

# Summer Company 2024 DIRECTORY





# Mayor's Message



Entrepreneurship is in our DNA.

The City of Vaughan's annual Summer Company program gives young entrepreneurs the tools to start their own companies with hands-on coaching from local leaders and an opportunity to receive a provincial grant of up to \$3,000 toward startup expenses and operating costs.

Since 2002, the program has supported hundreds of students as they started or expanded their businesses. From tutoring and web design to landscaping and carpentry, youth in Vaughan are charting their own path to success.

Through the Vaughan Business and Entrepreneurship Centre, the City offers excellent resources, including advisory consultations, workshops, networking opportunities and more for local entrepreneurs and business owners who continue to play a meaningful role in Vaughan's transformational journey.

I want to commend the incredible young leaders of tomorrow on building their businesses here in Vaughan. They are the innovators, leaders and employers who will continue to drive our economy forward. Their entrepreneurial spirit defines our thriving business community and ensures our city's future is in good hands.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven Del Duca".

**Steven Del Duca**  
**Mayor, City of Vaughan**



An average of

**\$9,300**

in revenue generated per business  
between June and September



# 2023 Summer Company Recap



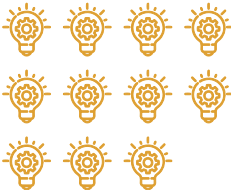
**47**  
Summer Company  
student applications  
received by the City



**11**  
new businesses  
started



**20**  
new summer  
jobs created



**11**  
students  
considering  
entrepreneurship





# 2023 Success Stories



**Simona Verre**

## **Simi's Lifesaving Squad**

Simi's Lifesaving Squad was founded by Simona Romina Verre, a Lifesaving Society standard first aid instructor, lifesaving and swim instructor and national lifeguard. Simona served the Vaughan and King City areas with First Aid Training and Aquatic Leadership courses. What set Simi's Lifesaving Squad apart from its competitors was that they offered smaller classes and mobile courses that resulted in a 90 per cent pass rate average.

During the four months participating in the Summer Company Program, Simona was able to grow her client base, requiring her to hire two additional instructors to keep up with demand. So, what is Simona's advice to students who wish to become entrepreneurs? "Set aside a significant time to properly prepare to start a business and think about applying to Summer Company," she shared as she recalled underestimating the time required to get the business running. "When I'm not teaching a course, I am communicating with families, managing a team and conducting marketing activities," she added.

Through the Summer Company Program, Simona learned different skills required to operate her business and was given an opportunity to present her service at the 2023 Canada Day Event at Boyd Conservation Area in Vaughan. "The workshops were very helpful, and the program providers were extremely supportive and friendly throughout this whole process," Simona recalled with a smile.

Simona returned to York University in the fall to finish her nursing degree. She plans to continue her entrepreneurial journey as she enjoys working for herself and offering a unique service.



**Maxim Shechtman**

## **Max's Window Cleaning**

With a desire to be his own boss, Max started his own business, Max's Window Cleaning. His window cleaning business helped residents and businesses maintain clean windows and increase their curb appeal. By leveraging his marketing experience, he was able to obtain consistent client demand throughout the summer.

Over the summer of 2023, Max had the opportunity to serve over 160 clients, including a major car dealership. When asked if he saw entrepreneurship as a future career, Max responded, "Most definitely! I enjoy being my own boss!"

By participating in the Summer Company Program, Max shared that he was able to learn about getting his business off the ground. Though he didn't know how to write a business plan prior to applying, guidance and insights from the Vaughan Business and Entrepreneurship Centre staff and Max's hard-working attitude turned his business into a success.

Max returned to Toronto Metropolitan University to continue his studies in Business Management, majoring in economics with a minor in accounting.





**Luis Lozano**

## **LA Painting Co**

Motivated by the dream to start his own business, Luis Lozano founded the LA Painting Co, offering interior and exterior painting and staining for residential and commercial properties. By leveraging his prior experience and story to entice clients, Luis was our top grosser for 2023.

