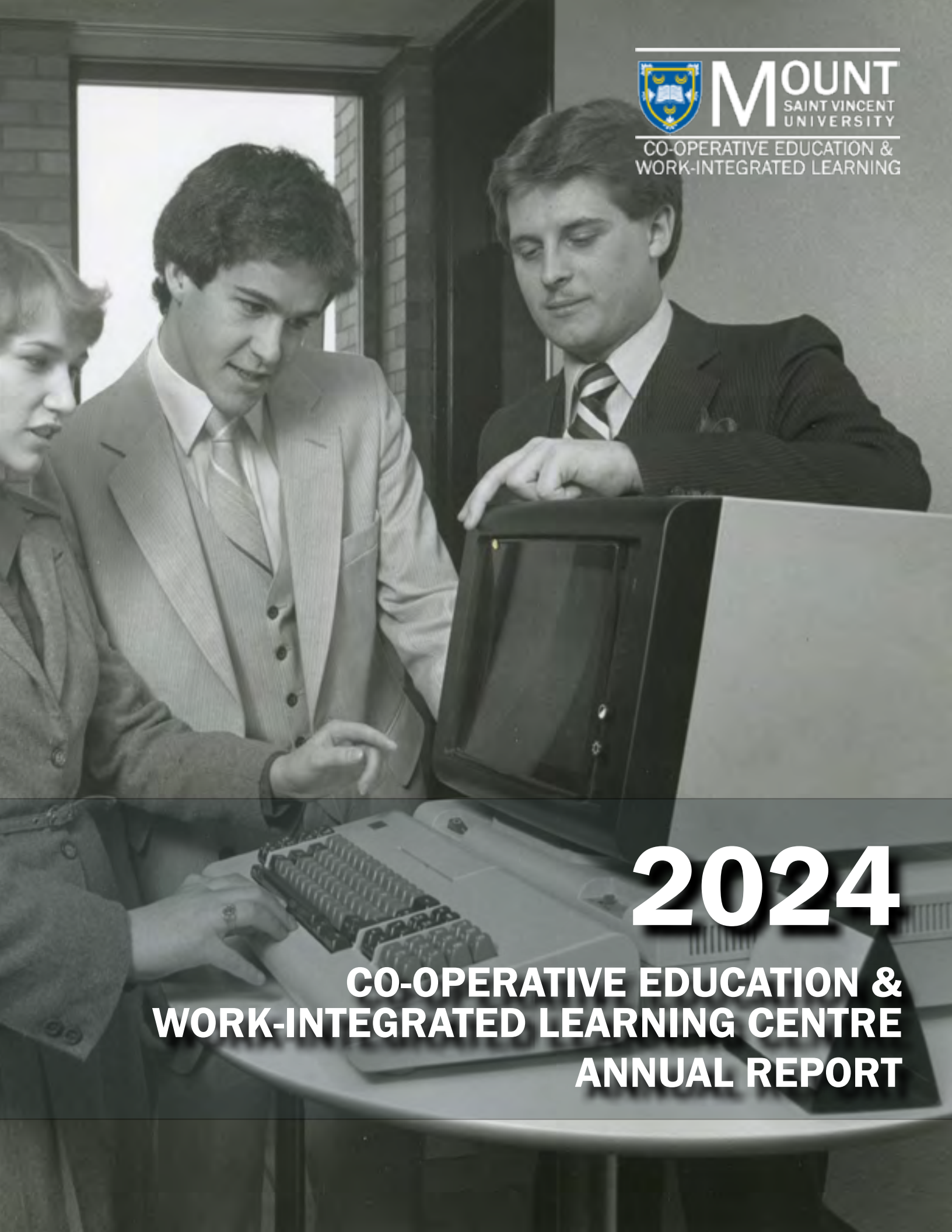




MOUNT
SAINT VINCENT
UNIVERSITY

CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION &
WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING



2024

**CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION &
WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING CENTRE
ANNUAL REPORT**

Acknowledgment

MSVU is located in Kjiptuk (Halifax), part of Mi'kma'ki, the unceded ancestral territory which remains the homeland of the Mi'kmaq Nation.

This territory is covered by the Covenant Chain of Treaties of Peace and Friendship signed between 1725 and 1779. These treaties are affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada and recognize Aboriginal Title (which is embedded in both the 1763 Royal Proclamation and in section 35(1) of the 1982 Constitution Act). The treaties are living agreements that establish the rules for an ongoing Treaty relationship between nations.

We pay respect to the knowledge embedded in the Mi'kmaw custodians of the lands and waters and to the Elders, past, present, and future.



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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Mount Saint Vincent University Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning Centre 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 MSVU 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 TEAM

The year 2024 marked a milestone for our office as we celebrated the 45th anniversary of the co-operative education program at Mount Saint Vincent University. This anniversary allowed us to reflect on the rich history of our program and its lasting impact on students and employer partners. We celebrated past co-op alumni through a collection of video profiles that were shared on our website and social media. We also hosted a 45th birthday party to celebrate our accomplishments with the MSVU community.

