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Summer Company Yearbook 2018

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the 2018 Summer Company Yearbook, showcasing 38 inspiring young entrepreneurs in Ontario.

The Summer Company program provides a platform for young people across all regions of the province to turn a bright idea into a viable business. The program is a great way for students to meet mentors, build strong networks and discover opportunities while continuing their studies. It helps bring ideas to life and transform aspirations of running a business into reality.

This round of young entrepreneurs built successful summer start-ups in a variety of unique fields, including custom furniture, STEM-based entertainment and medical device production.

Large, successful companies all had a beginning in their journey. Whether an idea starts around a kitchen table or in a classroom, there is an absolute connection between the opportunities and training we give our young people and what happens in our economy. New ideas can become new products and even spark new industries.

Through Summer Company, we hope to unlock the entrepreneurial potential of our brightest young minds and empower them to become contributors and game changers for Ontario's future economy.

Congratulations to each one of this year's participants. You are taking a chance on a dream, turning it into a new summer business and contributing to a thriving provincial economy for our collective future. Best of luck on all your future endeavours and we are happy to have been a part of your journey.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Todd Smith
Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

Addison Kilfoyle — Bubbles 2 Bubbles

Bradford



Giving new swimmers the confidence they need

Addison Kilfoyle had everything you need to set up and run a successful swimming school. A fully certified Red Cross Water Safety Instructor, (including First Aid and CPR certificates) she also had a pool right in her own backyard. Add some Summer Company and a healthy portion of entrepreneurial drive, and Bubbles 2 Bubbles was born.

Addison's school provided a unique learning experience for parents and children, with one-on-one lessons that ensured that everyone was safe and having fun. With her hands-on approach, Addison ensured that parents and kids were fully comfortable with learning this valuable life skill. Bubbles 2 Bubbles also provided families with flexible hours and lesson opportunities that fit their schedule. Her favourite part? Seeing the happy, smiling faces on the kids' faces as they improve their swimming skills.

<https://www.bubbles2bubbles.com/> (<https://www.bubbles2bubbles.com/>)

Nicole Bennett — Stinger Cream

Collingwood



Meeting a new need with a unique product

Nicole Bennett is an entrepreneur at heart – and when she saw a business opportunity, she didn't hesitate. Last year she was helping her siblings with a lip balm product they were selling at local farmer's markets in the Wasaga Beach area. When a customer asked if they had a similar product for healing tattooed skin, Nicole got to work.

She soon found that there was a significant demand for an all-natural tattoo balm, and she filled that need with her product, the aptly named Stinger Cream. The product is made of natural ingredients, including beeswax and organic virgin olive oil. Throughout the summer of 2018, Nicole visited tattoo shops to get her product on the shelves. After a successful season selling her product and learning new skills with Summer Company, Nicole now sells Stinger Cream year-round.

<https://stingercream.com/> (<https://stingercream.com/>)

Chad Nadin — Nadin Furniture

Oakville



Custom furniture tailored to client needs

Before starting his Summer Company, Chad Nadin recognized that consumers want household products that are both practical and attractive. Nadin Furniture sells high-quality natural wood cutting boards, dining and coffee tables, tailored to the customer's wants and needs. Chad specializes in custom "live edge" pieces, which incorporate the natural edge of the wood. He sells his pieces through online channels and at trade and craft shows throughout Halton.

Chad was an excellent Summer Company candidate, actively participating in mentor meetings and regularly asking for help and guidance along the way. With the help of the program's mentoring and training, he learned how to focus his messaging, and to use social media to promote and showcase his products. Along with working trade shows and markets, he sold a good proportion of his products by word of mouth.

Chad's success didn't go unnoticed in his community. Along with several other local Summer Company participants, he was featured on an episode of Inspiring Youth, a local cable series. Chad's interview about his new business and his experience in the Summer Company program aired in September and again in January.

Chad says he now realizes just how much work goes into running a business, and how important it is to keep on top of the paper work and be organized. He's continuing to run his successful company while attending school.

<https://www.nadinfurniture.ca/> (<https://www.nadinfurniture.ca/>)

James Ramlal — JR Media

Mississauga



A clear focus on his goals

JR Media has been a business in the making since James Ramlal graduated from high school, when he chose a career in film over architecture, his other passion. Now in his third year in Film and Television at Sheridan College, James launched his film and video production company after he was accepted into Mississauga's Summer Company Program.

James secured many projects throughout the summer. His business originally started as filming for corporate customers, but he has since developed an interest and passion for work in the music industry. Through networking, he found opportunities that included filming behind the scenes at Danforth Music Hall for a jazz band and recording on the set of OVO for a local rapper. Music videos are now his speciality, and he has developed a distinct skillset and impressive portfolio.

James hopes to improve his craft with more experience as he continues to run his business year-round. His newest ventures include combining his architectural interests with video, where he's able to use drone technology in his shoots. Just like a new lens for a camera, James has clear and focused goals for his new business.

Anneke te Bokkel — Lessons in the Loft

Nottawasaga



A Summer Company goes year-round

Lessons in the Loft is aptly named, since Anneke te Bokkel offered piano lessons throughout the summer from a studio in the loft of her home. Through the Summer Company program, Anneke fulfilled three objectives: to start her own piano school from home, gain a clientele, and to provide her students with up-to-date education.

“Private piano teaching is something I can do for life, because I love teaching and I love piano playing,” says Anneke. “Summer Company helped me with start-up costs, but it also taught me about making a business plan, accounting and keeping organized.”

She used some of her grant money for business cards and flyers, and went to schools, neighbours, and a church to advertise. “The program pushed me out of my comfort zone to get out and publicize my business,” she says.

She also used some funds to buy an iPad, musical games, and recording equipment for her students, to create a very positive learning environment.

“Summer Company gives us opportunities to carry out our dreams in ways we never would have been able to do on our own,” says Anneke. “My piano teaching business has gone from non-existent to long-term, and I am looking forward to continuing it even after the summer is over.”

