

2020 Annual Report



MARGARET NORRIE MCCAIN CENTRE

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Mount Saint Vincent University Co-operative Education Program is to be a leader in fostering and advancing work-integrated learning by:

- Developing skilled professionals who will strengthen the workforce in new and innovative ways;
- Leveraging community and alumni relationships to the Mount through strong employer partnerships;
- Providing students with the support and experiences for career exploration; and
- Promoting an environment where diversity is celebrated and valued in the workplace.

GREETINGS FROM THE *Mount Co-op Team*

Similar to countless organizations around the world, 2020 was an unprecedented year for the Mount Co-op Office. A host of unknowns faced our students, employers, partners, and staff as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We entered each co-op term braced for new challenges and unforeseen obstacles that would surely come our way. Given this anticipation, we were instead struck by the continuity and resilience we encountered.

Mount co-op students continued to display the same determinedness we saw in years past. Watching students juggle schoolwork, extracurriculars and other commitments while vigilantly pursuing co-op work terms – now in the midst of a pandemic – inspired a renewed sense of pride among staff. Two hundred and five Mount co-op students tapped into their historic flexibility and applied it to a novel workforce in 2020. We've always prided our students in showcasing adaptability, and their tenacity in the wake of a global pandemic demonstrated just how ready they are to take on the challenges of today's workforce.

Employers continued to express a steadfast commitment to recruiting and nurturing Mount co-op students in 2020. While we anticipated disruptions in position numbers and mentorship capacities, what we instead encountered was an eagerness in employers to coach students through this unprecedented time. Whether employers maintained in-office work, switched to virtual, or operated on a combination of the two – they took students down their newly-defined paths with them.

Much of this success would not be possible without funding programs from our government partners. The Co-operative Education Incentive from Nova Scotia's Department of Labour & Advanced Education was partially responsible for the ability of many Nova Scotia

based employers to continue hiring co-op students during the pandemic. Similarly, Employment and Social Development Canada's Student Work Placement Program assisted by providing wage subsidy programs to employers hiring students. We are grateful that in a time where so many worthy industries are seeking government assistance, co-operative education was recognized as an area worthy of continued investment. Our provincial and national economies will be better for it.

After a full year of unknowns, and broaching what appears to be another one, one thing is certain: we will persevere. We have our resilient students, committed employers, generous funding partners, and Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada to thank for this.

Wishing you a safe and happy 2021.

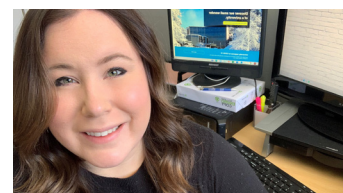
The Mount Co-op Team



Cynthia Black, Employer Liaison



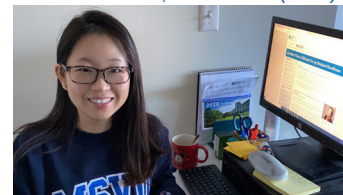
Scott Daniels, Manager



Courtney Davison, Coordinator



Raina DeBrouwer, Coordinator (Term)



Wendy Wang, Student Liaison

CO-OP STUDENT *of the year 2020*

The Mount Co-op Student of the Year Award was instituted in 1999 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Mount's Co-op Program. The selection criteria includes academic achievement, community involvement, contribution to the employer, and the impact co-operative education has had on personal and professional development.



Business Administration

Sarah Brining

nominated by Mike Johnson, Senior Corporate Accountant, Emera Inc. for her third work term

"Sarah has been able to use her strong communication skills to support managers and five other group members. She was able to adapt, and change processes based on working from home versus in the office, creating new and better processes for the role."



Tourism and Hospitality Management

Ji In Yoo

nominated by Georgia Toth, Guest Service Supervisor, Fox Harb'r Golf Resort and Spa for her second work term

"As a five star, four diamond, luxury property, Ji In encompassed the values of Fox Harb'r Resort. By consistently showing her outstanding customer service to every guest that walked through the doors, Ji In harnessed the luxury mindset and ensured the experiences had by each guest were above and beyond."



Public Relations

Raf Mikhael Peligro

nominated by Ivy Ho, Director of Communications, Downtown Halifax Business Commission for his second work term

"Raf set the bar very high when he started. He jumped into the job right away and was not phased by the learning curve. His writing skills helped him excel in the position and his maturity and professionalism made him a co-op favorite among the staff."

EMPLOYER *of the year 2020*

The Mount Co-op Employer of the Year Award was instituted in 2009 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Mount's Co-op Program. As part of our 40th anniversary celebrations in 2019, the award was expanded to include two categories: New Mount Co-op Employer of the Year and Longstanding Mount Co-op Employer of the Year.