Over the past year, we completed a long overdue rebranding project. We changed our department's name from the Co-op Office to the Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning Centre (Co-op & WIL Centre for short). This new name reflects the diversity of the work-integrated learning programs that are administered through our office – we support students and employers in three co-op, two work experience, and two internship programs. While our program offerings may have evolved, we have remained committed to our mission to be a leader in fostering and advancing work-integrated learning in our region.

As we reflect on the achievements that took place over the past 45 years, we are inspired to look forward, building on our legacy of fostering meaningful connections between students and employers, adapting to a changing world, and providing students with the support and experiences for career exploration. Here's to the next 45 years of empowering students and supporting our community through work-integrated learning – we truly cannot do this without your support.



Scott Daniels, Manager
Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning Centre

Scott Daniels is the manager of the Co-op & WIL Centre. As manager, Scott is responsible for the overall management of all work-integrated learning programs within the department. He should be a familiar face, as he's been working to promote MSVU Co-op & WIL programs to employers, students and the community for over 20 years.



Courtney Green, Coordinator
Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning Centre

As a Co-op & WIL Coordinator, Courtney prepares and advises students for work terms by hosting professional development workshops, resume and cover letter reviews, and interview preparation. Once students are on work terms, Courtney monitors their progress and assists as necessary. Courtney is also a familiar face to many who have worked with the MSVU Co-op & WIL Centre – throughout her 11 years working here, she's been known to be friendly, knowledgeable and organized. Courtney is currently pursuing her Master of Education in Lifelong Learning and is hopeful this program will help her gain insightful information that she can use to help students and employers involved in work-integrated learning.



Raina DeBrouwer, Coordinator
Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning Centre

Raina is a fellow Co-op & WIL Coordinator who also works to prepare and advise students for work terms through professional development workshops, resume and cover letter reviews, and interview preparation. Like Courtney, Raina works with students and employers during work terms to ensure things are going smoothly. Raina was a MSVU public relations co-op student herself and is excited to see the progress the field has undergone already since her own incredible experience. Raina is completing the Master of Public Relations program at MSVU, and planning to graduate in the spring.



Shari Arsenault, Employer Liaison
Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning Centre

Shari works to provide helpful, cheery administrative and organizational support to MSVU co-op and internship employers. Whether you're interested in hiring a student down the road or currently going through the process of hiring a MSVU student, Shari is your go-to contact. She's also responsible for facilitating all co-op and internship interviews – an ever-changing jigsaw puzzle that Shari manages to complete each semester with a smile. In 2024, Shari took on the role of Interim Coordinator, supporting students in preparing for work terms through workshops, resume and cover letter reviews, and interview preparation. Similar to Courtney and Raina, Shari collaborates with both students and employers to ensure successful and seamless work term experiences.



Jasmine Ho, Student Liaison
Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning Centre

As the Student Liaison, Jasmine is the main contact for all students passing through the MSVU Co-op & WIL Centre. From the time students inquire about our various program offerings, to the time that they sign their learning agreements once they secure a position, Jasmine is there every step of the way to help students. Jasmine is also responsible for sending out the majority of email and social media communication to students from the Co-op & WIL Centre, so even if they haven't met face-to-face, students are very familiar with Jasmine!

Reflections from the team

As we wrap up the 45th anniversary of the Co-op Program at MSVU, we took a moment to reflect on the milestones that have shaped our journey. We asked our team, What milestone over the years are you most proud of, and how do you feel it has impacted students and employer partners?

Scott Daniels, Manager, Co-op & WIL Centre

"I'm proud of the growth and diversity of MSVU's Co-op & WIL programs. While business, public relations, and tourism co-op remain our core, we've expanded to support arts & science internships, and public relations and tourism work experience programs. We are excited to launch our first graduate WIL program in 2025/2026. These programs ensure more students benefit from work-integrated learning in ways that fit their needs. We're grateful to support students in their job search and to collaborate with employers across Canada. Fun fact: Every MSVU undergraduate program offers at least one WIL opportunity!"

Courtney Green, Coordinator, Co-op & WIL Centre

"As we celebrate 45 years of MSVU's co-op program, I reflect on our department's growth—especially with Career Connects. This platform revolutionized how we connect students and employers, proving invaluable during COVID-19 by expanding opportunities virtually. Along with our transition to the Co-op & WIL Centre to enhance inclusivity, these advancements have made our program stronger and more accessible. I'm excited to see what the next 45 years bring!"

Shari Arsenault, Employer Liaison, Co-op & WIL Centre

"I'm proud of our adaptability at the Co-op & WIL Centre, especially with the Co-op and Internship Orientation. Each year, we refine content to meet student needs, ensuring diverse representation on both student and employer panels. We also integrate feedback to enhance engagement. This year's conference was one of the most interactive yet—it was inspiring to see students eager to begin their work terms!"