Brad Akbarpour — Kinetic Cubes

Richmond Hill



Perfecting the flagship product

Kinetic Cubes is a well-crafted puzzle and desktop accessory that anyone with an eye for design simply must have. A marriage of art and science, a kinetic cube is a trisected cube that lets your fingers fidget as the three sections slide together with a perfect fit.

“We took our flagship product and sought to make it perfect,” says Kinetic Cubes founder Brad Akbarpour. “After that, we needed to find a way to share its elegance.”

Enter Summer Company. Through the program, Brad met many like-minded people with an affinity for business. Some were just starting out, others were in mid-development, and several mentors had reached and surpassed their entrepreneurial goals.

Brad learned how to work with, and not against, the market, which was not open to more luxury items. A shift in positioning was in order.

“I learned that what people really wanted were educational products and premium incentives for enterprises,” he says. “The quality and versatility of our product allowed for it to fit those market needs, and the skills I obtained through Summer Company made for a seamless transition.”

The shift paid off. Kinetic Cubes was prominently featured at the CNE’s Innovation Garage and is now selling online.

<https://www.kineticcubes.com/> (<https://www.kineticcubes.com/>)

Rachel Lau — Snapdible

Richmond Hill



Innovation cuts pill processing time

Every good innovation solves a problem. Rachel Lau got the idea for a better pill cutter when she was frustrated in her pharmacy job. Customers were asking to have their pills cut every day, but conventional pill cutters can only cut one pill at a time. Rachel was spending a lot of time in laborious and boring work.

With the help of Summer Company, Rachel designed, created, and sold her own pill cutter — a vast improvement on the old devices. Her design not only saves users time by allowing multiple pills to be cut at once, it also helps users to cut pills of any shape and size more easily for precision cutting.

Before she started Snapdible, Rachel had limited knowledge of business planning. With the help of her mentor and Summer Company training sessions, she gained the knowledge and confidence she needed to turn her idea into a viable business.

“The program offered many networking opportunities for me,” she says. “It has connected me to events and individuals I would never have had access to.” Rachel attended MedEdge, and was subsequently accepted into SenecaHELIX, Seneca College's entrepreneurship incubator. Rachel also delivered a pitch on healthcare innovation at Markham Stouffville Hospital.

“Summer Company has taught me many entrepreneurial skills and broadened my horizons along the way,” she says. “If I hadn't been accepted, I would not have realized my potential, or have even considered entrepreneurship as a possible career choice.”

Jaden McGregor — Wasseyaa Design

Toronto



Carrying on the family business tradition

Since he was very young, Jaden McGregor has followed in his grandfather's footsteps to learn the secrets of making beeswax candles and honey. The Grade 11 student at Riverdale Collegiate Institute has spent many hours checking hives and harvesting honey at Billy Bishop Airport, the University of Toronto, and Rice Lake.

He learned the process of bringing together the perfect combinations to make their all natural and unpasteurized honey into truly unique flavours. He also learned the importance of attention to detail in producing 100% beeswax candles.

"The name of my business, Wasseyaa Design, comes from the first part of my name in Ojibway, which means 'light'," says Jaden.

After seven years of apprenticeship, and with the full support of his grandparents, Jaden took the company online. His goal was to expand their customer base beyond the many farmers markets they participate in each summer.

“We regularly had people asking if we sell online, so I realized that was the next step for us,” he says. “Summer Company allowed me to pursue this goal and take the business to a new level.”

Jaden is proud to continue in his grandparents’ footsteps and share his family heritage with a new generation, with the assistance of the Summer Company program.

<https://wasseyaa.com/> (<https://wasseyaa.com/>).

Christopher Komljanec — Chris’s Lawn Action

Newmarket



A love for lawns pays off

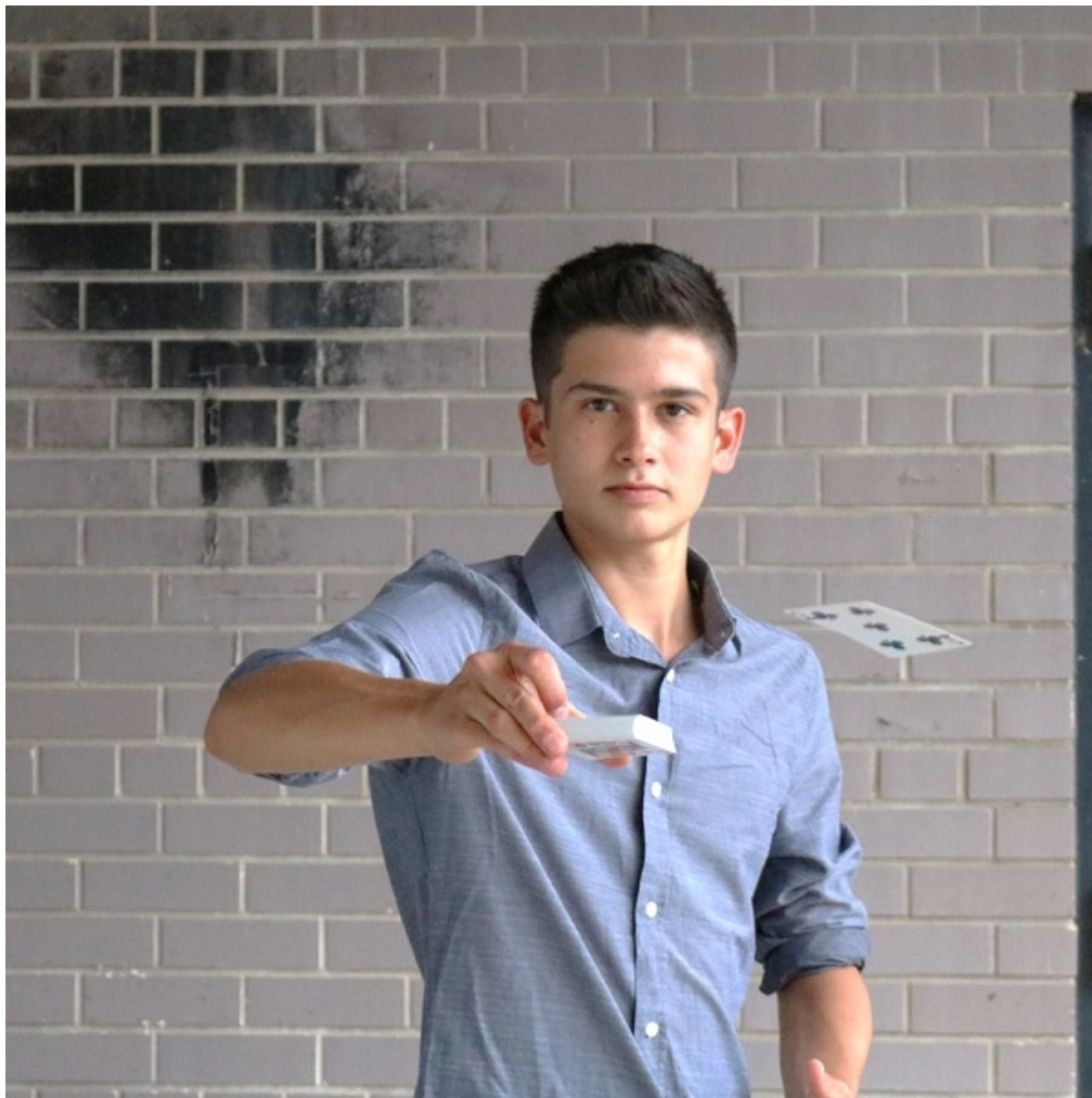
As a baseball player, Christopher Komljanec understands the importance of a well-manicured lawn, and the curb appeals it brings to a home. This is what inspired Christopher to start his own lawn maintenance business, Chris's Lawn Action. His clients appreciated his dedication and love for lawns.

