Fall 2026 Newsletter

Joint PhD in Educational Studies

Joint PhD in Educational Studies Website

Brock University Land Acknowledgement

Brock University acknowledges the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people.

Lakehead University Land Acknowledgement

Lakehead University respectfully acknowledges its campuses are located on the traditional lands of Indigenous Peoples. Lakehead Thunder Bay is located on the traditional lands of the Fort William First Nation, Signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. Lakehead Orillia is located on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg. The Anishinaabeg include the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Pottawatomi nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. Lakehead University acknowledges the history that many nations hold in the areas around our campuses, and is committed to a relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples based on the principles of mutual trust, respect, reciprocity, and collaboration in the spirit of reconciliation

University of Windsor Land Acknowledgement

The University of Windsor sits on the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, which includes the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi. We respect the longstanding relationships with First Nations people in this place in the 100-mile Windsor-Essex peninsula and the straits – les détroits – of Detroit.

Message from the Director

On behalf of the faculty and staff of the Joint PhD in Educational Studies program, I am pleased to welcome everyone to the start of the 2026-2027 academic year.

As with all new beginnings, this September signals both possibilities for the future and opportunities to celebrate the learning and accomplishments of the past. This newsletter shares the many contributions of our students. As always, in this issue, you'll find highlights of successful comprehensive and portfolio defenses, conference presentations, publications, and award recognitions. These achievements demonstrate the way in which our learning enriches our academic communities and our social worlds. Though these achievements are individually attained, they mark the generosity, dedication, and strength of our learners as a collective. The Joint PhD Program Committee is proud of your contributions to the field of education, and we look forward to supporting and celebrating your ongoing success as you forge ahead in your learning journey.

The Office of the Secretariat would like to extend special appreciation to Dr. Dolana Mogadime as she completed her term as Joint PhD Graduate Director (Brock Campus). We're delighted to welcome Dr. Leanne Taylor into this role and look forward to her leadership and contributions.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to the members of the Joint PhD Program Committee for their dedication and commitment to our program: Dr. Leanne Taylor (Brock University), Dr. Meridith Lovell Johnston (Lakehead University), and Dr. Michael MacDonald (University of Windsor). Your leadership and collaboration continue to strengthen our shared program and support the success of our students.

A warm thank-you as well to our wonderful support staff, whose dedication and knowledge keeps everything running smoothly: Jody Boone (Brock University), Christina Falcigno (Lakehead University), Mandy Turkalj (University of Windsor), and Christine Weisener (University of Windsor).

Please take a moment to read through this newsletter, which highlights the diverse accomplishments of our Joint PhD in Educational Studies students.

Please also take a moment to read the profile of our program Kate Hargreaves prepared for the University of Windsor Newsletter this summer **here**.

I wish all of you continued success in your academic and professional endeavors.

With appreciation,
Dr. Lana Parker, Director, Joint PhD in Educational Studies Program

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Summer Session 2026 Information

The summer session kicked off on a hot summer's afternoon in the beautiful, diverse city of Windsor. The orientation included a land acknowledgment and message of welcome from Dr. Ken Montgomery, Dean of Education at the University of Windsor. Dr. Michael MacDonald, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, also welcomed the two cohorts warmly. Director of the Joint PhD Program, Dr. Lana Parker, shared personal reflections on the doctoral journey and its rich possibilities for growth and change. Finally, PhD Candidate Kate Hargreaves offered the students and instructors invaluable insights into not just the experience of being together as DS1 and DS2 communities, but also into the unique opportunities to build bonds and get to know the local neighbourhoods.

Click below to see a quick video snapshot of our Summer Session (special thanks to UWindsor Digital Media Specialist, PAC, Ronak Doowd).

