

# The Senecan

## Confucius Institute opens at Seneca



The official opening of the Confucius Institute at Seneca was kicked-off with an eye dotting ceremony, which is a Chinese tradition to awaken the spirit of the lions before they perform (right). Pictured above (from left to right): David Agnew, President, Seneca College; Helen Szumigaj, Member, Seneca College Board of Governors; Ligang Chen, Consul General, Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China in Toronto and Alex Chiu, Councillor, Ward 8, Town of Markham.

Seneca College has officially opened the first Confucius Institute in the GTA at Markham Campus. The opening ceremony included representatives from Northeast Normal University (Seneca's Confucius Institute partner), representatives from the Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China in Toronto, Chinese community leaders and entrepreneurs, representatives from various levels of government and Seneca students and staff.

"We are delighted to officially open

Seneca's Confucius Institute to provide businesses and our community with programming that promotes Chinese language and culture," says Seneca President David Agnew. "From programming that can be custom-designed to help Canadian businesses develop better relations with Chinese businesses to after-school programs to teach children Mandarin, the Institute furthers Seneca's commitment to our community and our partners."



Established as partnerships between Chinese and local post-secondary institutions, Confucius Institutes promote Chinese language and culture, support Chinese language training and facilitate

cultural exchanges. There are now more than 300 Confucius Institutes around the world including nine in Canada.

To learn more, visit [www.senecacollege.ca/confucius-institute/index.html](http://www.senecacollege.ca/confucius-institute/index.html)

## Travel and Tourism graduate arranges life-changing trips

Building a school, planting trees and painting classrooms.

This might not sound like your ideal holiday, but volunteer travel programs are becoming increasingly popular and are creating demand for trained and experienced travel agents. Ask Cici Lam. The 22-year-old graduate of Seneca's Tourism and Travel program works as a co-ordinator of corporate and family engagement for Me to We — a Free the Children organization that is designed to transform consumers into world changers. One of the ways Me to We, started by brothers Craig and Marc Kielburger (Seneca honorary degree recipients), achieves this mission is through its Volunteer Adventure program to Kenya, which is managed by Cici. As part of her job, she assists families and individuals with the process of taking this transformative trip from the moment they express interest to when they arrive back home.

"I walk them through the experience, so that they can make an informed decision," Cici says. "I communicate with our in-country staff, book flights and hotels and all the other nuts and bolts that need to be taken into consideration before someone travels to Kenya."

Cici first learned about "volunteer tourism" and how it has become a growing player in the leisure travel market through her Seneca training. She never gave any thought to specializing in this sector until she came across the Me to We job posting. Cici had already established herself as a traditional travel agent, turning a co-op placement through the program into a full-time agent position with a luxury travel agency in Toronto. She says being



PHOTO BY TOM BARTSIOKAS

part of a grassroots program, where people can enjoy a vacation and make a difference at the same time, was an offer too good to refuse. "Traveling to Kenya is definitely a once-in-a-life time experience," she says. "Helping families get there and make a difference has got to be the best part of my job."

Through transfer agreements and institution partnerships, graduates of Tourism and Travel may be eligible for credit at the following post-secondary institutions:

- Algonquin College — Bachelor of Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Laurier Brantford — Honours Bachelor of Arts
- Royal Roads University — Bachelor of Arts in International Hotel Management
- Swiss Education Group — Swiss Higher Diploma in International Hotel and Tourism Management to Bachelor of Arts in Hospitality and Tourism Management

For more information, visit [www.senecacollege.ca/fulltime/TIS.html](http://www.senecacollege.ca/fulltime/TIS.html)

## Diploma to a degree

George Nasim's Seneca diploma is helping him earn a bachelor's degree in short order.

The 25-year-old is a year away from receiving his Engineering degree at Lakehead University thanks to Seneca's long-standing transfer agreement with the university.

It's just one of the many agreements the College has in place that allows our students to go from a diploma to a degree — and beyond.

"Many of our students choose to continue their studies at a university after completing one of our diploma programs," says Seneca President David Agnew. "Over the years, we have worked out many articulation agreements with universities across the country, so that our diplomas are recognized."

Seneca has transfer agreements with universities in Canada and throughout the world, including Australia, England, South Africa and the U.S. With these agreements, students can obtain credit towards a university degree.

The agreements cover a range of diverse program areas such as human resources management, real property administration, nursing, biochemistry and engineering, to name a few.

In George's case, he says his transition from Seneca to Lakehead was seamless. In fact, all of his credits were accepted by the university, which is one of 12 partner institutions affiliated with the Electronics Engineering Technology - Communications program.

