



## Support Staff Scholars Corner: An Interview with a Support Staff

Interviewed by Danny Stone & Sarah Hogan, Organizational & Staff Development

**Dawn Chandelier, Assistant to the Dean of Students, has been working for GBC for 11 years. Dawn exemplifies lifelong learning having been an active participant in many Professional Development events at GBC and outside of the college.**

### 1. How has George Brown College helped you to take steps towards your educational goals?

We are so fortunate to be working in a college environment, where education is literally right at our finger tips and made available to us to grow both professionally and personally. GBC has helped me with my education goals by providing financial support and assistance, onsite workshops and fostering a learning environment.

### 2. What courses / programs have you taken or are you currently taking?

I have taken courses in Continuing Education “Foundations of Teaching and Training” and a few other courses within Continuing Education, started my BA in Education with Brock University and recently with my current position, I am focusing on helping students with difficult situations. I have just completed the eight workshops within the Student Care Certificate offered through Staff Development, which I must say was great and honestly it doesn’t matter how many courses you have taken in customer service or assisting others, you can never take enough of them because there is always something to learn from someone else. I also just completed an intense course with an outside company “*Healthy, Wealthy and Wise*” – *Derrick Sweet*, to become a Certified Coach Practitioner and a member of the Certified Coaching Federation. It was outstanding!

### 3. How will this course/program assist you in your work or personal life?

I believe anything to better yourself as a person will help with understanding others both at work and in our personal lives. The courses I have recently completed will help me better understand the problems students are having and to hopefully provide them with assistance they need to get where they are going, helping to point them in the right direction and really listen to their problems. With the situations that are arising with our Dean of Students, Susan Stylianos, I hope to assist Susan by providing a better first point of contact for the students and provide them with respect and understanding.

### 4. Have you participated in any training workshops through Organizational and Staff Development? If so, what courses? Did you find them useful and relevant to your work?

Yes I have. I have completed, a few times now, the St. John’s Ambulance certificate, which is so beneficial both here at work and at home. Great opportunity if anyone has never done this before. And sorry I did mention this in question 3, but this gives me another opportunity to say the workshops for the “Student Care Certificate” were GREAT! Although some years ago I did take some workshops in customer care, I really feel that you can’t get enough of learning the different ways and methods that are out there for us. Danny Stone was a great facilitator and these workshops provided us with great information and great discussion. Not to mention, the opportunity to connect with others from within our college community is a bonus. These workshops are VERY useful and relevant to my work because providing great customer service/solving problems and building rapport with the students and staff are very important to me and my position here at the college.

**5. How do you balance, work, school and your family life?**

Fortunately we work at a college, so education is right here. However, there are times when your weekends/evenings are taken up, but I find going to school on the weekends has been enjoyable, as well, you learn so much and meet great people and you are constantly expanding on who you are! I am also fortunate to have a boss who is supportive in what I do and encourages me to grow and learn. I am also fortunate to have a family that supports what I do and we work around what needs to be done at home when I am not there. It takes some doing sometimes and it's not always easy that's for sure, but if it is something you really want to do for yourself, it is definitely doable!

**6. What would you say to other college staff who want to go back to school but haven't taken those steps forward or are contemplating taking those steps forward?**

I would say, if you really want to do something or want to take courses to either better yourself in what you do now or for the future professionally or just because you have the urge to learn something new, GO FOR IT! I believe you can never learn enough and it is always important to keep the brain motivated. It's a bit hairy at first if you have been out of school or just out of the loop of learning something new for a while, but after a few times, it's just like the bike you got off of years ago, you can just get back on like it was yesterday! Believe in yourself!

**7. Tell me one or two things that most of your coworkers or colleagues would not know about you.**

Most people I know here at the college probably know that my family and I are avid boaters and we spend our summer on Lake Ontario. But, at one point after finishing high school, where I took four years of horticulture I wanted to open my own flower shop. I absolutely love flowers, plants and gardening and this is a big hobby of mine. Who knows, one day, it's always a possibility!

**8. What is your favourite word, saying, or quote?**

"HEY, how's it going?"

Quote: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give" ~ Winston Churchill

And I like to ask: "Tell me one thing that makes you happy about today" and then I say "keep that happiness with you throughout the day".

The idea of showcasing Support Staff was put forth by the College wide Professional Development Committee. Each newsletter will showcase a different Support Staff member who is actively participating in Professional Development. If you have any individuals you would like to nominate to be interviewed please contact Danny Stone at [dstone@georgebrown.ca](mailto:dstone@georgebrown.ca) or ext. 4661.