

## **GARNET Year-in-Review 2019-2020**

The GARNET program began in January 2020. This program was created to support the need for growth between young alumni and current students. The program provides a learning environment for career development and a way to reinforce the relationship between industry and academia.

Initially a few young alumni were contacted and invited to volunteer as mentors for a current student in the Department of Geological Sciences and Geological Engineering. Each prospective mentor was asked which area of interest they would be most comfortable speaking to a mentee about. The current fourth year students (GEOLSCI and GEOE) were invited to participate in this program. Each student completed a form outlining their first, second and third choice of their area of interest. After review of the participation applications, mentees were matched with a mentor that best suited their interest!

Young alumni had a tremendous willingness to support the GARNET program, and all were eager to be able to provide career advice to our current students. These alumni went above-and-beyond by reaching out to others in their year to see if they too would be willing to volunteer as mentors for the program. So many positive comments were made over the course of the term and some of these comments are reflected later in this newsletter.

### **General Program Comments**

- ❖ "I think this is a great program!"
- ❖ "As the result of my mentoring, I've gained the ability and confidence to give better advice."
- ❖ "GARNET provided a great opportunity to connect with current students and identify great potential talent for our company moving forward."
- ❖ "I wish GARNET existed when I was a student, as it provides a great opportunity to learn about industry in a less formal setting for students, it and provides great networking opportunities as well."

- ❖ "The mentor/mentee aspect is wonderful as it gives students a resource with boots on the ground in their chosen industry to answer questions."
- ❖ "The GARNET speaker series is a great way for students to get exposed to parts of opportunities they may not have even been aware of and learn what steps to take to get there."

### Mentee Comments

→N.L. "My mentor has been extremely kind and helpful to me so far, she has been understanding of my situation in being a new graduate seeking advice on how to enter the industry. She's gone above and beyond my expectations, including multiple phone calls, editing my resume, looking for job postings that may interest me, and offering personal advice and encouragement. I am extremely grateful to Larke for setting me up with such a kind mentor and to Meghan for everything she's done and is continuing to do for me."

→SS "What I appreciated most about the program was the honest evaluation of their careers and the advice received. Too often when speaking with people at career fairs or events (ex. PDAC), they simply relate any career advice back to the benefits of their own company. With the mentor signing up for the program, you know that they will offer you enough time to get some great insights for your career."

→MC - "GARNET was a fantastic opportunity to connect with a recent graduate to gain insight into the potential experiences that we have access to in undergrad, post-grad, and/or in our careers. It was a great resource to learn about different career types or positions, as well as develop communication and interpersonal skills. The mentorship provided me with a great opportunity to learn about my field of interest and what I can start doing while I'm a student to better prepare myself for graduation and beyond. The program provided me with an inside view of the industry which would not have been possible otherwise."

→ SK: "GARnet is the match dot.com of mentorship programs. By filling out a form with our career interests and goals, Larke is able to connect us with alumni who share those interests and have achieved those goals. GARnet provides students with the rare opportunity to connect with someone who was once in our exact position and is currently where we want to be in a few years.!"

→ “My mentor has been extremely kind and helpful to me so far, she has been understanding of my situation in being a new graduate seeking advice on how to enter the industry. She’s gone above and beyond my expectations, including multiple phone calls, editing my resume, looking for job postings that may interest me, and offering personal advice and encouragement. I am extremely grateful to Larke for setting me up with such a kind mentor and to Meghan for everything she’s done and is continuing to do for me.”

→ “This program has helped me develop business and communication skills that I can use starting my summer experience and career in the industry, thanks to my mentor and the support I’ve been able to get “

→ “The GARNET program was an awesome experience, connecting with a recent graduate provided me with an opportunity to learn what it is really like to transition from an undergraduate student to a working professional.”

→ “Not sure if this is really for a newsletter, but more of a general comment: What I appreciated most about the program was the honest evaluation of their careers and the advice received. Too often when speaking with people at career fairs or events (ex. PDAC), they simply relate any career advice back to the benefits of their own company. With the mentor signing up for the program, you know that they will offer you enough time to get some great insights for your career.”

### GARNET Speaker Series

In addition to the mentorship opportunity for alumni, within the GARNET program, we have introduced a Speaker Series featuring alumni talks. These talks are intended to cover a wide-range of topics. An example would be career development and the journey from an undergraduate student to a successful Geo-Alumnus!

In the 2020 academic year we were most pleased to welcome back the following alumni for presentations:



Alex Wood, Environmental Engineering  
Consultant



Loralyn Blondin, Knight Piésold



Dr. Jason Crowder and Chris Elvidge, co-founders of Grounded Engineering Inc.

- A presentation from a representative from Career Services was given to prepare students for PDAC

Unfortunately, with the disruption to the academic year due to COVID-19, further speakers and presentations were cancelled. Planning is underway for the GARNET speaker series to resume in Fall.

The GARNET program welcomes volunteers who would be willing to either visit the department and give a presentation on their company and career path or give a webinar presentation.

## *Looking Forward to 2020-2021*

### *Mentor-Mentee Program*

Plans for the 2020-2021 GARNET program now include expanding the mentor/mentee collaboration to include our third-year students. If any alumni are interested in becoming a mentor, please let Larke Zarichny know!

### *Garnet Speaker Series*

Since the Fall term will be delivered virtually, we will be reaching out to invite alumni to become involved in the speaker series. This will include webinars and virtual zoom talks! Please don't hesitate to contact Larke if you would be interested in becoming part of this program.

### *Career Symposium/showcase/ -- January 2021.*

The inaugural GARNET Career Showcase is in the planning stages for January 2021. It will be an opportunity to increase the awareness of our students to the broad variety of possible careers in their chosen field thus enabling them to make suitable career choices. As the GARNET program ramps back up in the fall we will be reaching out to our alumni for their input and participation in this event.

*GARNET - Building Connections, Guiding Futures*