



**RRC**

POLYTECH

# Inspiring RRC Polytech Alumni

A STORYTELLING STRATEGY FOR SHARING SUCCESS

# Summary

*When our grads feel valued, they are much more likely to give back to RRC Polytech, whether with their time or their treasure.*

RRC Polytech's Alumni Engagement strategy comprises research-based tactics designed to meet the overarching goal of increasing donations from our alumni community and fostering a culture of philanthropy. In 2021, we had two directives to set the stage for increasing alumni giving: grow our alumni database, and inspire alumni to share their stories. We ran a two-part campaign (spring and fall) to meet these objectives.

## Part One: Increase Number of Alumni Contacts – Blueprints for Career Success

From February to May 2021, RRC Polytech's Alumni Engagement office ran a storytelling campaign rooted in a contest to win "career boosters." The campaign highlighted the success stories of ten graduates across a diverse range of industries and backgrounds. Their stories illustrated how their education through RRC Polytech allowed them ultimately achieve (and continue to achieve) career success, and encouraged alumni to use these stories as inspiration – along with RRC Polytech's career-boosting offerings – to establish their own paths to achieving their career goals. The campaign was successful in engaging alumni, informing them of RRC's new and existing career advancement offerings, and ultimately strengthening future fundraising efforts by improving the quality of audience data in our prospect database. We gained 521 new alumni contacts we could then reach out to in our fall campaign.



RRC Polytech Creative Communications graduate Sheila North

# Summary



RRC Polytech Mechanical Engineering Technology graduate Paul Cantin

## Part Two: Inspire Our Alumni – Bold Future

During the month of October, we ran the Bold Future campaign – a storytelling campaign in reverse. Instead of sharing graduates' stories, we invited our grads to share their stories with us. The campaign centered around a contest inviting alumni to share how RRC Polytech helped shape their career paths, reach their goals, get in front of what's ahead in their industry, take their lives in a bold direction, or overcome challenges. The contest launched in conjunction with the College's public launch of our new brand and strategic plan as a way to invite our alumni community to buy into the new brand direction (claiming our identity as a polytechnic institution) and celebrate both the legacy and future of RRC Polytech. The contest featured three themed prize packages each worth approximately \$1,500. The prize packages included products from RRC Polytech's talented alumni makers, exclusive experiences related to package themes, brand-new RRC Polytech swag, and a free course (value of \$629) from RRC Polytech's part-time and online offerings, including micro-credentials. The results of this contest exceeded expectations. We were thrilled to gain 365 inspired alumni contacts that we can reach out to in order to develop new content that will engage additional alumni and who can potentially be stewarded as prospective donors by our internal fundraising team as they prepare to launch the largest fundraising campaign in the College's history.

# Goals & Objectives

## Primary Goal

Source and use real alumni success stories to inspire and engage our alumni in order to create warm fundraising leads and grow our database through exciting contests and opportunities to reskill or upskill, and by elevating the profiles of our alumni.



RRC Polytech Business Information Technology graduate James Warren (second from right) with recent RRC Polytech graduates

# Goals & Objectives

## Objectives

- Drive at least 500 contest entries (new alumni contact information submissions)
- Generate at least 900,000 impressions and 10,500 engagement actions across digital media, including email opens, ad clicks, and social media likes and shares
- Direct at least 22,000 visits to the campaign landing page
- Create at least 10 blog posts that highlight alumni success stories, mention the contests, and drive primary action (form completions)
- Inform and provide value to alumni in an effort to further build the audience of potential future donors
- Make RRC Polytech our graduates' first choice for reskilling and upskilling by highlighting career success opportunities, include part-time and online offerings, micro-credentials, mentorship opportunities, and career consultations
- Encourage alumni to use our grads' blueprints to establish their own paths to achieving career success
- Build affinity for and inspire buy in to our new identity as a Polytechnic and bring awareness about the new brand direction (encourage ambassadorship)
- Support and bring awareness to RRC Polytech's talented alumni maker community, and highlight alumni-owned/operated businesses
- Gather alumni testimonials for use in future campaigns and alumni profiles, and help our internal fundraising team identify donor prospects

# Strategy & Methodology

The campaign's goals and objectives were tackled through the use of three key strategic pillars:

- 1. Leveraging Alumni Relationships**
- 2. Offering Exciting Opportunities**
- 3. Tapping into Multichannel Marketing**



RRC Polytech Advanced Graphic Design graduate Jordan Stranger

# Strategy & Methodology

## 1. Leveraging Alumni Relationships

With the first part of the campaign, Blueprints for Career Success, we leveraged existing alumni relationships to source success stories.

Working with our internal partners – Deans, program coordinators, and instructors – we identified 10 graduates from a variety of industries and College program areas that we could then reach out to for interviews and photoshoots. We were able to share grad stories spanning six industries (health care, creative arts, hospitality, engineering, construction trades, and information technology), allowing us to reach thousands of alumni who graduated from similar programs and who work in similar industries.

By leveraging existing connections, our academic partners gained an additional avenue for promoting their program areas and the Alumni Engagement team gained warm leads for storytelling.