DSI and DSII Instructors:

One of the great strengths of the Joint PhD in Educational Studies program is the shared expertise of faculty from our partner universities. This year's DSI course was taught by Dr. Hilary Brown (Brock University) and Dr. Bonnie Stewart (University of Windsor), while the DSII course was led by Dr. Meridith Lovell-Johnston

(Lakehead University) and Dr. John Freer (University of Windsor). Also in the photo is the Director of the Joint PhD Program, Dr. Lana Parker.

Doctoral Seminar I Class:

Our newest cohort of Joint PhD in Educational Studies students! (Not in order, and not all students may be represented in the photo.) Sheala Ali, Khadija Ali, Aghasan Alqaysi, Saurabhsinh Chauhan, Brandon Chevrier, Hely Colina, Kanata Cowan, Kathryn Crooks, Badria Hajjar, Mengyue Jin, Carissa Kanters, Emily Krushelnycky, Sylvia Langton, Neha Nair, Lori Nicholas, Shawna Philpott, Jessica Robertson, Kathleen Rose, Jaycee Rowe, Lisa Salfi-Novena, Tatiana Thompson, Darren Todd, Tingting Xue. Also in the photo are the DSI instructors Dr. Hilary Brown and Dr. Bonnie Stewart and the Director of the Joint PhD Program, Dr. Lana Parker.

Doctoral Seminar II Class:

Returning students in the Joint PhD in Educational Studies program complete Doctoral Seminar II (DSII)—the final in-person milestone of their doctoral journey. (Not in order, and not all students may be represented in the photo.) Robin Andrade, Mark Den Hollander, Wenting Rong, Chinyere Saka, Richard Stronach, Stacyann Williams, Mel Young, Rachel Brooke, John-Paul Chalykoff, Jennifer Chesnut, Nichols West, Blake White, Shantelle Browning-Morgan, Xuan (Cora) Cao, Stephanie Johnston, Rebecca Ng, Xuan Tai Nguyen, Anne Rudzinski, Janaka Samaraweera. Also in the photo are the DSII instructors Dr. Meridith Lovell-Johnston and Dr. John Freer and the Director of the Joint PhD Program, Dr. Lana Parker.

Summer Session - DSI and DSII Classes, Instructors and Director

Keynote Presentation by Dr. Lauren Bialystok

Dr. Lauren Bialystok, Associate Professor in the Department of Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, delivered a timely and thought-provoking keynote on the paradigm shift for learning that generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents. As a philosopher who is concerned about ethics and education, Dr. Bialystok contextualized her arguments by tracing the historical evolution of technology and learning, and suggested that generative AI presents a unique set of considerations. Her work challenged us to think of our own relationships to AI and learning: From our engagement with new knowledge, to the way we persevere through difficult problems, and to the manner in which being with others might shape key qualities of what it means to build a world together. Her talk raised many productive questions during follow-up classroom conversations, including on the role of capitalism and Big Tech in education.