Through the College's agreement, George entered directly into the third year of the four-year degree

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# Career success by all accounts

For Reynold Choi, the decision to pursue a degree in accounting at Seneca has added up to a new career.

Weeks before graduating from the International Accounting and Finance degree program, this 30-year-old received and accepted a job offer as an Accounting Associate with SmartCentres—the Canadian real estate development company known for its shopping centres.

“My job is fun,” Reynold says. “I work in a professional accounting department, with real deadlines and it’s amazing.”

Not too long ago, Reynold made his living as a real estate agent. For six years he sold homes and condos in the GTA, but then the global recession hit and his career stalled.

Having previously earned his Business Administration diploma at Seneca, Reynold looked into the College’s bachelor of commerce degrees and chose the International Accounting and Finance program.

The program provides a unique accounting education that gives students knowledge in the areas of business, finance and technology. Along with completing courses leading to professional certification during the program, graduates complete a four-month co-op placement to gain practical work experience.

In Reynold’s case, he completed his co-op at a prestigious Toronto accounting firm as a tax return adviser, where he filed more than 300 returns for clients. This experience, along with the accounting credentials he earned through the program, led to his current position with SmartCentres.

Now Reynold is earning the steady pay cheque he always hoped for in a profession that remains among the most in-demand in the world.

“The need for accounting talent will only continue to grow,” Reynold says. “If you are good with numbers and are interested in this profession, the International Accounting and Finance program will give you the hands-on training and theory you need to work in this field.”

For more information on the International Accounting and Finance program, visit [www.senecacollege.ca/fulltime/IAF.html](http://www.senecacollege.ca/fulltime/IAF.html)

## ‘Popcorn and a movie’ takes on a whole new meaning

When it comes to movies, forget about popped kernels of corn, and start thinking about Popcorn.js, a new way for web filmmakers to create videos with innovative interactive components.

Thanks to a partnership between Mozilla, creator of the Firefox browser, and Seneca College’s Centre for Development of Open Technology (CDOT), Popcorn.js will allow web users to experience videos enhanced with such elements as additional video and audio tracks; web-based maps; live feeds from Twitter or Facebook; photos and/or subtitles.

“The Popcorn project is a joint venture with Mozilla to create the technology and tools necessary for filmmakers and other storytellers to use the web as a medium,” says Professor David Humphrey, Seneca’s School of Information and Communications Technology. “Popcorn makes it possible for programmers and non-programmers to create complex visual narratives and time-based, interactive media experiences using open web standards without the need for proprietary plug-ins.”

Popcorn.js and its online web application Popcorn Maker were released during this November’s Mozilla Media Festival in London, England. It was part of a research project involving 15 Seneca students and faculty. The work was aided by grants from Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, Ontario Centres of Excellence and Mozilla.

“CDOT has been instrumental in the success of Popcorn,” says Brett Gaylor, Mozilla’s lead on the Web Made Movies project. “David Humphrey’s team have made an extraordinary contribution to the HTML5 ecosystem that advances the capabilities of developers, media makers, and video creators on the web.”

Without the need to download plug-ins, viewers can immediately be immersed in Popcorn-enhanced video content, provided that they are using a current HTML5-capable browser, such as Firefox, Apple’s Safari, or Google’s Chrome browsers.

Seneca has already worked with filmmakers in New York, San Francisco, Toronto, and Boston on other upcoming productions using Popcorn.js. It has been used by documentary filmmakers to tell the story of the uprising in Egypt, the plight of people living in Burma, and the economic crisis in the United States. The National Film Board of Canada also recently premiered a Popcorn-enhanced web film.

The Mozilla Foundation is an independent non-profit organization supported by individual donors and a variety of companies. The foundation promotes openness, innovation and opportunity on the Internet by releasing software such as Firefox and Thunderbird and expanding to new areas, and by allocating grants to support accessibility improvements on the world wide web.

# Newnham Campus Expansion



PHOTO BY RICHARD DOUGLAS

## Local dignitaries attend opening celebration

Seneca’s newest building, designed for energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, was officially opened.

Seneca students, alumni and employees were joined by Costas Menegakis, MP for Richmond Hill, David Zimmer, MPP for Willowdale, Michael Coteau, MPP for Don Valley East, and David Shiner, City Councillor for Ward 24 Willowdale, for the celebration.

The new building opened for September classes as an addition to Seneca’s Newnham Campus at Finch Avenue East and Highway 404. The expansion has been built to Leadership In Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold standards.

