

Volunteer Profile

Ian GlynWilliams, BSocSc, MBA

Ian GlynWilliams knows that one opportunity often leads to another. This is a lesson learned while participating in his varied volunteer work through his university and professional career. Ian's path has included a diverse range of activities that have led to his own personal and professional development. Recognizing what the immediate benefits would be, Ian took on roles knowing he would build skills and networks. But he discovered there were additional advantages as well. Read on to learn more about Ian's volunteer choices and the rewards he gained as a result.

While studying for his Bachelor degree in Ottawa, Ian chose to develop his skills through volunteer experiences that focused on student and electoral politics. In 2000, while Ian was pursuing his graduate degree from Wilfrid Laurier University, he again became involved in electoral politics as well as the environmental movement in the Greater Toronto Area. Ian considered a few factors when selecting his activities including his own talents, the needs of an organization, skill development and his own personal experiences with an organization. It is likely that these factors led to his decision to include additional volunteer work that involved speaking to prospective students of the Laurier MBA program. While on his educational path, Ian took advantage of the benefits of volunteering, including having the opportunity to apply learned theory, using leadership skills and gaining insight to community organizations.

Ian has continued to volunteer. His more recent experiences include taking on a role as a board member of the Canadian Cancer Society while also continuing his prior volunteer activities. All of these experiences have had an impact on his career development in areas such as building leadership skills and developing his listening and people skills. Ian has found this skill development to have a positive impact on his present career role as the Chief Capital Planner of the Facilities, Emergency Management and Security Branch of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Ian's volunteer activities have also led to his own personal development. In particular, he noted his progress in the ability to quickly understand and respond to complex situations. However, it is the appreciation and recognition he has received while participating in the various initiatives that has led to a growth in confidence. Ian also recognizes how he contributes to the community through his volunteering. He does this by working towards change while pursuing a goal of equal opportunity and social progress as well as acting as an advocate for the environment.

Ian would advise Laurier students to participate in volunteering as there are many benefits to doing so. For Ian it has given him the "ability to leverage a web of contacts within a larger sphere of influence" and for students, Ian 'would recommend a volunteer opportunity for anyone...any opportunity because one begets another.'