

# CULTIVATING BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

True visionaries know that a vital aspect of business leadership is surrounding oneself with brilliant minds at every level. Many students have made a lasting impact on the companies that provide experiential learning opportunities.

“ **In giving students workforce training during their academic careers, Ontario’s universities are helping to cultivate this province’s talent, while strengthening our workforce and economy. Experiential learning is just one way that Ontario’s postsecondary institutions are teaching the next generation to lead.** ”

– Bob Chiarelli, Ontario’s Minister of Energy

of study such as biomedicine, mechatronics, nanotechnology and environmental engineering. The students gain valuable experience and provide employers with an opportunity to see the knowledge and skills that may be useful to them in the future. With co-op

programs across all disciplines including arts, environment, applied health sciences, pharmacy, science, math, entrepreneurship, research and computer science, **Waterloo has the largest post-secondary co-op program in the world.**

At Queen’s University, engineering students get hands-on ex-

perience during their first year through a course that is structured to teach fundamental skills of engineering practice including problem analysis, modeling, design, project management and client relations. Students spend 12 weeks on projects with a wide range of community partners including the City of Kingston, LaFarge, Cycle Kingston and the United Way. Over the past three years, students from Queen’s Engineering Practice have partnered with more than 50 community groups.

One of the distinguishing features of the Co-operators Centre for Business and Social Entrepreneurship at the University of Guelph is that savvy business students not only get to use their knowledge to help small businesses in the private sector, but also to help non-profits and local charities. Students help community organizations tackle business problems by developing marketing plans, brand strategies and social media platforms. Students receive course credit and real life experience by applying their skills outside the classroom. Community partners benefit greatly from new ideas and solutions to business problems.

While students of Brock University’s Oenology and Viticulture program may be surrounded by barrels of



**Dominic Toselli** is a mechanical engineering student at the University of Waterloo who saved energy giant Shell Canada \$1 million a year during his co-op placement in Calgary. While working in the engineering group for inspections and piping,

Toselli compiled an analysis of a heat exchanger problem and pointed out the human factor in the issue, which accounted for 80 per cent of the failings the company was encountering. Since the replacement of heat exchangers is costly and time-consuming, Toselli’s work resulted in significant savings.

Medical and nursing fields were pioneers in experiential learning, and through business and technical disciplines, such as engineering, it greatly expanded.

At the University of Waterloo, engineering students are automatically entered into the co-op program where they work in companies that are relevant to their areas