Christopher, a Grade 11 student at Cardinal Carter Catholic High School, credits the Summer Company program for helping him develop skills in marketing, sales, networking and bookkeeping. He also notes how he has developed personally, being more comfortable networking with others, and talking about his business to generate more sales. Summer Company helped Christopher develop an interest in entrepreneurship. He now sees it as a potential career option.

"I had a great experience learning about business, and developing my own business," says Christopher. "I learned new skills and developed as a young adult. Summer Company gave me more knowledge and career options for the future."

Ivan Demine — Cassio Believe Astounding Magic Shows

Belleville



Making the magic pay off

Like many successful magicians, Ivan Demine started early. Around the age of 7, Ivan fell in love with magic, and he's turned that passion into a successful Summer Company. Ivan honed his magician skills by attending workshops and learning from some of the world's best prestidigitators. He's also an active participant in the magic community on social media, comparing tricks, sharing tips and supporting his fellow magicians. His favourite magician and inspiration is Shawn Farquhar, a Canadian magician and illusionist known as the "Grand Prix World Champion of Magic."

When he started his company, Ivan knew a lot about magic, but little about business. Summer Company changed all that. Ivan used all the resources Summer Company offered him, including the full training day at the beginning of the summer.

One of the challenges he faced, was accurately estimating how long his shows would be. With practice, along with newly acquired time management skills, Ivan now closes his show right on cue. With positive reviews from all of his clients, Ivan is sure to remain a hit, with no disappearing act in sight.

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/cassioBelieve/\)](https://www.facebook.com/cassioBelieve/)

Ava Prosser — Swish Basketball Camp

Brockville



Nothing but net

Growing up in Brockville, Ava Prosser was often bored over the summer months. The experience prompted her to deliver a top-notch basketball camp for youth through the Summer Company program.

With the wide variety of activities available for kids, summer sports camps are often difficult to fill. Ava anticipated that, so she spent part of May and most of June cold-calling local schools and connecting with teachers and parents. This early promotion got her camps off to a very strong start.

Swish Basketball Camp worked with 50 children aged 6 to 15 years over the summer, at various locations. The children learned a lot and had a lot of fun, and many wanted to return.

When asked about her experience with Summer Company, Ava said she was very happy with all facets of the program. She says the training and connections were “life changing”, and although she worked extremely hard, she has no regrets about the summer of 2018.

Ava has returned to the University of Cape Breton in Sydney, Nova Scotia where she plays for the Cappers and is in her second year of a chemistry program.

<https://swish-basketball-camp.webnode.com/> (<https://swish-basketball-camp.webnode.com/>)

Alberto Aguilar — YourDorm

Ottawa



Bridging the housing gap

YourDorm is a student housing intermediary business, designed to bridge the gap between students and landlords by streamlining the house-searching and renting processes. The company simplifies things, helping domestic and international students find and secure the right accommodation.

“We saw a pain point where students always struggle to find housing,” says Albert Aguilar, the founder of YourDorm. “They are often confounded as to what steps they need to take.”

YourDorm offers several packages with varying levels of support, including airport pickup, grocery stops, and city tours to ensure a stress-free arrival for international students.

The company is definitely meeting a need. YourDorm has received significant media exposure. Alberto was interviewed by Rogers TV, and his company was featured in a project by Algonquin College students looking at local businesses led by young entrepreneurs. Alberto and his team are currently scheduling a time to appear on CTV News.

Albert is now focussing on networking events and connecting with the wider entrepreneurial community. He was recently invited to a networking event at Ottawa City Hall, where he discussed his business ideas with Mayor Jim Watson.

<https://yourdorm.ca/> (<https://yourdorm.ca/>)

Mackenzie Huckvale — Mighty Molecules Entertainment Co.

Ottawa



Making science education fun

Mackenzie Huckvale is a high school student who loves science, and she wanted to share her passion with younger students. Mackenzie was already involved in her community, working with children as a camp counsellor, when she decided to engage kids (and especially girls) in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects.

