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# SOC&COM

## Advancement and Alumni

*YEAR IN REVIEW*  
2022-2023

**WE ARE  
FUTURE FOCUSED**

Read online at [communityservices.humber.ca/news](https://communityservices.humber.ca/news)



# Alumni Stories

## Anna-Lori Stennett-Thomas

Before choosing Criminal Justice for my undergrad, I was confused and uncertain about what I wanted to pursue. I always found myself questioning my environment, institutions, and social problems and have always been curious and observant. In the last year of high school, I became interested in the social sciences and after doing some research, I found the **Criminal Justice** program at Humber.

The four years I spent at Humber were amazing! I learned so much about myself, and successfully completed the program with honours. The instructors in the Criminal Justice faculty were engaging and dedicated to expanding our knowledge. To this day I incorporate the lessons I learned from the amazing instructors in my life.

After graduating from Humber, I obtained my master's degree in Immigration and Settlement Studies from Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), formerly known as Ryerson. My experience writing my thesis at Humber College helped me immensely to complete my major research project as a requirement of my master's program. With the help and support from my previous lecturers at Humber, I was motivated to continue my education.

In 2021, I graduated from TMU, and am now working for the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, and still working towards my goal of starting my own non-profit and getting into policy!



## Viktoria Varga

While I was working at British Telecom, I received some cybersecurity training, and decided that this is the field where I see myself in the future. After conducting some research on possible programs, I realized that Humber's **Protection, Security and Investigation (PSI)** program would be perfect for my interests. In my last semester, there were two courses that especially intrigued me: cybersecurity and crime analysis. I was debating which of these two career paths I should choose when I was lucky enough to have an opportunity to apply for a Business Intelligence Analyst (BIA) position at Peel Regional Police (PRP). I was successful in my application and began working with PRP as a BIA upon graduating from Humber. After spending about 10 years in the private sector it was an exciting career change!

My current work at PRP aligns perfectly with both my analytical background and field-specific knowledge I acquired at Humber. I was pleasantly surprised at the number of techniques and concepts I can actually use at my workplace that I learned in the PSI program. I cannot express enough how grateful I am for the program and professors. I only wish I had known about it earlier!



## Alumni Stories (cont'd)

### Hilry Neale Jr. ....

I began my Humber journey in 2011 where I enrolled in the **Community and Justice Services Diploma** program. I then transferred into the Criminal Justice Degree program in 2014. With courses ranging from sociology and psychology to restorative justice, I received the foundation needed in order to have a successful career in policing.

Since graduating, I worked as a Research Project Coordinator at Humber College where we were tasked with researching the Toronto Police Neighborhood Officer Program. I then worked as a Special Constable with Metrolinx/GO Transit. In December 2019, I began my career in policing with the Toronto Police Service. I work in the Primary Response Unit and I have first hand seen how my educational journey at Humber College has assisted me in this role.

Policing today requires a lot of compassion and effective communication skills. In addition, there is also a lot of investigative work and report writing. While I was in the Criminal Justice Degree program, there was a lot of emphasis placed on research and essay writing. This prepared students for the thesis in their final year. I have realized how beneficial this part of the program was in preparing me to effectively investigate and complete reports in my everyday roles as a Police Officer. I look forward to continuing to excel in my current role and actively seek out opportunities for advancement in both my career and education.

I look forward to being a part of Humber as an Alumnus and seek out opportunities to mentor future students.





## Alumni Stories (cont'd)

### Sophia Pacini

Attending Humber College's **Police Foundations** program (PFP) was one of the most important decisions I've made in both my academic and professional career. By enrolling in the Police Foundations program, I was able to gain the necessary theoretical and application-based knowledge that successfully prepared me for my career within the criminal justice and higher education fields. Through this program, I was able to learn about the diverse range of impactful professions within the criminal justice field, which drove me to apply for and successfully earn the position of a Student Border Services Officer with the Canada Border Services Agency, working at Canada's largest and busiest airport, Toronto Pearson.

In addition to career exposure, the Police Foundations program provided me with the pathway to continue my education after graduating from the program. Through both the knowledge and practical-based approaches to learning that were provided in the Police Foundations program, I was driven to complete my Honours Bachelor of Social Science in Criminal Justice degree at Humber College, graduating in June of 2022, and I am currently completing my Masters of Arts in Sociology and Social Psychology at McMaster University. Through PFP's highly dedicated professors, intriguing curriculum, and unique application-based approach to learning, I was able to understand my potential for higher education. I believe that anybody who is considering a career in criminal justice, social justice, or policing would benefit greatly from Humber's Police Foundations program!