During the summer, Luis earned more than \$100,000 with the help of his two crews. When asked what advice he would give to students contemplating starting their own businesses, Luis answered, “Don’t get complacent and keep working even on the days you don’t want to. The time is going to pass anyway, so you might as well make the most of it.” He added that the start-up budget provided by Summer Company was very helpful with his starting expenses.

Through the Summer Company Program workshops, he formulated proper pricing to maintain a profit margin, adding that initially, he underestimated the amount of mistakes he would make while quoting jobs.

Luis returned to Toronto Metropolitan University to finish his degree in International Economics and Finance.



# **2024** **Summer** **Company** **Students**



## Adam Davis

### DAVIS TUTORING

Davis Tutoring, a technology tutoring company, offers support on a diverse range of subjects. These include programming, web development, data structures and algorithms, and many other specialized areas. Through engaging and interactive one-on-one tutoring sessions, students gain a deep understanding of the material.

While studying at Seneca College, Adam Davis volunteered as a tutor, teaching fellow students challenging computer science topics. His experience allowed him to refine his teaching techniques and develop practical tools to convey complex concepts, resulting in significant academic and co-op success for students.

Adam is currently studying Software Development at Seneca College and began his fourth year this fall. He enjoys developing video games, contributing to open source and practicing taekwondo. Adam is always looking for new software projects to build and is committed to continuing his tutoring business after graduation.



## Adir Goldenberg

### ADIR'S COOKIES

Adir's Cookies believes in the perfect blend of passion and quality. Founded out of a love for the simplicity of baking and the excitement of finding solutions to business challenges, Adir's company is dedicated to offering an unparalleled cookie experience. Adir's Cookies understands that every cookie lover is unique, and they make it easy for customers to get cookies just how they like them.

Adir's Cookies are homemade with the highest quality ingredients, ensuring every bite is a delightful experience. Whether you're looking for a classic favourite or a custom creation, Adir's Cookies is here to make your cookie dreams come true. Join them on this delicious journey and taste the difference that passion and quality can make.

Adir Goldenberg is an Israeli Canadian and a family-oriented individual who cares about the ones close to him and values his free time and hard work. Adir enjoys working out, playing sports, eating good food and loves to travel. Adir's future goals are to see the world and work in an environment that he enjoys. Adir is passionate about business and success because he enjoys accomplishing his goals. Adir hopes to continue taking the entrepreneurial route after he completes his post-secondary education.



## Akasha Aftab

### MIRACLE DESIGNS

Miracle Designs is a specialized marketing and printing business that develops tailored designs for various advertising mediums. The company aims to help small businesses enhance their brand presence through effective and customized marketing materials. The services offered include developing brochures, business cards, online advertisements, print advertisements, posters and banners. Additionally, Miracle Designs provides high-quality printing services, ensuring that marketing materials are consistent and professional. Operating online, Miracle Designs offers 24/7 access to service information, pricing and request forms. This online presence ensures easy accessibility and communication with customers.

Miracle Designs stands out by offering personalized design services, comprehensive printing solutions, expert advice and a focus on small businesses, making it a compelling choice for businesses looking to enhance their brand presence.

Akasha Aftab, the founder of Miracle Designs, has extensive experience in the marketing industry, which provides her with a unique advantage in understanding and meeting the needs of small businesses. She is studying Biomedical Sciences at York University and entered her second year this fall. Akasha enjoys exploring different opportunities and embodies an entrepreneurial spirit to find success in her joys.



## Dave Singh

### DINE DESIGN WEBSITES

Welcome to Dine Design Websites, which creates stunning, affordable websites tailored specifically for small restaurants and local businesses. Dine Design Websites' mission is to enhance your online presence with beautifully designed sites that not only look great but also help you attract and engage more customers. From custom menus to integrated reservation systems and SEO optimization, they provide everything you need to stand out in the competitive restaurant industry.

What sets Dine Design Websites apart is their deep understanding of the unique challenges restaurants face. The company goes beyond generic templates by offering custom solutions that make managing content and having a strong online presence a breeze. Its industry-leading techniques ensure that your website looks fantastic and drives real traction, helping build trust and credibility with your customers.