With the second part of the campaign, Bold Future, we tapped into our network of talented alumni makers, purchasing items and experiences from our alumni-owned or operated businesses to include in our themed prize packages. We highlighted seven alumni whose product or service was included as part of a prize package or in marketing materials.

From luxury home goods to custom artwork, and from a DIY woodworking session to a cake baking and decorating class with one of Winnipeg's premier local bakeries, we were able to not only offer alumni entering the contest incredible prizes, but also promote and support our alumni makers during a difficult period due to COVID-19 restrictions.

By leveraging existing alumni relationships, we were able to strengthen our ties to these grads and gain better reach, engagement, stories, and prizes.



# Strategy & Methodology

## 2. Offering Exciting Opportunities

Thanks to extensive research into our alumni audience, we knew which tactics to employ to engage our alumni – this is why we chose to run two contests offering our alumni exciting opportunities. Because our alumni told us what they wanted to see from us and because we listened, it was a win-win.

**Blueprints for Career Success** offered our alumni the chance to win career boosters: a free micro-credential course (maximum value \$265) or a free one-on-one career consultation with an RRC Polytech career expert. We gave away 10 micro-credential courses and 30 career consultations, and alumni had the opportunity to select which career booster they would like to win.

**Bold Future** offered our alumni the chance to win one of three themed prize packages, each worth approximately \$1,500 and including products from RRC Polytech's talented alumni makers, exclusive experiences related to package themes (Aviation, Skilled Trades, and Hospitality and Culinary Arts), RRC Polytech-branded swag, and a free course (value of \$629) from RRC Polytech's part-time and online offerings, including micro-credentials.

It also invited alumni to share how RRC Polytech helped shaped their career path, reach their goals, get in front of what's ahead in their industry, take their life in a bold direction, or overcome challenges, and these submissions will also be used for future alumni profiles and speaking opportunities.

# Strategy & Methodology

## 3. Tapping into Multichannel Marketing

In order to maximize our budget and reach as many of our alumni in Manitoba as possible, we primarily relied on digital marketing tactics, both paid and organic.

Our target audience was reached in several ways:

- Dedicated landing pages
- Cross-links on several relevant rrc.ca web pages
- Digital ads that appeared throughout the web, including websites frequently visited by our alumni
- Emails using our existing email list of +37,000 e-newsletter subscribers
- Social media posts and ads
- Streaming audio ads
- A print ad in the Winnipeg Free Press
- Outdoor signage

A strong visual identity created cohesion among all our tactics and brought our new brand, RRC Polytech, to the forefront. Through this approach, we exceeded our goal of impressions by 655% and our goal of engagement actions across all digital media by 414%.



RRC Polytech Nursing graduate Jaime Manness

# Marketing Creative

## Web Pages



### Blueprints for Career Success

As industries evolve, Red River College's alumni keep pace - remaining nimble and responsive in the face of rising challenges, including a pandemic that continues to change the way that we work. They are *all in*, and so is Red River College.

The creativity and perseverance of our alumni as they continue to adapt to the pandemic has been inspiring. Even in their own time of need, many alumni *generously donated* to help students through the COVID-19 Emergency Student Support Fund.

Follow along to discover our alumni's inspiring success stories, exciting career boosters to help you reach your career goals faster, and continuing education and mentorship opportunities, all of which will help you form your own blueprint for career success.

[ENTER TO WIN CAREER BOOSTERS](#)

### Browse Alumni Success Stories

Check out career success stories from RRC alumni for inspiration on building your own career success blueprint.



**Lanell Smith**  
Hospitality and Tourism Management grad Lanell Smith achieves career success running one of Manitoba's most popular restaurants.



**Sam Aminian**  
RRC grad Sam Aminian achieves career success as a Pediatric Cardiovascular Technologist at Manitoba's largest hospital.



**Sheila North**  
Creative Communications grad Sheila North achieves career success coaching Manitoba's businesses in diversity.



**Nick Bockstael**  
RRC grad Nick Bockstael achieves career success as Vice-President of one of Manitoba's leading construction companies.



**Robert Okabe**  
Civil Engineering grad Robert Okabe achieves career success leading one of Manitoba's largest trade organizations.



**Jaime Manness**  
RRC grad Jaime Manness achieves career success by training Manitoba's health care workers.

### Contact Us

**Red River College Alumni Engagement**  
C308A-2055 Notre Dame Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0J9

[204-632-2399](tel:204-632-2399) [EMAIL US](#)



### Tap Into Alumni Benefits

Access support and services you need to get the most from your education.

Browse membership perks, join our mentorship network, access employment services, and more.

[Browse benefits >](#)

### Donate to RRC

Help us build a better future. Your donation will fund innovation and impact at Red River College.

[DONATE NOW](#)



### A bold legacy. A bold future.

RRC Polytech's alumni community is a diverse network of entrepreneurs, contributors, and innovators with the essential skills to drive industry in our province. Our alumni, and their contributions to industry in Manitoba and around the world, are what make us proud of being a Polytechnic Institution - Manitoba's only Polytechnic. Our alumni define what Red River College Polytechnic is, just as Red River College Polytechnic has helped our alumni define their own paths.

