Next Step Conference 2015
Alumni Volunteers - Breakout Sessions

*Become a Pro at Personal Finance (GS / RG / CS / IS)*

Stacey He  
**Title:** Financial Consultant Investors Group

*Building your own Business (GS / RG / CS / IS)*

Sandra Kahale  
**Title:** Owner, OnWord Consulting

*Education Options Beyond your Undergrad (GS / RG / CS / IS)*

3:00 pm  
Michelle Blackwell  
[LinkedIn Profile](#)  
**Degree:** MA medieval Studies 2007  
**Title:** Marketing Manager, Simon & Schuster Canada  
**Bio:** Michelle Blackwell is an Associate Marketing Manager at Simon & Schuster Canada, one of Canada’s leading publishing houses. She creates multi-tiered marketing campaigns to promote the wide variety of titles published by S&S and develops brand strategies aimed at increasing the profile of authors and their books. Passionate about literacy and learning, Michelle has served on the communications committees for the National Reading Campaign and the Giller Light Bash Fundraiser for Frontier College. She is a graduate of U of T’s Centre for Medieval Studies where she completed her MA in 2007.

Louis Chan  
[LinkedIn Profile](#)  
**Title:** Associate Director, Financial Services Rotman School of Management, U of T  
**Bio:** Louis is currently the Associate Director at the Rotman School of Management. He is responsible of the full Accounting Cycle within the School. He helps create a sustainable 5-year plan for the School, and provide relevant financial reports for decision making. Prior to this role, Louis was the Faculty Financial and Reporting Analyst at the Faculty of Medicine, where he analyzed the financial implications from future business decisions by the Faculty. In merging his CPA-CGA designation, his certificate in Project Management, and studies in Statistics and Economics; Louis is able to effectively coordinate and complete projects that require the cooperation of many internal and external stakeholders. Prior to coming back to the University of Toronto as a staff member, he was the Director of Finance at St. Paul’s L’Amoreaux Centre, the Finance Manager at Canadian Diabetes Association, the Financial Analyst at Ryerson University, and the International Accountant at KPMG. Louis’ studies in Statistics and Economics were not a hindrance in his career, but were the base in order to achieve his career growth. In addition to his CGA designation, Louis has a Master’s in Business Administration, and pursuing his PMP designation.
Eugene Choi  
**Degree:** BA Philosophy; Ethics, Society, and Law  
**Title:** Business Systems Analyst, Travelers Canada  
**Bio:** Eugene graduated from University of Toronto in 2012 with a BA in Philosophy and Ethics, Society, and Law. He is currently taking on leadership roles in key project initiatives for Travelers Canada as a Business Systems Analyst. Prior to his corporate experience, he worked with a non-profit organization to establish an international sustainable municipal development conference. In addition to his professional work, he directed and produced an award-nominated web series.

Emily Springgay  
**Degree:** MA Religion 2010  
**Title:** Centre Assistant Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies, U of T  
**Bio:** Emily Springgay works as an administrator at the Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. In her role at the Centre, she supports the Jewish Studies undergraduate program, manages websites and social media, designs visual communication, and helps with logistical arrangements for visiting speakers, conferences, and symposia. She interacts on a daily basis with undergraduate and graduate students, U of T professors, and visiting scholars from around the world. Emily received her MA in Religious Studies and Jewish Studies from the University of Toronto (2010) and her BA in Religious Studies and Art History from York University (2007). Working at a university gives Emily many opportunities to continue studying part-time, for fun: she will be taking introductory Modern Hebrew this summer at U of T.

4:30 pm

Zan Chandler  
[LinkedIn Profile](#)  
**Degree:** BA Linguistics & French 1989  
**Title:** Foresight/Innovation Researcher and Facilitator, KerrSmith Design  
**Bio:** Zan Chandler is a foresight/innovation researcher and facilitator. Her unusual mix of training in strategic foresight, innovation, media production and linguistics has enabled her to work in a variety of settings from innovation consulting, to provincial and federal government, media production and film festivals, and design. Her core skills lie in diving deep into a problem and identifying key insights, facilitating groups in building new skills and knowledge, being sensitive to pockets of the future that exist in the present, and using all this to enable people and organizations to understand the future might look like so that they can make better decisions.

