

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

NEWSLETTER
WINTER, 2021

Andrew Petras- Inaugural Ambassador Award Winner

Andrew Petras knew that a smaller University did not mean a smaller experience. Born and raised in Simcoe County, Andrew was drawn to the idea of staying close to home and being able to stay connected to his community.

"I liked the idea of smaller class sizes and knowing everyone in not just my class, but my program. The connections that can be made there, I knew would last a lifetime and support be beyond my years at Lakehead. The people, from classmates to Professors, they are my favourite memories and the biggest takeaways I have from Lakehead and the Business program," says Petras.

Petras believes that the Orillia campus and Business Administration program gave him a foundation and confidence to go into the world and figure out the next chapter of his life with greater self-assurance. After graduation, Petras obtained several additional designations in financial planning, chartered life underwriting, and registered retirement consultant. Through these additional certifications and navigating the post-graduation world, he found his way to financial planning, and has now joined IG Wealth Management.

"My Professors, classmates and those I got to interact with really helped me achieve my goals. That is a part of my role now, as a financial planner, that I enjoy the most. I get to help others turn dreams into goals and it is extremely rewarding, especially when I get to work with multi-generational families."

One of Petras' main reasons for staying in Simcoe County was to stay connected with his community and he has maintained that post-graduation. In the community, he serves on the board of a non-profit low-income housing organization and teaches financial literacy to grade school students. An avid skier, Andrew is a level 3 instructor with Collingwood Alpine Ski Club and has coached youth and



adult soccer. He is also an active member of Lakehead's Simcoe County Alumni Chapter, and as their President has helped host numerous events, including Lakehead Orillia's 10th anniversary celebrations.

It was the combination of his community and connection to Orillia and Lakehead that led him to be awarded the Inaugural Ambassador Award at the 2020 Homecoming ceremonies. This award is a new addition to the fall Homecoming activities and was designed to annually recognize either an Ambassador or Chapter President/member. The ideal candidate is a champion for Lakehead University, someone like Petras, who shows dedication and continued support to the University and who has made a significant impact on students, alumni, faculty, and staff.

The Faculty of Business Administration is extremely proud of its alumni and is grateful to alumni ambassadors like Andrew Petras. We wish him all the best on his future success, his up-coming wedding and hope that he is enjoying weekends on the ski hills!



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Virtual Coffee Dates with Industry Professionals

Connecting with colleagues, professionals, and mentors, in a casual coffee-house environment is a missing piece during this global pandemic. Therefore, members of the Faculty of Business Administration Student Association (FoBSA) worked together to provide current students with the opportunity to learn from and network with different majors' professionals within the community. The goal was to invite industry professionals from a variety of disciplines to come speak to current students so that they could get a chance to learn and ask questions about various fields they were interested in.

This event included 8 sessions carried out by 7 industry professionals, and each lasted for approximately thirty-minutes. Invited professionals included: Mr. Joseph Grant, Canadian Mental Health Association; Harold Wilson, Economic Development, City of Leduc; Millie Gormely, from IG Wealth Management; Steven Cavar, Steven Cavar Professional Corporation; Abhishek Singh, Aya Payments; Brianna Cook, Digital Transformation and Innovation student at the University of Ottawa; and Shelby Ch'ng, a local Thunder Bay entrepreneur and City Council member.

The event was a great success and students appreciated the opportunity to talk with alumni and other members of the community. FoBSA is hoping to run the event again in the future.

Buy Low, Sell High!

The Business Orillia Student Society (BOSS) first created a stock simulation event during one of the organizations weekly meetings and it grew into their inaugural event for the 2020/21 academic year. The goal was to introduce new and returning students to the program and the BOSS organization through a virtual stock simulation competition.

The event was open to business students at both campuses. Each participant started with 50,000 (not so real) dollars, with options, leverage, and real-time trading. The event took place from November 2, 2020 and will go to mid-February, 2021, and 44 students registered and actively participated in the competition. The BOSS leadership posted weekly standing results on their Instagram account, filtered by USD and CAD securities.

The winners will receive prizes and campus bragging rights!

Brown Bag Research Presentations

This fall, the Faculty of Business Administration offered several Brown Bag Research Presentations to staff, students and faculty. This informal, virtual gathering allowed for faculty members and graduate students to share their recent research and engage in discussion in an open and accessible way. Included in the monthly research

presentation were two recent MSc Management graduate students Roberto Felipe Loayza, who gave a presentation on the "Practice of Coaching and the Leader Self-Development of the Manager" and Katriina Tiilikainen) who presented on "Beauty Beyond Sensuality".

