Inside 5Co-op

WATERLOO STARS
Our 2009 Students of the Year

OUT OF THIS WORLD
Co-op meets NASA

WINNING FORMULA
Success at Sunnybrook

THE SKY’S THE LIMIT

WATERLOO CO-OP STUDENTS RISE ABOVE AND BEYOND
Inside sCo-op CONTENTS

The Inside sCo-op is a bi-monthly student e-publication released through Co-operative Education & Career Services at the University of Waterloo.

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Hello Fellow Co-op Students!

Last summer, I had the chance to see the Pixar movie *Up* and left the theatre with a childlike sense of awe. The beautiful animation, the whimsical theme, the super cool 3D glasses I got to wear - all essential elements of the perfect movie experience.

For those who haven’t seen the film, I offer a quick, spoiler-free synopsis: Protagonist Carl Fredricksen, a widowed septuagenarian who is stuck in a rut after his beloved Ellie passed away, decides to make good on an old promise to his late wife and explore the wilds of South America. With thousands of helium-filled balloons fixed to his house, he ascends into the sky for the adventure of a lifetime.

I was only recently reminded of the animated flick when watching the Academy Awards (for which it was nominated five times) while, coincidently, working on this issue of the Inside sCo-op. As I was gathering stories about exceptional co-op experiences, I couldn’t help but notice that many Waterloo co-op students, like our friend Carl, have pushed the boundaries and exceeded all expectations.

This issue is all about co-op experiences that go above and beyond. Check out the profiles of our six 2009 Co-op Student of the Year Award recipients, and learn all about their fascinating accomplishments. Also, meet Katelyn Fraser, a student whose space-related research was linked to NASA. And don’t forget to read about Sunnybrook Hospital, a hotbed of the most talented Waterloo co-op students. If you are interested in landing that dream job and having your own exceptional co-op experience, don’t miss our Career Corner article on perfecting your application package.

So whatever you may be doing, be it co-op or exploring the Amazon in a balloon-propelled house, always remember the sky’s the limit.

Enjoy,

Matthew

Have a suggestion for the next Inside sCo-op? Think you have a sCo-op worthy co-op experience? E-mail olaf@uwaterloo.ca now! We’d love to hear your ideas!

Returning to campus this summer? Don’t forget these IMPORTANT DATES!

**May 3:** Classes Start  
**May 15:** First job postings open (Pharmacy and Main Group)  
**May 17:** First job postings close (Pharmacy)  
**May 18:** First job postings close (Main Group)  
**June 28:** First job postings open (Architecture)  
**June 30:** First job postings close (Architecture)

The complete list of important dates will be available soon at www.cecs.uwaterloo.ca/students/dates.php

Interested in new and different co-op and post-graduate career opportunities? Check out the Employer Information Session calendars to find out when your future employer is presenting on campus. http://cecs.uwaterloo.ca/students/sessions.php

Need to brush up on your interview skills? Or perhaps you’re interested in grad school opportunities? The Student Workshop Calendar is your guide to important sessions taking place here at CECS. https://strobe.uwaterloo.ca/cecs/cs/index.php?page=Public.Workshops
Sunnybrooke Health Sciences Centre: When the name first blipped on the Waterloo co-op radar, they were offering two co-op positions to students in the spring term of 2004. One job was even labeled “Summer Co-op Student”. Six years later, Sunnybrook has become the ultimate hotspot for health research, filling over 45 unique jobs a year with Waterloo students.

So what’s all the buzz? Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, located in downtown Toronto, is an internationally ranked research-intensive institution. Their cutting-edge studies (and the co-op students who help conduct them) are often hot topics in the medical academic community.

Sunnybrook is renowned for its focus on preventative treatment of cancer and radiotherapy oncology.

Here at Waterloo, however, Sunnybrook is regarded as the mecca of successful co-op students. The experience it provides is unlike any other.

Take a look at Sunnybrook’s Rapid Response Radiotherapy Program, a special team at Sunnybrook’s Odette Cancer Centre. This group of physicians and researchers is joined by several Waterloo students each term, continually making headlines and breakthroughs in the medical community. Simply look (below) at the number of times a Waterloo student from the team has been professionally published! The most popular journal to feature the RRRP? The Journal of Pain Management.