Terry Lamproulos  
**Degree:** Honours Bachelor of Science – Life Sciences and Anthropology 2009  
**Title:** Senior Analyst TD Securities – Operational Risk Management  
**Bio:** Terry joined TD Bank group in 2010 and has held various risk related roles within fraud, insurance, operational, and, currently, all aspects of risk management within TD Bank. In his current role he was selected to join a team of young risk professionals who are tasked with understanding all aspects of risk management at TD Bank and improve on an already mature risk management framework. In addition, Terry also teaches Risk Management courses at Seneca College for students aiming to achieve the Canadian Risk Management (CRM) designation. Terry graduated within an Honours Bachelor of Science from the University of Toronto in 2009 and completed three certificates (Project Management - 2011, Business Analysis - 2012, and Risk Management - 2013) at the University of Toronto – School of
Continuing Studies. He also holds the Canadian Risk Management (CRM) designation awarded by the Risk and Insurance Management Society (RIMS) and the Associated Business Continuity Management Professional (ABCP) designation awarded by the Disaster Recovery Institute (DRI) International.

Burton Lim
**Degree:** BSc Zoology 1984; PhD EEB 2007; Certificate in Global Journalism 2012  
**Title:** Assistant Curator Royal Ontario Museum  
**Bio:** After completing my B.Sc. in Zoology from U of T, I began working at the Royal Ontario Museum as assistant curator of mammals. While continuing to work at the ROM, I returned to do my M.Sc. in Biology from York University and then Ph.D. in EEB at U of T. With an interest in bridging the gap between science and the general public, I completed the Certificate Program in Global Journalism at the Munk School of Global Affairs, U of T. My research interests are in the evolution and biodiversity of mammals with a particular focus on bats. This has involved fieldwork to over 20 countries primarily in tropical regions where the species diversity is highest and which form a natural laboratory of speciation. In addition to authoring about 100 scientific papers, I have also written popular articles on science and nature for newspapers such as the National Post.

Tiffany McKenzie  
**Degree:** BA Hons History and American Studies, 2008  
**Title:** Student SUNY Buffalo  
**Bio:** I am an Immigration Lawyer who is licensed in Ontario. I went to school in Canada, the UK, and I am currently pursuing my Master's in the United States. I am a Corporate Immigration Lawyer, and have represented universities, Fortune 500 companies, etc.

Julienne Torres  
[LinkedIn Profile]  
**Degree:** HBSc Human Biology 2011  
**Title:** Director of Operations (GTA) Appletree Medical Group  
**Bio:** Julienne Torres graduated from the University of Toronto in 2011 with an Honours B.Sc. double major in Human Biology: Genes, Genetics, and Biotechnology and Cell and Molecular Biology. During her undergraduate career, she was actively involved in a number of student groups, including New College Orientation and the Winterfest Planning Committee. Her interest in healthcare led her to begin working for Appletree Medical Group as Medical Assistant shortly after graduating. Since then, Julienne has gained vast experience in leadership development and familiarity with the business aspects of medicine. She is now the Director of Operations for the GTA division of what is now the largest practice management group in Canada.

Alex Wells  
**BA history, drama, sexual diversity studies 2011** Relief staff and Program Assistant Central Toronto Community Health Centre and U of T  
Alex is currently the Acting Program Assistant for Sexual Diversity Studies here at U of T and work from time to time at the Central Toronto Community Health Centre as a locum staff member. Prior to this he worked at the Telepsychiatry clinic at Sick Kids hospital processing referrals from physicians in northern and rural Ontario. Outside of office walls though Alex is involved with a number of LGBTQ and sports organizations. Alex is a graduate from the University of Toronto with a double major in History and Drama and a minor in Sexual Diversity Studies.
How to Work a Room (GS / RG / CS / IS)

Leanne Pepper
Title: General Manager Faculty Club, University of Toronto

Keeping a Community after U of T – a Workshop (GS / RG / CS / IS)