Jasmine Ho, Student Liaison, Co-op & WIL Centre

"It's rewarding to see the strong connections students and employers build through work terms. Co-op and WIL not only provides job experience, but also opens doors to post-graduation careers. Employers appreciate the value students bring, and their enthusiasm shows in nominations for MSVU's Co-op Student of the Year Award. It's amazing to witness students' growth and the impact they make in the workplace."





“

The MSVU co-op program allowed me to translate coursework theory into tangible professional skills. Not only did I gain valuable professional work experience, I learned how to create a top-notch resume and strengthened my cover letter writing skills. The guidance and support offered by the MSVU co-op team is what propelled me toward success through each term!

Mackenzie Parker, Bachelor of Business Administration
(Co-operative Education), 2022

”

SO MUCH TO CROW ABOUT AT MSVU

5,378

STUDENTS IN 2024

(undergraduate and graduate,
full-time and part-time)

PROGRAMS OFFERED:

- Undergraduate programs in Arts, Science, Education, and various professional programs
- 34 graduate degrees offered
- 8 certificate and diploma programs

STUDENTS FROM

64

COUNTRIES

MORE THAN

40,000

**ALUMNI
AROUND THE WORLD**

610+

**FACULTY
AND STAFF**



**1ST ENGLISH SPEAKING BACHELOR OF
PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM IN CANADA**

**1ST UNIVERSITY IN THE MARITIMES TO
OFFER A NATIONALLY ACCREDITED
CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM**

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE OF

23

**NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AS BEING
AMONGST THE LOWEST IN CANADA**

TOP 5 MSVU STORIES OF 2024

Each year MSVU compiles a summary of the stories that received the most views and engagement on the university's website and social media sites. Here are the top five stories that received the most attention in 2024.

Visit <https://www.msvu.ca/top-10-msvu-stories-of-2024/> for the top 10 stories of the year.

#5 Shannex Donates \$500,000 to MSVU for Healthy Aging Research and Innovation

Shannex announced a \$500,000 gift to MSVU for the establishment of a new Shannex Centre for Workforce Wellbeing, including a new research chair, new learning opportunities for students and emerging scholars, and new research on innovative care practices and nutrition for residents.



The new centre and chair will position the Maritimes as a national leader – arguably international leader – in research and practice focused on those working in long-term care, shaping care practice, staff recruitment and retention strategies.

#4 MSVU Celebrates Spring 2024 Graduate Honorary Degree Recipients

Each spring and fall, we get to pause and celebrate the success of our students. We watched more than 1,100 MSVU graduates cross the stage during spring and fall convocation. And we celebrated faculty and honorary degree recipients too, including the Honourable Dr. Paula A. Cox, Dr. Michelle Douglas, and Dr. Ruby Blois.



#3 MSVU Child Study Centre Growing with 5m Government Investment

In May, we shared the news that the governments of Nova Scotia and Canada are investing a combined \$5 million (\$2M provincial and \$3M federal) in an expanded Child Study Centre at MSVU. The university will raise an additional \$5 million.



The centre is a one-of-a-kind place for its provision of exceptional and inclusive childcare, and leading teaching and research on early childhood. Once complete in 2026, the new centre will have tripled the number of childcare spaces and expanded capacity in teaching and research too, informing policy and practice across the Atlantic region and beyond.

#2 Dr. El Jones Receives Honorary Degree from Acadia University

She's an author, poet, journalist, educator, and advocate, and now honorary degree recipient. During spring convocation season, Dr. El Jones was awarded an honorary degree by Acadia University.



Dr. Corinne Haigh, Dean of the Faculty of Professional Studies at Acadia said, "What defines her achievements is a commitment to activism and community advocacy to highlight inequities and redress injustices. The recognition of her performances, teaching and political commitment [is testament] to the exceptional influence she has exercised during the Black Lives Matter movement and the expansion of Black scholarship in Canadian academia."

#1 Celebrating MSVU 2024 Student Academic Award Winners

In the spring, we celebrated MSVU students' exceptional academic achievements. We celebrated our student-athletes at the 2024 Best of the Blue event too. These students are an inspiration to the university community and a great source of Mystic pride!



MSVU CO-OP PROGRAM CELEBRATES 45 YEARS OF WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING EXCELLENCE

2024 marked a momentous occasion for Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) as the Co-operative Education program celebrated its 45th anniversary. In September students, faculty, staff, and alumni gathered to honor the program's legacy of empowering students with hands-on, real-world learning.



The event was a true celebration of the MSVU co-op program. Throughout the celebration, staff and faculty took the opportunity to connect with past and present co-op students. It was a special occasion where the co-op team members were able to reminisce about the exceptional work experiences students have had and answer questions from new students about the program.