RRRP (Rapid Response Radiotherapy Program)

The RRRP provides palliative care to relieve the symptoms of patients with advanced cancer. This research team has also been the host to more than 15 talented Waterloo co-op students in the past few years. Check out the combined successes of the Waterloo RRRP co-ops (right).

Co-op Students of the Year

Ever since the RRRP began hiring at Waterloo, at least one co-op student from the program has won the Waterloo Co-op Student of the Year Award every year.

2005 2006 2007 2008 2009
Nicole Bradley (AHS) Amanda Hird (AHS) and Kate Gardiner (Sci) Roseanna Presutti (AHS)
Kristen Harris (AHS) Amanda Hird (AHS)

WHAT ARE THEY WORKING ON?

Janet Nguyen and Jocelyn Pang are Waterloo’s most recent RRRP co-op students. Here’s some of the interesting work these talented students completed on their co-op terms.

Janet and the RRRP team investigated the possible use of hypnosis in treating cancer pain. Literature and studies on the subject are scarce, so Janet implemented a survey to find out how many patients are even aware of hypnosis for pain treatment. Knowing that over 50% of cancer patients have pain that goes untreated, the RRRP is exploring various methods of treating pain before resorting to radiotherapy or surgery.

Did you know? Sunnybrook received over 1,040 applications from Waterloo Co-op Students... In the Winter 2010 Term alone!

Jocelyn was one of the lucky few Waterloo co-op students who attended the 9th Annual Princess Margaret Hospital Conference in October 2009. The topic of the convention: New Development in Cancer Management. Not only did Jocelyn get to hear leading physiologists discuss new breakthroughs regarding breast cancer genes, she and her fellow co-op students delivered a poster presentation about their quality of life research.
On August 23, 2009, at precisely 7:26 p.m., Texas-born astronaut Col. Tim Kopra did something in outer space that even Buzz Aldrin would have never dreamed possible. He tweeted — yes, tweeted — aboard the International Space Station.

“We have a monthly physical fitness test on the stationary bike — just finished. We hook up an ECG and heart rate monitor,” he announced under the online alias astro_tim.

While this 98-character Twitter update may have amused his over 9,000 followers, for Waterloo student Katelyn Fraser, it meant her co-op research was right on track.

For the past two work terms, Katelyn, a 4A Kinesiology student, has been researching the effects of space travel on the human body. Her test subjects? NASA astronauts aboard the International Space Station.

Beginning in the fall of 2008, Katelyn joined Waterloo’s own Dr. Richard Hughson right here on campus, where he and his team of Master’s students and PhD candidates explore the effects zero gravity has on the cardiorespiratory and vascular systems of astronauts. Dr. Hughson’s work on the subject has been featured on Discovery Channel’s Daily Planet.

Before entering the lab, Katelyn had little interest in the world of space.

“I never even considered space research...”

“I never even considered space research,” she states. “I was just really interested in cardiovascular research.” During Katelyn’s first co-op term, she worked as an Exercise Leader for McMaster’s Cardiac Rehabilitation Centre, which sparked her interest in the workings of the human heart. She knew for her subsequent work terms, she wanted to continue exploring cardiovascular physiology.

Following her work at McMaster, she began investigating on-campus research opportunities. When she came across Dr. Hughson’s cardiorespiratory work, it was almost too good to be true. “I contacted him myself,” she explains. Her timing was impeccable; Dr. Hughson was looking for a co-op student to join his team.

Katelyn began her first term in the lab assisting grad students with ongoing experiments designed to simulate a zero gravity environment. At first, she focused primarily on data collection and analysis, but eventually developed a more hands-on role in the research. The experiments were all part of a larger project called CCISS – Cardiovascular Control on the International Space Station.

When Katelyn was hired back in the spring of 2009, the study moved from the lab to the launch pad. Expedition 20 was preparing to depart at the end of May, and Dr. Hughson and his team were ready to launch their ideas into space with a participating astronaut.

