

# Making Grey Bruce Home for International Talent:

An Evaluation of Resources and Services for International Students  
at the Georgian College Owen Sound Campus

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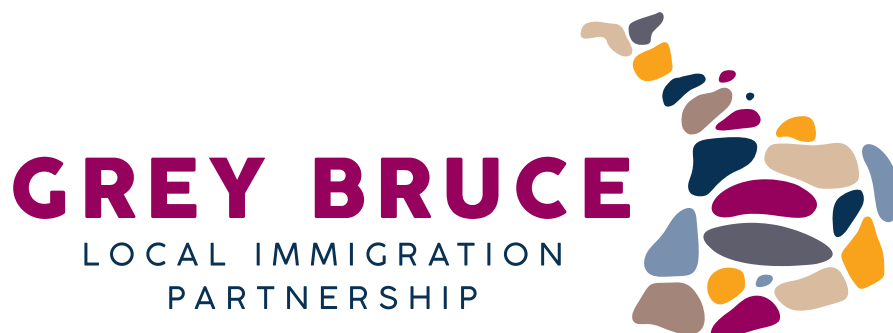
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We thank everyone who contributed their time and thoughts to this project with a special thanks to interview participants who shared their experiences and recommendations.



## Executive Summary

International students bring social, cultural, and economic benefits to rural college campuses. As the number of international students arriving at the Georgian College Owen Sound campus increases, understanding their unique needs will help the college and community service providers support student settlement and adaptation to living, studying and working in a rural area. This report details the results of consultation with international students and college staff, to understand the students' experiences and makes recommendations of how to support international students arriving in Owen Sound to study at Georgian College. By understanding the opportunities and challenges for international students studying at the Owen Sound campus, the project partners will be better able to develop strategies to support international students to find employment and build social capital in the community. This will contribute to the successful completion of their program of study and support the retention of students in the community after graduation.

Georgian College, Welcoming Communities Grey Bruce, Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership and Grey County Economic Development initiated a research and development pilot project from December 2020 to March 2021. The pilot project received funding under the Regional Economic Development (RED) program of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and each project partner contributed financially and/or through in-kind contributions and provided direction through the project steering committee. Karen Heisler, Ph.D., a local rural geographer and applied research and program development consultant, was contracted to implement.

The pilot project had two objectives, first to understand what resources and services international students need to support their settlement and integration into the community. Second, to understand the opportunities and challenges international students have finding in-program employment (co-op, work placement or practicum), part-time and post-graduation employment in the region. A multi-methods data collection approach was used, reviewing web sites, policy documents, academic and industry reports, and by conducting key informant interviews with international students, Georgian College staff and regional employers. Two reports have been produced to present the findings:

- **Making Grey Bruce Home for International Talent: An evaluation of resources and services for international students at Georgian College Owen Sound campus**
- **Making Grey Bruce Home for International Talent: A Case Study Analysis of Opportunities and Challenges for Power Engineering Technology and Practical Nursing Students in the Grey Bruce Region**

## Executive Summary (Continued)

This report proposes five key recommendations to support student settlement and employment in the community.

- Improve information regarding the location of Owen Sound campus
- Improve public awareness for opportunities to participate in the Homestay program or private room rental.
- Improve transportation support and awareness for students.
- Connect students to community members and organizations to support language and build social capital.
- Provide supports for international students about employment and immigration in Canada.

The first recommendation highlights inconsistencies in communication between student recruitment and arrival in Canada. Many students interviewed were unprepared when they arrived in Canada, not realizing their program was being delivered at the Owen Sound campus rather than at the Barrie main campus. This breakdown in communication creates a vulnerable situation for students when they arrive in Owen Sound without secure housing in-place.

This challenge is exasperated by the ongoing challenge students have finding affordable accommodations in Owen Sound, which is reflected in the second recommendation, to engage in strategies to increase the inventory of rooms for rent in private homes in the community.