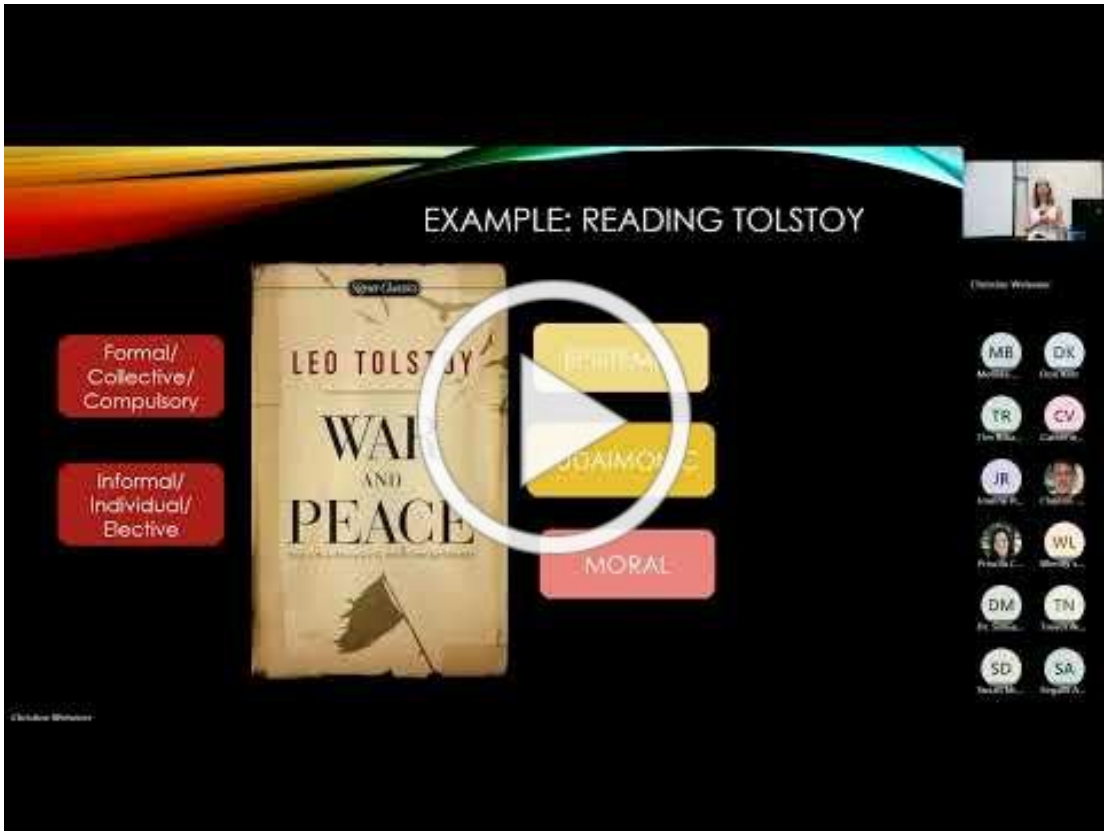
Biography – Dr. Lauren Bialystok

Lauren Bialystok is Associate Professor in the Department of Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. A philosopher by training, her research spans topics in ethics, education, and identity; she has published on authenticity, social justice education, open-mindedness, sex education, curriculum, and policy. Her current project concerns the impact of AI on the aims of education and the ethics of assessment. She is co-author (with Lisa Andersen) of ***Touchy Subject: The History and Philosophy of Sex Education*** (Chicago, 2022), which was the recipient of the AERA Outstanding Publication in Justice Award from the Philosophical Studies in Education SIG (2024), and co-editor (with Bruce Maxwell) of the six-volume anthology *Educational Foundations* (Bloomsbury, 2023). Her forthcoming manuscript with MIT Press is titled *Learn Who You Are: Identity and Authenticity in Education.*

Abstract: Train Your Brain: The Imperative of Education in the Age of AI

Scholars have always debated the best way to achieve educational aims, but the latest AI technology presents existential questions about education itself: why force humans to learn how to do things that can be outsourced to machines? This presentation considers doubts about the purpose of familiar educational goals now that AI is ubiquitous. I argue that AI is not just another technology to incorporate into education and that embracing it in the name of adaptation is short-sighted. As education evolve to meet the world that students find themselves in, it is more important than ever to insist on training the brain.

Click below to view Dr. Bialystok's presentation:



RECENT GRADUATES

The Office of the Secretariat and the Joint PhD Program Committee extend their congratulations to our candidates on the successful defense of their doctoral dissertations!

This remarkable achievement is a testament to their dedication, perseverance, and passion for knowledge.

We wish our graduates continued success as they embark on the next chapter of their scholarly and professional journeys as graduates of the Joint PhD in Educational Studies Program.