“The question we were trying to answer was ‘Why are astronauts more likely to faint when they return to earth?’” Katelyn says. “The overall goal of this experiment was to improve their safety.”

She and the research team had their subjects wear 24 hour heart rate and activity monitors throughout their mission to record heart rate patterns and corresponding activity. Data was collected once preflight, twice in space (the astronauts would even workout on specially designed fitness equipment), and once post-flight. Katelyn’s guinea pig through it all? None other than intergalactic Twitter-user Tim Kopra.

Katelyn and her team flew to California for the landing of the space shuttle Discovery in September 2009. Upon arriving safely, Tim Kopra announced the successful completion of his first engineering expedition on the International Space Station. Katelyn got a chance to meet him and, of course, collect data for her project.

“It was an awesome experience,” she recalls. With two successful terms already down, Katelyn prepares to rejoin her team in the spring of 2010. Garnering a new found appreciation for space research, Katelyn can boast that her co-op experience was out of this world. Literally.
AND THE WINNER IS...

Six exceptional students, each representing one of six faculties, were chosen as the 2009 Students of the Year. The recipients were judged on their workplace achievements, academic success, and overall contribution to co-operative education.

**ROSEANNA PRESUTTI**

**3A Health Studies**

What undergraduate student can say they have nine book chapters, eight published papers, and seven presentations under their belt before entering their 3A term? Roseanna Presutti, that’s who! As a Clinical Research Assistant at the Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre, Roseanna was actively involved in the patient consultation process for palliative radiation therapy. In one clinical trial involving patients who presented with multiple distressing symptoms, Roseanna discovered that non-radiation oncology healthcare (like nutritional counseling or psychological intervention) was necessary but also a potential burden on the current healthcare system. This discovery earned her a prominent spot in the *Journal of Pain Management*. Roseanna has since researched in bone metastases and her findings have been shared on an international level. Back in her community, however, Roseanna is better known for her role as “coach” to her local minor girls’ soccer team.

**SIAW YUN POI**

**3B Actuarial Science**

Siaw Yun Poi had a goal in mind when she began her Spring 2009 work term: to leave a lasting impression on her employers and within the Sun Life Financial company. Four months later, she checked that off her “to do” list. As an Actuarial Assistant, Siaw worked with an Investments Portfolio Management team on multiple projects that involved processing cash flows of private deals. Noticing it typically took over an hour to process just one deal, Siaw stepped up to the plate and developed a robust, new framework that shortened the turnaround time to five minutes. Her work took off from there, as she created more time-saving frameworks that have been adopted across the entire company. Her ideas were described as “sophisticated and original to the industry”. Talk about leaving an impression! When on campus, Siaw helps junior students with résumé feedback through the Singaporean and Malaysian Association. Siaw has been named the top university co-op student in the province by Education at Work Ontario.

**LAUREN THEOBALDS**

**3A Drama, Arts and Business**

When Lauren Theobalds began her Fall 2009 work term, the odds were already stacked against her; a brand new position with a seriously understaffed team. Working as an assistant to the Development and Outreach Officer of Workman Arts (a not-for-profit professional arts company), Lauren assumed a significant hands-on role upon arrival and rose to the occasion. She handled the marketing and communications to promote the company’s annual Rendezvous with Madness film festival, and increased attendance by over 46%. Lauren was the smiling representative of the company to the entire Toronto District School Board, and worked to increase youth enrolment in the arts program. Not only was she successful, she improved numbers in a way the company had never seen before. Lauren is also a member of Kappa Kappa Gama here at Waterloo, and loves yoga and badminton.
Tewodros Mamo
4B Nanotechnology Engineering

Harvard Medical School may be the top research medical school in America, but even they know Waterloo boasts the most talented students. Enter: Tewodros (Teddy) Mamo, a Waterloo co-op student who spent two terms at Harvard as a Nanomedicine Intern. With both a science and engineering background, Teddy was involved in designing targeted nanoparticle systems for gene and drug delivery. The current consensus is that these particles show great promise in the treatment of cancer and other diseases. He authored a review article that organized the latest perspectives in the field of nanomedicine that was published in the February 2010 issue of the journal Nanomedicine. What is more impressive is Teddy’s colleagues are hiring eight more Waterloo co-op students as a result of his incredible work terms. On his down time, Teddy enjoys both watching and playing soccer.  

