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New Grad Returns to Her Roots

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An extraordinary day

Convocation 2017

Ayla Andrus (Class of 2017)

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Cover photo: Class of 2017 grad Ayla Andrus at convocation on May 25

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Convocation 2017 18 This year's convocation ceremony was held on May 25 at the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall

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Class of 2017 grad Sheldon Jordan, co valedictorian of this year's convocation ceremony

Editor's letter



Convocation and conscious choices

My young son once asked me what my favorite thing about working at CCNM was. Without hesitation I answered: “Going to convocation every year.”

You might ask, why on earth would I choose that? Like most communicators, I have a soft spot for ceremony. But more importantly, convocation is a critical marker. It tells us that something important in a person's life has been achieved and that a new chapter in their personal journey is about to begin.

This year I attended three convocations in a three-week time span as members of my own family also graduated from university. All three convocations took place at very different institutions but there were so many commonalities: proud parents (and relieved ones!), joyous and supportive spouses, partners and friends, and a general tone of happiness throughout.

The other thing I love is listening to all the personal stories from both graduates and their families. What's particularly fun is hearing about their future plans, and the conscious choices they are making about life after graduation.

Choosing to return home

Ayla Andrus, of the Class of 2017, is a great example of these thoughtful graduates of ours. Reading her story, you will be struck by how much thought she has put in to life after graduation. Full of ideas and energy, Ayla is returning home to begin her life as an ND in Dawson Creek, British Columbia. You can read her story beginning on page 10.

Choosing to be an ND... and choosing Canada

Perhaps one of the most poignant moments at CCNM's convocation this year was the arrival of graduate Elena Erhan, who

rushed in after becoming a Canadian citizen moments before. Elena has made two conscious choices about her life: to become an ND and to become a Canadian citizen. That the celebration of her new degree and new citizenship happened on the same day at opposite ends of the city would have been difficult for some, but Elena chose to see the day as “beyond memorable.” Her story is on page 14.

Congratulations to all our graduates. We look forward to seeing where your journey takes you next!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simone', with a long, sweeping underline.

Simone Philogène
Editor in Chief



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Telling the story of naturopathic medicine's elders

How do we pass down knowledge from practitioners with decades of experience? Dr. Verna Hunt, BSc, DC, ND, shares how preserving the history of naturopathic medicine is crucial for future generations.



The Naturopathic Legacy Project, created in 2014 by Dr. Verna Hunt, DC, ND (Class of 1982), with administrative support from the OAND, is an ambitious mission which aims to compile practice knowledge from the profession's elders.



NATUROPATHIC LEGACY PROJECT

The Naturopathic Legacy Project is dedicated to preserving the roots of naturopathic medicine. Their mandate is to acquire, transfer and archive the naturopathic medical wisdom and knowledge of the profession's elders.

Filming naturopathic medicine

Through a series of hands-on workshops which are filmed and then housed on OAND's website, CCNM students and OAND members can learn from NDs who've been in practice for at least 20 years. In the future, these videos will be available to all licensed NDs nationally and world-wide. "We'd like to have – and keep – these videos online indefinitely. It's partly an experiment – can we do this? Can people actually learn from wherever they are?" she asks. Eventually, the next phase of the project will include archiving out-of-print books and writings and interviews with NDs about the evolution of their clinical practice and careers.

Verna was inspired to protect this vast wealth of information after her colleague and dear friend, Dr. Anton Ingard, DC, ND, passed away suddenly in 2012. A chiropractor since 1967 and an ND since 1981, Anton practiced at his integrative clinic in Penetanguishene, a small town in central Ontario.

"Anton was probably the best hands-on doctor I've ever met," Verna recalls. "Some of the best things we do as naturopathic doctors are with our hands. This is hard to document in a written way, but you can film it, and show how to position and do manual work."

Verna will be recording the final of four videos in the fall – the summary session of the naturopathic new patient exam, to be filmed in a CCNM classroom. For those wanting to attend contact naturopathiclegacy@gmail.com.

She is also motivated by a more basic human desire – storytelling. She describes it as one of the best ways to teach a person because they invoke the senses, emotions, and imagination. Most importantly, for the future of NDs and naturopathic medicine, stories provide a common heritage and a connection to the past.

"I've met many young practitioners who are interested in this historical project. It takes years and years to accumulate the knowledge that we have and they're determined and passionate to retain and learn from the history." Many of these younger NDs volunteer on the Naturopathic Legacy Committee.

Verna's own knowledge spans 38 years. While maintaining both her DC and ND licenses, she says she keeps separate patient files and malpractice insurance as the law requires. She is glad she went ahead and became an ND.



“I became a chiropractor in 1979 but soon realized I needed a larger scope of practice. We have many more modalities as NDs. Even now, a lot of chiropractors ask me about being an ND and the naturopathic program,” she says.

She has also worked with the federal and provincial naturopathic associations to promote the profession. The biggest change she has witnessed is the way many new graduates have not been taught and mentored how to incorporate the six principles of Naturopathic Medicine using practical modalities.

“There is so much more hands-on, mind-body work that people don’t incorporate in their practice,” Verna explains. “It is

important for NDs to focus on modalities that they feel works best in their practice and hands-on therapy is an essential part of personal and directive health care.”

At her private practice, The Centre for Health and Wellbeing, Verna doesn’t have a specialty related to diseases but helps any human being optimize their health on all levels. She helps anyone who walks through her door – whether they are newborns, the elderly, athletes, or people with disabilities. She sees patients three days a week.