Anthony Blair
Degree: BSc Majors are Psychology and Criminology and minor Sociology 1992
Title: Chief, Pay and Pensions, Public Works and Government Services Canada
Bio: Anthony graduated from the University of Toronto in June 1992 with a BSc; majors in Psychology and Criminology and a minor in Sociology. He is currently employed by Public Works and Government Services Canada as the Chief, Pay and Pensions. During his tenure with the federal government he worked for two departments; Canada Revenue Agency and his current department. Anthony has also occupied various positions such as Regional Business Manager, Supply Team Leader, Training Officer and Collections Contact Officer. Anthony is currently a mentor at the University of Toronto and has also volunteered with the Peel District School Board as Chair of the Parent Involvement Committee. Volunteerism has been a major part of his life and that is one of the reasons he volunteered for four years as a Probation and Parole Officer. He believes in consistent learning and believes that every day is a learning experience. He also says that one should not let the problems of yesterday or the thoughts of tomorrow prevent one from achieving the goals one set for oneself.

Netila Demneri
LinkedIn Profile
Degree: BA Political Science 2010
Title: Associate, Russell Reynolds Associates
Bio: Netila Demneri is a Research Associate with Russell Reynolds Associates. Netila is responsible for the design and implementation of search strategy and candidate development for senior executive searches spanning across verticals, with a particular focus in the financial services and professional services sectors. With a focus on detail, Netila has earned a reputation for effectively carrying out search execution and building trusted advisor relationships with her candidates and clients, across Canada and the United States. Netila joined Russell Reynolds from the Caldwell Partners, Canada’s first executive search firm. Netila began her career at the Phelps Group, a Toronto-based boutique firm that executes senior level searches in the municipal and provincial government sector. Prior to her career in executive search, Netila worked in the Government of Canada, as an Operations Supervisor in the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, where she led a team of officers managing multi-million dollar government contracts for delivering newcomer settlement services in Toronto. Netila is also the Director of Operations for the Global Summitry Project, a think tank based out of the Munk School of Global Affairs, at the University of Toronto. Previously, Netila was the Chair of the G8 and G20 Research Groups at the University of Toronto. She presented the Groups’ final reports at the G8 and G20 Summits, from 2009 to 2011, in front of media and the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Canada.
Sarah Ker-Hornell
Degree: BA English 1981
Title: CEO & Executive Director FilmOntario
Bio: Sarah Ker-Hornell, CEO & Executive Director, screen-based industry consortium (film, television, interactive), FilmOntario. A seasoned industry Executive with extensive business development, marketing and public policy experience, Ms. Ker-Hornell holds a BA from the University of Toronto. Other notable honours include Canadian Women’s Who’s Who, Canada’s Who’s Who and the University of Toronto Arbor Award for Mentorship. Before joining FilmOntario in 2003, Ms. Ker-Hornell established an award-winning commercial production company, Angel Films Inc., handling domestic and international commercial production. Ms. Ker-Hornell sits on a variety of Industry Boards and Committees, including the Ontario Media Development Corporation Screen-based Advisory Council and Toronto Board of Trade, Municipal Committee.

Rena Parsan
LinkedIN Profile
Degree: Hons. B.A., 2009- Urban, Economic and Social Geography
Title: Committee Secretary of the UTSC Campus Council U of T
Bio: Rena started her career at the University of Toronto in 2010 in the Faculty of Medicine as a Program Assistant in the Department of Family and Community Medicine. She then moved on to the Office of the Governing Council as an Administrative Assistant. In her current role as the Committee Secretary of the UTSC Campus Council she provides Secretariat support to the governance bodies at UTSC. Rena has an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in Urban, Economic, and Social Geography from the University of Toronto and a Graduate Certificate in Human Resources Management from George Brown College. Rena’s favourite place on campus is the Knox College courtyard where faculty, staff and students can enjoy peaceful moments during hectic times.