ABELA, JANELLE (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2021)

On October 29, 2025 Janelle successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled:"Bridging the Gap: Examining Canadian Police Officer Perceptions of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Training". Janelle's supervisor was Dr. James Oloo. **Congratulations Dr. Abela!**

ALAMEDDINE, NISREEN (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2018)

On December 2, 2025 Nisreen successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled:"Muslim Newcomer Youth in Canadian Schools: Narratives of Lived Experiences and Identity Negotiation". Nisreen's supervisor was Dr. Dolana Mogadime. **Congratulations Dr. Alameddine!**

BLOM, ROBERT PETER (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2019)

On April 21, 2026 Robert successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled:"Defining Teacher Envelopment: The Ancient Wisdom Craft of Mindfulness and Extensional n-valued Discernment as Meta-Practices within the non-Aristotelian Conceptualisation of Truth Paradigms". Robert's supervisors were Dr. Chunlei Lu and Dr. Joyce Mgombelo. **Congratulations Dr. Blom!**

BURTON, WILLIAM (LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY, 2020)

On July 16, 2026 William successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "RECONSTRUCTION SITE: EXCAVATING AND ELEVATING PLACE-BASED EDUCATION IN WINNIPEG K-12 TEACHER PRACTICE". William's supervisor was Dr. Ellen Field. **Congratulations Dr. Burton!**

DELPAGGIO, JAMIE (LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY, 2021)

On March 10, 2026 Jamie successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "Navigating “immovable”: How neoliberalism shapes the experiences of Ph.D. students in Canadian universities". Jamie's supervisor was Dr. Gerald Walton. **Congratulations Dr. Delpaggio!**

DUDEJA, MOHIT (LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY, 2022)

On April 27, 2026 Mohit successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "Canada-Here": A Narrative Inquiry into Queer International Students' Experiences in Small-City Ontario". Mohit's supervisor was Dr. Gerald Walton. **Congratulations Dr. Dudeja!**

GROVER, ASHLEY (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2019)

On April 20, 2026 Ashley successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled:"Higher Education, Memoir Pedagogy and Seeing the Self-in-Coalition: An Autoethnographic Witnessing of Contemporary Narratives in Trauma and Learning". Ashley's supervisor was Dr. Nancy Taber. **Congratulations Dr. Grover!**

HOLDEN, TERESA (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2022)

On December 11, 2025 Teresa successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "Attitudes and Perceptions of Grade 6 ELLs Before and After EQAO Test". Teresa's supervisor was Dr. Clayton Smith. **Congratulations Dr. Holden!**

KING, APRIL (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2021)

On February 9th, 2026 April successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "When Systems Meet Stories". April's supervisor was Dr. Clayton Smith. **Congratulations Dr. King!**

LEE, DEVON (LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY, 2017)

On October 24, 2025 Devon successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "The Making of a Movement: New Beginnings in Canadian Folk Schooling". Devon's supervisor was Dr. David Greenwood. **Congratulations Dr. Lee!**

NAHAICIUC, RUXANDRA (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2017)

On January 16, 2026 Ruxandra successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "Student Success Literacy in Context: Analyzing SSL as a Competency for Secondary School Teachers Using an Explanatory Mixed Methods Design". Ruxandra's supervisor was Dr. Geri Salinitri. **Congratulations Dr. Nahaiciuc!**

POTOCEK, DAVID (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2021)

On June 29, 2026 David successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "In Their Own Voices: Exploring Graduates' Experiences of Higher Education Programs for Students with Disabilities". David's supervisor was Dr. Shijing Xu. **Congratulations Dr. Potocek!**

PRATT, HEATHER (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2018)

On December 15, 2025 Heather successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "Entrepreneurship in a Post-Secondary Institution: A Windsor Perspective. Where are the Women?". Heather's supervisor was Dr. Geri Salinitri. **Congratulations Dr. Pratt!**

SEN, AYSE PINAR (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2018)

On January 30, 2026 Ayse Pinar successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "The Role of Composition, De-composition, and Comparison Activities in 3-4 Year-old Children's Abstraction Processes in Shape Recognition". Ayse Pinar's supervisor was Dr. Mary Louise Vanderlee. **Congratulations Dr. Sen!**

ZAGORDO, DAN (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2016)

On December 17, 2025 Dan successfully completed the Dissertation Defense titled: "School Boys and Hockey Masculinities: Exploring the Negotiation of Gender Identifies Among Boys Within Hockey Academies". Dan's supervisor was Dr. Christopher Greig. **Congratulations Dr. Zagordo!**

COMPREHENSIVE PORTFOLIO DEFENSES

The Office of the Secretariat and the Joint PhD Program Committee congratulate our students on the successful completion of their Comprehensive Portfolio requirement!

