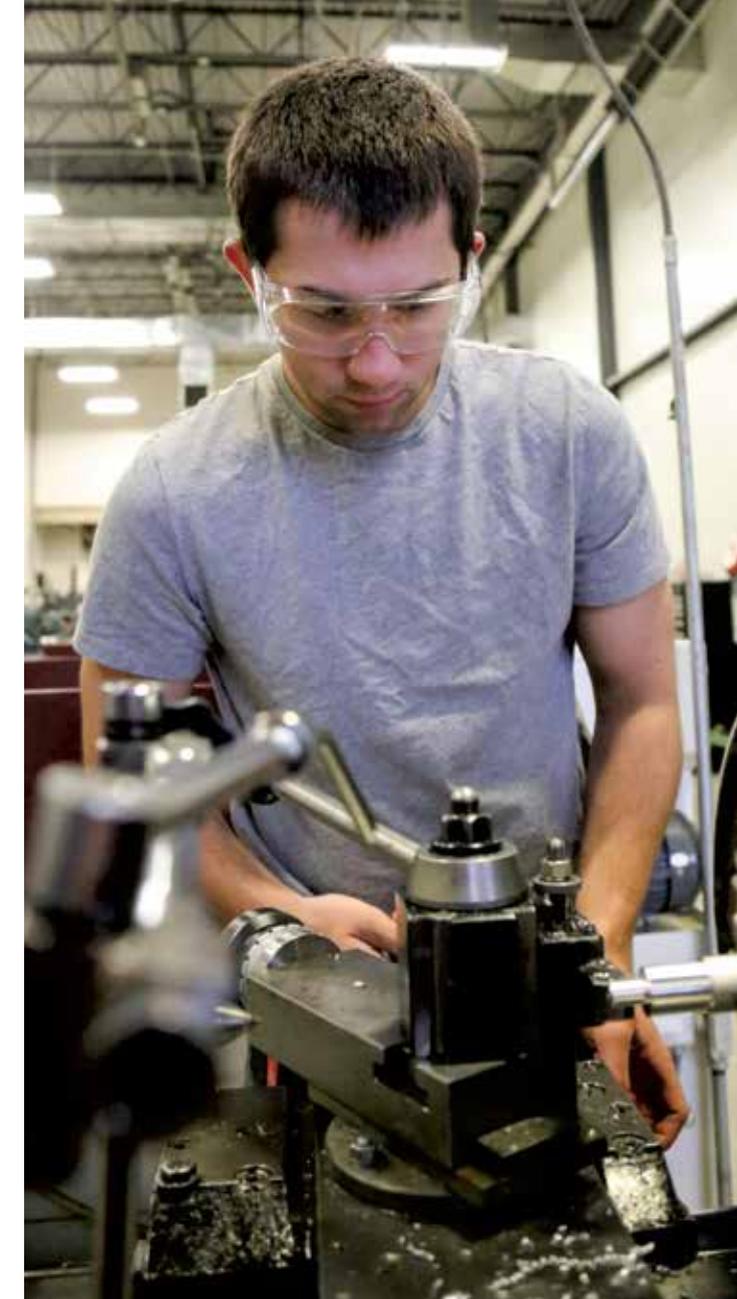
"Racing is expensive," he said. "If I owned my own car I could manufacture what needs to be fixed. It makes the profession affordable. Last year, my father and I actually made skid plates for the side of the front wing of the car I rented in his shop."

With College behind him, Nathan hopes to become a partner in his father's business, and run the machine shop.

"There are so many options on the table," he said. "I enjoy the trade a lot and the best part is, I can still race."

In 2015, Nathan was the F2000 Canada Champion with five podium finishes and four pole positions, and he holds the F2000 track record at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park.

To learn more about Nathan Blok, visit [nathanblok.com](http://nathanblok.com)



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April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016

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# Joining the Revolution

Just days after graduating from Loyalist College's Culinary Management program in June 2014, Uri Budzianowski headed to Belleville's Burger Revolution, took a seat in the restaurant and waited patiently for his chance to make a first impression on chef and owner Jeff Camacho.

"I actually waited an hour and a half just to introduce myself and shake Jeff's hand," said Uri.

Impressed with Uri, Jeff hired him on the spot. Having employed 11 Loyalist students and grads since opening Burger Revolution four years ago, Jeff likes what he sees from the Culinary program.

"They know how the kitchen is run," said Jeff. "They know the terminology and through the program they have experience working in various culinary environments."

Since joining Burger Revolution two years ago, Uri finds he uses many of the skills he learned from Loyalist every day.

"It wasn't just doing prep work," he said of the program. "You actually get hands-on practice serving real meals to real customers."

Burger Revolution's relationship with Loyalist goes beyond hiring students and grads. Jeff serves on the Culinary program's Advisory Committee, offering feedback on the curriculum from an industry professional's perspective. He also inspired the Great Canadian Burger Competition, a cook-off for local high schools, which he judged on campus at Loyalist in April.

Jeff points out that Loyalist students make good employees and chefs thanks to the confidence the Culinary program instills.



Uri Budzianowski, 2014 Culinary Management graduate

# Mark your calendar

**18<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament**  
Friday, September 16  
Trillium Wood Golf Club

Dinner prepared by the Loyalist Culinary program  
*Come for a spectacular meal – after a great day of golf!*

**Loyalist Post-Grad Fair**  
Wednesday, November 2  
11 am to 1 pm

Check out Loyalist's post-graduate Certificate programs, as well as more than 70 university transfer agreements.

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