Adil Sardar
LinkedIN Profile
Degree: Computer Science 2002
Title: Lead Developer WaveDNA
Bio: Adil Sardar is the lead developer at a music software company called WaveDNA. Unfortunately not being a musician, Adil is purely excited by the amazing pattern technology and other shiny things in the WaveDNA Labs. He received a BSc in Computer Science with a specialty in Software Engineer from the University of Toronto in 2002. Adil in the past has worked at IBM’s Toronto lab for 8+ years, developing key technologies in the DB2 LUW Kernal team. Over those years has worked in enhancing the DB2 Bufferpool services, Load, Sort, Import, Export and Distribute utilities. Adil also teaches Disciplined Agile Workshops and is an informal agile coach for his current and past teams.
Denisa Balla
LinkedIn Profile
Degree: HBA, Economics (Major), Political Science (Minor), Environmental Policy (Minor) 2009
Title: Director, Paid Search Reprise Media
Bio: Denisa moved to Canada in 2005 to start her studies at University of Toronto, Victoria College as an international student and she graduated with an HBA in Economics, Political Science and Environmental Policy in 2009. During her studies, she was involved with the Political Science Association of U of T and SAC office. Additionally, she has spent two summers in Italy, France and Central Europe through the Summer Abroad Program at U of T, an experience she found very valuable to her education and personal growth. Denisa started her career in Marketing as an Online Marketing Specialist. Within one year she transition into an Account Manager and two years after that to the head of the Digital Marketing Team of Kanetix Ltd. Denisa is currently working as a Director of Paid Search for Reprise Media, leading the Air Canada account.

Svitlana Frunchak
LinkedIn Profile
Degree: PhD History 2014
Title: Exchange Officer, Partnerships, Assessment, and Special Initiatives, Centre for International Experience, U of T
Bio: Svitlana Frunchak is a higher education professional and a scholar who has been with University of Toronto for more than 10 years. Before joining the Centre for International Experience as an Exchange Officer in 2014, she has worked at the Munk School of Global Affairs and the History Department in a number of different roles. Her professional experience highlights include program development, project management, research, teaching, and counselling. Before she joined U of T to begin her doctoral studies as an international student, Svitlana lived, studied, and worked in Ukraine, Russia (Siberia), Hungary, and the US.

James Liang
LinkedIn Profile
Degree: HBSC Computer Science and Statistics 2012
Title: Software Engineer NetSuite Inc.
Bio: As a student originally in Commerce program, James found his interest in Computer Science after making a video game, and transferred to the department of CS at his second year of study. James’ previous employers include RIM (now BlackBerry) and DBRS (Canada’s top bond rating agency), and is now working for NetSuite (A California based public trading company focus on cloud ERP). He is also the Founder of Wherego Inc., a start-up that is working on innovative web services.
Making the Most of Your Final Year (CS / IS)

Nadia Bakhtiari
Degree: Near and Middle Eastern Studies; Double Minor in Political Science and History
Title: 4th Year Student

Vincent Ho
Degree: Bachelor of Commerce, Specializing in Accounting; Minors in Women and Gender Studies in Economics
Title: 4th Year Student

Alessia Kazakova
Degree: Nutritional Sciences; Major Human Biology: Neuroscience
Title: 4th Year Student

Yoon (Rachel) Shin
Degree: Employment Relations and Criminology, Minor sociology
Title: 4th Year Student

Overcoming Hurdles on the Track to Success (GS / RG / CS / IS)

Fahmida Kamali
Degree: B. Sc. Psychology, Employment Relations 2014
Title: Project Coordinator Ministry of Government and Consumer Services, Ontario Public Service
Fahmida Kamali is a Project Coordinator at the Ministry of Government & Consumer Services. Fahmida graduated in June 2014, with a double major in psychology and employment relations, and a minor in sociology. (Fahmida is proof that what you study in university may not at all be related to your “dream job”. ) Fahmida is passionate about community service, and volunteers with several community organizations to developing programming for youth.

Foday Kanu
Degree: M.A. English 2005
Title: Director, Client Management Kingsdale Shareholder Services
Bio: Foday Amara Kanu joined the Digital Media Department at the Globe and Mail in 2006, shortly after graduating with a Master of Arts from the University of Toronto. Promoted to Manager, Customer Solutions within a year of joining the Globe and Mail. In 2013, I joined Kingsdale Shareholder Services, the leading proxy solicitation firm in Canada. - Experienced strategic level client relationship management and corporate communication professional. - Accomplished senior leader - Developed over a career of managing operations for departments of up to 250 employees including supervisory and management staff. Led departmental employee engagement committee for Consumer Sales and Service at the Globe and Mail. - Proven client and stakeholder relationship management expertise and successfully took over the relationship management for key business partners within 3 months of starting in the Web Products Manager role at the Globe and Mail. Revenue from these business relationships exceeded $5 million per annum. - Currently responsible for managing client relationships between my current employer and several TSX-companies. Kingsdale Shareholder Services
provides communications solutions to companies when they have an event that requires shareholder approval.