The third recommendation addresses the challenges international students face by not having a vehicle and difficulties using public transportation for school and work. The location of the campus and the challenging physical geography of Owen Sound, makes it difficult for students to move around the community without a private vehicle. Many students must walk or cycle, for school or work. The large hills and the location of the college campus on the far east side of the city can be very difficult to navigate especially in the winter.

The fourth recommendation focuses on the importance of acknowledging language and communication challenges facing some international students. Communication barriers can lead to social isolation, and creating opportunities for students to connect with community members may aid students in the development of English language skills and help students feel more connected to the community.

Lastly, the fifth recommendation encourages support to connect students to part-time and graduate employment opportunities in the area. International students can work 20 hrs/week during a semester and up to full-time hours during term

## Executive Summary (Continued)

breaks. This Canadian work experience helps build students' resumes, reduces social isolation, increases their social capital and builds employment connections for post graduate employment.

Detailed activities and targets, accompany each recommendation in the tables found throughout the report. Central to these recommended actions is an ongoing collaboration between Georgian College, Grey County Economic Development, Welcoming Communities Grey Bruce and the Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership. International students are a vital opportunity for sustainability of the Owen Sound rural campus and the region. An ongoing influx of young people at the beginning of their careers, settling in the community for two years, is the perfect opportunity to encourage students to consider the Grey and Bruce area as an ideal location for permanent settlement. Working together the project partners can help support students to have a positive experience at the college and in the community.



# 1. Research Design

Guided by the project steering committee a qualitative research methodology was adopted. The research plan had two foci, first, to conduct an in-depth case study of the in-program and graduate employment opportunities and challenges for international students in the Grey Bruce region. Second, to build the steering committee's understanding of the experiences of international students studying at the Owen Sound campus, to better ascertain what resources or services they may need to support their success. Appendix A presents the logical framework that guided the project design.

The goal of the research was to understand the opportunities available to students and the challenges experienced during their programs of study; to find employment (such as part-time work and co-op or work placements or employment after graduation), and to build social capital in the community and college. The following questions guided the data collection.

- 1) What opportunities and barriers exist for international students to complete their program of study, gain meaningful employment, develop a sense of belonging and community whilst studying at the Owen Sound campus?**
- 2) What resources and partnerships are needed in Grey and Bruce Counties to support international students living and studying at the Owen Sound campus?**
- 3) What career advancing employment opportunities are available in Grey and Bruce Counties for international students?**

A multi-methods data collection approach was used, reviewing web sites, policy documents, academic and industry reports, and by conducting key informant interviews with international students, Georgian College staff and regional employers. Recruitment of international students and employers, for key informant interviews was done via email and postings on the college student portal. Interviews were conducted between February 26 to March 31, 2021. In total 27 key informant interviews were conducted over email, telephone or using online video calling.

**Table 1 presents the breakdown of the interviews. (see next page)**

## 1. Research Design (Cont.)

**Table 1: Key Informant Interviews**

Key Informant Group	Number of Interviews
International Student Interviews	9
Employer Interviews	5
Georgian College Staff	13
TOTAL	27

International Students were asked questions under three themes: 1) Experiences at Georgian College; 2) Experiences living in the region; and 3) Employment and career expectations. Participants were given the option to complete the interviews via email, telephone or online. Results from the employer interviews are detailed in the Making Grey Bruce Home for International Talent: A Case Study Analysis of Opportunities and Challenges for Power Engineering Technology and Practical Nursing Students in the Grey Bruce Region report. The goal of these interviews was to gain a greater understanding of the type of supports needed for students and/or employers to help retain RPN graduates in the region. Lastly, Georgian College staff were contacted to provide information and insights about resources and services to international students and assisted in identifying gaps and recommendations.

A series of risk factors impacted the originally planned implementation of the pilot project. First, the pilot project funding was limited to four months. Initially a Georgian College international student graduate was hired to coordinate to engage with students over the term break in December 2020. However, an initial situation analysis identified that Georgian College research policy required all human subject research in which Georgian College is a partner or that recruits Georgian students or staff using college resources, must be approved by both the Georgian College Research and Innovation department and the Georgian College Research Ethics Board (REB). Dr. Heisler, prepared and managed the REB application and the approval process significantly delayed the recruiting and interview of participants. Final approval to commence participant recruitment was not gained until February 16, 2021.