“I’m interested in human beings. You’re not your headaches or your pimples – health care is about you and your health on all levels. I’ll refer if another practitioner has more experience or is better able to handle

“I’ve met many young practitioners who are interested in this historical project. It takes years and years to accumulate the knowledge that we have and they’re determined and passionate to retain and learn from the history.”

Dr. Verna Hunt, DC, ND (Class of 1982)



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the health concern because it all comes back to what is best for the patient. The more I refer the more referrals I get from patients and other professionals,” she says.

Verna also conducts seminars and writes about health-care topics through her health care educational business, Being Well Communications.

The Naturopathic Legacy Project is self-funding and all committee members are volunteers. Verna encourages any NDs interested in carrying forward the knowledge and wisdom within the profession to get involved even by volunteering to be interviewed.

“If I created fire or the world’s best apple pie and the knowledge died with me, where would that leave you?” she says. “We must pass on the knowledge so that we don’t lose it. When NDs know the six principles of NM and how to apply them they will have surety in their clinical methods.”

Learn more about Verna:

healthandwellbeing.info

beingwellcommunications.com

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ACCESS TO WORKSHOPS

OAND members and CCNM students have FREE access to NLP recorded workshops. Login to the OAND members page and explore the OAND Legacy Project Videos under the "Events and Education" tab in the Membership section. Learn, pause, and revisit the workshops at your convenience.



VIEW PAST INTERVIEWS

NLP Elder Practice Interview Series are released biweekly on our Facebook page. Like and follow @NaturopathicLegacyProject to see past interviews with practitioners like Dr. John Bender, ND, Dr. Scott Clack, ND, Dr. Iva Lloyd, ND, and more.

Do you have a passion for preserving naturopathic knowledge?

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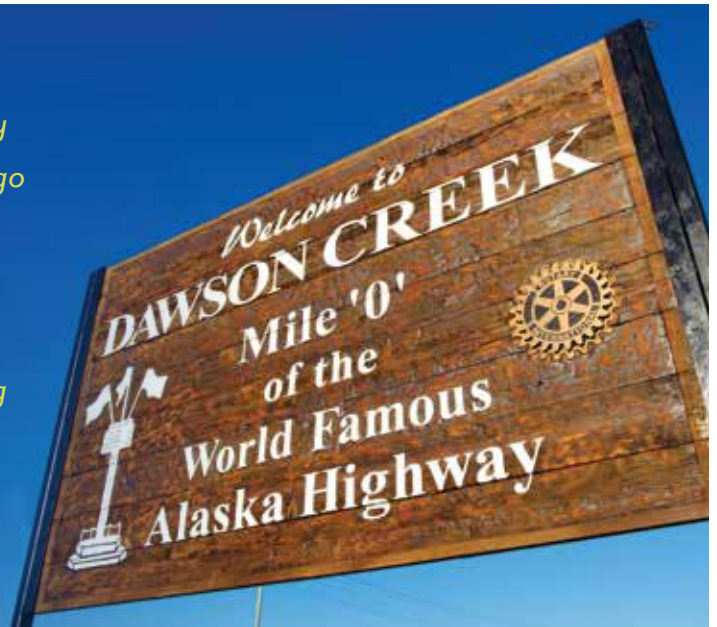
A new grad takes the plunge

Dawson Creek, BC native
Ayla Andrus (Class of 2017)
is returning home to
practise naturopathic medicine



“There’s actually a huge space in the community for naturopathic medicine. Whenever I would go home to Dawson Creek I always got asked, ‘When are you going to open your practice?’ There are chiropractors, physiotherapists and acupuncturists, but the NDs are in surrounding towns. People drive an hour just to see them.”

Ayla Andrus (Class of 2017)



A turn toward naturopathic medicine

Class of 2017 graduate Ayla Andrus can barely contain her excitement.

She just graduated from the program, for one thing. After intending to become a pharmacist – even working at a pharmacy for five years as a teenager – her plan gradually took a U-turn at the end of her first year at the University of Saskatchewan. “I realized it was not the right fit – I wasn’t enjoying what I was doing,” she says. “I talked to some NDs and thought naturopathic medicine would be better for me, so I changed everything. I ended up majoring in anatomy and cell biology, which was the perfect fit coming into CCNM because it gave me a solid scientific background.”

Ayla had never stepped foot anywhere east of Saskatchewan before she arrived in Toronto (her initial interview was done over Skype). She hails from Dawson Creek, BC, a small town of roughly 13,000 people. Located near the Alberta border, at the foot of Bear Mountain ridge and in the southwestern part of the Peace River Country, it’s often called “Capital of the Peace” because it’s the seat of the Peace River Regional District.

“The next major town is 45 minutes away; the next one after that is 90 minutes. There are lots of smaller communities in between. It’s the type of place where you’ll always run into people you know at the grocery store,” she says.

Dawson Creek is also a popular tourist destination, due to its position as Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway, and home to a number of oil and natural gas companies. While the presence of these industries attracts people from all over the country, the town lacks health-care professionals.

“People have to travel to see a specialist or get surgery,” she explains. “There’s actually a huge space in the community for naturopathic medicine. Whenever I would go home I always got asked, ‘When are you going to open your practice?’ There are chiropractors, physiotherapists and acupuncturists, but the NDs are in surrounding towns. People drive an hour just to see them.”



Ayla Andrus at home in Dawson Creek



Dawson Creek, BC, has roughly

13,000

people and is located near the Alberta border, at the foot of Bear Mountain ridge in the southwestern part of the Peace River Country.