Mighty Molecules Entertainment Co. is a science and education-based entertainment service, specializing in birthday parties and special events. Mackenzie positioned her business to offer an affordable, small-scale, and convenient service for busy families looking for a way to make their kid's birthday memorable. Young female instructors use experiments, games, and hands-on activities to promote STEM values and education.

Mackenzie is proud to empower young female entrepreneurs and give them a platform to educate the next generation about STEM in their communities. The company received considerable media coverage, including an appearance on CTV News Ottawa. The winner of 2018 Young Entrepreneurs Make Your Pitch competition, Mackenzie is back in high school, but she is continuing with her business. Her plan is to increase her involvement in Ottawa's STEM community and provide new workshops and programming.

<https://www.mightymoleculesparties.com/> (<https://www.mightymoleculesparties.com/>).

Eric Zhang — Pastel Education

Kingston



Meeting the challenges of autism

Eric Zhang started Pastel Education to support educators and families working with children on the autism spectrum. Pastel Education offers online modules to alleviate some of the challenges faced by parents, teachers and childhood educators when working with children with autism spectrum disorder. The modules take a positive approach, promoting supportive interactions.

Along with the online modules, Pastel Education also offers an app designed to build understanding and empathy. The app provides simulations of the sensory processing challenges faced by people with autism spectrum disorder.

Eric had two goals for his Summer Company project. He wanted to incorporate his business, and to monetize his product offering. Over the summer he managed to achieve both, along with much more. Over the past year, Pastel Education's modules were piloted in summer camps. A pilot program is set to run in three school boards in Ontario and Alberta in the 2018-2019 school year.

<https://www.pasteleducation.org/>(<https://www.pasteleducation.org/>)

Alex McGrath — College Lake Labour

Peterborough



Cruising contractor meets cottagers' needs

Alex McGrath took an innovative approach when setting up his contracting company. Alex uses a boat to serve his customers better. College Lake Labour (CLL) provided contracting services to seasonal residents, as well full-time cottage residents, on several local lakes. The boat enabled him to travel among different lakes easily and visit customers on their schedules. He also often completed the work during the week when the cottager was away.

CLL was successful right from its start in May, tackling the many small jobs that larger contractors avoid. No job was too small, and CLL soon saw a huge demand for junk removal from island seasonal residents who often can't move things themselves.

CCL's unique selling proposition of mobile service by boat also helped create a marketing opportunity. The company's branded boat (and matching T-shirts) were a familiar sight in the area, as Alex and his employee (and friend) Bryce Wasson served clients.

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/CollegeLakeLabour/\)](https://www.facebook.com/CollegeLakeLabour/)

Maxime Paquette — Augmenta Services

Prescott and Russell



Helping small businesses grow

Maxime Paquette exemplifies many of the traits of the true entrepreneur. An energetic, ambitious marketer, he strived to help local businesses achieve a social media presence through his Summer Company, Augmenta Services.

His company offers brand awareness, lead generation and growth services for B2B (business to business). Augmenta teaches small businesses how to effectively sell to their target markets, using branding, marketing and social media.

Max's message is to have balance in personal life as much as in business life. A sample quotation from his website sums it up: "If you post too infrequently, your audience will forget that you exist, and you will quickly fade into the deep dark recesses of their minds. However, if you are posting too often, you will become a complete nuisance and they will dread seeing your posts overcrowding their feed."

Often underestimated because of his age, Maxime developed the ability to be flexible and adapt, enabling him to quickly respond to changing opinions and market conditions. The Prescott and Russell Entrepreneurship Centre was proud to support his ventures through the summer months, and he plans to continue his business while going to school.

<https://augmentaservices.com/home> (<https://augmentaservices.com/home>)

Ceili Minten — Foundations Tutoring Services

Bracebridge



Ceili Minten and client – Foundations Tutoring Services

Custom tutoring helps students reach their potential

Ceili knew she was destined to help students reach their full potential. Seeing close relatives struggle in school with dyslexia and general anxiety disorder sparked her passion for helping other students who otherwise wouldn't get the help they need. "Not every student learns the same way and it's not fair to treat them like they do," says Ceili.

Through the support of the Muskoka Small Business Centre and the Summer Company program, 17-year-old Ceili started Foundations Tutoring Services. Ceili's goal was to ensure that other kids, like her relatives, aren't simply "pushed" through the system, without being taught what they need for success.

"At Foundations, my first priority was to find different ways to look at the same topic and make learning as easy as possible to ensure success," she says.

The Summer Company program helped her achieve that goal. Ceili has become a successful business owner, while at the same time doing work she loves, ensuring that students can reach their full potential.

<https://foundationstutoringservices.ca/> (<https://foundationstutoringservices.ca/>)

Dustin Moncrief — First Cast Tackle

Kenora



Tackling two challenges with one product

Discarded plastic is a serious environmental issue that's killing a lot of fish unnecessarily. Dustin Moncrief's Summer Company helps address that issue by recycling old lures into new products. The high school student at Beaver Brae Secondary School in Kenora operates First Cast Tackle out of a workshop in his family's home, manufacturing fishing tackle made of soft plastics. He melts the plastics, adds flavouring (garlic or coffee) to attract the fish and then injects the mixed plastic into moulds to create various lures aimed at different types of fish.

Dustin experiments with different colours, textures and flake to attract the fish. He also recycles old plastic baits (that otherwise might go to the landfill or the bottom of a boat), by melting the plastic down and adding fresh scents. His baits were recently used by fishermen in the 32nd annual Kenora Bass International (KBI), which welcomes over 200 professional anglers to the area. He sells his lures online and through JB Baits in Kenora. Dustin credits Summer Company with helping him set up and run a successful and unique business.