Secondly, in early February, the project coordinator left the project when offered a full-time position in his field of power engineering in Toronto. At this time Dr. Heisler assumed responsibility for the completing the research, analysis and report writing. Thirdly, during the project the province went into a six-week province wide lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This created a series of restrictions on movement and delayed the beginning of the winter semester at Georgian College.

## 1. Research Design (Cont.)

Classes were restricted to online learning where possible and access to campus was limited to laboratory learning. These restrictions made it more challenging to recruit students for interviews.

While waiting for TEB approval for human subject research, a significant amount of secondary research was conducted to review available policy documents, project reports and research reports to understand the context of immigration, economic development, and international student recruitment for Ontario colleges. In addition, the steering committee and community partners supported the project through providing technical support, recruitment and conducting interviews.

Special thanks are extended to members of the steering committee and community members:

- Lisa Taylor – Executive Director, Owen Sound Campus, Georgian College
- Stephanie Barry – Director, International Education, Georgian College Barrie
- Kelly Watson – Manager, International Education, Georgian College Barrie
- Azar Azad – Board Member, Welcoming Communities Grey Bruce
- Manpreet Kaur Sangha – Board Member, Welcoming Communities Grey Bruce
- Melissa Avedesian – Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator, Grey County
- Jacinda Rudolph – Economic Development Officer, Grey County
- Arvind Sharma, former Project Coordinator
- Colleen Purdon, Board Member, Welcoming Communities Grey Bruce
- May Ip, Volunteer, Welcoming Communities Grey Bruce



## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations

The research has identified an important underlying principle when considering resources and services for international students studying at Georgian College. International students live in the community and study at the college under unique circumstances and therefore have unique needs. To understand these unique circumstances and needs, it is important to look at the campus and community through the lens of the students, to gain insight from their lived experiences and evaluate how resources and services are understood and used. Building resources and services that enhance students' success and quality of life, not only benefits the students but also have short and long-term benefits for the college and the community.

Students spoke very highly of Georgian College staff and instructors and students felt college staff had an overarching concern for their success and well-being. Most students expressed they liked the "smallness" of the community once they were settled and attributed this to feeling connected to staff and students. All students interviewed described the college and community as a welcoming environment. The COVID-19 pandemic and being physically distanced from the main campus and the movement of all services to on-line communication, has been challenging for international students, especially those starting their programs during full or partial lockdown restrictions. Limited access to campus and community spaces has increased the social isolation international students already experience when first moving to the community. It is not difficult to imagine this has been particularly challenging for students starting in the winter 2021 semester.

Recommendations are drawn from the students' own ideas, as well as from the observations of Georgian College staff who work directly with students through service delivery or instruction. Gaps were assessed by analysing what services and resources are currently offered and how and where they are delivered, compared to the expressed needs and experiences of students. These were cross-referenced with recommended best practices published by international education research organizations and scholarly research. The recommendations are suggested to-scale, meaning attention was given to suggesting solutions that would not be resource or time intensive and could be accomplished through campus-community partnerships. Lastly, each recommendation is presented with activities and targets to measure the success of project and move the initiative forward towards medium and long-term outcomes of the *Making Grey Bruce Home for International Talents* initiative.

Recommendations for on-campus and community resources are organized into four categories: pre-arrival information, housing, transportation and employment. Under each category findings from the interviews with students and staff are summarized, highlighting the services currently available and where gaps are perceived or experienced.