Experiential Learning with Real World Projects

Experiential learning and community outreach are two core elements in the strategy of the Faculty of Business Administration and the MBA program has been greatly valued for these elements. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the MBA courses have been offered online, which has brought many challenges with experiential learning opportunities and outreach to business communities.

The Project Management course in the MBA program was designed to equip future business professionals with the highly demanding project management knowledge and skills. In Fall 2020, Dr. ShiKui Wu (course instructor) worked closely with Ms. Maryann Kleynendorst (Experiential Learning Navigator) to connect the MBA class with seven Canadian organizations for project management consultancy. The organizations are partnered through an agreement between the Lakehead University and Riipen with support from the RBC Future Launch initiative. The participating organizations included: Animal Care Systems (Vancouver, British Columbia), County of Simcoe Economic Development (Midhurst, Ontario), Dr. Karim Dharssi's Dental Office (Orillia, Ontario), Kappa Foods (Newmarket, Ontario), Meghan Chomut Financial Investment (Thunder Bay, Ontario), Petra Mayer & Associates Consulting Inc. (Vancouver, British Columbia), and Profilio (Calgary, Alberta). The projects involved virtual career fair planning, digital learning tool pilot, pricing model development, professional advisors course development, retrospective project analysis, reusable strategies, new product market research, and communication system improvements. The MBA students worked in teams to deliver project plans and reports throughout the semester and to present their work to the client organizations via Zoom at the end of the term.

Both the client organizations and the MBA students found the experience to be beneficial. The students enjoyed opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real world project management scenarios. The client organizations also highly appreciated the students' effort and contributions in their projects. Ms. Petra Mayer, the founder of Petra Mayer & Associates Consulting Inc., posted the following public feedback on Riipen: *"This project completed by Lakehead University students has allowed me to set up processes and systems that will make my business more efficient. The group of students on the project were well prepared, highly collaborative and effective in the implementation."*

ALUMNI PROFILE

Thunder Bay Alumni Profile: Kielly McDonough

When 2020 started for Kielly McDonough, she had the next few months mapped out. Her graduation from the Honours Bachelor of Commerce in Marketing was on the horizon that Spring, and she had plans to visit Europe. After the February break, these plans quickly changed. “I made the best out of the situation and got to really explore my own backyard more. I am born and raised in Thunder Bay and yet there was so much I had yet to see,” said Kielly.

Kielly, a naturally outgoing person, has never be one to sit on the sidelines for long. As a student athlete in high school, she joined the Lakehead Women’s Thunderwolves Basketball team and played throughout her four years. Being a part of a team is where Kielly thrives, and she found multiple ways to stay connected to the basketball court, whether she was playing competitively, coaching youth, or volunteering wherever she could. “Coach Kriener still can’t get rid of me. I still show up to practice and play with the current team. I just love the game.”

Upon graduation, Kielly began applying for roles in her field and this fall was successful in becoming the Marketing and Community Capacity Building Specialist for the Mikinakoos Children’s Fund. This Northern Ontario charity was created to address poverty by providing basic amenities, such as food, clothing, and shelter to First Nations children residing in remote First Nations communities. Kielly is excited to be a part of an organization that is creating positive change and securing the safety and well-being First Nation children.

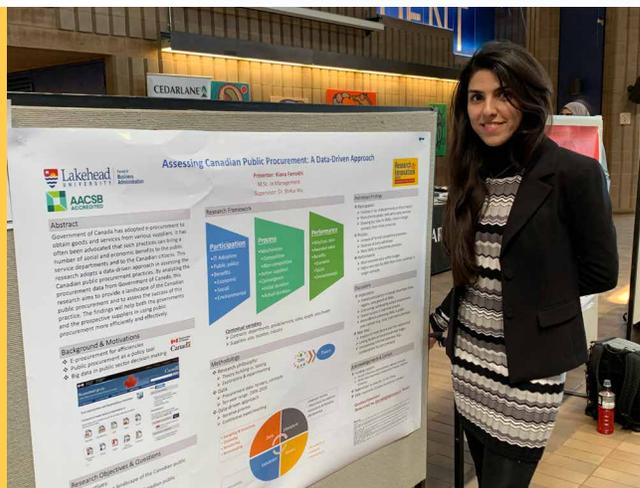


International Alumni Profile: Kiana Farrokhi

When Kiana Farrokhi was researching post-secondary institutions, she instantly fell in love with Lakehead’s Thunder Bay campus. “I loved the nature when I saw the pictures.” She was also impressed with the way in which staff and faculty connected with her right away, answering questions, and helping her learn more about the program. “It gave me a really great impression of how my day-to-day life would be. I felt like I mattered right away and knew that that’s what I wanted out of my Canadian education.”