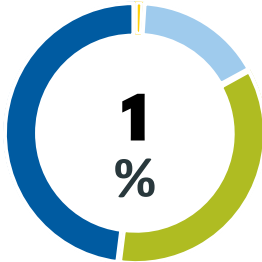
This milestone is a testament to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved in the co-op program over the years. From the students who take on exciting challenges in the workplace to the employers who mentor and guide them, it's truly a team effort.

The event was not only a time for reflection, but also a chance to look to the future. As the MSVU co-op program steps into its next chapter, the message was clear: the commitment to providing transformative work-integrated learning experiences remains as strong as ever. Here's to another 45 years of supporting students to grow, learn, and succeed!

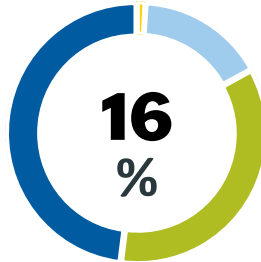


MSVU WIL PROGRAMS IN 2024

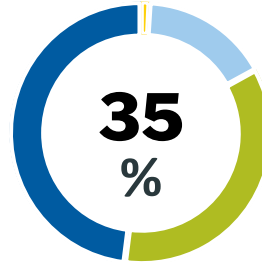
137 STUDENTS COMPLETED WORK TERMS IN 2024



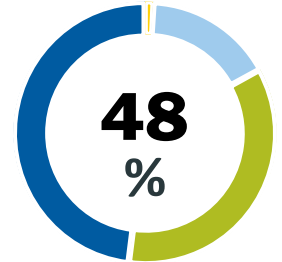
Arts & Science
(1% of WIL at MSVU)



Business Administration
(16% of WIL at MSVU)

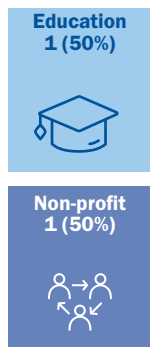


Public Relations
(35% of WIL at MSVU)

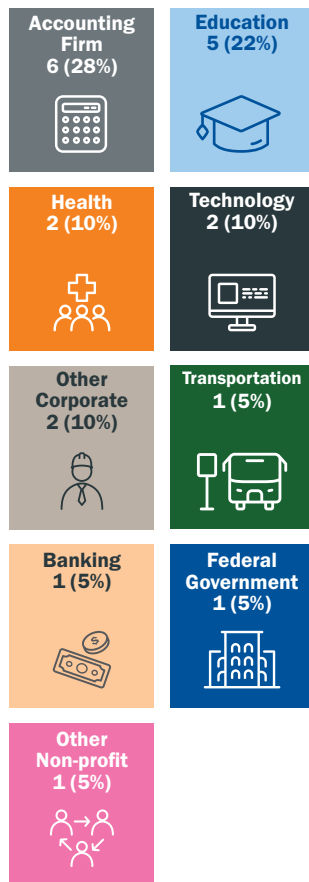


Tourism & Hospitality Management
(48% of WIL at MSVU)

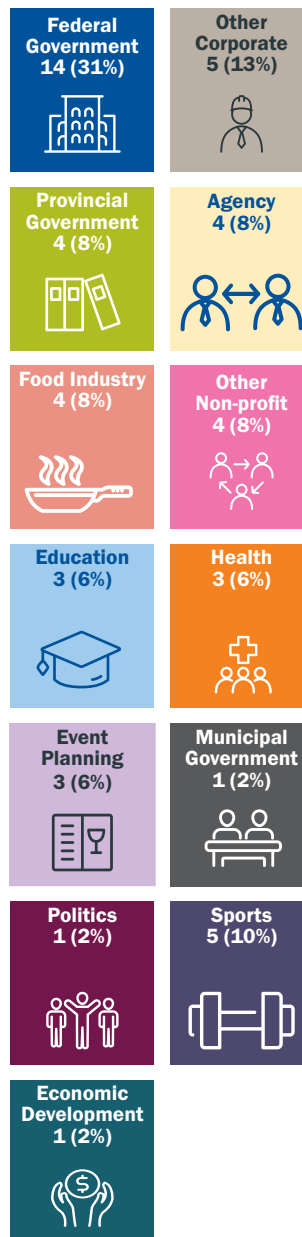
Where they worked:



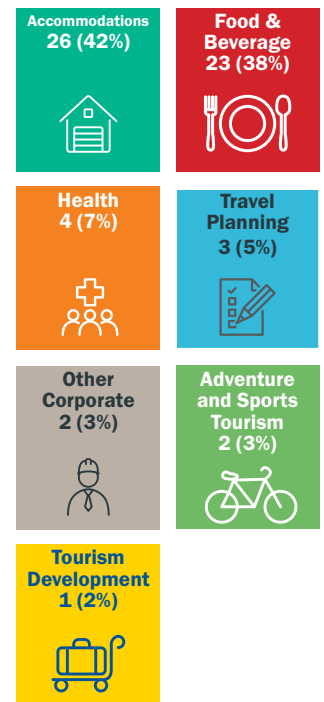
Where they worked:



Where they worked:



Where they worked:



SALARIES AND GEOGRAPHY

Average salaries for Business Administration, Public Relations, Tourism & Hospitality Management and Arts & Science (for work terms completed in 2024)

Business Administration

Average hourly: \$20.50
Range hourly: \$16.00 - \$28.00

Public Relations

Average hourly: \$21.00
Range hourly: \$18.00 - \$26.50

Tourism & Hospitality Management

Average hourly: \$17.25
Range hourly: \$15.50 - \$20.00

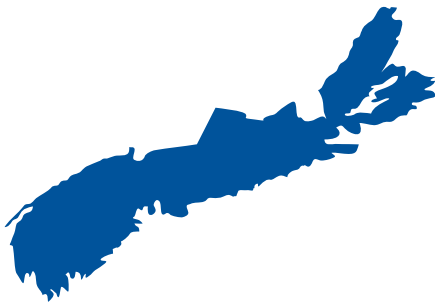
Arts & Science

Average hourly: \$20.50
Range hourly: \$19.00 - \$22.00

\$1.71 million

earned by co-op, work experience and internship students in 2024
(based on 16 week work terms; 35 hours per week)

Where students worked in 2024



116 (89%)
work terms in Nova Scotia



8 (6%)
work terms in Canada
(outside of Nova Scotia)



7 (5%)
work terms internationally

Where students worked in 2024 (outside of Canada)

1. China
4 (57%) work terms



2. Bermuda
2 (29%) work terms



3. Ghana
1 (14%) work term



CO-OP GRADUATE STATISTICS

100% of co-op grads were employed in their field after one year of graduating

100

100% of co-op grads said they felt prepared for the workforce after co-op

100

94% of co-op grads said co-op was effective in helping them secure full-time employment post-graduation

94

94% of co-op grads were satisfied or very satisfied with their co-op experience

94

88% of co-op grads were employed in their field after six months of graduating

88

72% of co-op grads made an annual starting salary of \$50,000+

65

In 2024 the Co-op & WIL Centre celebrated 45 years of co-op excellence at Mount Saint Vincent University. Throughout the year we published videos of MSVU co-op graduates spanning the past 45 years. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the co-op alumni participants for joining us in the celebration.

Below is an overview of the inspiring co-op alumni stories. For the full videos visit: msvu.ca/co-op.

Amy Thurlow, BPR, 1989

Amy is a professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University. Her research is motivated by a curiosity about how humans socially construct and enact organization through processes of identity construction. Her recent work includes historical constructions of identity and the alternative histories often ignored in that process. Her 2019 book, "Social Media, Organizational Identity and Public Relations: The Challenge of Authenticity", investigates identity construction in a virtual context. Her most recent book, "Diversity and Business Storytelling" (2023), is a collection of works exploring diversity in organizations from a variety of perspectives, co-edited with Dr. Jean Helms Mills.



Lynn Coveyduck, BPR, 1996

Lynn's Dad would say she can't keep a job...she says she's just interested in too many different things. Throughout her career, Lynn has led a non-profit, tackled media issues such as strikes and lay-offs, built new lines of revenue, and managed an economic development team's province-wide response to COVID-19 in its early days. At the same time, she's raised funds to build a new YMCA and the Margaret Norrie McCain Centre at MSVU, mentored students, entrepreneurs, and new Nova Scotians, been on a Chamber of Commerce task force, and helped plan provincial legs of national conferences (twice). And she's also the only Duke MBA graduate in Atlantic Canada (as far as she knows – if you're a Blue Devil, get in touch). Now she's stepped into the VC realm, using her strategic management skills to align Sandpiper's work and ensure founders and investors are given the custom, thoughtful Sandpiper treatment they won't get anywhere else.



Adam Bower, BTHM, 2003

Adam Bower's career in the food and beverage industry has come full circle and he couldn't be happier. Now the owner of The Grand Banker Bar and Grill and Brigantine Inn in Lunenburg, Adam worked there from 1998 to 2002 as a busboy, server and eventually assistant manager, while attending Mount Saint Vincent University. That early foray into the restaurant business convinced Adam that food service was the industry for him.

Adam has most recently opened Lunenburg's first craft brewing company, Shipwright Brewing Company, in 2018. In 2020, Adam purchased the Old Fish Factory restaurant on the waterfront in Lunenburg; a 250-seat restaurant which is the largest in town, located in the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic. In 2023, Adam opened his third restaurant, Shipwright Brewing Taproom + Pizza, which has 25 taps with all Nova Scotia products including his own beer, and specializes in gourmet signature pizzas.