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

### ***Pre-arrival Information***

The Segal International Centre (SIC) provide direct support for international students during recruitment, settlement and throughout their studies. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the SIC communicates with students' pre-arrival, and helps students ensure they have a 14-day self-quarantine plan in place, to meet government pandemic regulations. All international students arriving in Canada must provide proof of a 14-day self-quarantine plan when they land in Canada. Students may make their own quarantine arrangements or purchase a quarantine package from Georgian College. The quarantine package from Georgian College includes assistance developing a quarantine plan before they come to Canada, providing transportation from the airport to their place of quarantine, assistance acquiring necessities for the 14 days of quarantine such as food, medication medical services, etc. physical and mental health support, and education and resources to help students understand the requirements of health monitoring.

SIC communicates these requirements to all new International students and offers quarantine packages for purchase in on-campus residence in Barrie for \$940 or at the Holiday Inn, Barrie for \$1,745. The packages include accommodations, private transport from hotel stopover to accommodation, early arrive insurance (as needed), Canadian SIM card for mobile phone, universal power adapter and a person hygiene kit (<https://www.georgiancollege.ca/international/covid-19-faqs/#quarantine-package>).

### ***Settlement Information***

Students also receive a pre-departure handbook for international students, detailing contact information for Georgian services, registration, housing, documents, and basic settlement information. Students are strongly encouraged to make arrangements for housing prior to arriving to Canada. **One of the most significant challenges facing many international students arriving to study at the Owen Sound campus, is they did not realize the program in which they had registered would be delivered in Owen Sound.** Both Georgian staff and students reflected on this issue, reporting that in some cases it is a miscommunication between the student and recruitment agents in their home country and others commenting how the location of campus was not clearly communicated on their acceptance letter and/or they did not realize that the Owen Sound campus was not located in Barrie. Regarding the latter issues, a review of the Georgian web page for international students highlights how it is possible to see how students may be confused regarding the location of the campuses. For example, on the main page, Barrie, Ontario is large font, with a link to a video about Barrie, and in much smaller font is a link to Other

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

Campuses. Following the link to other campuses, students are presented with the map below and a list of the seven satellite campuses which take you to the designated webpage for each campus.

**Figure 1: Campus map** Source: <https://www.georgiancollege.ca/about-georgian/campuses/>



The map does not properly present the location of the campuses, as there is no scale or enough information to fully understand where the region is situated within the larger Ontario geography. Viewed through the lens of someone not familiar with the geography of southern Ontario, this map does not provide necessary information for students to fully understand how far the Owen Sound campus is from Barrie or Toronto.

On the Owen Sound campus web page there is detailed information about the programs and services available at the Owen Sound campus as well as limited information about the community. There is not, however, an easily found description of where the Owen Sound campus is located. Many students interviewed reflected on how stressful it was arriving in Barrie only to learn that they needed to go to Owen Sound.

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

Students commented on how difficult and expensive it was to find transportation to Owen Sound from Barrie and having to live in local hotels when they arrived, whilst trying to find a place to live.

It is difficult to fully understand where the breakdown in communication is occurring – from the college, recruiters, or the students, but regardless the result is the same. Students are arriving in Owen Sound without secure housing in place, which makes them vulnerable physically and mentally, as they must navigate an unfamiliar community and unfamiliar culture to quickly find a place to live.

### **RECOMMENDATION 1: IMPROVE INFORMATION REGARDING THE LOCATION OF OWEN SOUND**

Activity	Target
1.1 Georgian College highlights the location of campus on international student acceptance letter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New international students are directly provided with the information of delivery of their program at the Owen Sound campus and specific information about the location of Owen Sound relative to Barrie.</li> </ul>
1.2 Georgian College reviews location information such as campus descriptions, maps and access on the college web site and pre-departure information available to international students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Location information about the satellite campuses is more visible on the Georgian web site and the Owen Sound campus page.</li> <li>Accurate maps and travel information is provided in the pre-departure information package so students can prepare for how they will get to Owen Sound from Barrie.</li> </ul>
1.3 Georgian College continues to monitor and correct miscommunication between recruitment agents and new international students for quality and accuracy of information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International students provide direct feedback to the Segal International Centre regarding the information they received from recruiters and international education agents to measure quality control.</li> </ul>

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

### ***Housing***

The inventory of affordable housing, was the most significant issue raised by both Georgian staff and students. The SIC provides students with pre-arrival housing information, including information about the types of housing available, information about leases, finding roommates, expenses, landlord-tenant regulations, etc. Students are encouraged to start looking for housing before they arrive in Canada. As noted above, finding housing was exacerbated because many students interviewed did not understand they were coming to Owen Sound.