Jessica Panetta
LinkedIn Profile
**Degree:** BA 2011; MA English  
**Title:** Head Director/Fashion and beauty editor Conceptual Event Society  
**Bio:** Jessica Panetta graduated from the University of Toronto in 2011 and went on to receive a Bachelor of Professional Studies at the University of Niagara, although she pays her OCT every year, prior to completing her degrees, public relations and fashion have always been a part of her life. After graduating, she took on a PR internship and upon completion, instead of accepting an employed position; she started her own company, Conceptual Event Society. Through this role and daily interactions with the media, she also became the Fashion and Beauty Editor of multiple, respected, outlets. Jessica Panetta has over 10 years of experience in fashion, beauty and public relations. She has been able to learn from A-list designers, such as, Roberto Cavalli, Christian Louboutin, Mikhael Kale, Christopher Bates and Alejandro Blanco (Marciano, Bebe, Eva Mendes Collection). By attending fashion and beauty events all over the world, Jessica has a unique and cultured perspective that continues to evolve throughout her work and personal style.

Robert Sinclair
**Degrees:** B.COMM 2003; MBA 2008  
**Title:** Manager Procurement Operations Independent Electricity System Operator  
**Bio:** As the Manager of Procurement Operations at the Independent Electricity System Operator, Rob is responsible for the operation of the IESO’s standard offer generation procurements. Rob is also involved in developing new renewable energy programs and negotiating energy contracts on behalf of the IESO. Formerly, as a Power System Planner at the IESO, Rob and his team developed electricity system plans in northern Ontario, including the plan to connect 21 remote First Nations communities. Prior to working at the IESO, Rob assisted the role out of the province’s Feed In Tariff program while working at the Ministry of Energy. Rob has also held roles in finance and corporate strategy in the banking and retail sectors. Rob has a Bachelor of Commerce and an MBA from the Rotman School of Management.

Alex Wells
**Degree:** BA history, drama, sexual diversity studies 2011  
**Title:** Relief staff and Program Assistant, Central Toronto Community Health Centre and UofT  
Alex is currently the Acting Program Assistant for Sexual Diversity Studies here at U of T and work from time to time at the Central Toronto Community Health Centre as a locum staff member. Prior to this he worked at the Telepsychiatry clinic at Sick Kids hospital processing referrals from physicians in northern and rural Ontario. Outside of office walls though Alex is involved with a number of LGBTQ and sports organizations. Alex is a graduate from the University of Toronto with a double major in History and Drama and a minor in Sexual Diversity Studies.
Success Stories: Working Outside of Canada (GS / RG / CS / IS)

Catherine Bragg
Degree: M.Sc. 1975 Psychology
Title: Adjunct Professor of Humanitarian Action, University College, Dublin
Bio: Dr. Bragg received her degrees from University of Toronto (B.Sc. Psychology), University of Cambridge (M.Phil. Criminology) and the State University of New York at Albany (Ph.D. Criminal Justice). She her previous roles include the United Nations and Government of Canada; Professor in the Centre for Humanitarian Action, School of Agriculture and Food Science, University College Dublin and a Senior Partner in Otsenre & Associates, a private consulting firm focusing on providing humanitarian advice to the private sector. She is married and has two children. A Canadian, she currently resides in Toronto.

Colin Buchanan
LinkedIn Profile
Degree: BA 1985
Title: Co-CEO, Six Degrees Medical Consulting
Bio: Colin is the co-founder and Co-CEO of global medical communications agency Six Degrees Medical Consulting. With more than 30 years’ experience in the international pharmaceutical industry, Colin is an acknowledged leader in the healthcare communications sector. Today he helps research-based pharmaceutical organizations around the world translate emerging clinical data and insights into tangible, focused communications platforms. He graduated from U of T (Victoria) in 1985 with a degree in History and Philosophy - and used the skills obtained in university to quickly establish a thriving and fascinating career.