Sameer Shah
3A Environment and Resource Studies

Leave it to an Environment student to approach the financial world of RBC and ask the question, “What is your carbon footprint?” Sameer Shah was contracted as an Environmental Project Management Intern and made numerous contributions towards “greening” the Royal Bank of Canada. As a co-leader of a pilot program that aimed to reduce RBC’s operational footprint, Sameer helped the company eliminate waste as a result of vendor consolidation. RBC reduced their footprint by 25,000 tonnes and saved almost half a million dollars in the process. Sameer also helped create a North American-wide energy consumption portfolio, so the entire RBC business could identify and implement energy-saving solutions. Not bad for a first work term! Currently, Sameer is studying abroad in Queensland, Australia, and plans to attend school in Uganda or Kenya in the 2011 year.

Stephanie Dobson
4B Biochemistry

Waterloo co-op students often find themselves researching the most revolutionary and cutting-edge sciences as part of their co-op experience. Stephanie Dobson is the perfect example. At the Princess Margaret Hospital, Stephanie worked as a research assistant in a lab devoted to stem cell and cancer research. With a specific focus on leukemia, Stephanie identified potential genes affected by retroviral insertion mutagenesis in her test subjects (mice, no less). It was hypothesized that the insertion sites of the retrovirus may be linked to the establishment of leukemia in the mice. The countless hours in the lab and analyzing statistics paid off; Stephanie and her team confirmed 44 unique insertions. Her results were later presented at the Gordon Research Conference for Stem Cells in Switzerland and soon after, Stephanie received an award for a presentation she gave on her research. Outside the lab, you can find Stephanie on the ice for the Waterloo Varsity Figure Skating team.
Meet the co-op students who call the Tatham Centre home. Presenting the Winter 2010 CECS and WatPD co-ops...

Tatham Centre

(Back row) Matthew Mendonca, Media and Publications Associate; Yuguang Zhang, PHP Developer; Brian Wu, Research Assistant (Middle row) Devon Day, Jobmine/Tech Support Representative; Shemeka Bailey, Employer Services Advisor; Qi Zhang, Web Content Analyst; Cynthia Liu, Research Assistant (Front Row) Cathy Lee, Business Analyst; Christie Han, Marketing Associate; Justina Lam, Business Analyst (Absent) Kyle Stewart, Research Assistant

CECS co-op students

WatPD co-op students

(Back row) Matthew Faubert, PD3 Teaching/Program Assistant; Jonathan Molin, PD2 Teaching/Program Assistant; Meagan Warnica, PD3 Teaching/Program Assistant; Karen Vanderhoek, PD7 Teaching/Program Assistant; Elisha Esté, PD2 Teaching/Programming Assistant; Amanda Leigh, Projects Assistant (Front Row) Daniel Pinizzotto, PD5 Teaching/Program Assistant; Leslie Ly, PD1 Teaching/Program Assistant; Aj Orena, PD2 Teaching/Program Assistant; Kyrene Kim, PD1 Teaching/Program Assistant

AVOIDING RUSH HOUR

Ah, the final day of first round applications. The only things standing in your way of total (job application) freedom are a thousand other students logging on to JobMine at the same time. We have heard and appreciate all of your constructive comments. CECS and Information Systems & Technology (IST) are working hard to improve the current system by adding capacity and fine tuning a very complex network. As we prepare to unveil our new system, here are a few ways you can help us (and yourself!) when applying for jobs on JobMine.

Plan Ahead: When you add a job to your short list, don’t let it ferment. Begin preparing your application package right away. Work in order of jobs you want the most to those you want the least - that way, if something does come up, the most important applications are submitted first.

Pace yourself: Why risk submitting all of your applications the night before they’re due? Make it a habit to submit each of your packages the moment it is finalized. Changes can always be made before the final due date.

Test run: There’s nothing worse than uploading a résumé and finding the formatting isn’t anything like you imagined. Upload your package a few days before you hit “submit”. That way you can see your résumé exactly as a future employer would and ask for assistance if something is wrong.