She hopes her new practice, Oak Naturopathic Clinic, will fill the health-care gaps in the area. There's already a long list of people who can't wait for it to open – in fact, her friends and family were so thrilled when she set up her website that she received over 100 shares on Facebook the first day it went live.

"It was never my intention to open up my own practice; I always thought I'd join someone else's," she reveals. "But over the last six months I had a lot of discussions with people, and after thinking about it I realized I have unconditional support to follow through. It would be a very different experience without my loved ones. Everyone has been so supportive!"

Ayla has more big plans for the future, too. Not only is she about to open her own clinical practice, she wants to incorporate technology in a way no other ND has done before. Her boyfriend, Gordon, builds and works with artificial intelligence and together they want to create a tool that NDs

can use in their practice. Technology is the way of the future, Ayla says, and she wants to be a part of it.

"There is no harm in using technological tools to help us practice better," she states. "We'll never replace the human connections that NDs offer but there's a huge opportunity for diagnostic testing and seeing where it goes. The clinic part is amazing, of course, and the technology part is the future."

Sometime in the winter, after completing her board and licensing exams, she expects to open her clinic surrounded by the people who are closest to her. Coming to CCNM was a journey in every possible sense – the four years she spent at CCNM changed her life. And although Ayla's CCNM journey has come to an end, a new one awaits back home. *

[Learn more about Ayla:](#)
aylaandrus.com



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Graduate... and citizen

Fifteen minutes with Elena Erhan
as the Class of 2017 grad tells
us about her extraordinary day



“On May 25, 2017 I became both a Canadian citizen and a naturopathic doctor. After working towards these goals for four years, achieving both of them on the same day was an outstanding reward. These two major events crowned, within a few hours, my successful journey.”

Elena Erhan (Class of 2017)



Q When you woke up on May 25, the day of your convocation and Canadian citizenship ceremony, how did you feel and what were your first thoughts?

A – May 25, 2017 is a day that will be forever engraved in my memory. On this day I became a Canadian citizen and received my Doctor of Naturopathy degree. When I woke up in the morning I was very excited, but also nervous. I had spent the whole night tossing and turning in bed worrying, wondering if I would be able to make it to convocation in time. Convocation was scheduled to start at 1:30 p.m. at Convocation Hall, but my citizenship ceremony wouldn't be over until around 2 p.m. in Mississauga.

I got out of bed and started getting ready. Soon, our family friends Elena and Garry, who willingly and happily accepted the challenge of chauffeuring me and my family, showed up with gifts and flowers. Along with my mom and brother, we all jumped in their car. It was pouring buckets outside, with dark sheets of rain, making the traffic very slow. Elena hugged and reassured me, “Don't worry, we'll make it happen!”

Q Walk us through your citizenship ceremony and highlight what you liked the most about it. When it ended, how did you feel as a new citizen of Canada?

A – The citizenship ceremony was held at the Mississauga Immigration Centre and started at 12 p.m. The courthouse was packed with people from all over the world. The ceremony started with a judge giving a speech, and then we all took an oath swearing fealty to Canada and promising to abide by the laws of the land. After signing our oaths, the new Canadians were invited on stage to shake the judge's hand and receive our certificates of citizenship. I remember my eyes were tearing when we all sang “O Canada.” In that moment, 200 people became part of the big Canadian family.

I was born in Moldova, a country that gave me a solid education and an understanding of what I want and where I am going. I felt so proud to finally have an official document attesting of my new home and to my personal allegiance. I feel like I belong here. Words cannot express how grateful I am to be living in a beautiful country that gives everyone a chance, regardless of their skin colour, political or religious affiliation, personal convictions, or sexual orientation.

Q Describe the journey of getting from the ceremony to Convocation Hall.

A – The citizenship ceremony ended at 2 p.m. and suddenly the hope of making it to convocation before it ended became a real possibility. I just wanted to run to the Hall through the rain. Even the thought of getting my hair wet became secondary. I ditched the photo session with the citizenship judge and jumped in the car.

The traffic was heavy, the rain was pouring the whole way, and I was checking the time every single minute. Karam Singh, Manager, Marketing & Communications, was constantly in touch with me. There were moments when I felt that she was more worried than I was that I would miss convocation. The tension was building and constant, and the traffic was getting worse by the minute; it felt like an eternity, but finally we made it to Convocation Hall at 3:30 p.m.



Elena with her mother Stela at the citizenship ceremony

Q Once you arrived, what was it like to walk across the stage and receive your Doctor of Naturopathy degree?

A – Karam was waiting for me at the door with the gown and I put it on quickly. Convocation was almost ending when Karam waved at Dr. Leslie Solomonian, ND, and said, “She’s here!” It was a very emotional moment for me when Dr. Solomonian in tears invited me on stage. The audience was cheering. I walked up with a lot of pride that I was receiving my second degree, and as a Canadian citizen.

Q How did you celebrate your achievements?

A – After convocation, my family, friends and I all went to a restaurant not far from Convocation Hall. We had a great time enjoying each other’s company and reminiscing about the last four years. I could not have done it without all of their help and support so it was only fitting that we celebrated these once-in-a-lifetime accomplishments together.

Q After becoming a Canadian citizen and an ND, describe your sense of accomplishment and how you ended your day.