### New building features:

- Three 80-seat classrooms
- Twenty-three 40-seat classrooms
- Fourteen 40-seat computer labs

- Multi-purpose auditorium for 240 students that can be turned into a conference room or two 120-seat lecture halls
- Increased computing commons and library space
- Several new areas of collaborative student study and work space
- A new “front door” for the campus
- Improved campus access for people with disabilities

Seneca received \$20.7 million from the provincial government and \$4 million from the federal government to create the new building.

The funding is in response to the surge in post-secondary participation. The College also contributed \$32 million to the project. To learn more, visit [www.senecacollege.ca/about/kip/officialopening.html](http://www.senecacollege.ca/about/kip/officialopening.html)



PHOTO BY YING WANG

From left to right: Michael Coteau, Member of Provincial Parliament for Don Valley East; David Zimmer, Member of Provincial Parliament for Willowdale; Costas Menegakis, Member of Parliament for Richmond Hill; Nasra Abdi, Vice-President, Seneca Student Federation – Newnham Campus; David Agnew, President, Seneca College; David Shiner, City of Toronto Councillor, Ward 24, Willowdale and Bill Hogarth, Chair, Seneca College Board of Governors.

# Fighting fires before they even start

He had a burning desire to be a firefighter, but Mohamed Ismail decided to save lives in another way — by preventing fires.

This 2009 graduate of Seneca's Fire Protection Engineering Technician program preserves life and property by installing, maintaining, and repairing fire protection systems.

As a Fire Alarm Technician with Simplex Grinnell — one of the leading North American companies in fire and life safety — Mohamed has installed fire alarm and fire suppression systems across Ontario and in residential and commercial buildings such as Pearson Airport and the Rogers Centre. His most recent project saw him return to Newnham Campus, where he helped set-up the new alarm system in Building A.

"Coming back to the campus was like coming back home," Mohamed says. "A lot of the faculty I bumped into joked, 'What are you still doing here? Didn't you graduate?'"

Before coming to Seneca, Mohamed studied at another college where he was taking general computer courses.

After attending a couple of classes, he quickly realized a career in computers wasn't for him. A childhood dream he once had to become a firefighter resurfaced and brought him to Seneca. As soon as he stepped foot on campus, he knew he made the right decision to come here.

"Overall, Seneca seemed like a more serious college," he says. "I actually compare it to a university in terms of the educational setting."

Although he wanted to be a firefighter at first, Mohamed changed his mind after learning about all the opportunities that exist in fire protection. A job fair hosted by the School of Fire Protection sealed his decision and introduced him to his future boss at Simplex Grinnell.

Mohamed says what sets Seneca's fire protection training apart from other programs is the hands-on training students receive.

"The training facilities are amazing," he says. "They have fire panels, sprinkler systems and real life equipment that you would use in the field right here at Seneca."



VIDEO

PHOTO BY RICHARD DOUGLAS

Mohamed Ismail performs a routine check of the fire alarm panel at Newnham Campus. A graduate of Seneca's Fire Protection Engineering Technician program, Mohamed recently returned to the campus to help set-up the new alarm system in Building A.

Through transfer agreements and institution partnerships, graduates of the **Fire Protection Engineering Technician program** may be eligible for credit at the following universities:

- **University of Western Ontario** — Bachelor of Engineering Science
- **Davenport University** — BBA – Public Safety and Security Management

For more information, visit [www.senecacollege.ca/fulltime/FPN.html](http://www.senecacollege.ca/fulltime/FPN.html)

# Co-op connects graduate to her dream job

As a Communications Officer who specializes in events, Laura Angelone has grown accustomed to making things happen.

Two years ago, she turned a four-month co-op placement with the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) into a full-time career. Now, this graduate of Seneca's Corporate Communications program supports cabinet ministers, members of parliament, and industry stakeholders in the organization and execution of announcements and community events. She is responsible for writing speaking notes, news releases and a number of other materials as a member of the Public Affairs and Ministerial Services team.

"This is the career I always envisioned for myself after Seneca," Laura says. "It's a dream come true."

Laura's journey into the world of corporate communications didn't happen overnight. After completing her undergraduate degree in tourism administration, she struggled to find work in her field and accepted a position as Manager of Guest Services in the food and beverage industry. For nearly two years, Laura managed a restaurant in Oakville before deciding she wanted more in a career.

Her interest in corporate communications, ironically, all started thanks to the restaurant and the internal communication requests she was asked to carry out in her role as a manager.