Completing the Comprehensive Portfolio represents a significant milestone in the Joint PhD in Educational Studies Program and marks their transition to PhD candidacy. We recognize the considerable effort, scholarship, and commitment they have demonstrated in reaching this stage of their doctoral journey.

We wish our candidates every success as they move forward toward the next milestones in their academic journey.

BABFEMI, GRACE TITILOPE (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2023)

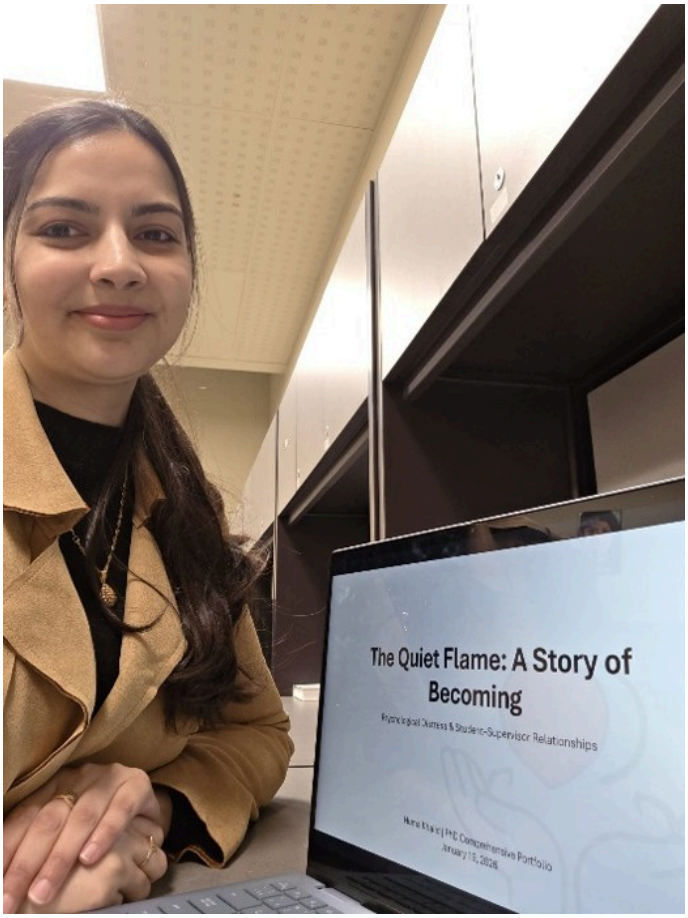
On December 3, 2025 Grace successfully completed the Comprehensive Portfolio Defense titled: "On the Path of Becoming: Playing the 'Game' of Scholarship". Huma's supervisor is Dr. Xavier Fazio.

HARGREAVES, KATE (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2024)

On March 3, 2026, Kate successfully completed the Comprehensive Portfolio Defense titled: "Messy Connections and Rhizomatic Runners: Trauma, Disability, and Poetic Inquiry". Kate's supervisor is Dr. Lindsey Jaber.

KHALID, HUMA (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2023)

On January 19, 2026 Huma successfully completed the Comprehensive Portfolio Defense titled: "The Quiet Flame: A Story of Becoming". Huma's supervisor is Dr. Sandra Della Porta.



PRESENTATIONS

BABFEMI, GRACE TITILOPE (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2023)

Babafemi G.T. (2026, April 8). Digital game-based learning in Classrooms: A systematic review of teachers' adoption practices. Mapping New Knowledge Conference, Brock University, St Catharine's, Ontario, Canada.