A – This day was beyond memorable. I was overwhelmed with joy and happiness. On the same day, I had become both a Canadian citizen and a naturopathic doctor. After working towards these goals for four years, achieving both of them on the same day was an outstanding reward. These two major events crowned, within a few hours, my successful journey. *

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Convocation 2017

The inspiring words we hear at convocation remind us of why we devote four years of our life to study, learn, and teach naturopathic medicine. The passion that brings people to this approach to health care, as practitioners and patients, is reignited and burns powerfully. And the knowledge that the future of the profession is in the capable hands of graduates who are intelligent, optimistic, strong, and focused is reaffirmed.

Both Bob Bernhardt, in his president's address, and honorary degree recipient Dr. Barb Weiss, ND, in her convocation address, touch on these thoughts and so much more.

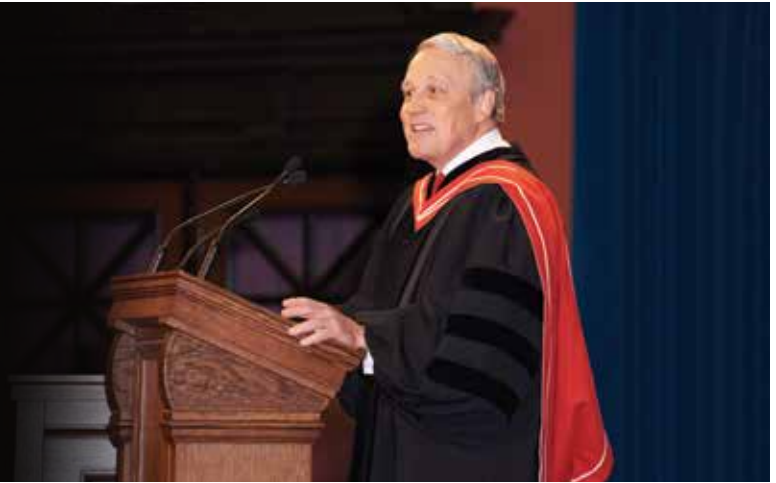
The following are excerpts from their speeches.



ALL ABOUT BEGINNINGS

“This is a new beginning, and you are, and will be, an integral part of the change that is unfolding.”

Bob Bernhardt, PhD, President/CEO



Convocation? It is a strange term for what today represents. It refers to a calling together of people for some important purpose. That does apply to today's event – and yet it is really so much more.

Many of you may have referred to today as graduation. To graduate means to step towards something that seems to be getting closer. Many high schools refer to their celebrations as commencement – meaning to begin, or start. I believe today is a true commencement.

The 135 graduates who are gowned before you are **beginning** their careers as naturopathic doctors. They are joining the 2,500 graduates of CCNM who are beginning to change health care in North America.

They are involved in research that is **beginning** to make an overwhelming case for why we should make better use of naturopathic medicine in our health care. The evidence is appearing in journals such as the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, *PLOS One*, *Journal of Integrative Cancer Therapies*, and the *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, to name a few.

We are **beginning** to see important shifts in health care. Changing demographics are switching the greatest health care needs from acute care for the young, something hospitals are very good at, to chronic care for the not-so-young.

A research project that is **beginning** in Ottawa is looking at adjunctive care for pediatric oncology patients. This is being conducted with CHEO, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

We are also **beginning** to develop the evidence that there is a strong economic case for adopting more naturopathic care.

We are **beginning** to see the acceptance of naturopathic medicine by the broader health-care sector. We are working on conducting research or providing care with The Ottawa Hospital, Bruyère Hospital – Palliative Care Team, the Canadian Association of Psycho Social Oncology, the Canadian Cancer Society, and the Cancer Knowledge Network – to name only a few of many.

I believe that we are **beginning** to see that the extensive learning of the individuals who are gowned before you will be more widely recognized and appreciated. The increasing number of provinces and states regulating naturopathic medicine suggests this is happening.

I am **beginning** to see greater integration of practice between conventional and naturopathic medicine. Today's graduates include members of the third cohort of our international medical graduate program stream. These grads received their initial medical training in places as diverse as Iran,

Senegal, India, China, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Morocco, and Peru, with specialties such as orthopedics, surgery, dermatology, and psychology.

I believe health care is **beginning** to focus on health, rather than just illness.

And through a ceremony in Mississauga earlier today, one of our graduates is becoming a Canadian citizen.

I hope that you too see this as a commencement – the commencement of a bright future for the graduates before you, the commencement of the best years for the naturopathic profession, and the commencement of improved health care in North America as a result of the contributions of naturopathic doctors.

Congratulations, Class of 2017! The faculty and staff of CCNM are delighted to have had the opportunity to know you, we are very proud of you, and we believe that you hold the potential to profoundly change the future of health care. This is a new **beginning**, and you are, and will be, an integral part of the change that is unfolding.

CONVOCATION 2017





ALWAYS REMEMBER WHAT IGNITED YOUR PASSION

“Remember why YOU became a naturopathic doctor – what ignited your passion – everyone has their story.”

Dr. Barb Weiss, ND, honorary degree recipient, 2017



You have become a family – you have spent the last four years of your life with people who share similar views of health and healing and who speak a common language. It is difficult to describe the experience but I liken it to a rite of passage. You enter the school as one person and throughout your four years you experience such tremendous personal growth and knowledge you emerge as a different person.

We all come to naturopathic medicine for different reasons. I was drawn to naturopathic medicine while immersed in the business world. I had a very unhealthy work-life balance. After sharing some health issues with a colleague she suggested I make an appointment with a doctor by the name of Xialan Zhao, a western trained medical doctor who was also trained in traditional Chinese medicine. With my first visit, she was able to tell more about my health history from my tongue and pulse diagnosis than any other doctor or specialist was able to infer from my intake. I was awestruck.