This award acknowledges employers who have displayed commitment, excellence and dedicated support to the Mount's Co-op program.

New Tourism & Hospitality Management Employer of the Year



Yuchen Ji, Owner

Sugar Bakery, Halifax, NS
nominated by Yu Hang Chen, BTHM Co-op Student

"Yuchen consistently saw my efforts and encouraged me to succeed. My supervisor taught me the knowledge and skills related to food handling, provided me with the opportunity for promotion, let me discover one of my passions, and gave me a clearer direction for my future career goals."

New Public Relations Employer of the Year



Mary Acton-Bong, Executive Director

Family SOS, Halifax, NS
nominated by Cassidy Shatford, BPR Co-op Student

"Mary was open to giving me any positive learning experience she was able to, and always understood how feedback helps make a student stronger. Mary was always available when needed, and we were able to learn together."

Longstanding Tourism & Hospitality Management Employer of the Year



FOX HARB'R
RESORT

Elliott Isenor, Director of Golf Operations & Human Resources

Fox Harb'r Golf Resort & Spa, Wallace, NS
nominated by Dylan Walsh, BTHM Co-op Student

"From the very first day it was clear to me that Elliott was one of the nicest and most approachable people I've ever known. I was extremely comfortable around him the entire season and it was a pleasure to have worked for him – I hope to do it again some day."

Longstanding Public Relations Employer of the Year



**Atlantic Canada
Opportunities
Agency**

Erin MacDonald, Senior Communications Officer

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Sydney, NS
nominated by Chauntelle Brewer, BPR Co-op Student

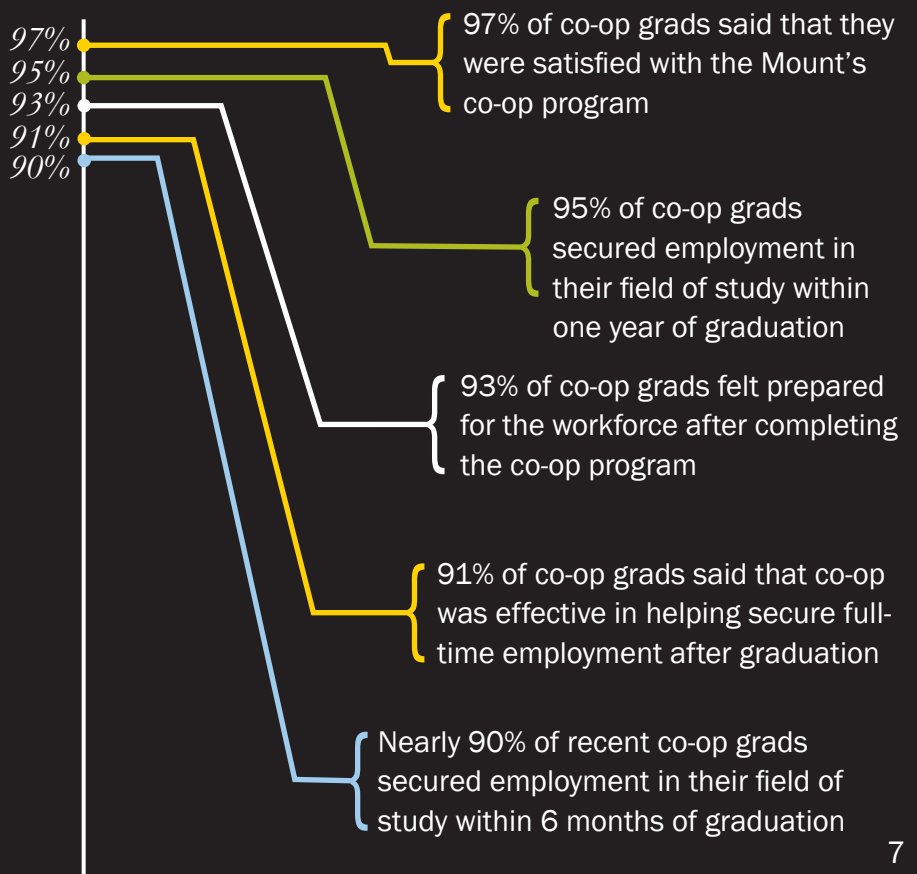
"As a student, my co-workers treated me as a valued member of the team and gave me tasks equivalent to their workloads. This provided me with a challenge that allowed me to build my individual skills, while also shining a light on my strengths. The professional atmosphere the agency has created propelled me to produce each of my projects at the highest possible quality."

Graduate STATISTICS



Here's what our grads had to say:

Since 2010, the Co-op Office has conducted a survey to learn about grad success in the workplace and how co-op has contributed to their current level of success. Our business administration, public relations and tourism & hospitality management co-op students are surveyed one year after graduation.