Melanie Lowe, BTHM, 2013

Melanie is from the Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia. She studied at Mount Saint Vincent University between 2009 – 2013. Melanie lives in the Halifax Regional Municipality with her partner Sam and works with Tourism Nova Scotia as a Tourism Development Advisor. Previously she worked with Marriott, Nustadia Recreation, the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, and the Kinu Tourism Project at MSVU.



Rebecca Skinner, BBA, 2014

Rebecca is a Regional Advisor for the Atlantic region at Invest in Canada. In this role, Rebecca develops and promotes the region’s value proposition for investment and facilitates investment attraction efforts between Invest in Canada and local partners. Rebecca leads partnerships in Atlantic Canada on behalf of the organization, working collaboratively with provinces and municipalities.

Rebecca received her Bachelor of Business Administration from Mount Saint Vincent University and graduated as valedictorian. In 2019, she earned her Master of Business Administration from Saint Mary’s University and was awarded the Harold G. Beazley Medal – the oldest graduate-level University Gold medal, recognizing the highest academic achievement for graduates of the Master of Business Administration.



Tharmini Arulramalingam, BBA, 2015

Tharmini Arulramalingam is a Senior Financial Advisor at Scotiabank, based in Halifax. She completed her Bachelor of Business Administration with concentrations in Accounting and Information Technology in 2015. Tharmini completed her co-op work terms at O’Regans Automotive Group and Scotiabank. Her experience with both the automotive and banking industries helped her decide where she ultimately wanted to go in her career. Tharmini says that MSVU’s small classroom sizes helped her to practice public speaking and presentation skills, which have built up her confidence and helped her shape a successful career.



Haley Green, BTHM, 2015

Haley Green is the Recruitment Lead for Jazz Aviation LP, hiring flight attendants for their five Canadian bases. She holds two degrees from Mount Saint Vincent University; a Bachelor of Tourism & Hospitality Management and a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in Human Resources and a minor in Marketing. After her first graduation in 2015, she went on to be a wedding and event planner for six years where she worked with various catering companies and as a freelancer. When COVID-19 changed the wedding industry, Haley returned to MSVU to obtain a new skill set and changed career paths. After her second graduation in 2022, she started with Jazz Aviation as a Recruitment Coordinator. Her expertise in attention to detail, organization, planning, and customer service quickly led Haley to her new role as the Recruitment Lead position.



Tammy Alamrieh, BPR, 2016

As the Head of Government & Public Affairs for McDonald’s Canada, a company that employs almost 100,000 Canadians and serves 1.6 million people every day in over 1,400 restaurants, Tammy oversees a team with the goal of driving impact and enhancing brand trust with government stakeholders. In this capacity, Tammy has played an instrumental role in navigating complex regulatory and political landscapes with proactive government strategies addressing critical industry issues such as sustainability, labour standards, taxation, and more. Alongside this, Tammy works with various stakeholders to optimize the company’s grassroots system of franchisees, suppliers, and business partners.



Henry Li, BTHM, 2017

Upon graduation, Henry started working as an Assistant Front Office Manager at Sofitel Shanghai Hongqiao Hotel in China. After two years in that role, Henry took on a new position as the Front Office Manager at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier in Ottawa. Eventually, Henry returned to China to be the Front Office Manager at the Hard Rock Hotel in Dalian, and has now settled in as Front Office Manager at Langham Hotel in Hefei, China. Henry is currently doing a Master’s program in International Hotel Management at Hong Kong Polytechnic University and also serves as a student representative in the program.



“

As a large hospitality employer in Halifax, partnerships for talent in the market like the MSVU Co-op & WIL Centre is critical to our success in filling our talent needs annually. The MSVU Co-op & WIL Centre has developed a strong reputation with our property for their commitment to providing high quality, organized, professional and timely support. Their Career Connects portal is easy to use and communication with the Co-op & WIL Team is professional and timely. Given MSVU's annual co-op posting timeline (organized for early January) we often interview and hire MSVU students first for co-op roles.

Emily Coady, Director of Human Resources,
Halifax Marriott Harbourfront

”



CO-OP STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

The MSVU Co-op Student of the Year Award was instituted in 1999 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the MSVU 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



Casey Oakey-O'Grady

Nominated by: Deanna Struthers, MSVU Department of Business and Tourism

“Casey independently managed the learning passport program, a vital component of our student engagement strategy. Her ability to oversee it without requiring direction showcased her initiative and reliability. She played a crucial role in planning, promoting, and executing over six events, including major ones like the 50th Learners & Leaders Business and Tourism Conference and the TEAM Dinner and Auction. Her efforts were pivotal to the success of these events, which are essential for our community engagement and fundraising goals. Despite the challenges posed by a mid-term resignation and a faculty strike, Casey maintained communication with students, managed files, and continued to support the Learning Passport program, demonstrating her adaptability and resilience. Casey’s organizational skills, professionalism, and ability to balance multiple responsibilities have been invaluable. Her quick adaptation to challenges and responsiveness to feedback further highlight her contribution to our organizational goals.”