After a series of acupuncture treatments and a few different decoctions of some eastern herbs my health issues resolved and I found myself with a desire to learn more about this approach to medicine. This approach to healing made a great deal of sense to me. Instead of identifying a pathology and trying to rid the body of it, naturopathic medicine sees illness as a process or a pattern of disharmony and **our** role is to **restore** and **support** the powerful and inherent healing ability of the body.

I bring this up as I feel it is important for you to always remember why **YOU** became a naturopathic doctor – what ignited **your** **passion** – everyone has their story. Yours may be similar to mine in that you may have discovered naturopathic medicine through a personal health experience – either yourself a family member or a friend. Perhaps the principles of naturopathic medicine resonated strongly with you. Remember that you are here today because you want to make a difference in people's lives.

People are looking for a solution to their health concerns. People are looking for doctors that are trained to find the root cause. They are not looking for more pharmaceuticals or to see another specialist. They want answers on how to restore health. If you stay true to the tenets of naturopathic medicine you will **succeed** in practice.

Not everyone understands what naturopathic medicine is or what it is that we do. I urge you to get out into your communities and educate, get involved with the profession, with government, with policy makers; become educators in medical schools and be a driver for change and let your clinical successes be your marketing.

To the graduating class of 2017, I wish you much success and look forward to where you will take us. Always remember what ignited your passion and keep it alive! *

Honorary doctor degree recipient 2017

Dr. Barb Weiss, ND
(Class of 2006)

After a 16-year career in business and marketing, Dr. Barb Weiss, ND, made the life-changing decision to become a naturopathic doctor. Since the beginning of her journey, her dedication and advocacy on behalf of CCNM has made a lasting impact on the College and profession. She is a former Student Governor on the Board of Governors and later joined the Board as a professional member, serving for almost a decade. She was the first female ND to act as Chair of the Board of Governors. She is a member of CCNM's Program Advisory Committee and is a director for the Ottawa Integrative Cancer Centre Foundation, CCNM Press and CCNM Enterprise.



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References: 1. Biol Pharm Bull. 2011;34(5):660-5;
2. Cancer Chemother Pharmacol. 2012 Jan;69(1):65-70;
3. J Nutr Sci Vitaminol (Tokyo). 2015;61(1):37-44.

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The best of both worlds

**Dr. Mary Sawdon, ND
(Class of 2016), explains
how integrating her
medical degree with
naturopathic medicine has
made her a better doctor**



When her kindergarten classmates were dreaming about being astronauts or princesses, Mary Sawdon already knew she was going to be a doctor. She doesn't remember wanting to grow up to be anything else. "I never had an existential crisis in high school or university about what I wanted to do with my life. I was absolutely sure to the core of my being that I was meant to help people by healing them."

Dr. Mary Sawdon, ND (Class of 2016)



Dr. Mary Sawdon, ND, studied medicine at the University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Centre in Quezon City, Philippines.

This certainty led to her to graduate with honours from the University of the Philippines with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and then study medicine at the University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Centre. Shortly after graduating, Mary completed a medical internship and worked as a general practitioner at an integrative clinic in Manila.

Mary's first introduction to naturopathic medicine actually came during her medical studies.

"When I was in medical school, we had one class on alternative medicine. I remember it introduced us to the theory of acupuncture and botanical medicine. I thought it was somewhat interesting at the time."

After moving to Canada to pursue a family medicine residency, Mary was reminded of that class when she attended the Internationally Educated Professionals (IEP) Conference where CCNM's dean Dr. Nick De Groot, ND, was speaking.

"I remember Dean De Groot was part of a panel and he spoke about naturopathic medicine and the launch of the school's first two-year IMG bridging program. I was immediately intrigued. I did more research into naturopathic medicine and decided to apply for the IMG bridge delivery," she explains.

In what can only be described as a full circle moment, Mary was part of the Successful IEPs Panel at this year's IEP Conference held in March.

A clear path to healing

According to Mary, the IMG bridge delivery came at exactly the right time in her life.

"I was in a learning mindset. I knew when I left my practice in the Philippines that I wanted further training. CCNM provided that and more. It was a challenging and demanding program, but I had incredible classmates to lean on.

"Being an intern at the RSNC and at Sherbourne really cemented in me that this was the path that I was meant to take. It just felt so right."

“I was in a learning mindset. I knew when I left my practice in the Philippines that I wanted further training. CCNM provided that and more. It was a challenging and demanding program, but I had incredible classmates to lean on.”

Dr. Mary Sawdon, ND (Class of 2016)



Dr. Mary Sawdon, ND, was part of the Successful IEPs Panel at this year's IEP Conference held in March, 2017.

Mary currently practises at Brown and Brown Family Chiropractic Centre, a multidisciplinary clinic in Newcastle, Ontario. Having also practised in Toronto, she says the transition to a smaller city hasn't been as difficult as she expected.

“I have found it much easier to grow my practice in a smaller community through in house referrals from the chiropractors that I work with, word of mouth, and Facebook. I also contribute an article to one of the local magazines. My colleagues and local Business Improvement Association (BIA) members have been very welcoming and supportive of my endeavours. It's been easier to network and establish a good relationship with the community.”

There are still challenges to overcome however; many people are not familiar with what naturopathic medicine is, have never seen a naturopathic doctor before and/or don't know what NDs can do. Mary offers complimentary 15 minute consultations which she says are key to introduce patients to naturopathic medicine and how it can impact their health.