Terence Dunn
Degree: BA Linguistics 2013, MA Linguistics 2015
Title: Student, University of Toronto
Bio: Terence’s professional biography is made up of experiences across a fairly wide field, and mostly from summer jobs and exploring possibilities. He learned leadership through forest fire fighting, data collection from surveying for Parks Canada, people skills from retail, and teaching skills as a TA and as an English teacher in Russia.

The 411 on Graduate School (CS / GS / IS)

Samia Afzal
LinkedIn Profile
Degrees: PhD Immunology 2014; BSc Immunology/Human Biology 2007
Title: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Toronto
Bio: Samia received her BSc and PhD degrees in Immunology at the University of Toronto. She’s currently pursuing postdoctoral studies at the University of Toronto where she is working on identifying predictive biomarkers for chronic lymphocytic leukemia. Besides scientific research, she has always enjoyed teaching and giving back to the community. She looks forward to meeting students and answering their queries about careers in academic research.
**Theresa Aversa**  
**Degree:** HBA 2012  
**Title:** Health and Safety Officer, Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU)  
**Bio:** Theresa (Terri) Aversa currently works as a Health and Safety Officer at the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU). Her role includes providing health and safety assistance and advice to OPSEU's 130,000 members and participating with other stakeholders to improve workplace health and safety in Ontario. Prior to coming on-staff at OPSEU in 2005, Terri worked for 16 years in Correctional Services. Altogether, Terri brings over 25 years of experience in the labour movement dealing with various issues and including her current focus on occupational health and safety. Most recently, Terri spearheaded the development of the 2012 Mental Injury Tool Kit, a resource tool developed by unions, workers, and organizations to identify and address organizational factors that may cause or contribute to mental distress for workers. Terri has completed a Specialist B.A. in Employment Relations at University of Toronto and is pursuing a Masters in McMaster University’s Work & Society program.

**Katie Burton**  
[LinkedIn Profile]  
**Degrees:** BA Criminology 2006; B Ed. I/S 2009; M Ed Adult Education 2017  
**Title:** Contract Professor & Program Coordinator Centennial College  
**Bio:** Katie is a life-long learner with dedication to her growth as an educator. As a certified teacher and college professor, Katie is constantly striving to integrate new ways of teaching and learning into her classrooms at the School of Business at Centennial College. Katie graduated from U of T with a BA in 2005, and with a B Ed. in 2009. Currently, she is pursuing an M Ed. degree at OISE.

**Mingxuan Fu**  
**Degree:** Honours BSc Physics  
**Title:** Senior Ph.D. student Department of Physics and Astronomy, McMaster University  
**Bio:** Ming graduated from University of Toronto in 2010 with an Honour Bachelor of Science. She then started her graduate study at McMaster University in September 2010. As a condensed matter experimentalist, Ming conducts nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) investigations on novel quantum materials, in particular frustrated quantum magnets and exotic superconductors. She has published her research results in top-ranked physics journals, and her presentations at several international conferences attracted worldwide attention. Moreover, Ming has acquired a wide range of teaching experience by serving as a teaching assistant (TA) for undergraduate and graduate courses at McMaster University, through which she has developed a true passion for supporting undergraduate students in achieving self-improvement and academic success.

**Rhain Louis**  
[LinkedIn Profile]  
**Degrees:** BSc Physiology/Philosophy 2001, MSc Physiology 2003  
**Title:** Animal Ethics and Compliance Manager University of Toronto  
**Bio:** Rhain Louis is the Animal Ethics and Compliance Manager in the Research Oversight and Compliance Office at the University of Toronto. For the past decade, he has been responsible for managing the animal ethics and compliance program, providing administrative leadership to the institutional animal care committees and facilitating ethical animal research. Rhain completed both his BSc and MSc degrees at the University of Toronto, and enjoys scuba diving, cycling and running in his spare time.
Chieh Teng
LinkedIn Profile
Degree: Psychology Specialist, 2014 MSW
Title: Student  St Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton
Bio: Social Work training brings together theoretical issues of societal organisation and problems, which is important before one goes out to work in any field. Social work training also allows greater effectiveness in navigating working world, even if one does not work as a social worker.