Dave Singh is currently a high school student who is passionate about combining technology with creative solutions. Next year, Dave plans to pursue further studies in computer science and business. When Dave is not working on his website designs, he enjoys exploring new technology trends and volunteering in the community.



## Ethan Cohen

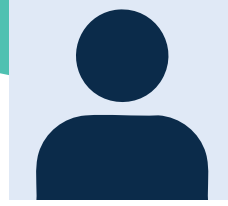
### STRESSYNOL

Stressynol is a company focused on supporting child athletes and students with mental illness and taking away that sense of loneliness and anxiety. The product's significance is to give parents the chance to surprise their children with a gift full of emotional and physical support snacks. The surprise Stressynol gift can go a long way toward conveying to students and athletes that their parents or guardians are thinking of them during stressful times.

Once Stressynol is ready to expand, the company plans to have direct delivery and email services for all parents of post-secondary students to buy an exam tension relief package for their kids living on their own who may be stressed and anxious during exam season.

Ethan Cohen is a dedicated and ambitious York University student pursuing a specialized Honors Degree in finance and economics. Balancing rigorous academic demands with a passion for sports, Ethan has made a significant impact both in the classroom and on the field.

Ethan has demonstrated exceptional athletic prowess and leadership as a critical York University baseball player. His athletic achievements extend beyond baseball, as he has competed at the AAA level in hockey, showcasing his versatility and commitment to excellence in sports.



## Jassa Samra

### GREEN MAPLE PROPERTY SERVICES

Green Maple Property Services is an affordable landscaping company focused on convenience and client satisfaction. Customers will expect to receive the outdoor space they desire through services like lawn mowing, pruning, weeding and other forms of exterior maintenance.

Through the research of other landscaping companies, it was apparent that the services they provided were not congruent with their prices. Therefore, Green Maple is committed to rendering services that are both affordable and effective. Reducing operating expenses, such as using equipment powered by electricity as opposed to gasoline, and operating locally, allows them to keep their prices lower than other companies. Furthermore, reducing overhead costs allows Green Maple Property Services to specialize in personalized services that go beyond services typically offered by competitors.

Jassa Samra is currently studying Business Technology Management at York University and began his fourth year this fall. Jassa hopes to expand his entrepreneurial knowledge through the experience and guidance of the City's Summer Company Program.



## Josh Ovis

### CYBERFORGE COMPUTERS

CyberForge Computers provides tailored computing solutions for gamers and work-from-home professionals based in Vaughan, Ontario. The business offers three primary services: custom-built computers, customized computer upgrades and customized parts lists.

As a home-based sole proprietorship, CyberForge Computers leverages direct communication with clients to ensure a personalized and hassle-free experience. This approach facilitates a clear understanding of customer needs and enables competitive pricing due to reduced overhead costs. With a focus on staying abreast of the latest technology trends and offering comprehensive customization options, CyberForge Computers aims to differentiate itself by providing expert guidance, top-tier customer service, and tailored computing solutions that align perfectly with each client's unique requirements and preferences.

Josh Ovis is currently studying at William Lyon Mackenzie Collegiate Institute, and started Grade 10 this fall. Josh enjoys technology and sports. He is always looking to try new things and is currently deeply invested in computer hardware and software. He hopes to pursue a technological career in the future.



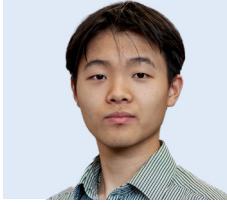
## Joshua Szwera

### BRAND PILOT AI

Brand Pilot AI is a comprehensive suite of digital marketing services tailored for business-to-business (B2B) companies, offering services in influencer marketing, digital advertising, social media management, investor relations portals, LinkedIn and email lead generation.

Brand Pilot's competitive advantage comes from its established network of B2B influencers and its focus on marketing strategies targeted at the finance industry. Brand Pilot targets new up-and-coming financial companies adaptable to the B2B sector and brings in high-value clients, including marketing directors, business development managers and C-suite.

Joshua will be continuing his education in the fall to obtain a Master of Business Administration at Tel Aviv University.