Another huge drawback is the lack of available resources for patients in the community.

“There are no health food stores in town. If I send my patients for a blood draw, the nearest Lifelabs or compounding pharmacy are in Bowmanville. Accessibility to these added services can be a challenge for patients.”



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Dr. Mary Sawdon, ND, sees a patient in her private practice in Newcastle, Ontario

Achieving true healing

Graduating from the IMG bridge delivery not only helped Mary establish her career in Canada, it also redefined what health and healing mean to her.

“Naturopathic medicine has broadened my understanding of health and opened my eyes to other ways to achieve true healing: not just suppression or treatment of symptoms, but treating each person as a whole. As a medical doctor, I had two main treatment options—pharmaceutical medications and surgery. But as a naturopathic doctor, I have quite a number of modalities that I can use to address the root cause of my patient’s ailments. I have learned to trust the body’s own innate ability to heal itself, as well as in nature’s ability to heal us,” she says.

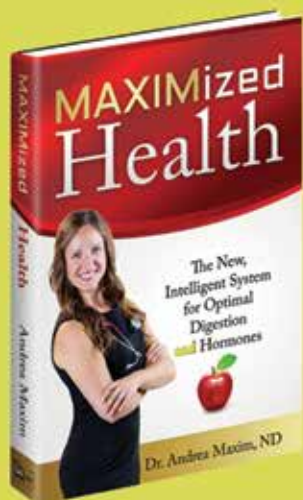
Mary says integrating naturopathic medicine with her medical degree has definitely made her a better doctor and primary care provider. With only one medical clinic in Newcastle, she is able to put both disciplines to use and treat patients who don’t have access to a family doctor.

“Establishing a diagnosis through a focused history and physical exam and through diagnostic testing are skills that have been honed by my medical training. Treating each patient, as a whole, employing the use of naturopathic principles and treating them through various naturopathic modalities are skills that I have learned through CCNM.” *

Building a practice and brand that is unique to you

Class of 2011 grad
Dr. Andrea Maxim, ND,
on maximizing success





“My objective is to move people from a starting place to an end place – and in this case, from disease to health. For me, that’s the Maxim Movement.”

Dr. Andrea Maxim, ND (Class of 2011)

Moving patients into health

In her third year of business, during a long drive from CCNM back to her practice in Caledon, Ontario, Dr. Andrea Maxim, ND, was struck with a lightning bolt of inspiration.

“Why am I not using my last name as a marketing tool?” the Class of 2011 grad thought. “My objective is to move people from a starting place to an end place – and in this case, from disease to health. For me, that’s the Maxim Movement.”

And so the Maxim Movement – along with its newest branches *MAXIMized Health* (her book) and *MAXIMIZE your Practice* (her podcast series for NDs) – was born. For Andrea, it’s an authentic expression of what she offers. From a branding perspective, it’s catchy, memorable, and rather clever. For patients (over 200 to date), it’s a lifeline – an easy to follow, health and wellness program with Andrea’s full support and guidance.

She calls the movement all encompassing – it’s not about speed necessarily, but about getting patients on board first.

“The best analogy I’ve been given is that people are drowning and praying that you’ll help them. Patients don’t care if you show up in a yacht or a rowboat. Just get to them and take action,” she says.

Channeling a singular drive into success

From a young age, Andrea’s drive and goal-oriented nature produced results. As a 13-year-old teenager struggling with her weight, Andrea took it upon herself to change her lifestyle and eating habits. When she discovered naturopathic medicine as an undergrad at McMaster University, she applied to CCNM – the only school she was interested in going to – and never looked back.

And after she graduated from CCNM, she focused all of her energy into building her practice, learning how to do it all on her own.





ANDREA'S TOP TIPS FOR NEW GRADS

Remember, you're in it for the long haul.

Although the time and effort she puts into running her clinic has significantly reduced, Andrea says the hard work doesn't really pay off until about the five-year mark. "You'll be doing this for 10-20 years, not just to survive for a year or two. Don't be frustrated that you're not fully booked with patients. Go with the mindset that everything you do will help your business grow."

Mimic what successful people are doing.

Established NDs have their own style from which grads can learn. "Watch what other grads are doing until you become comfortable with how you want to treat patients and run a business. What they're doing is consistent and they've been doing it for a lot longer than you have. I've spent more time learning business than health since graduating."

Attend webinars and naturopathic conferences, and attend them often.