It wasn't long before she started researching corporate communications careers and the type of training offered.

Having already earned her university degree, Laura chose Seneca's Corporate Communications program, a graduate



certificate program known for its rigorous curriculum, high academic standards and paid co-op program. She completed a co-op at FedDev Ontario, which had launched to assist southern Ontario communities and businesses diversify and strengthen their local economies. During the four-month co-op period, Laura performed many of the tasks she does today as a Communications Officer, including event planning and day-to-day communications and media relations activities.

She says her ability to work in the public service was made easy thanks to the government relations course she took as part of the program.

"It educated me on all levels of government and how they operate," she says. "When I came to the job, the learning curve was a lot less steep."

Through transfer agreements and institution partnerships, graduates of the **Corporate Communications program** may be eligible for credit at the following post-secondary institutions:

- **Athabasca University** — Bachelor of Professional Arts in Communication Studies
- **Davenport University** — Any relevant Bachelor's or Master of Business Administration
- **Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey** — Masters in Communication and Information Studies (MCIS)
- **Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology** — Master of Communication

For more information, visit [www.senecacollege.ca/fulltime/CCMC.html](http://www.senecacollege.ca/fulltime/CCMC.html)

## Raspberry Pi

# The less than \$40 PC

Internet chat rooms and forums are filled with questions and comments about Raspberry Pi, the personal computer designed in the United Kingdom that will sell for under \$40.

What many don't realize is the strong connection between Seneca and this device: Seneca's Centre for Development of Open Technology (CDOT) has played a large part in creating the operating system it will run on.

The College's involvement comes from its expertise with Fedora, an open source Linux-based operating system, and its use on ARM microchips typically used in cell phones and tablets.

"Five billion ARM chips were pro-

duced last year and there will 150 billion in use by 2020," says Professor Chris Tyler, School of Information and Communications Technology.

As it happens, Raspberry Pi also uses the ARM chip, so it caught the attention of CDOT.

"The Fedora ARM project includes several interesting projects including the One Laptop per Child program, so when Raspberry Pi was first announced, it occurred to us that it would be an interesting device to run the Fedora ARM software," says Chris.

An inquiry was made, and CDOT was supplied with an early version of the computer.

"Since then our efforts have focused on optimizing that software so it runs really well on the small amount of memory that's available on the Raspberry Pi device. We anticipate having a strong set of software when the device is released for sale."

Chris says that this project is just another example of why working with open source software benefits Seneca students.

"Students working with open source have the opportunity to work on much larger projects than they would otherwise. Typical computer studies projects involve writing a few thousand lines of code at the most. By working with open source projects we give the students the opportunity to work with existing codes that sometimes range into millions

of lines. That's something they'll have to do in their careers but it's not something you can do with proprietary software."

Seneca has posted a YouTube video about Raspberry Pi that has been viewed more than 30,000 times in its first month online.

It features Chris and Eben Upton from Raspberry Pi talking about the project.



VIDEO

# NEWS DIGEST



## Seneca wraps its best United Way campaign

The students, faculty and staff of Seneca College have reached new heights in their support of the United Way's annual campaigns in Toronto and York Region. Efforts across the College's campuses have resulted in more than \$148,000 raised — \$62,000 more than was donated last year.

"The generosity and support of the Seneca community was exhibited across all our campuses throughout the United Way campaign," says Seneca President David Agnew. "I am delighted that through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers, we have exceeded our fundraising goal, which will assist thousands of people in our communities and the one in three Seneca students who benefit from the services of United Way member agencies."

The College hosted various fundraising events in support of the campaign including a kick-off at Newnham Campus with guests including United Way Toronto President and CEO Susan McIsaac. Markham Campus hosted the second annual United Way stair climb and more than 100 Senecans participated in the Enbridge CN Tower's United Way stair climb.

Seneca's campaign was bolstered by a generous donation of \$15,000 from the Seneca Student Federation. Members from the Federation and students from various Seneca programs also joined Seneca full- and part-time staff members in various on-campus events, leading to the largest United Way campaign in the College's history.

The United Way in Toronto and York Region supports a network of more than 250 agencies providing vital social services to strengthen individuals, families and communities. Working in partnership with others, the United Way mobilizes people and resources to address the root causes of social problems and to change community conditions for the better.

## Seneca named GTA top employer four years in a row

Seneca has been named one of Greater Toronto's Top Employers for the fourth year in a row, in a *Globe and Mail* supplement.