## Jin Zhou

### AVATAR DEBATE ACADEMY

Avatar Debate Academy is a debate tutoring company dedicated to helping students find their voices, express themselves and learn about the world. The company's mission is to help students overcome their fear of public speaking and learn to communicate with the world. Avatar Debate Academy offers group and private lessons tailored to improving debaters' skills.

Debate has always been an integral aspect of Jin's life. Debating for more than six years and coaching for two years has led Jin to compete internationally in places like Great Britain, Croatia and the United States of America. As a member of Team Canada, he has the honour of representing Canadian debaters on the global stage. It is with this specific expertise that Jin started Avatar Debate Academy.

Avatar Debate Academy provides classes, including seminars on world topics (social justice, international relations, philosophy), argument practice exercises and a full debate round with judging.

Jin is currently in Grade 12 at Thornhill Secondary School. When not debating or teaching debate, you can find Jin playing basketball, reading novels, contributing to his school's student council as Prime Minister and volunteering as an English teacher for refugees. He is always eager to pursue new opportunities in business and wants to learn more about the world of business and entrepreneurship.



## Mariam Garcia

### STRATEGY GROWTH

Strategy Growth is a dynamic marketing agency powered by Artificial Intelligence that is dedicated to empowering businesses through strategic planning and innovative growth solutions. The company provides tailored advice and actionable strategies to help businesses optimize their operations and achieve sustainable growth. From market analysis to implementation support, Strategy Growth is committed to driving profitability and success for its clients.

Mariam Garcia, the founder of Strategy Growth, has a passion for entrepreneurship and a keen eye for business opportunities. She recently graduated from high school and is now attending Toronto Metropolitan University to further her education in business. Mariam's dedication to helping businesses thrive stems from her own journey as a young entrepreneur. She enjoys leveraging her skills and knowledge to positively impact the business world.

Outside of her professional endeavours, Mariam is an active member of the entrepreneurial community. She frequently shares insights and tips on her Instagram (@iam\_mariamgarcia) and engages with her audience through motivational content. Her commitment to growth and excellence sets her and Strategy Growth apart, making her a notable participant in the City's Summer Company program.



## Matthew Kurtz

### **KURTZ KARPENTRY**

Kurtz Karpentry offers a variety of custom-made wood products, such as live edge tables, benches, outdoor bars, garden planters, pergolas, outdoor wood sectionals/banquettes and charcuterie boards. All products come in standard sizing and pricing, but they can also be fully customized to suit the needs of each client. For custom projects, 3D modelling software is used to create a design with each client. The tagline of Kurtz Karpentry reflects the company vision: "Don't Just Build... Create".

Kurtz Karpentry makes its products using locally sourced materials. Local woods include black walnut, spalted maple, maple, oak, cedar, pine, cherry and plum wood. Kurtz Karpentry has created beautiful outdoor bars for such clients as The Food Network, and live edge charcuterie boards for many customers, including Fruit of the Land and Nosh Co.

Matthew is in his third year in the civil engineering program at the University of Toronto. He aims to continue specializing in building wood structures, a passion he has developed over the years.



## Max De Saint

### **OASIS CARDS AND GAMES**

Oasis Cards and Games is an online trading card game retailer that aims to provide products and services, such as buying and selling single trading cards and offering select camps and lessons that aid in learning how to play or advance in certain card games. Oasis Cards and Games is a welcoming space for everyone pursuing this wonderful hobby.

Max's business stands out as the market he serves includes a range of individuals between the ages of five and 35, with a huge target market connected with trade card gaming. Max has also professionally competed in Pokemon trade card gaming on an international level and has seen huge growth in the industry, which he believed he could tap into and develop into a business.





## Meghan Lee

### THE TURNIP TROOPS

The Turnip Troops are garden plant stakes that you place near plants to deter harmful pests and bugs. These stakes are doused in eco-friendly essential oils such as peppermint, lavender and lemongrass oil, whose scents naturally protect plants from mites, insects and nasty infections. These stakes are decorated with original turnip-based cartoon characters created and drawn by Megan, making the product a cute addition to the home! Additionally, the scents from the essential oils add a pleasant aroma to the household while providing aromatherapeutic benefits to the customers!