The Georgian Housing web page <https://www.georgiancollege.ca/international/student-life/housing/> details a number of options for students:

- **Homestay**
- **On-campus residence**
- **Off-campus housing**
- **Temporary accommodations**

The pre-departure guide for international students offers the following comparative table for students to understand their options.

Type of Accommodation	Duration of Stay	Approximate cost per semester	Campus Availability
Homestay	Negotiable (min. 2 month)	\$3470 (includes 3 meals)	All campuses
On-campus residence	Academic year (8 months)	\$3720	Barrie, Orillia and Owen Sound
Off-campus residence	8 to 12 month lease	\$3500	Barrie
Find your own place	Negotiable	\$2500 to \$3000	All campuses

(Georgian College, 2021, p. 7)

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

There is also an off-campus private residence available in Owen Sound not included in the pre-departure guide. The Owen Sound Student Residence offers students 4, 8 or 12 month lease options for 12 months – \$6450, 8 months – \$5400 or 4 months – \$2800 (<https://owensoundstudentresidence.com/forms.php>).

The Homestay program is a private company matching students to room and board in private homes. On and off-campus residences provide furnished rooms and common areas for students. The Georgian College on-campus residence offers students private bedrooms, shared common spaces, a residence advisor and 24 hour on-call staff assistance. The private residence in Owen Sound offers a similar living set-up minus the residence advisor.

The students interviewed felt the residence housing was too expensive or too restrictive in the leasing terms, i.e., they did not want to pay for accommodations upfront for one or two semesters. Students preferred to find their own accommodations, such as shared apartments or rooms for rent in a private home. From a cost perspective, a residence room costs approximately \$800 – \$900/per month, whereas students believe they can find other accommodation for \$500–\$600 per month. Furnished rooms for rent in Owen Sound are currently being advertised for \$650–\$675 per month and there is a very limited supply. International students do not qualify for community rent subsidy programs and those without family or family friends are particularly vulnerable to insecure housing.



## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

Ideas such as connecting Owen Sound's large senior citizen population with students could be a mutually beneficial opportunity. This was suggested as an idea especially for the practical nursing students who tend to be women and more socially isolated because of fewer international students in the programs. However, barriers such as encouraging seniors to participate in the Homestay program, breaking down discriminatory stereotypes and fear of allowing students into homes during the pandemic were suggested as inhibiting growth in rooms for rent in private homes. The pandemic is placing additional stress on the inventory of student accommodations. Many students work part-time whilst in school and are travelling to campus to attend learning labs. However, as Georgian College continues to recruit international students and expands programming at the Owen Sound campus, demand for rooms to rent in private homes will continue beyond the immediate pandemic crisis.

Increasing the supply of rooms for rent in Owen Sound may help with affordability or at the very least help international students find housing more easily. There is also a notable benefit for the community by helping seniors manage the affordability of ageing in their homes, building companionship for students living in a home environment and promoting inter-cultural awareness and appreciation.

### **RECOMMENDATION 2: IMPROVE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE HOMESTAY PROGRAM OR PRIVATE ROOM RENTAL**

Activity	Target
2.1 Public awareness campaign to promote the need for private room rental for students studying at Georgian College.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pre-semester intake public awareness campaign promoting the benefits of room rental for incoming international students.</li><li>• Public awareness to breakdown discriminatory stereotypes in the community of international students.</li></ul>
2.2 Information sessions for new landlords considering renting rooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Online or (post pandemic) in-person open house for prospective landlords in the community to promote the benefits of renting to students and answer questions.</li></ul>

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

### ***Transportation***

International students living in Owen Sound talked at length about how difficult it is to get around Owen Sound without a private vehicle. Public transit routes and timetables do not work well for those who have complicated school and work schedules. Additionally, there is no bus service in the evening. Many students walk or cycle, however, this presents seasonal challenges. International students can drive in Ontario if they obtain an International Driver's Permit in their home country prior to arriving in Canada. Some countries also have a reciprocity agreement which allows for students to exchange an out-of province license for an Ontario license. If not, students must go through the same graduated licensing system as all new Ontario drivers.

