

## **MBA Alumni Career Profile**

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**Tell your own story. Where were you in terms of your professional career, before you started the program? Where has the MBA taken you professionally?**

After completing undergraduate and graduate degrees in Biochemistry, I was working as a Research Associate with the Ontario Cancer Institute at Princess Margaret Hospital. I was looking for a way to transition out of a scientific research-based role, and wanted to explore different career options. The comprehensive Laurier MBA provided training in finance, accounting, marketing, operations and strategy, so I was able to build a diverse portfolio of skills desired by employers. At Laurier, students are able to tailor their degree to their needs. I took advantage of opportunities to explore the field of health policy through class projects, volunteer work and extracurricular activities. Through this experience, I graduated well prepared for a career in health policy with the Ontario Public Service.

**Please tell us about your organization, your current role and your motivation for getting involved.**

As a Policy Advisor with the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, I provide non-partisan advice to the government on key issues affecting Ontario's health care system. A career in the public service is very rewarding. My role in policy development allows me to make an impact and help improve the provincial health system. My work leads to meaningful changes in legislation and to the programs and services that are provided to Ontarians.

**Provide information about the types of skills, education and experience required to move into your career.**

The Ontario Public Service consists of a number of different Ministries focused on different areas, and so my colleagues possess education, training and work experience in a diverse range of fields. To be a successful Policy Advisor, you must have excellent research and analysis skills in order to gather and assess evidence to formulate feasible policy options and sound policy recommendations. You must also have excellent written and oral communication skills in order to effectively brief senior management and government officials. Strong partnership-building skills are also essential in order to facilitate productive stakeholder consultations and negotiations.

**Please discuss any future trends or future needs that you are aware of in your career area.**

Within the public service, there is an increasing emphasis on evidence-based decision-making, which ensures value-for-money and efficient use of public funds. People with strong analytical skills, and an understanding of financial analysis, are sought after for policy development roles. It is very important that Policy Advisors be able to develop a business case to inform policy decisions.

### **What Career Development did you engage in at Laurier during your studies?**

While completing my MBA, I took advantage of many services offered by the Laurier Career Development Centre. When considering potential career options, I used self-assessment tools, workshops and one-on-one career counselling to explore my interests and abilities. To learn about potential employers, I attended various information sessions and career events. While job hunting, I used Career Centre resources to craft my resumé and cover letter, and I met with career counsellors to receive individual feedback and assistance with interview preparation. All of these services were instrumental in helping me successfully market myself and gain employment in my career field.

### **How was networking a part of your career success and how does it continue to be important in the work you do?**

The Laurier MBA is a terrific venue to make contacts and network in different industries. During the program, I volunteered with the Ontario Public Health Association and completed a strategic consulting project with the Victorian Order of Nurses. This allowed me to start building a network within the health care sector. Not only did I gain new skills, but I made some valuable new contacts. Currently, I am able to draw on this network when I need advice or expertise, and it will also help support my career progression in the health policy field.

### **Any final advice for students interested in a career in your area?**

The classroom is only one part of your learning experience. Take the initiative to seek out unique experiences tailored to your interests and goals. Not only will this enhance your resumé, but you will build a network to launch your career. Take full advantage of the services that are available to you as a Laurier student. The Career Centre is one excellent resource for you to leverage!