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Local-Business/First-Cast-Tackle-1819406558167141/\)](https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Local-Business/First-Cast-Tackle-1819406558167141/)

Katia Gareau — KK's Healthy Paws

Sudbury



Natural treats keep pets healthy and happy

Katiya has been waiting to apply into Summer Company since she was 11, when her older cousin completed the program. As a dog-lover, Katiya had the idea to make and sell dog treats made from all-natural and limited ingredients. She started with just dog treats, but now sells bunny and hamster treats as well as cat treats. Katiya is also the creator of a natural bug spray that keeps ticks and mites away from pets.

Through the summer, you could find her at the Thursday Sudbury Farmer's Market where she sold out every week. She also attended markets and booths around in the region.

Katiya credits the Summer Company program with teaching her valuable business skills, which will help her pursue her dream of owning an orthodontist practice in the future. In the meantime, she's planning on keeping her business going over the school year.

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/kkhealthypaws/\)](https://www.facebook.com/kkhealthypaws/)

Amanda Beland — All Lathered Up

Timiskaming



Custom bath products earn rave reviews

Eighteen-year-old Amanda Beland has turned her hobby into a business with a lot of potential. The Timiskaming District Secondary School student creates hand-made bath products in her home, with ingredients

she has carefully researched and chosen. Amanda's customers are constantly complimenting her on the colorful combinations of scents she has produced. Bath bombs, body scrubs, soaps and bath salts are some of the products she sells either separately or displayed in gift baskets for purchase.

Andrew Faulkner — ISO Studios

Thunder Bay



Getting a head start on the competition

Andrew Faulkner is a film production student at Confederation College in Thunder Bay.

Andrew took full advantage of Summer Company, attending all the workshop sessions. He also had a very well-matched mentor, a local professional with business aptitude and previous digital photography experience who is also a graduate of Summer Company.

His booth at the Summer Company Staples Youth Entrepreneurship Day Tradeshow was among the most-visited. His eye-catching exhibit displaying his drone video work and other projects attracted a lot of visitors, and Andrew was ready with business cards to book possible training sessions or promotional video work.

Before Summer Company, Andrew had done only small photography jobs for friends and relatives. He had minimal business experience and lacked vital skills that are not taught as part of a typical film course. After Summer Company, he has multiple photography and video clients in a very competitive local market.

Andrew plans to pursue his film and photography business full time after he graduates college. He credits the Summer Company program with helping him get a head start on his path to successful entrepreneurship.

Nicole Mighton — Nicole's Creative Customs

Thunder Bay



Breathing new life into old furniture

Nicole Mighton is a high-schooler who combines her artistic flare with carpentry skills to breathe new life into outdated furniture and housewares. Her Summer Company, Nicole's Creative Customs, repairs and refinishes old furniture and household items to serve a new purpose.

The training and mentorship provided by the Summer Company program helped Nicole to transform her hobby into a profitable business. Her mentor shared her expert insight into digital marketing for small businesses, helping Nicole to be strategic in posting engaging content to her Facebook and Instagram channels. The Preparing for a Tradeshow workshop taught her how to plan an eye-catching booth for the Summer Company Staples Youth Entrepreneurship Day Tradeshow. Her unique bathroom vanity (made from an antique Singer sewing machine table) was a highlight of the show.

Another one of Nicole's most notable projects is the custom refinishing work she has done for clients, revamping worn-out tables and night stands with new stain and refinished hardware. She works to cultivate a social media following and is starting to see results from these marketing efforts.

Nicole enjoyed working for herself and continued the business after returning to school. Her Summer Company experience has given her invaluable knowledge and experience, and she's now considering entrepreneurship as a career option after she completes her formal education.

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/nicolescreativecustoms/\)](https://www.facebook.com/nicolescreativecustoms/)

Brock Babin — Northern Edge

Kapuskasing



Making memories last with wood engravings

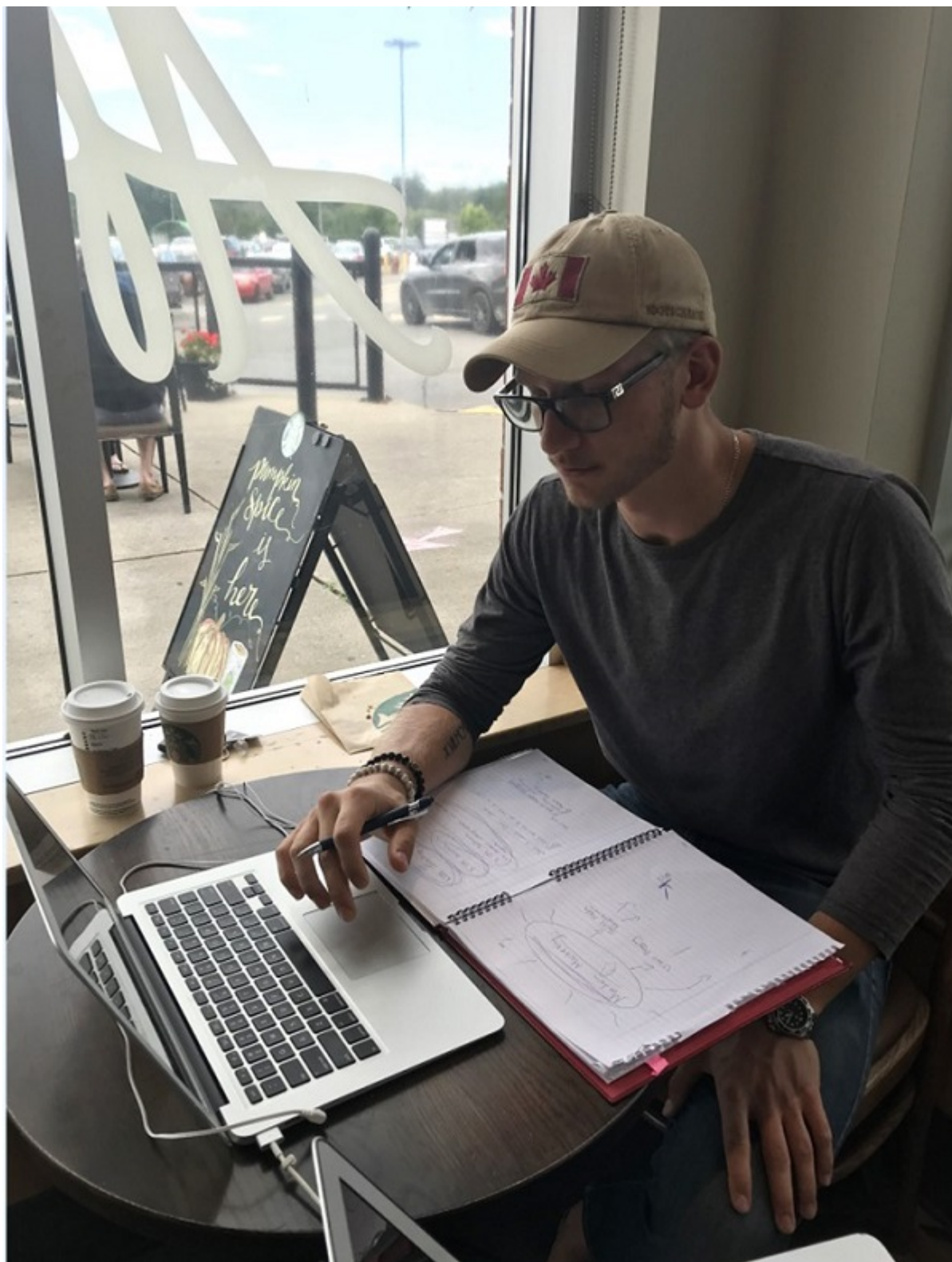
Brock Babin decided to try turning his hobby into a business last summer, and it was a wise decision. His hobby was using a laser to engrave wood to create family portraits, quotes, signs and other décor. With nearly 300 “likes” on his Facebook in a short few months, Brock's business soon grew bigger than he had imagined. The student at Echo du Nord in Kapuskasing was making a lot of sales from his hometown, and before long orders started coming in from all over Ontario and even other countries.