Babafemi G.T. (2026, March 13). Bridging emotional affordances and learning engagement through digital game-based learning: an analysis of adoption practices. The 10th annual Graduate Education Research Conference, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

Babafemi G.T. (2026, February 26). What does Digital game-based learning have to offer? Insights from a narrative review. International Symposium, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada.

Babafemi G.T. (2025, June 4). Advancement and Trends in Scientific Creativity Studies: A review of pedagogical efforts, conceptualization, and psychometric measures. Canadian Society for the Study of Education, CSSE, George Brown College, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Babafemi, G. T. (2025, April 25). A systematic review of validated scales for assessing game-based learning: A proposal. Education Graduate Student Research Symposium, Lakehead University, Ontario, Canada.

Babafemi, G. T. (2025, April 23). Towards the practicality of game-based learning (GBL) in STEM classrooms: Designing and validating an instrument to assess teachers' adoption of GBL. 2nd Annual STEM Graduate Student and Researcher Colloquia, Brock University, St Catharine's, Ontario, Canada.

Babafemi G.T. (2025, April 9). Game-based learning: The Journey Ahead. Mapping New Knowledge Conference, Brock University, St Catharine's, Ontario, Canada.

Babafemi G.T. (2025, March 14). Game-based learning for the future classroom: Investigating challenges and suggesting solutions. The 9th annual Graduate Education Research Conference, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

FERDOUS, TANIMA (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2024)

Ferdous, T. (2026, March 19). *Cultural World and Funds of Knowledge in Children's Literature: A Systematic Review* [Poster presentation]. Faculty of Education (FOE) Celebration of Excellence in Research and Creative Activity, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario

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HARGREAVES, KATE (UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR, 2024)

Hargreaves, K. (2025, November 21). Supporting students through trauma-informed pedagogies. Trauma-Informed Symposium, Trent University. **https://traumainformedsymposiumday2.sched.com/list/simple**

KHALID, HUMA (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2023)

Khalid, H., Talwar, V., & Bosacki, S. (2026). *Does theory of mind predict psychological well-being in adolescents? Exploring the roles of stress and loneliness* [Conference poster]. Society for Research on Adolescence, Toronto, Canada

Karimi Valoojerdy, Z., Pereira, N. C. D., **Khalid, H.,** Bosacki, S. L., & Talwar, V. (2026). Theory of mind and self-control as predictors of prosocial and antisocial behaviors in adolescence [Poster presentation]. ISRA 2026 World Meeting, International Society for Research on Aggression.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

BABFEMI, GRACE TITILOPE (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2023)

- International Graduate Fellowship Award, Brock University (2023 – present).
- Moriyama Entrance Award, Brock University, 2023/2024 session.
- DGS Spring Research Fellowship, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs, Brock University (April 2025).
- Research Mentorship Award, Faculty of Education, Brock University (Nov. 2024 and June 2025).

FERDOUS, TANIMA (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2024)

- Faculty of Graduate Studies and Post-doctoral Affairs (FGSPA) Dean Winter Research Award 2026
- The International Graduate Teaching Assistant Award 2026

KHALID, HUMA (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2023)

- Michael Kompf Graduate Student Conference Travel Scholarship 2025, Brock University, ON

OTHER NEWS

ANDRADE, ROBIN (BROCK UNIVERSITY, 2025)

Pharmacy tech wins national award for creating learning platform that's improving clinical judgement and communication

Waterloo, ON (February 26, 2026)—Pharmacy technician Robin Andrade has developed a patient simulation platform called **Patient Pro** that's helping pharmacy students gain confidence, communications skills and clinical judgement well before they enter real-world practice.

Currently piloted at the University of Waterloo, the platform integrates emerging technologies—including virtual reality and artificial intelligence—to allow pharmacy students and technicians to practise patient interactions beyond the limits of traditional standardized patient sessions. In turn, it is helping prepare future pharmacy professionals to deliver more effective, compassionate care.