Program STATISTICS

205 students completed
co-op work terms
in 2020

BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION
16 STUDENTS

TOURISM AND
HOSPITALITY
MANAGEMENT
70 STUDENTS

PUBLIC
RELATIONS
119 STUDENTS

Average Salaries (per hour)

Business Administration

Work Term 1: \$16

Work Term 2: \$17

Work Term 3: \$17

Public Relations

Work Term 1: \$16.50

Work Term 2: \$16.50

Work Term 3: \$18

Tourism and Hospitality Management

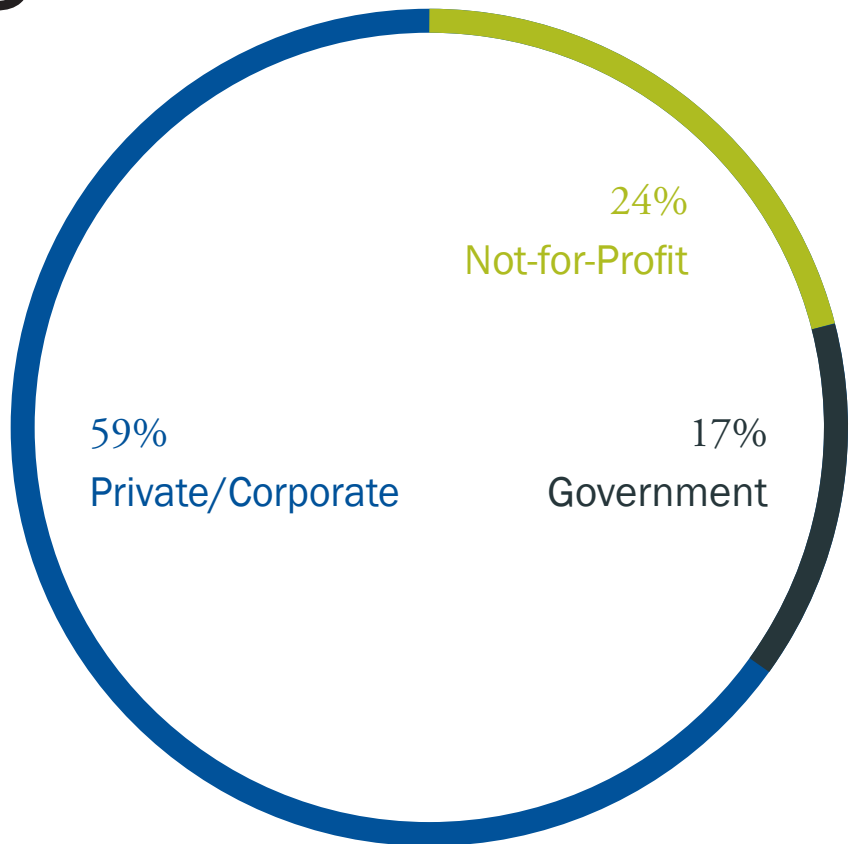
Work Term 1: \$13.50

Work Term 2: \$13.50

Work Term 3: \$13.50

Industry STATISTICS

239 employers
posted 483 jobs
in 2020



Geographic STATISTICS

\$1.82 million*
earned by co-op students in 2020

Where they
worked

Canada; except Nova Scotia 9%
International 8%

Nova Scotia 83%

Workplace Ready STATISTICS

Co-op supervisors ranked Mount co-op students' preparedness for the workplace.

(Scale of 1 = Poor to 5 = Excellent)



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

4.4



**PROBLEM SOLVING AND
DECISION MAKING SKILLS**

4.1



PLANNING AND INITIATIVE

4.2



**WORKING EFFECTIVELY
WITH OTHERS**

4.6



**INTEGRATION OF THEORY
INTO THE WORKPLACE**

4.2



**OVERALL WORKPLACE
PERFORMANCE**

4.3

**Data based on end of term employer evaluations submitted in 2020.*



Talking about CO-OP



The Value of Co-op

“When I started at the Mount, I had several years of applicable work experience. Co-op was important for me to take because getting a job in accounting when you graduate is very competitive. Many students come out of university with strong GPAs and want to pursue the CPA designation. On paper, we all look the same. I needed something to differentiate me when applying for jobs after graduating.”

– Abbie Hodder, Business Administration co-op graduate who completed her last work term at BDO Canada and was hired permanently upon graduation



On Post-Covid Preparedness

“It’s a good time to be studying. Tourism is not the only industry experiencing challenges associated with COVID-19. A lot of organizations are reflecting on their business models and reimagining what business looks like in the future. For students who are coming back to school – learning as much as they can and taking advantage of opportunities – jobs are going to be available.”