A highlight was when Brock was asked to engrave a wooden paddle presented to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, when he stopped in Kapuskasing on a tour of Northern Ontario in August 2018. Brock has immense pride in his business and has been selling at various public markets in the area this year. He plans on continuing his business throughout his studies.

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/NorthernEdgeKap/\)](https://www.facebook.com/NorthernEdgeKap/)

Daniel Vaskanin — VaskMedia

Brantford



Mentorship the key to digital marketing success

Daniel Vaskanin is a third-year philosophy student at McMaster University who credits Summer Company with the successful launch and long-term potential of his digital marketing business, VaskMedia.

“The program was highly beneficial for me,” says Daniel, “because it gave me the mentorship and real-world experience that no textbook can teach. I feel that the utmost beneficial part of the Summer Company program is the exposure it has given me to real-world operations.”

Through trial and error (and many hours of mentorship) Daniel learned how to successfully market his services via email, and how to pitch in a first meeting. He notes that joining the Summer Company program will be a decision he'll look back on positively for years to come.

"This has been critical for me moving forward," he says. "The program has helped me to develop a solid foundation for the long-term growth of VaskMedia."

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Product-Service/VaskMedia-224408168305834/\)](https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Product-Service/VaskMedia-224408168305834/)

Meghan Duclos — Eggs Unlimited

Elgin-St. Thomas



The chickens came first

For Meghan Duclos, the chickens came before the eggs. Meghan had been raising chickens as a hobby when she heard about Summer Company, and decided to start selling her farm-fresh, pasture-raised eggs through Eggs Unlimited.

"The Summer Company program has been an absolutely fabulous experience from start to finish," says Meghan. "It's has been a huge part of my success. Every part of this program has been very helpful in preparing me for the business world. They gave me the guidance I needed to make a business plan, a marketing plan, and a budget. I've also learned many lessons that help me in everyday life."

Meghan credits the mentorship component of Summer Company as key to her success.

“The mentors have been a great support for my business, and provided great ideas,” she says. “Most importantly, they gave me the confidence and power that a new small business owner needs to continue in business.”

Sarah McGibbon — Sarah's Little Studio

Hamilton



A stationery business that's on the move

University student Sarah McGibbon had always wanted to work as an illustrator but was unsure how to start working freelance on her own, especially with no business background.

The coordinators and mentors in Summer Company showed her that running her own business is not as intimidating as she thought.

“They gave me advice and support,” says Sarah. “It was encouraging to be in a space with other students starting at the same place.”

Sarah's Little Studio is a shop for stationery items like greeting cards, art prints, original artwork, and stickers, featuring Sarah's unique painting and sketches. Sarah ran the business from her home, and products were shipped to the customer or available at booths at local art shows. During the summer, she collaborated with local stores to sell her artwork and other stationery items.

“The mentors and coordinators in Summer Company are truly passionate about what they do,” she says. “Their effort to give personal and specific advice and encouragement to me really made my business grow to what it is now. I will always be thankful for the community and support.”

<https://sarahslittlestudio.com/> (<https://sarahslittlestudio.com/>)

Zak Rahim — Oxford Consulting

London



Creating winning campaigns

As long as voters go to the polls to elect a new city council and provincial and federal governments, there will be opportunities for Western University economics student Zak Rahim. Oxford Consulting, his public affairs marketing consulting firm, uses the latest technology and techniques to enhance his client's chances of victory.

With the goal of providing the precise knowledge and support candidates need to win their races, Zak uses his experience in staffing campaigns at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. He understands what makes a winning campaign.

Oxford Consulting develops and applies strategic communications and campaign operation strategies to ensure victory for their clients. They use cutting edge technology to reach more voters in the most efficient manner, from mass email communication and NationBuilder software to spot surveys.

<https://nationbuilder.com/zakrahim> (<https://nationbuilder.com/zakrahim>)

Andrea Leslie — Sand & Cycles

Niagara Falls



Giving visitors a new view of the beach

Andrea Leslie operated a bicycle rental business in Crystal Beach that allowed her visitors to see Crystal Beach in a new and interesting perspective. Her business caters to the needs of all visitors, with different pricing packages serving a variety of clients.