Casey stated that “participating in the Co-operative Education program played an instrumental role in enhancing my career development, giving me a clear sense of direction. My role within the Department of Business and Tourism at MSVU allowed me to explore various career related skills, from event planning and management to communications and public speaking. My supervisors and colleagues were supportive and provided constructive feedback that helped me grow and feel confident with my ideas.”

Public Relations



Jaclyn Bourque

Nominated by: Heather d'Entremont, Canadian Food Inspection Agency

“Jaclyn’s contributions to our small team’s outputs significantly helped us move faster and more strategically – something that is crucial when responding to emerging animal diseases. We consistently receive excellent (and unprompted!) feedback from Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) senior management regarding Jaclyn’s work, her friendly and positive attitude, as well as her professional demeanor.”

Jaclyn was presented with numerous learning opportunities during her work terms and she has capitalized on all of them, including several tours of the CFIA Dartmouth Food Safety Laboratory and workshops about invasive pests in Truro and in Dartmouth with CFIA plant health specialists. She is an active and engaged participant in all opportunities, providing a great representation of the Atlantic Communications team. She actively follows up with coordinators for each of these experiences after, thanking them for sharing their knowledge and time with her. Little acts of kindness like this greatly improve client relationships, something that Jaclyn excels at.

Whatever direction Jaclyn takes in her professional life, she will do great things! She is a fantastic colleague who I’ve had the privilege of working with over two co-op placements. Her professionalism is second-to-none, and she has an innate ability to connect with her colleagues (from junior to the most senior folks at CFIA) on a personal level.”

Jaclyn stated that “At the CFIA, I was able to build relationships with colleagues ranging in ages, roles, and expertise. From working on a project for the Government of Canada, to ghost-writing blog posts for our Director General, I gained invaluable experience collaborating with others with diverse perspectives. This enhanced my ability to connect with others and reinforced my confidence in my interpersonal skills.”

CO-OP EMPLOYERS OF THE YEAR

The MSVU Co-op Employer of the Year Award was established in 2009 to recognize the important contributions of our co-op employer partners and mark the 30th anniversary of co-operative education at Mount Saint Vincent University. We are pleased to acknowledge co-op employers each year who have supported co-operative education at MSVU by demonstrating a commitment to the program and providing excellent work term opportunities for students. These partnerships are critical for the success of our program.

The selection criteria included consideration of the work environment, leadership and mentorship, the supervisor's demonstrated support of student learning, and the employer's longstanding commitment to co-op.



Business Administration Employer of the Year – WCL Bauld Insurance

Britany Deal, Leadership Team Coordinator, WCL Bauld Insurance
Nominated by: Tajrin Bashar

“My supervisor demonstrated a high level of professionalism and commitment to my development right away. She took the time to learn my history and career ambitions before offering specific advice that was both insightful and motivating. Her approachability and eagerness to answer queries made me feel supported throughout my time with the organization. [Britany] actively engaged me in worthwhile projects and provided helpful criticism, both of which significantly improved my learning experience. She created an atmosphere where I felt free to take the initiative and share my thoughts, which aided in my professional development.

Overall, my co-op experience at Bauld Insurance was both rewarding and pleasurable, thanks to the supportive nature of my co-workers and an inspiring work environment. It has given me a strong platform on which to further my career and has also given me a sense of worth and involvement in the company's success.”



Public Relations Employer of the Year – Halifax International Airport Authority

Leah Batstone, Communications Manager, Halifax International Airport Authority
Nominated by: Suwela Paim Vaz Vassoa

“Leah Batstone exceeded every expectation I had for a supervisor. I expected guidance and support, but Leah went far beyond that, fostering an environment where I felt valued, empowered, and encouraged to grow. Leah's approach was collaborative and inclusive. She trusted me to make decisions and respected my judgment, treating me as a team member whose input mattered. She believed that if I recommended something or took a specific action, there was always a logical explanation behind it, which she was eager to hear. This level of trust was a significant confidence booster for me. I credit a lot of my new-found confidence as an aspiring public relations professional to Leah because of this.

Leah actively supported my professional journey outside of co-op by connecting me with key individuals within the organization and beyond and ensuring I was exposed to valuable networking opportunities. For example, she made sure that all the communications with our guest speaker for the International Women's Breakfast, the President & CEO of the Canadian Airports Council, were made through me.

Leah also offered herself as a resource for my future career. She has kindly agreed to act as a professional mentor for the remainder of my program, a gesture that I deeply value. Her willingness to provide ongoing advice, serve as a reference, and share her experiences as a communications professional has given me confidence as I prepare to transition into my career.”

WHAT EMPLOYERS ARE SAYING ABOUT MSVU STUDENTS

The end-of-term evaluations completed by employers showcased the strengths of MSVU students and the contributions that work-integrated learning students bring to the workplace. After analyzing the 2024 employer evaluations, it is evident that MSVU work-integrated learning students consistently demonstrate outstanding work ethic, professionalism, and adaptability.