## PSI and PFP Scholarships

Students at our **Protection, Security and Investigation** (PSI) program are eligible for the Toronto Crime Stoppers scholarship, which awards one student annually who displays positive leadership qualities by promoting community safety and creating positive change through volunteer work.

**PSI** and [Police Foundations \(PFP\)](#) students are also eligible to apply for the GardaWorld Scholarship, which is awarded to one student annually, who embodies the values of integrity, trust, vigilance, and respect through their contributions to the classroom or their community.

Read more on these scholarships [here](#).

# You're Invited to the Humber Café!

Humber students and recent grads can work on building their professional networks now by joining the Humber Café. Humber alumni can share their life and career advice, and gain mentorship experience with current students and recent grads through joining, as well.

Anyone interested in learning about or joining the Humber Café can do so **here!**



## FSCS Receives \$25,000+ Grant to Support LGBTQ+ Community Work

After a successful grant application from Linda Hill, Program Coordinator of the **Community Development** degree, the Faculty of Social and Community Services has received \$26,243 to undertake an LGBTQ+ focused community project from October 2022 – May 2023.

This grant is part of Humber's **Community Partnership Fund** and will generously support work with LGBTQ+ youth in partnership with **Lakeshore Arts** and **RexPride**, a program that supports the 2SLGBTQ+ BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) youth, 12–24 year olds, in the Rexdale/North Etobicoke community.





## FSCS Alumna nominated for *Premier's Award*

### Jacqueline Edwards .....

Jacqueline Edwards began her career with the Correctional Service of Canada and became the first female president of the **Association of Black Law Enforcers (ABLE)**, initiating important conversations and relationships to reform anti-Black racism in law enforcement. She was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal and she received in 2021 the **Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police's President's Award of Merit**, the highest honour for Ontario police leaders. Edwards leads by engaging diverse voices in building bridges between the sector and the community. She serves on several sector boards and committees, advocating and emphasizing the co-creation of change.

Jacqueline graduated from Humber's Law and Security Administration program in 1994. Congratulations on your nomination!



## Alumni Stories

### Taiwo Olalekan .....

I came to Canada in 2017 as an asylum seeker from a country with little to no social support for its citizens or residents. The unexpected and inexperienced social support which I received on my arrival to Canada gave me a perspective on the importance, role, and contribution of social assistance/services to society.

As time pass by, I began to see people with different needs, social inequality, and others in society, I felt the need to contribute toward providing solutions to societal issues, by enrolling in the **Social Service Worker (SSW)** program at Humber College.

The endless support from all my instructors and academic staff, coupled with the philosophical lens of social service gave me a brother perspective of the history, progress, and achievements of social services from inception till date, the political and legislative roles, including the importance of advocacy.

I got my first employment with a community agency while I was in my second semester in the program. I was also given the opportunity to do my placement with other agencies to acquire more experience. This has been and continued to be a great fit for me as a social service worker while contributing towards a better society.



## Alumni Stories (cont'd)



### Jodi Kenny

I always knew that helping people realize and meet their goals was a passion of mine. In 2019, through a leap of faith, I decided to leave my career as an administrative assistant to pursue studies at Humber college as a **Social Service Worker (SSW)**. I applied as a mature student and a single mother to a teenager after being out of school for nearly 20 years. Changing careers and choosing Humber was one of the best decisions I had ever made.

I began my journey at Humber in September of 2020, right in the middle of the pandemic. Though classes pivoted to an online learning environment, this did not stop me from connecting with faculty and my peers. During my time at Humber, I volunteered with Orientation and worked as a peer tutor both in **Peer Assisted Learning Support (PALS)** and the **Writing Centre**. I graduated in June 2022 with honours and the confidence of knowing that I would have a successful career in social services. The relationships I formed with faculty combined with the support and knowledge I gained from the SSW program will stay with me throughout my career.

Directly after graduation, I was hired on by The John Howard Society after completing my student placement with them and soon moved onto the Bachelor of Indigenous Social Work program at Laurentian University. I am currently working relief positions at both Women's Habitat and Native Child and Family Services Toronto while I complete my IBSW full time. My goal is to complete my master's in social work and eventually start my own agency. The foundation I received from Humber college continues to open doors and help me reach both my educational and career goals.