Megan got the inspiration for The Turnip Troops when she had to deal with an ant infestation at home and discovered that most pest deterrents were based on toxic chemicals, which presented a danger to the environment. Megan sought an alternative and combined her passion for art and gardening with her desire to help protect the ecosystem by creating The Turnip Troops. As a result, they offer a one-of-a-kind product that, unlike other pest deterrents, is chemical-free, better for the environment, and safe for children and pets.

Megan is in Grade 11 at the International Baccalaureate program at Alexander Mackenzie High School. She has always been interested in entrepreneurship and intends to pursue business after high school, hoping to utilize her passion for art and creativity. In her spare time, Megan enjoys drawing, writing, playing tennis and walking.



## Serena Wang

### SERENA'S STICHES

Serena's Stitches is a clothing business specializing in vintage and Y2K styles. Each piece is personally designed to combine the playful and bold style of the early 2000s with modern trends and silhouettes. The business strives to provide high-quality clothing at affordable prices for teenage consumers through individually-sewn pieces, hand-selected fabrics and solid attention to detail.

Serena first noticed the widespread demand for Y2K clothing while browsing social media apps and researching market trends in the clothing industry. Inspired by the vibrant fashion communities on these platforms and motivated by her love for sewing and creative design, she created Serena's Stitches. This business meets the market demand for unique and stylish pieces by blending nostalgic elements with contemporary design. The company strives to create unique clothing and a welcoming space for self-expression and style authenticity.

Serena is now in her first year at New York University as a business major, where she hopes to continue to explore her passion for entrepreneurship and finance. In her free time, she enjoys reading and spending time in nature.



# Niagara University Summer Company Training Partner

Niagara University (NU), a private Catholic University, was established by members of the Vincentian order in Lewiston, New York, in 1856. The oldest of three Vincentian institutions in the United States, the programs provide students with highly credentialed faculty and small class sizes to develop graduates who are prepared for positions of responsibility in a way that embodies the vision of St. Vincent DePaul's compassion towards the poor and oppressed.

In 1984, NU became the first New York institution to offer its master of educational leadership under ministerial consent. Since then, it has graduated principals, superintendents and directors of education, members of provincial ministries and accrediting bodies that have served across the province. In 2007, NU responded to Ontario's teacher shortage by expanding its offerings to include a bachelor of professional studies in education program, which is accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers and offered under the consent of the Minister of Colleges and Universities. To date, this program has graduated more than 2,000 teachers.

The move to Vaughan, Ontario, in 2019 consolidated NU's programs in education into a single site. Later that year, NU received ministerial consent to offer three new graduate programs to meet the community's needs. These included a master of science in information security and digital forensics, a master of business administration and a master of science in finance that prepares students for the highly technical and highly regulated world of international finance. NU's Faculty of Business Administration is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) – a designation

attained by just five per cent of the world's business schools. This is achieved with a faculty dedicated to teaching excellence and publishing in internationally recognized journals, close connections with the business community, and a commitment to its mission.

As of 2022, NU is embarking on a new international student strategy. This approach aims to provide academic excellence to international students and assist them in their eventual residency pursuit in Vaughan through internships and other work opportunities. As of 2024, NU is now offering two new graduate programs, including a Master of Science in Criminal Justice Administration and a Master of Science in Disaster/Emergency Management and National Security. In other exciting news, NU is growing and expanding, adding 20,000 square feet to the existing campus in Vaughan. In addition to serving as an academic institution, NU hopes to become a community hub for various events and business needs.

NU is proud to be in Vaughan and enact its mission by serving the community's needs. Through their pandemic speaker series, working with the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce and collaboration with the City of Vaughan on the Summer Company program, NU is contributing to developing the next generation of entrepreneurs and business leaders. For this year's Summer Company program, NU is facilitating university-level business workshops on customer relationship building, growth marketing and the fundamentals of business finance. At the end of the summer, each student will receive a certificate of completion from NU, recognizing their accomplishments over the summer.

# Economic Development

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