Here are a few words employers used to describe MSVU students they worked with in 2024.

Creative

Delivered quality work

Solid writer

Adept

Mature and reliable

Thoughtful

Personable

Strong aptitude for creating content

Critical thinker

Proactive

Charismatic

Professional

Significant contributor

Positive

Outstanding

Kind

Goes above and beyond

Consistent

Skilled in web design

Friendly

Accommodating

Reliable

Strong customer service

Great fit

Exceptional

A welcomed addition to the team

Strong work ethic

Excellent time management

Organized

Excellent communicator

Great resource

High-quality social media posts and written work

Kinu Tourism Project: A Journey Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Tourism



The Kinu Tourism Project is based in Kijipuktuk, Mi'kma'ki (Halifax, NS) and aims to provide an Indigenous informed education for all MSVU Tourism and Hospitality Management students. The work of Kinu was first sparked by discussions between Elder Catherine Martin (Mi'kmaw Elder and Kinu Mi'kma'ki Advisor), and Prof. Jennifer Guy (Assistant Professor, Department of Business & Tourism at MSVU). Kinu is housed at and supported by Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) as part of its Tourism & Hospitality Management program. Under the guidance of Etuaptmumk (Two-Eyed Seeing), Kinu is redefining how tourism can be approached, blending sustainability, inclusivity, and respect for Indigenous culture.

Kinu welcomed its first group of Indigenous students to start their Indigenous tourism education journey this past September 2024. Students have been able to study in-person or remotely from their community.

The Importance of Community

“Kinu” translates to “us” in the Mi'kmaw language, reflecting the project's core value of collaboration. The initiative connects students, faculty, and Indigenous communities to create unique tourism course content that honours the land, traditions, and people of Mi'kma'ki. Through this partnership, Kinu aims to highlight Mi'kmaw and other Indigenous cultures, while promoting sustainable practices that benefit both communities and visitors.

Course material has been created in consultation with the Kinu Mi'kma'ki Advisory Committee, which includes tourism professionals, educators, Knowledge Keepers, and Elders from across Mi'kma'ki. This committee was formed to ensure voices across a number of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey communities were heard. The Kinu Tourism Project team dedicated time to building relationships with Indigenous communities throughout Mi'kma'ki to better understand how tourism education could effectively support Indigenous tourism needs for communities in the region, including through course content development.



Experiential Learning in Action



For students, the Kinu Tourism Project offers a unique opportunity to engage in hands-on learning. Participants work closely with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey communities to develop tourism initiatives that are culturally respectful and environmentally sustainable. These experiences prepare students to navigate the complexities of modern tourism while fostering a deep appreciation for Indigenous perspectives.

For example, MSVU tourism students had the opportunity to participate in a full-day cultural education tour at Millbrook Mi'kmaw Nation, featuring Mi'kmaw artist Alan Syliboy. The day included a specialized tour of Alan's art studio, and a welcoming and prayer from Elder Pasty Paul-Martin, and a tour of the Millbrook Cultural and Heritage Park led by Heather Stevens. The event, which included a traditional meal and discussions on Mi'kmaw Regalia repatriation, provided valuable learning experiences for students.

Kinu tourism students in both the diploma and bachelor's program will complete work-integrated learning experiences, such as co-op terms. Several students from Kinu's first student cohort will complete a work term during the upcoming summer 2025 term. The majority of Kinu's students plan to take their tourism education back to their communities or other Indigenous communities for these work experiences. However, some are planning on pursuing opportunities outside of Indigenous communities in the short term. In doing so, they will contribute not only their tourism expertise but also valuable Indigenous perspectives to the organizations they will work with.

Building a Path Forward

The success of the Kinu Tourism Project lies in its commitment to mutual learning and respect. By prioritizing the needs of Mi'kmaw communities and ensuring the work is Indigenous informed and guided, Kinu has set a precedent for how tourism development can be inclusive and culturally enriching.

As the program continues to grow, its impact extends beyond the classroom and community. The Kinu Tourism Project is inspiring a new generation of tourism professionals to think critically about their role in shaping the industry. By embracing sustainability and cultural respect, it is paving the way for a more equitable and thoughtful approach to tourism.

The Kinu Tourism Project stands as a shining example of what can be achieved when education, community, and sustainability come together in harmony. It is not just a project, but a movement toward a more inclusive and thoughtful world of tourism.

To learn more about the Kinu Tourism Project, visit: msvu.ca/kinu.

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Mount Saint Vincent University
Co-operative Education &
Work-Integrated Learning Centre

166 Bedford Highway
McCain Centre, Room 312
Halifax, NS B3M 2J6

902.457.6493
co-op@msvu.ca
msvu.ca/co-op