Selected employers are large and small, from a variety of industries, offering different benefits and working conditions. This special designation

recognizes the Greater Toronto employers that lead their sectors in offering exceptional places to work. Employers are compared to other organizations in their field to determine which offers the most progressive and forward-thinking programs.

"Greater Toronto's Top Employers recognizes organizations that are leaders in their field and to be included on the list for the fourth year in a row is a testament to Seneca employees," says Seneca President David Agnew. "It is their dedication and commitment that make it possible for Seneca to offer quality, professional, career-focused programs and services to our students."



## Senecans recognized for outstanding service

The achievements, successes and contributions of 32 individuals and partner organizations were celebrated at the Senecans of Distinction Awards reception. The Senecans of Distinction Award recognizes individuals and organizations who are exemplary role models to Seneca students through their service and who have made significant contributions to the Seneca community. Senecans of Distinction ranged from alumnus David Flood who received an award for bravery from the York Region Police for his role in a daring ice water rescue of four individuals on Lake Simcoe to retired Professor Stan Gershman who established a free Legal Advice Clinic at Seneca College. For the complete list of recipients, visit [http://www.senecacollege.ca/media/senecans\\_of\\_distinction.html](http://www.senecacollege.ca/media/senecans_of_distinction.html)

## Professor Bruce Hunter wins poetry award

Professor Bruce Hunter's *Two O'Clock Creek – Poems New and Selected* has won the 2011 Acorn-Plantos Award for People's Poetry.

This award is presented annually to a Canadian poet who published a book in the previous year that has followed in the tradition of Canadian poets Acorn, Livesay, Purdy, Plantos, and others by being accessible to all people in its use of language and image.

For winning, Bruce will receive \$500 and a medallion.

*Two O'Clock Creek* brings together the best of Bruce's previous books of poetry, as well as exciting new work that shows the continual development of this life-long poet. It has been highly acclaimed by *Books in Canada*, the *Calgary Herald*, the *Globe and Mail* and *Canadian Literature* magazine.

Bruce is the author of four books of poetry, a short story collection and the award-winning novel *In The Bear's House*. Since 1986, he has taught English and Liberal Studies at Seneca.



## Business competition brings high school students to Seneca College

Seneca hosted more than 1,800 Toronto high school students who took part in the Demonstrating Excellence Celebrating Achievement (DECA) Toronto Regional Competition, which was held at Newnham Campus.

DECA is an innovative extra-curricular program for Ontario secondary school students. It creates

professional partnerships and experiential learning opportunities for students in the business community. Participants competed in a multiple choice exam on key business concepts, as well as individual and team oral case competitions.

The cases covered a range of topics including: accounting, marketing, management, business law and ethics and spanned such sectors as sports and entertainment, automotive, hotel, restaurant and retail.



School of Business Management and Centre for Human Resources Chair Chris Dudley (left) and Faculty of Business Dean Susan Zimmerman (right) with the competition's winners.

## Seneca Professor's artwork selected for hospital holiday card

A painting by Professor Werner Zimmermann, who teaches in the Animation and Illustration programs, was chosen as the 2011 Holiday Card for The Hospital for Sick Children.

The lively and colourful artwork titled "Snow Day" features a group of school-aged children playing on ice. The Women's Auxiliary Volunteers of The Hospital for Sick Children will be selling the cards to help support children and their families at the hospital.

Werner has been writing and illustrating children's literature since 1986. His books have been sold worldwide and he has twice been nominated for a Governor General's Award for Illustration in Children's Literature.

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program.

When he graduates next year, George is confident the combination of his engineering diploma and degree will maximize his career options.

"The sky's the limit," he says. "In five years, I have gained the hands-on experience and theoretical know-how employers value in their engineering professionals."

Peter Meehan, Chair of Liberal Arts and Academic Partnerships at Seneca, says the College's Degree and Credit Transfer Office can assist students with their plans to attend university after college.

Staff at the office help students

research their options, verify requirements and walk them through the application process.

Information sessions and university fairs are also held on campus throughout the year.

"The College degree transfer process provides students with maximum value for the work they have already done," Peter says. "The process is designed to create pathways to allow students to move ahead and connect with their post-secondary and career-related goals."

For a complete list of Seneca's transfer agreements, visit [www.senecacollege.ca/degreetransfer/students/index.html](http://www.senecacollege.ca/degreetransfer/students/index.html)

# Seneca

For questions about circulation of The Senecan, call 416.491.5050 ext. 77010. Submissions or questions about articles in The Senecan should be sent to:

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