Born in Tehran, the capital of Iran, Kiana attended Business school there, completing her Bachelor and Master’s degree. After working for a few years, she decided that she wanted to explore her options in Canada, learn more about the world of Business, and grow both her education and life outside of Iran.

Kiana took the idea of growth to heart and became very involved in campus life. She volunteered for many activities, such as becoming a Global Ambassador and assisting with the Winter Orientation for new students. The Global Ambassador Program is an opportunity for students to represent Lakehead University and express a proud voice and spirit of Lakehead to future students and alumni globally. Kiana jumped at the opportunity to be a part of



this as she is someone who really enjoys getting to know people from different nations and cultures. “I want to be able to introduce the positive aspects of the university where I study to others so that I can open the way for them to come to Lakehead and Canada.”

Despite the restrictions that COVID-19 placed on campus activities and student engagement, Kiana still enjoys the outdoor activities that Thunder Bay has to offer, such as hiking, ice skating and enjoying the local cuisine. We wish her all the best as she works towards completing her Master of Science in Management.

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Anyone with assets should have a Will to:

- protect your family and your estate
- minimize taxes
- establish a legacy and safeguard future generations

A gift in your Will to Lakehead University can:

- **CHANGE LIVES**
- remove barriers to a post-secondary education
- sustain important programs and initiatives

A GIFT IN YOUR WILL. SOMETHING YOUR FUTURE SELF WILL BE PROUD OF.

For more information contact [Lee-Anne Camlin](#)
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*“Because of the **Coughlin-Courtland Family Bursary**, I was able to continue to pursue my educational goals – dreams, really – without financial hardship.”*

KERI-LYN DURANT,
2019-20 award recipient Coughlin-Courtland Family Bursary

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with no obligation.



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Faculty Profile: Dr. Mehdi Arzandeh

When Dr. Mehdi Arzandeh isn't lecturing, either in front of a classroom or virtually over Zoom, you can find him in nature, hiking. "My biggest hobby is hiking and living in Thunder Bay has provided me with an endless number of amazing hiking trails. Thankfully, even during a pandemic, we have the space and opportunity in our backyard to get out and enjoy our surroundings."

Born and raised in Mashhad, a city with three million people in the northeast of Iran, Dr. Arzandeh received his MSc from the University of Tehran, Iran and then moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba in 2010, where he began his PhD studies in the Department of Economics at the University of Manitoba. He started teaching in the same department in 2012. Dr. Arzandeh spent seven years in Winnipeg, before moving to Thunder Bay in 2017 and it was not just the lure of Lakehead that drew him to our Superior shores. "I came in 2016 to camp and hike in Sleeping Giant Provincial Park, Canada Day long weekend. I didn't know that I would one day live here."

Dr. Arzandeh teaches several courses in the Faculty of Business Administration, in both the undergraduate and MBA programs, focusing on Managerial Economics, International Finance, and International Business, at the MBA level, and Business Quantitative Analysis, Finance, and Canadian Business in the Global Environment, for undergraduate students.

His primary research focuses on electronic markets. More specifically, it revolves around the application and analysis of big data in electronic markets, and in particular commodity markets, to add to our understanding of market behaviour. As Dr. Arzandeh explains, "understanding market behaviour is crucial to everyone who operates in commodity markets such as producers, processors, merchants, policy makers etc." He is currently planning a project in collaboration with the Lakehead University Agricultural Research Station (LUARS) to apply this research to agricultural commodity futures markets and train interested graduate students in the field.

We look forward to learning more about his upcoming research and wish him well on exploring more of our wonderful piece of the world.



AWARDS

William Das Neves

William Das Neves received the Ben Cowan Scholarship, which was created through the Estate of Ben Cowan, a Lakehead University Honorary Degree recipient. This Scholarship is awarded to a high-achieving student in the Faculty of Business Administration.

William recognizes that this award is more than a scholarship. "To me it represents the work I have done in the classroom. During the 2019/20 academic year, I worked a full-time job and was able to also be a Dean's List honouree." Receiving awards and acknowledgement from the Faculty of Business Administration for his hard work is something that almost didn't happen for William, as he didn't begin his journey with Lakehead as a Business student.