– Paulette Cormier-MacBurnie, Assistant Professor and Tourism Program Coordinator



The Adjustment to Working from Home

“Working from home can certainly come with its challenges when you are someone who likes structure and being able to interact face-to-face. That’s why for me it was important to establish my own routine and create a workspace that was comfortable. It was also important to maintain some of my work habits, such as waking up at the same time and taking breaks throughout the day. Finally, the biggest thing for me and the rest of the team was that we stayed connected. Whether it was a Zoom call or a daily chat, it’s important to reach out to the people who you not only work with everyday but those who you would just see in passing.”

– Danielle Truen, Public Relations student, speaking to the importance of maintaining structure and routine when working from home during her work term with Saltwire Network.

A Collective EFFORT

In response to the impacts the COVID-19 global pandemic had on student employment, employer partners, CEWIL Canada, government, and MSVU joined forces to support co-op students.

Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada



- Led government relations and advocacy efforts to increase student employment opportunities
- Developed a COVID-19 resource hub for students and employers
- Modified standard co-op program accreditation requirements

Nova Scotia Department of Labour & Advanced Education (LAE)



- Approved a greater number of wage subsidy applications through the Co-operative Education Incentive (CEI) program
- Allowed employers to stack funding (e.g.: combine CEI and SWPP funding)
- Organized regularly scheduled virtual meetings with all provincial co-op programs

Government of Canada



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

- Provided more funding for wage subsidies through the Student Work Placement Program (SWPP)
- Allowed post-secondary institutions to apply for SWPP funding
- Relaxed the “net new” requirement for positions to be eligible for SWPP funding

Mount Saint Vincent University



- Moved the co-op student PD program and co-op recruitment process (including interviews) entirely online
- Offered a work term replacement course for tourism & hospitality management students whose work terms were most significantly impacted by the pandemic
- Started the President’s Student Relief Fund to provide emergency financial support to students

Thank you to our co-op employer partners who continued to hire Mount co-op students in 2020!

Strength Through COMMUNITY

As we approach our sesquicentennial, the Mount's new strategic plan (2021-2028) is a statement about the unique contributions that the Mount can and will make within an evolving global context.

As its title – Strength Through Community – suggests, the new strategic plan is grounded in community and responds to our pledge to build, in partnership with community, stronger societies through enhanced access to education. That commitment extends to our Indigenous community, as we work to advance programs that support not only their educational ambitions, but provides a support system for Indigenous faculty, staff and students with a particular focus on women and girls.

This plan is profoundly important to the future the Mount, and is informed by input received from faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, government, business and community partners – including co-op employers.

Achieving the objectives set out in this strategic plan is imperative to ensuring the ongoing viability of the Mount, and our long-standing tradition of social responsibility and enduring commitment to the advancement of women.

Strength Through Community Strategic Plan 2021–2028

Our Vision

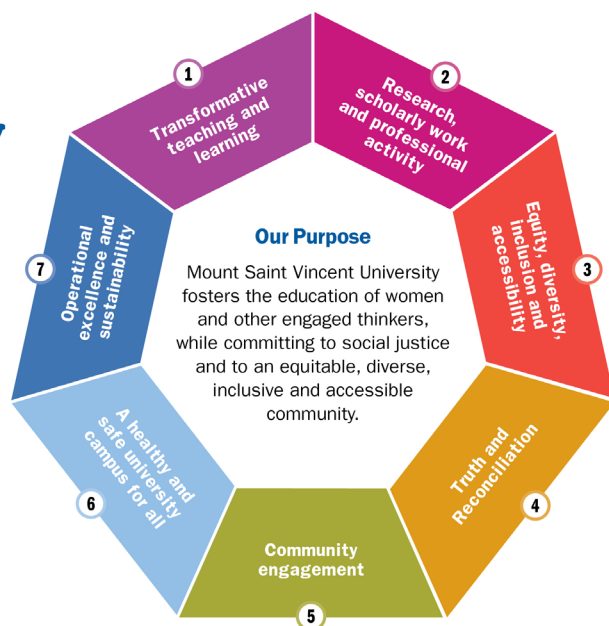
Mount Saint Vincent University is a model of creative teaching and research that nurtures socially responsible global citizens.

Our Mission

The advancement of women and girls, inspired by our strong tradition of social responsibility.
The delivery of academic excellence through a rich and rewarding university experience.
The pursuit of knowledge: scholarship, teaching and intellectual endeavours of the highest quality.
The promotion of accessibility through flexible learning opportunities and services.

Our Values

Academic Freedom
Accountability
Creativity
Engagement
Professionalism
Respect







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CEWIL Accredited