Alongside her work on Patient Pro, Andrade has built a long track record in pharmacy education as a Professional Practice Instructor at the University of Waterloo.

Read Andrade's story on the **Pharmacy Practice+ Business Awards site**. Her story is also featured in the February issue of *Pharmacy Practice + Business* magazine. You can contact her at **robinandrade7@gmail.com**.

The Pharmacy Practice + Business Awards recognize Canadian pharmacists providing exceptional patient care and demonstrating creativity and innovation in pharmacy practice. *Pharmacy Practice + Business* and its web portal, **CanadianHealthcareNetwork.ca** are Canada's leading independent journal and website serving pharmacist's news, clinical, practice and business information needs.

NOTE: Robin Andrade is just one of the many thousands of pharmacy professionals providing solutions to improve health care in Canada at a time when health system resources are stretched to the limit. If you'd like to know more, or to learn about other pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who have compelling stories to share, contact editor Vicki Wood at **vwood@ensembleiq.com**.

ALUMNI PROFILE

Dr. Brandy Doan-Goss (University of Windsor, 2015)

Completing the Joint PhD Program in Educational Studies at the University of Windsor was a defining milestone in my professional journey. My doctoral research explored how school leaders make decisions in complex organizational environments using a grounded theory approach informed by bounded rationality. While the research focused on educational leadership, it sparked a broader interest in how evidence can be used to support organizational learning, system improvement, and better outcomes for students. Those questions continue to shape my work today.

Following graduation, I completed a Mitacs Accelerate Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Windsor, where I examined gender equity in the Canadian transit industry. Since then, I have held senior research and analytics leadership roles within Ontario's publicly funded education system, leading large-scale initiatives in strategic planning, educational equity, mental health, special education, student achievement, and organizational improvement. These experiences strengthened my commitment to bridging rigorous research with meaningful change in educational practice.

Today, I continue this work through system-level research and program evaluation with the Durham District School Board. My current research examines the implementation and effectiveness of Empower Excellence schools, an initiative designed to create equitable, identity-affirming learning environments by addressing systemic barriers to student success. I am also evaluating the implementation of JUMP Math within Empower Excellence schools through a science of learning lens, examining both implementation fidelity and student and system outcomes. In many ways, this work represents a continuation of the questions that first inspired my doctoral research by exploring how educational systems implement change, learn from evidence, and improve over time.

Alongside my research and leadership work, I have remained committed to teaching and mentoring. I have had the privilege of teaching at both the University of Windsor and York University, where I have enjoyed helping future educators think critically about educational research, evaluation, equity, and evidence-informed decision making. Bringing current research and real-world system improvement work into the classroom has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career.

The Joint PhD Program provided far more than advanced research skills. It taught me how to approach complex problems with curiosity, methodological rigour, and an appreciation for multiple perspectives. Those skills have remained central throughout my career, whether designing research studies, leading strategic initiatives, evaluating educational programs, or supporting organizational learning.

My scholarly work has focused on educational leadership, organizational decision making, gender equity, educational data, and program evaluation. I continue to collaborate with colleagues on research examining educational equity, critical quantitative methodologies, disability-informed research, and evidence-informed system improvement.

For current doctoral students, my advice is to remain curious and embrace opportunities that may not fit a traditional career path. A PhD is not simply preparation for an academic career. It is preparation for asking thoughtful questions, navigating complexity, designing rigorous research, and translating evidence into meaningful action. Those skills are valuable across many professional contexts and will continue to open doors in ways you may not yet imagine.

I remain deeply grateful to the faculty, mentors, and fellow students whose guidance challenged me to think differently and grow as a researcher. The Joint PhD Program shaped not only my career but also the way I understand leadership, learning, and the role of research in creating more equitable educational systems.

PAST NEWSLETTERS

DESIGNATED FACULTY LIST

JOINT PhD EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

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