Last Minute Effort: If, for whatever reason, you must submit your package the last day applications are due, aim for the morning or early afternoon. These time frames tend to be the calm before the (co-op) storm.

Check out http://www.jobmine.uwaterloo.ca/students/help/ for other useful hints
THE REAL FIRST IMPRESSION

Sure, that chic new outfit and haircut is bound to impress some employers during the interview process. But you can forget about an in-person interview if your application isn’t up to par. Career Services’ Jayne Hayden explains why a solid résumé and cover letter are your ticket to the interview round, and offers valuable tips to make a real first impression.

We’d like to think that an employer will pick up our application package, thoughtfully analyze it, and discover we’re perfect for the job. The truth is, most employers have stacks of applications to go through, and will spend no more than 30-60 seconds scanning each one, looking for any excuse – no matter how small – to eliminate it, in order to shrink that pile.

A solid résumé, together with an effective cover letter, is your ticket to the interview. Together they provide a well-structured, easy-to-read presentation of your accomplishments, skills, and work history, designed to convince a potential employer to invite you to an interview. They also reveal your written communication skills. Employers pay close attention to phrasing, grammar, typos, and clarity. They often make decisions on this information alone.

Here are some tips to help you survive the first cut and keep you in the running:

1. **Target the employer.** Effective résumés and cover letters must be targeted to the employers to whom they are sent. Do not send a “cookie-cutter” letter: they are easy to spot, and don’t lend anything to your application. Employers want to see why you are specifically applying to them as well as what you have to offer.

2. **Highlight your skills and accomplishments.** It is imperative that both documents highlight the skills and accomplishments that meet the employer’s needs. In your résumé, include a “Skills Summary” as the first section, and ensure you list only job-relevant skills and accomplishments there, in decreasing order of importance (four to six points). This is the most important section of your résumé. It quickly tells the employer whether you have what s/he is looking for. The rest of the résumé provides proof for what you claim here.

3. **Quantify wherever possible.** The use of numbers and percentages helps demonstrate the extent and success of your accomplishments.

4. **Use action verbs.** These help to create a sense of action, making your experiences more vivid in the employer’s mind. Avoid use of such verbs as “assisted,” “participated in,” and “involved in,” as these do not give a clear picture of what you actually did.

5. **Keep descriptions as short as possible.** After you get the initial idea written down, edit it until you have eliminated any unnecessary language. Make it easy for the employer to quickly read what you have accomplished. For the résumé, use bulleted points instead of complete sentences and paragraphs.

6. **Include references to activities and interests.** These help the employer relate to you and get a better picture of who you are as a person. With regard to volunteer work, a prevailing attitude in the business world these days is community is important, and companies want their employees to participat

7. **Watch the length.** For the résumé, that’s a maximum of two pages; for the cover letter, one page. Strive for three to five sentences per paragraph in your cover letter; none should look overwhelming to read.

If your résumé is two pages, remember that the employer will spend the majority of time on the first page, so ensure that the most important information is on that page. Include sufficient white space and ensure it is pleasing to the eye.

In summary, make sure your résumé and cover letter look professional, clear, and concise. Focus on the job and employer and include only relevant information. Don’t end up in the discard pile because of careless mistakes or the inclusion of irrelevant information. Let them discover – easily – what benefits you have to offer. Intrigue them with your background and qualifications and make them want to meet with you. When you get the interview, you know your introductory documents have made the right impression.

**REMEMBER THIS FORMULA!** (for highlighting your skills in the “Workplace Experience” section)

**SKILL (action verb) + TASK (what you did) + TOOLS (how) + RESULT (outcome)**

Ex. Designed client database using MS Access, resulting in client info retrieval time reduction of 50%.

Don’t overuse, however! Otherwise your “workplace experience” section will be lengthy and contrived.

Want to shape up your résumé or cover letter? Revisit the Résumé Writing and Letter Writing modules of the Career Development eManual (cdm.uwaterloo.ca) or book an appointment in Career Services through careerservices.uwaterloo.ca.