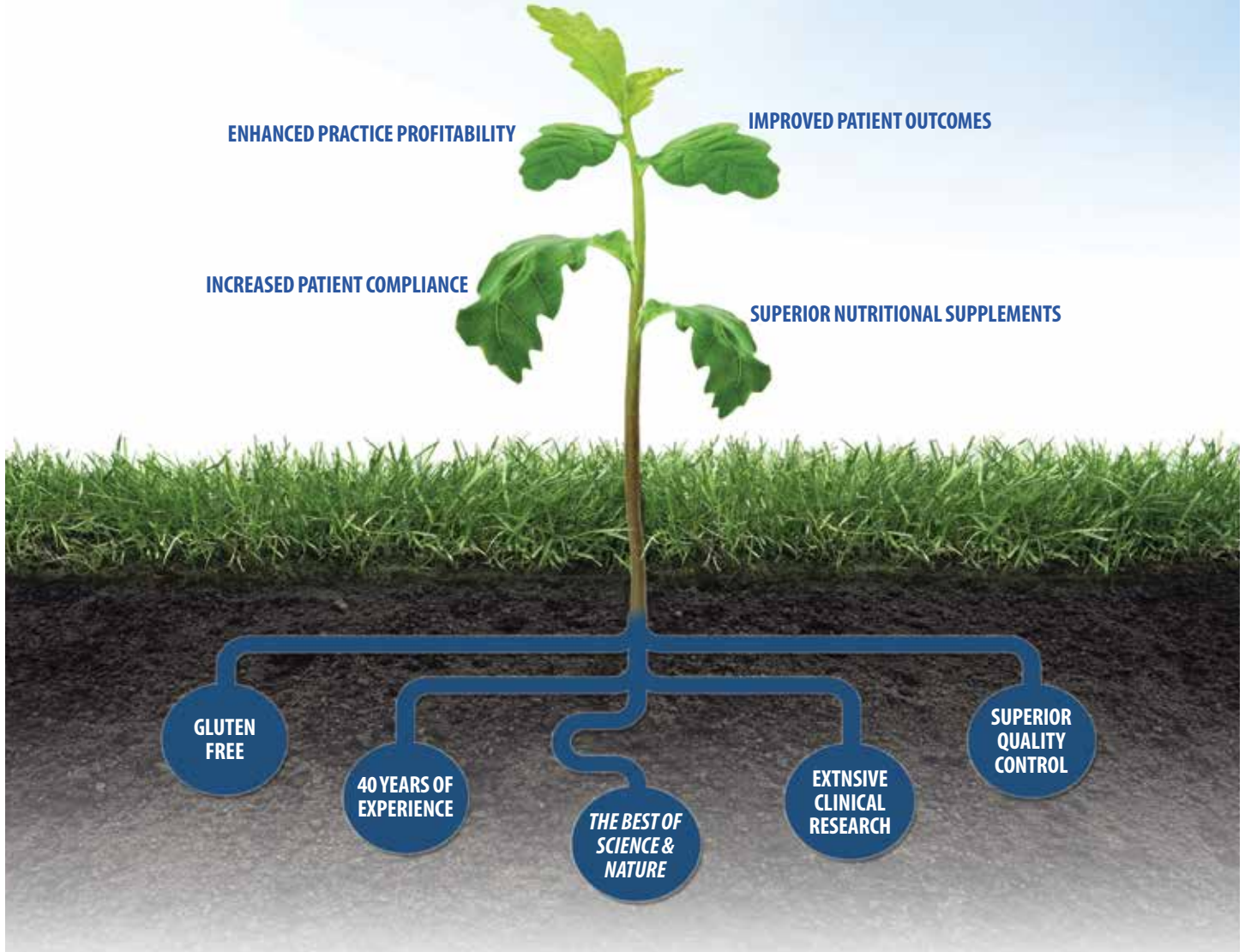
It's important to learn how others practise and manage their business. Don't be afraid of doing something that others have done because eventually you'll create your own individual routine. "Going to conferences is what got me started. I listen to what people say and pay attention to how they say it," she states.

Take the perfectionism out of creating.

Don't expect to suddenly become an expert on creative web copy, building a website, accounting, and technology. It won't be perfect, but it will evolve. "The first few years are crucial because you are building a foundation. The idea that we expect magic overnight is unfortunate because it won't happen," she says. Instead of feeling discouraged, funnel energy into fostering your patient base, taking courses (business and continuing education), and finding a mentor to coach you.



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Dr. Andrea Maxim, ND, poses with Brooklyn, her 6-month-old baby.

“The transition between student to practice owner is a big one,” she explains. “In the beginning, I put the majority of my time into being a business owner because we already learned how to treat patients at the College. Since I put so much effort into the clinic early on, it’s running more on auto-pilot now.”

Her business philosophy is simple and effective – excellent customer service and following up with patients are the keys to running a successful practice. Andrea ensures that she’s available to patients whenever they have a concern and even delivers supplements to them directly so that they’re following the protocol.

“We try to get everything as automated as possible,” she adds. “No patient ever leaves my clinic without an appointment booked or a task. I’ve trained myself and my receptionists to be this way. People will never remember you unless you’re fully transparent and invested in their health.”

Booking time for practise – and everything else

Andrea’s life is about to become busier with the launch of Maximize your Clinic, an online course that outlines how to start, build, and systemize clinical practice. She also offers one-on-one coaching services that she slots into her schedule four days a week. In addition to running three practices

(in Caledon, Hamilton, and Burlington), she is also a mom to 6-month-old Brooklyn and 2-year-old Aria. But Andrea eschews the word “balance,” instead choosing to divide her work and personal time into separate blocks.

“When I’m at work, I work. When I’m at home, I am there for my family. I think it’s unproductive to be everything all the time. I don’t have a fully booked practice on purpose so that I have time to work, coach, record podcasts, and see patients,” she says. “I believe very strongly that you must create your own schedule so that no one takes your time away from you.”

While Andrea is enjoying the fruits of her labour, she’s the first one to say that hard work, sheer determination, and a willingness to learn are fundamental for success. Her business model, which started with designing a simple website and making YouTube videos with no previous experience, has transformed into one that is truly her identity. What will yours be? *

Learn more about Andrea:

themaximmovement.com

maximizedbusiness.ca

 [/themaximmovement](https://www.facebook.com/themaximmovement)

 [/AndreaMaximND](https://www.instagram.com/AndreaMaximND)

“No patient ever leaves my clinic without an appointment booked or a task. I’ve trained myself and my receptionists to be this way. People will never remember you unless you’re fully transparent and invested in their health.”