Current Bachelor of Community Development Student, **LISA POST**, elected Mayor of Orangeville

“As a 4<sup>th</sup> year student of the **Bachelor of Community Development** program, I am filled with pride and a sense of accomplishment to stand before all of you as the newly elected Mayor of Orangeville. My journey to this role has not been a straight line, but rather a winding path filled with twists and turns and both Humber College and my professors have played an integral role.

My path to community development began when I married young and started my family. At 18, I was not sure what I wanted to do with my life and did not have the opportunity to continue my education. Instead, I went to work to support my family, but what I found was that my job as a retail manager for various large brands brought me joy and a wealth of life experiences.

Working in retail taught me many valuable skills, including how to lead and inspire others, how to understand and appreciate different cultures, and how to be a good role model for my kids, my coworkers, and my community. As I grew in my career, I began to realize the importance of giving back to my community and started volunteering with non-profit organizations. Through my volunteer work, I found my true passion and discovered new talents I never knew I had.

This led to me running for Town Councillor in my community

and to making the decision, at 39 years old, to start my post-secondary journey. The Community Development program that Humber offers has given me education, grown my skills and given me the confidence in my knowledge and application of that knowledge within my own community. Now, as Mayor, I have the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of the people who live in Orangeville and neighbouring municipalities, and I am committed to doing all I can to make our community a better place for everyone.

With the help of my dedicated staff, our Council team, the support of my family, and the backing of the community, I look forward to continuing to build upon the progress we have made together, and to creating a more equitable and inclusive Orangeville for all residents.

As a Community Development student, I have learned to prioritize my focus to ensure we are building a strong community and the valuable knowledge I have gained through my time at Humber has solidified my desire to focus on strong social policies.

I am honoured and humbled to serve as the Mayor of Orangeville and proud to be a Humber College student and I look forward to the work that lies ahead. I am excited for the opportunity to make a difference in our community.

– Lisa Post



# Alumni Stories

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## Nancy Omar – SSW Program

I'm an Egyptian who came to Canada in 2019 with my family. I came filled with many hopes and dreams. My biggest dream was to pursue a career path that would allow me to help people and contribute to the greater good of humanity. Shifting my career was a big decision, but I was very excited to do it because coming to Canada offered me a brand-new beginning.

I pursued studies at Humber College as a **Social Service Worker (SSW)**. I applied as a mature student, and the day I got accepted at Humber was a milestone I celebrated with my family.

I began my journey at Humber in September 2020 during the pandemic. The online environment didn't stop me from trying my hardest, especially with the help and support I received from my professors at Humber. This nurturing environment allowed me to excel at my studies and become a peer tutor in Peer Assisted Learning Support (PALS) to help my peers.

I graduated in June 2022 with honours and was awarded the Academic Award of Excellence for attaining the highest GPA in the Social Service Worker diploma program. The pearl of knowledge I received at Humber College will forever guide my career and my life.

After graduation, I applied to the Indigenous social work program at Laurentian University to broaden my perspective and develop an Indigenous approach to social work to serve more people. I'm also a volunteer at Victim Services Toronto in the crisis response team that assists people in the immediate aftermath of a crime or sudden unexpected tragedy. My goal is to pursue my master's in social work and continue to serve people. I also wish to become a professor someday! Who knows? The sky is the limit!



## Iman Minaz – ADMH Program

I graduated from the University of Toronto with a double major in Psychology and Health Studies. I've always had a deep interest in healing different forms of trauma; my father is in active addiction and with that came many personal moments of angst. I know I am not the only one with a parent suffering from this disease. Humber's **Addictions and Mental Health** program along with my placement at 1000 Islands Addictions Rehab taught me the art of self-love and self-compassion. Many a time the reality of addiction is misconstrued and stereotypes tend to lead the way – isolation is the breeding ground for bonding towards other substances, or behaviours which then become maladaptive. Hence an addiction forms. Johann Hari stated in his TedTalk “the opposite of addiction is not sobriety, it is connection.” We tend to lose sight of ourselves and others when we are in active addiction or are in an environment where survival is the main goal. The education brought to me from this program has allowed me to work with individuals from different walks of life and enable them to see their inner power. Becoming an addictions counsellor through this program helped me help others get their voice back while also gaining my own.