Although there was no competition in the area, Sand & Cycles faced and overcame some challenges in the early stages. Andrea demonstrated the ability to take the advice given during Summer Company and use it to successfully launch and run her business.

“I enjoyed every aspect of the program,” she says.

Andrea is continuing to grow her business by featuring new packages on her website and spreading the word about Sand & Cycles through social media. Andrea is seeing the return on her investment, and says she’s looking forward to seeing where the business will take her next.

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/sandandcycles/>)

Arenn Osadzuk — Sugar and Ice

Owen Sound



Bringing back childhood memories

Owen Sound high school student Arenn Osadzuk had always dreamed of owning her own business. Once she heard about Summer Company, Arenn decided to make her dream a reality, and opened Sugar and Ice, a mobile business selling frozen treats along the Owen Sound waterfront.

The distinct sound of Arenn's bicycle bell quickly became familiar in Owen Sound during the summer of 2018. Arenn and her retro bike were also present at local festivals and events, including the Oliphant Regatta and the Make Waves Market.

"People in Owen Sound and the surrounding areas have been extremely supportive in the success of my business," says Arenn. "While I'm out with the bike, people come over to tell me childhood stories of the old 'Dickie Dee' bikes and of the fond memories my bike brings back."

Arenn says that Summer Company taught her many skills and it also showed her what she had to work on to become an accomplished entrepreneur.

"The generosity and support of the people in Owen Sound is amazing to see, and it's something I witnessed almost every day," says Arenn. "Starting my own business was and is a great experience, and

I hope to continue to grow Sugar and Ice's business in the next few years."

Matthew Hayter — Hayter Family Produce

Sarnia



Sweet corn stand serves campers' needs

Matthew Hayter has a passion for business at just 15 years of age, which isn't surprising for a student from a family of entrepreneurs. Spurred on by his background and elective courses at his high school, Matthew decided it was time to put his knowledge to work. He hit the ground running, thanks to the Summer Company program.

Matthew's produce stand specializes in sweet corn, a popular item with its location on travel routes frequented by campers. To add branding and credibility to his product, Matthew was also able to partner with Foodland

Ontario. As the local produce season wound down, Matthew was already talking about next summer's business. He's confident that the marketing and sales groundwork he established in 2018 will boost his brand even further next summer in Alvinston and the surrounding area.

Chance Mutuku — BBBBLANC*

St. Catharines



Creative services help clients connect with their customers

Chance Mutuku wanted to take his deep understanding of both traditional and contemporary culture and turn it into a full-time business. When he learned about the Summer Company program during a networking event at Brock University, BBBBLANC* was born.

BBBBLANC* is a design and creative-direction company, working partnerships with brands, freelancers and institutions. The company provides innovative design and creative services to help customers create strong emotional connections and cultural relativity with their target audiences.

Chance's goal is to connect with people of all backgrounds through his art, to help them understand the world around them and to show how art can be used to turn negatives into positives.

"This program helped me to learn more about entrepreneurship and to develop skills which are necessary to succeed as a business owner," says Chance. "Additionally, it allowed me to connect with like-minded individuals within our community, and helped cover business expenses, which will allow my company to grow and reach its highest potential."

<https://chancemutuku.com/> (<https://chancemutuku.com/>)

Ahmad Zaitoun — Cedar Detailing

Windsor



Flexible services create a competitive advantage

The Summer Company program has enabled Ahmad Zaitoun to give Windsor residents a unique service: mobile car detailing. Ahmad has a competitive advantage, as he is the only local detailer who offers both on-site and mobile detailing services. As he continued to refine his technique and develop a strong brand over the summer, Ahmad saw a steady increase in sales volume.

When the program started, Ahmad was a bit shy when speaking to prospective customers. To overcome this, he began to literally knock on doors to get his company known and explain his services. This approach helped him generate leads and provided a great opportunity to enhance his sales skills. His efforts paid off. Ahmad generated revenue during the summer and will continue with the business next year.

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/CedarDetailing>)

Emilia Quaggiotto — 4Paws 1Pup

Windsor





New skills provide confidence for success

As a very young 15-year-old entrepreneur, Emilia Quaggiotto wanted to ensure that she absorbed all the lessons and insight provided through the training and mentor meetings. She did just that with 4Paws 1Pup.

At the beginning of the program, Emilia wasn't completely comfortable selling her organic dog treats. To overcome this, she forged ahead and participated in vendor events and night markets. She had very positive feedback from dog owners purchasing her treats and grew her network in the community.

Emilia's perseverance generated over \$3,000 in sales over the summer, and other business owners have taken note. They are now buying her products for resale, and she has three businesses at four locations carrying her products this fall. By developing her business acumen, Emilia gained the confidence she needed to get out and sell her organic dog treats.

<https://www.4paws1pup.com/> (<https://www.4paws1pup.com/>)

Imaad Remtula — Barranco Handmade Furniture

Vaughan



Unique furniture meets client needs

Imaad Remtula has always had a passion for fine furniture and woodwork. He founded Barranco Handmade Furniture to create one-of-a kind, quality high quality pieces that impart a sense of exclusivity and pride of ownership.

His customers all agree: the Barranco pieces are stunning — from benches to shelves to chairs. Most of the items are custom orders, although Imaad does stock coffee tables, mirrors and coat racks. His customers love the fact that they acquire a unique piece of furniture that serves as a work of art, beyond simple functionality.

Imaad says that the Summer Company program helped him improve his time and money management skills, as well as his marketing acumen. He was surprised that marketing is a lot harder than he expected. Now in his final

year of high school, Imaad continues work on his business, and hopes to grow it and have employees working with him in the near future.

