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## **GTHA construction gets a boost from George Brown College construction program**



I don't think there's a builder in the GTHA that doesn't have a George Brown College graduate. Sitting with the graduates of the RESCON residential construction management certificate program during a George Brown College graduation dinner in Toronto a while back, I realized that RESCON has helped produce another 13 leaders of tomorrow for the construction industry.

Four years ago, George Brown College and RESCON teamed up to create the program. We believed wholeheartedly (and still do) that builders must take a leadership role in addressing the skills gap. In order to be successful as an industry today and in the future, we need to ensure that future construction managers and professionals are given opportunities to learn and grow: George Brown College was a perfect fit to start producing those future leaders.

"When they started the program, a lot of these kids were scared to walk into my office," said Clint Kissoon, academic chair of the Angelo Del Zotto School of Construction Management. "Now, we're seeing them develop into blossoming professionals ready to take on the world." "This partnership, between George Brown College and RESCON, is working beautifully." RESCON president Richard Lyall agreed. "George Brown College is one of the highest value partnerships that we have, and it's important that we maintain it as the industry's No. 1 feeder

program for construction management,” Lyall said. Kissoon said the students grew up before his eyes in just 28 weeks.

One of the graduates, Celeste Furlotte-Bois, caught on with Great Gulf in a permanent position as a site administrative clerk. We were excited to learn that she is working with panelizing manufacturer Home Technologies on a four-storey pre-fabricated project in Oakville. So was Celeste. “It’s been pretty interesting; I’m kinda looking forward to checking that out. It’s amazing to see a crane putting up a building, from no suites to five suites to 10 suites in a day. “I’m glad I’m on this project.” While she was worried about her lack of experience coming into the program, program co-ordinator Bill Nichols said she made up for it with enthusiasm and adaptability.

'Great example for women and men' “Celeste is a great example for not just women coming through our program, but the men too,” Nichols said. “She’s tough, ambitious and enthusiastic.” I’m not surprised she caught on with Great Gulf, not a bit.” Without a doubt, the George Brown program is one of the bright spots for RESCON, and all of our members recognize its excellence – a reflection on the quality of the focused students coming through. To the recent graduates, a compliment: we can help you get an interview, but it’s up to you to get the jobs. Congratulations – you earned it.

And one word of advice, grads – keep that George Brown network going. This is a small industry.

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