Dr. Andrea Maxim, ND (Class of 2011)



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- **Ascophyllum nodosum is Kelp**, a brown seaweed containing a good amount of iodine as well as essential vitamins and phytonutrients. Kelp is known for its abundance of trace minerals. Iodine-rich kelp acts as a natural supplement for weight loss and obesity. Because iodine stimulates the thyroid function, it may increase the rate at which the body uses energy, thus reducing fat deposits. For this reason, kelp has a long history as a remedy to reduce cellulite.
- **Garcinia cambogia** is a tropical fruit native to Southeast Asia that contains a number of compounds that may have some health benefits. One compound, hydroxycitric acid (HCA), has been studied for weight control. The calcium salt of HCA extracted from the Garcinia cambogia fruit is a standardized extract to contain a minimum of 50 percent HCA. This extract has been used to suppress appetite and thus supports weight loss management.
- **Panax ginseng quinquefolius** may boost the immune system, function as an antioxidant, benefit inflammatory conditions, and act as a stress tonic. Ginseng is traditionally reputed to regularize bodily functions and relieve many ailments resulting from physiological stress. As an adaptogen, ginseng exhibits anti-fatigue, anti-stress, and anti-

aging activity, as well as general improvement of mental and physical performance.

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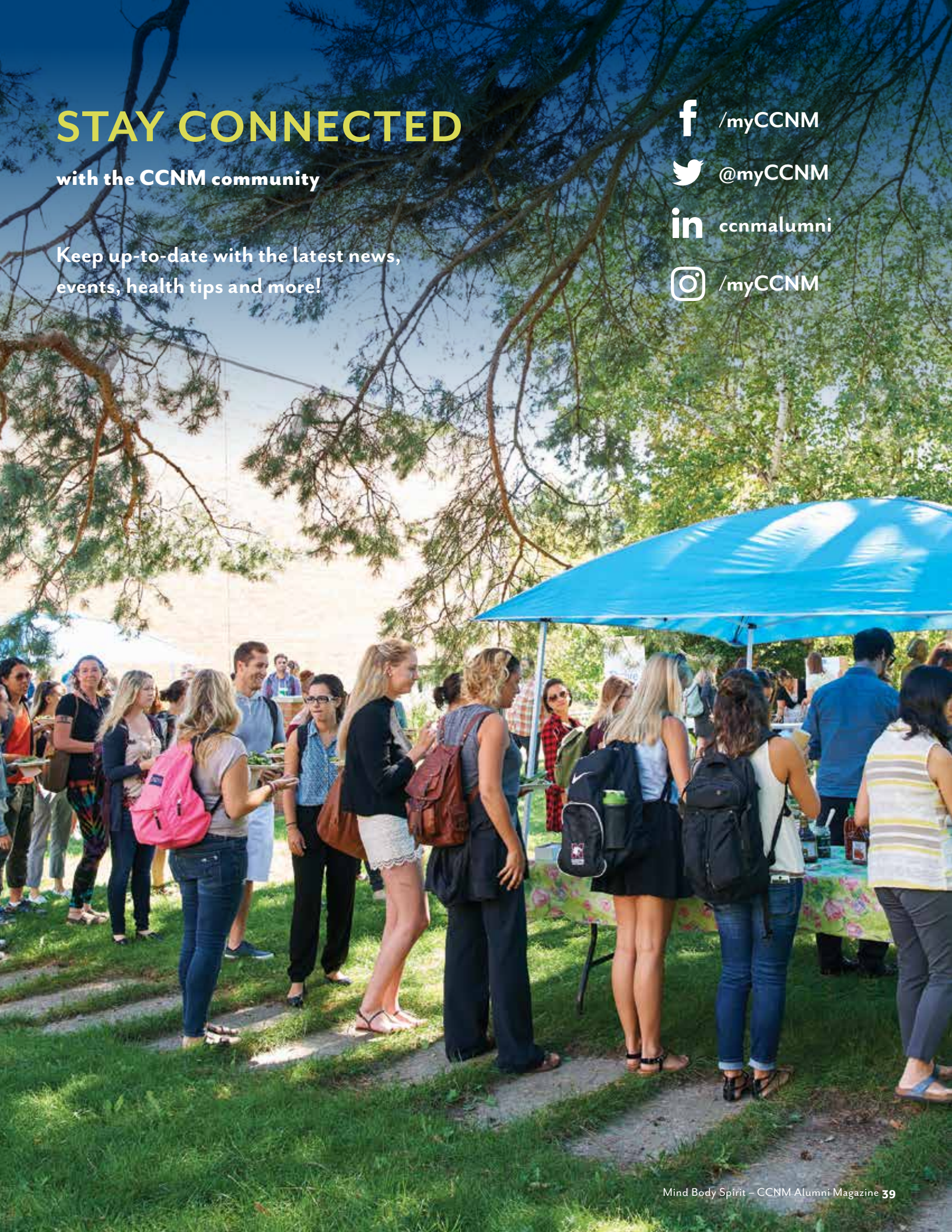
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Do you have news you would like to share with your fellow CCNM alumni? Send us a brief update – we’d like to promote your efforts!

Contact:
Sana Abdullah, managing editor, Mind | Body | Spirit
sabdullah@ccnm.edu

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Written or published a book or article?



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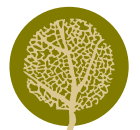
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