<https://www.barranco.ca/> (<https://www.barranco.ca/>)

Abigale Vollmershausen — Sparkle Princess Parties

Woodstock



Summer Company mentor helps princess

Abigale Vollmershausen was lucky enough to have a recent Summer Company participant as a mentor. At 15, Abigale was one of Summer Company's youngest participants.

"I had the privilege of having Sarah from Mrs. Sarah's Face Painting as a mentor this past year," says Abigale. "We both noticed that there was no princessing business around Woodstock. She knew all about the program. I've always been artsy, and loved music and working with kids, so it was a natural fit."

Abigale says that the \$1,500 start-up grant was very helpful, funding her costumes, glitter tattoo supplies, business insurance, and other supplies. Sparkle Princess Parties offered glitter tattoos, princess parties, and face painting.

"I didn't know much about running my own business or how to market or keep books, and now I have a much better understanding of all of it," she says. "My favourite part of the program was when my advisor set it up for me to go to the Woodstock farmers market as Princess Belle, doing glitter tattoos and autographs and advertising."

Abigale says she's very grateful for the support she received and says she "highly recommends" the program to anyone who wants to start their own business.

Lucas Moncada — Backyard Swim and Learn

Scarborough



Personalized swim lessons in a comfortable environment

Lucas Moncada had been working as a swim instructor for two years and saw the need for more personalized lessons in a comfortable environment. Lucas realized that the fear many children have of the water was magnified when they were in the chaotic environment of a public pool. His intuition has paid off.

Backyard Swim and Learn offers swim lessons at home pools, making the environment much more comfortable and controlled for the kids, from toddlers to teenagers. His personalized approach and safe environment has helped Backyard Swim and Learn blossom through word of mouth and referrals.

Lucas projected sales exceeded projections. Despite his early success, Lucas says he's committed to ensuring Backyard Swim and Learn doesn't lose its purpose: to provide children with a safe, comfortable environment, and teach essential pool and swimming skills.

<https://ca.linkedin.com/in/lucas-moncada-23b47b164> (<https://ca.linkedin.com/in/lucas-moncada-23b47b164>)

Eric Muellejans —Kumovate

Strathroy



Taking inspiration from injury

Saddled with a devastating football ankle injury when he was 16, Eric Muellejans was unable to walk, climb stairs, or leave the house.

“I was living in my basement for the entire summer of 2012,” he says. I’d have to find some ledge or chair or coffee table to elevate my foot on, and then somebody bumps it by accident and my foot falls off. This set my recovery back by weeks from re-injury.”

Eric soon realized there was no product available to solve his problem. He went on to solve it himself by developing an inflatable and adjustable leg elevation device from the confines of his bedroom. Last summer, prior to entering his final year as a commerce major at Ryerson University, Eric founded Kumovate to bring his product to market.

During the summer, Eric started accepting pre-orders for Kumovate and traveled to China to meet with suppliers. The mentorship and guidance provided by Summer Company helped him to accelerate the product development and marketing for his company. Eric is continuing to build connections with coaches and athletes to expand his network.

By the end of the summer, Eric was able to achieve over \$1,200 in device pre-orders through distributors and individual consumers. With this momentum created from the Summer Company program, Kumovate will be extending its operations in 2019 and will be hiring its first employee.

<https://kumovate.com/> (<https://kumovate.com/>)

Kaleb Dortono — Embold Films

St. Catharines



Growing the business through Summer Company

While starting a “No Name” version of Embold Films, Kaleb Dortono had shot a couple of weddings. He wanted to grow his business into more than just a “weekend warrior” stint — but he didn’t really know how to start the process.

Through a chance meeting with a former Summer Company student, Kaleb learned that the Summer Company program could prove to be very beneficial. The program paid off for him: he shot 10 weddings over the summer and doubled his projected sales figures.

“The Summer Company program really helped me focus more on my business and get a few key pieces of equipment to upgrade my services,” says Kaleb.

His dedication to his clients was another factor.

“We believe that a wedding is so much more than just an event,” says Kaleb. “It is the beginning of a new narrative — a virtue of love which binds people together in perfect unity. We believe that these stories are worth holding onto for generations.”

www.emboldfilms.com (<http://www.emboldfilms.com/>)

Summer company alumni

Blair McMillan — Golden Lake Rustics

Golden Lake



Adding new products means steady growth for Summer Company Blair took part in the Summer Company program in 2013, launching his woodworking business. More than five years later, Golden Lake Rustics (GLR) is building more and more rocking chairs, coffee tables, chairs, end tables, bar tops, stools and custom-built products.

Blair steadily built his customer base and expanded his business by adding woodworking equipment and enhancing his craft and business skills. He's added a variety of new products to offer customers more choice and boost repeat business.

In 2015, Blair was ready to expand Golden Rustics even further. He contacted Enterprise Renfrew County and enrolled in the Starter Company Program, where he received a grant to purchase new equipment and further business training.

Blair now has an enclosed trailer for deliveries that is also a true promotional vehicle and has built a work shed that lets him build furniture over the winter. The growth continues. Blair has a website for his business and uses Facebook and Instagram for promotion and to contact potential clients.

<https://www.goldenlakerustics.com/> (<https://www.goldenlakerustics.com/>)

Kerri Russell — Russell Aquatics

Markham



Summer swim school spawn's aquatic empire Kerri Russell signed up for Summer Company with the Markham Small Business Centre as a Grade 12 student in 2004. The \$3,000 grant and mentoring from local business people got her private swim school off to a strong start, and demand for her services grew quickly.

Kerri's success prompted her to continue operating Russell Aquatics each summer. As demand grew, she started renting hotel pools to provide swim programs year-round.

Last year, Kerri reached a milestone that's the dream of most entrepreneurs. She built her own aquatic facility in Markham (Russell Aquatics). Her company is now training some 1,500 students each week. She employs more than over 60 swim instructors and is already planning further expansion next year. Most of her instructors are former students and teach a full range of programs from Parent and Tot to Adult Swim and Aquafit.

<https://russellaquatics.com/> (<https://russellaquatics.com/>)

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