Students spoke about how the lack of transportation contributes to feelings of isolation. For example, international groceries are limited in Owen Sound and students must make special trips to larger cities to find familiar foods and connect to people with a shared language or culture. The introduction of the Grey Regional Transit, county inter-community transit service and the Guelph Owen Sound Transportation bus has expanded public transit options out of Owen Sound, however currently Greyhound Canada which provided service to Toronto has suspended all bus services in Canada.

In Owen Sound, the physical geography of the community is very difficult to navigate on foot or by bicycle. The separation of the west and east sides of the community and the location of the campus on the eastern edge of the city, pose real challenges for students when they are looking for a place to live or work. Pandemic restrictions also present limitations for students to share rides with friends or classmates.

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

### RECOMMENDATION 3: TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Activity	Target
3.1 Provide students with access to affordable used bicycles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host a spring bike drive on campus for residents to donate or sell unused bikes by consignment at a campus bike sale.</li> </ul>
3.2 Create alternative transportation services to and from campus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate creating a DriverSeat evening shuttle service to and from campus.</li> </ul>
3.3 Provide information about obtaining how to obtain permission to drive in Ontario.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include information about how to obtain an international driver permit in pre-departure information, so students can obtain the necessary permit in their home country before coming to Canada.</li> <li>• Connect students to driver's education services in the community upon arrival.</li> </ul>

### *Academic and social development*

The greatest academic challenge for international students is studying and living in a community when English is a second language. Students must demonstrate language competencies to gain a study permit and be admitted into their program of study, however, there are nuances of communication and technical language required for their field of study that makes it difficult to thrive academically and socially. Students with English as a second language praised Georgian instructors for supporting them in their studies but discussed how a lack of on-campus support for language development was challenging. Georgian offers language support through the Owen Sound library such as help with essay writing, however some students found tutors were more accustomed to working with English as first language students and were unfamiliar with the special support ESL students require with learning formal writing styles such as essays or resumes and cover letters.

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

Staff try to help connect students to limited community ESL supports. Many students remarked how language barriers go beyond functional communication at school, but also create barriers for understanding social situations. This can be an isolating experience, as some students felt they were uncertain how to respond in friendly conversation and this created a space between them and others at school or at work. The greatest benefit for students needing ESL support would be connecting students to the community for conversational support or participation in community organization.

### **RECOMMENDATION 4: CONNECT STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Activity	Target
4.1 Promote the recruitment of volunteers in the community to provide language and social support for international students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-going advertising on <a href="https://brucegrey.cioc.ca/volunteer/">https://brucegrey.cioc.ca/volunteer/</a> for community members to meet with ESL students.</li> </ul>
4.2 Welcoming Communities Grey Bruce partners with the Georgian College Student Association to connect international students with volunteers in the community and other newcomers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of volunteers through <a href="https://welcominggreybruce.ca/">https://welcominggreybruce.ca/</a> who would be interested in providing mentorship to international students.</li> </ul>
4.3 Promotion of Newcomer Information Bruce Grey: Community Info and Support for Newcomer web site <a href="http://www.newcomersbrucegrey.ca/">http://www.newcomersbrucegrey.ca/</a> . This database provides a wealth of information for newcomers to the region, translated into 24 languages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add web site link to the About Owen Sound section of the Owen Sound campus web page.</li> </ul>
4.4 Enhance the About Owen Sound section of the Owen Sound campus. <a href="https://www.georgiancollege.ca/about-georgian/campuses/owen-sound-campus/#owensound">https://www.georgiancollege.ca/about-georgian/campuses/owen-sound-campus/#owensound</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect Grey County information for residents <a href="https://www.grey.ca/">https://www.grey.ca/</a> and Living Here City of Owen Sound <a href="https://www.owensound.ca/en/living/living.aspx">https://www.owensound.ca/en/living/living.aspx</a> web pages.</li> </ul>