Born and raised in Southern Ontario, William attended St. Michael High School in Bolton, ON and was a star athlete on his school's basketball team. He originally



chose Lakehead University and the Thunder Bay campus because of the outstanding Education program that it offered. "I also knew that Lakehead had a reputation for smaller class sizes and that really appealed to me." Ultimately, William decided he wanted to be closer to home and transferred to the Orillia campus, where he now commutes to school.

It was his return to Southern Ontario that caused him to also look at his interests and goals post-graduation and make the switch to the HBComm program. "I would have considered myself a B- student in the past, but something about the

new program and my desire to one day pursue graduate school that really made me focus and push myself."

The Faculty of Business is very proud that William found his fit within the Orillia program and that he is achieving his goals. Congratulations on your awards and achievements!

Eraj Rehman

"Lakehead University offered such outstanding financial aid and scholarships, coupled with being a highly accredited business program, it really made my decision to choose Lakehead an easy one."

Raised in Thunder Bay, Eraj Rehman enjoys the outdoor beauty that Thunder Bay has to offer everyone. Whether it is winter or summer, there is something fun to do outside. When Eraj is not exploring, she is supporting the Ontario Board of Ambassadors, as their student CPA and as an Accounting Intern for Magnus Theatre, a local theatre company in Thunder Bay. She has also secured a summer internship at BDO for the summer of 2021.

Eraj was the recipient of three outstanding awards and bursary's this winter. She received the **Freedom 55 Financial Award**, which is awarded to a 4th-year Faculty of Business student, in good academic standing, who shows a commitment to learning and has demonstrated leadership through community involvement or student affairs. She also received the **William H. Buset Memorial Bursary**, which was created in memory of William H. Buset in 1997 and is awarded to a deserving student in Business, Music and Visual Arts programs. Finally, she also received the **Investors Group - Herp Lamba Spirit Award**, which was established in 2013 in celebration of Herp Lamba, a Lakehead University Alumni Association Young Alumni Award winner dedicated to community



service. Eraj received this award as a Honours Bachelor of Commerce student, based on academic achievement, demonstrated community involvement and financial need.

"To me, receiving these awards acts as a form of recognition that I am on the right path in my career and that my hard work is paying off."

The Faculty wishes Eraj all the best in her future endeavors and cannot wait to see what she does next.

Greetings Alumni, Students, and Community Partners

The theme of the recent *Lakehead University Report to the Community* is Hope and Resilience (<https://hopeandresilience.ca/>). This theme reflects how the institution, its students, faculty, and staff, have responded with flexibility, creativity, and strength to the challenges of the past year.

Like the rest of the University (and the world for that matter), The Faculty of Business Administration had to make some significant changes to its operations due to COVID-19. We made the transition to online delivery of all our courses and adjusted to working primarily from home. All members of the FOBA community had to adapt to this new environment, and I am grateful to our administrative and teaching staff, our students, and our community partners for the flexibility and creativity as we strove to maintain a meaningful learning environment and the sense of community that is such a part of our culture.

Aside from our courses, the community responded with a wide range of virtual activities that supported our mission. Our student organizations BOSS in Orillia and FoBSA in Thunder Bay organized events for students at both campuses. The Work Integrated Learning (WIL) @ Lakehead program (supported by RBC Future Launch) moved to entirely virtual placements. The University's partnership with Riipen (also supported by RBC Future Launch) enabled WIL placements and in-course experiential learning opportunities. The Faculty partnered with Mitacs to offer a Research Training Award and six Business Strategy Internships. Faculty members and graduate students participated in virtual Brown Bag research presentations, and we continued our research guest speaker program online. Although this year had many challenges and we look forward to coming together again in person, the Faculty also developed new capacities and explored new possibilities that may have lasting positive impacts.

Throughout this past year, there have also been many opportunities for reflection and evaluation. In November 2020, we underwent a Cyclical Review of our



undergraduate and MSc programs and will have our site visit for our AACSB Continuous Improvement Review (re-accreditation) in March 2021. We also began a new strategy development process a year ago. This revised strategy will identify key priority areas that will enable the Faculty to support Lakehead University's Strategic and Academic Plans. The Strategy prioritizes a stimulating and inclusive student experience, community engagement, innovation, operational efficiencies, and quality with the goal of supporting our students and our communities through excellence in teaching, research, and service.

I would like to thank our alumni and community partners for their continued support of our students, faculty, and staff.

David.

Dr. David Richards, Dean
Faculty of Business Administration
Lakehead University

Contributors

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