

2007 Ontario Premier's Awards for College Graduates Recipients



Elio Pacheco
Business
George Brown College

When Elio Pacheco was promoted to head Evian North America in January 2007, his mandate was to turn around the sagging fortunes of the world-famous brand. After only a few months, Canadian sales grew six per cent and U.S. sales were predicted to soon follow. In addition, Pacheco launched an ambitious marketing strategy, focusing on the water's unprocessed purity, and communicating the company's long standing environmental responsibility. With people with MBAs and business degrees working for him, Pacheco has risen to the top with a college diploma. "People who work for me are sometimes surprised to learn of my educational background." But Pacheco believes his college training gave him basic business skills that he sees lacking in others.



Kay Blair
Community Services
**Humber College Institute of
Technology & Advanced Learning**

Kay Blair heads one of Toronto's leading non-profit community agencies helping people who need it most. Blair took the reins of the Community MicroSkills Development Centre in 1988 and has led it through times of enormous challenges and growth. She is a champion of services for women, immigrants and young people, and under her leadership MicroSkills helps them get shelter, training and jobs. Blair consults for governments, educational institutions and social agencies about racism and violence against women. She graduated from the two-year Community Worker Program at Humber College in 1985 and is currently a doctoral candidate at OISE.

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Bonnie Stern
Creative Arts & Design
George Brown College

For almost 35 years, Bonnie Stern has been helping to make cooking fun for Canadians through her bestselling cookbooks, national television shows and weekly newspaper columns. One of Canada's best-known food experts, she is the owner of the Bonnie Stern School of Cooking and Cookware Shop in Toronto, which has earned an international reputation for excellence and attracted many of the world's best chefs as guests. Stern, who has a degree in English Literature, originally planned to become a librarian before she enrolled at George Brown. She also channels her love of food and cooking into activities that benefit the community, including raising funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Hospital for Sick Children.



Abdul Abdulrahman
Health Sciences
Algonquin College

Abdul Abdulrahman is an active advocate for the integration of foreign-trained medical professionals into Canada's healthcare system. As an immigrant to Canada almost a decade ago, Abdulrahman's Somalian medical credentials were not recognized. To qualify for work in healthcare, Abdulrahman enrolled in the Respiratory Therapy Program at Algonquin College. He is now in his second year as a resident anaesthesiologist at the University of Toronto after competing against 1,600 other foreign-trained physicians for a spot. He was a driving force behind the establishment of the ACE IT program at Algonquin, which helps other foreign-trained healthcare professionals transition to the workforce.

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Peter A. Rowntree
Technology
Canadore College

The safety of air passengers is the top priority for Peter Rowntree. Since joining the TSB in 1997, Peter has been involved in the investigation of Canada's major air disasters, the most highly publicized of which was the 1998 Swissair 111 tragedy off the coast of Peggy's Cove that claimed 229 lives. Peter volunteered to coordinate and assist in the investigation, hailed as the most complex in Canadian aviation history, and selflessly spent the following two years in recovery efforts, away from his wife and family. Peter is also an active community volunteer, and has donated his time and services to the Canadian Armed Forces Primary Reserve, the Iqaluit Volunteer Fire Department, Community Living Newmarket/Aurora District, and the National Ovarian Cancer Association.



Christopher Rowland
Recent Graduate
Centennial College

Christopher Rowland is the founder and CEO of Equitans Global Logistics, a Toronto-based freight forwarding company that operates across North America and beyond. It is ranked 10th in Profit magazine's top emerging growth companies in Canada for 2007, having experienced revenue growth of 907% in the three short years since inception. Chris credits his success to Centennial College's Business Administration program, which he took concurrently as he started his business venture. Among his proud accomplishments, Equitans was called upon by the U.S. government to help distribute temporary housing throughout the Gulf region after the devastation of hurricane Katrina.