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

### ***Employment***

All students interviewed, indicated finding part-time employment was especially important to help off-set their living expenses. The regional labour shortage, especially in retail and food services has helped international students find part-time jobs. International students with a valid study permit studying full-time in a Georgian College degree, diploma or certificate program can work 20hrs/week on or off campus during the regular academic session and can work full-time during regularly scheduled breaks between academic sessions. These jobs are primarily minimum wage, which means the students can make a maximum of \$1,235/month during the semester. Depending on the cultural norms in a student's home country, they may not have previous work experience, or job search experience prior to coming to Owen Sound and may benefit from support to learn about Canadian norms for finding employment and understanding workplace culture.

## 2. Research Findings and Recommendations (Cont.)

### RECOMMENDATION 5: PROVIDE SUPPORTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION IN CANADA

Activity	Target
5.1 Provide localized information for new students about employment information, how to apply for a social insurance number and regional job posting web sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuously promote <a href="http://www.connect2jobs.ca">www.connect2jobs.ca</a> to new students.</li> <li>Connect students to employment resources such the YMCA Employment Resource Centre and job board.</li> <li>Promote the <a href="http://www.newcomersgreybruce.ca">www.newcomersgreybruce.ca</a> web site to new students.</li> </ul>
5.2 Develop a formal or informal support network between Grey and Bruce Economic Development and Georgian College Co-op for ongoing communication related to employer recruitment and information services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the database of potential employers for future co-op/work placement opportunities.</li> <li>Compile information about how to hire international students for co-op, work placements and practicums and add to the Made in Grey and Jobs in Bruce websites</li> <li>Provide information and links on regional economic development web sites about options for sponsoring international students for employment and permanent residency.</li> </ul>
5.3 On-going promotion of employment opportunities and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host job and information fairs for Georgian College students.</li> </ul>
5.4 Partner with other organizations in the region to provide pathways for employment and immigration information sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host on-campus immigration information sessions with local speakers</li> <li>Create a mentorship program with people in the region with experience immigrating to Canada and living and working in the region</li> </ul>



### 3. Conclusion

The most effective way to support international students studying at the Owen Sound campus is to create on-going channels of communication between the students, college and community. From the moment a student accepts a place in a program delivered at the Owen Sound campus, reaching out with customized information about the Owen Sound campus and community, will help students settle more smoothly in the area.

This is the first step toward building a lasting relationship between the students, the college, and the community. Ongoing collaboration between community organizations and the college will help draw students off-campus and build a sense of place and belonging. Providing support through mentorship, services, information, and training, will help students find local employment and the services needed during their time at the college. Canadian work experience and networking will support students' short and long-term employment goals.

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## Appendix A

### Impact

Retention of international students in the Grey and Bruce region, by supporting settlement of students in the community and promoting employment opportunities for students and graduates in the region.

### Outcomes

Improved communication and access to localized resources and settlement services

Improved employment and career planning services for students

Increase the capacity of regional employers to hire int. students and recent graduates

### Outputs

1. Recommendations for on-campus and community resources and services

2. Recommendations for college-community partnerships to improve resource services

3. Understanding of in-program and graduate employment opportunities and challenges

4. Recommendations for resources and services for employers to support hiring international students

### Activity

Review of the settlement, academic and employment needs of international students

Review of community and college services for international students

Analysis of gaps in services and resources on-campus and in community

Case study analysis of employment opportunities and challenges for Power Engineering and Practical Nursing int. students in the region

Analysis of student employment experiences in the region

Analysis of employers hiring and supporting international students

**Pilot Project**