[Learn more about our bold name change and our exciting plan for the future >](#)

Adding Polytechnic to Red River College Polytechnic's identity isn't simply a name change - it is a reflection of who we are and who we have always been. We proudly claim this title and are excited to share this update with our alumni community.

### Win Exciting Prizes



**Tell us the bold direction you've taken in your life. Enter today for your chance to win one of three incredible prize packages, each worth approximately \$1,500.**

From a once-in-a-lifetime helicopter ride to a relaxing spa experience, plus brand-new RRC Polytech swag and products from RRC Polytech's talented alumni makers, these prize packages celebrate RRC Polytech, as well as alumni-owned and operated businesses.

- **PACKAGE #1: AVIATION AND AEROSPACE**
  - Scenic helicopter flight for up to 4 people along the shore of beautiful Lake Winnipeg with Prairie Helicopters
  - VIP tour of RRC Polytech's Stevenson Campus, where our students are trained in all aspects of the aviation and aerospace sector
  - \$50 gift card to **Academy Hospitality** (valid at Mottola Grocery, Pizzeria Gusto, The Merchant Kitchen, Gusto North, Yara Burger, The Good Fight Taco, and Rose Bar)
  - Coal and Canary Candle Company bestselling **Chunky Knit Sweater** candle
  - Custom 8x10 #kbscript art piece by **Kal Barteski**
  - \$150 gift card to Red River College Polytechnic's **Campus Store** so you can choose the RRC Polytech swag you'd like to rep
  - \$50 gift card to **Jane's**, RRC Polytech's fine dining restaurant and training ground for Hospitality and Culinary Arts students
  - One free course, value of \$629, of your choosing from RRC Polytech's **part-time and online offerings**, including micro credentials

• **PACKAGE #2: HOSPITALITY AND CULINARY ARTS**

• **PACKAGE #3: SKILLED TRADES**

### Stay In Touch

**Red River College Polytechnic Alumni Engagement**  
C308A-2055 Notre Dame Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0J9

[204-632-2399](tel:204-632-2399) [EMAIL US](#)



#RRCALumni

### Tap Into Alumni Benefits

Access support and services you need to get the most from your education.

Browse membership perks, join our mentorship network, access employment services, and more.

[Browse benefits >](#)

### Donate to RRC Polytech

Help us build a better future. Your donation will fund innovation and impact at Red River College Polytechnic.

[DONATE NOW](#)

# Marketing Creative

## Print Ad

**RED RIVER COLLEGE**

### Three Steps to Career Success

**1 Attend Our Virtual Open House**

Connect with us online at our Virtual Open House. Meet and learn from our instructors, students, alumni and staff to gather the information and knowledge you need to make an informed decision about your future.

**WEDNESDAY, FEB. 17, 2021**  
4 - 8 PM CST

REGISTER TODAY [rrc.ca/openhouse](http://rrc.ca/openhouse)

**2 Choose Your Path**

Red River College is Manitoba's only polytechnic institution. With more than 200 full- and part-time certificate, diploma and degree programs, we're always adapting to ensure our graduates meet the needs of our province's growing economy.

**NEW WORLD. NEW PROGRAMS.**

Register for one of our eight brand new programs, and be among the first to graduate with a highly sought-after credential.

- Information Security [rrc.ca/it](http://rrc.ca/it)
- Data Science and Machine Learning [rrc.ca/dsm](http://rrc.ca/dsm)
- Digital Film and Media Production [rrc.ca/dfm](http://rrc.ca/dfm)
- Communication Management [rrc.ca/cm](http://rrc.ca/cm)
- Interaction Design and Development [rrc.ca/idd](http://rrc.ca/idd)
- Video and Motion Graphics [rrc.ca/vmg](http://rrc.ca/vmg)
- Game Development - Programming [rrc.ca/gdp](http://rrc.ca/gdp)
- Game Development - Design [rrc.ca/gdd](http://rrc.ca/gdd)

**BOOST YOUR SKILLS WITH OUR MICRO-CREDENTIALS.**

Recently launched online micro-credential courses align with some of the most desired skills sought by industry. Earn a shareable digital badge that shows off your new skills.

Courses are available in: Business and Communications, Leadership and Management, Data Science, Digital Design, New Media, Health Sciences.

GET STARTED TODAY [rrc.ca/boost](http://rrc.ca/boost)

**3 Discover Our Alumni's Blueprints for Success**

Red River College alumni can be found in virtually every corner of Manitoba's workforce, helping organizations thrive and providing support to the people who need it most.

Learn their secrets for career success and enter for a chance to win a micro-credential course or one-on-one career consultation.

ENTER TO WIN [rrc.ca/careersuccess](http://rrc.ca/careersuccess)

[rrc.ca](http://rrc.ca)

# Marketing Creative

## Outdoor Signage



# Marketing Creative

## Emails



Hi Friend of RRC,

As industries evolve, Red River College's alumni keep pace – remaining nimble and responsive in the face of rising challenges, including a pandemic that continues to change the way that we work. They are **all in**, and so is Red River College.

### Nick's Blueprint for Career Success



Armed with the technical foundation provided by Red River College's Structural Engineering Technology program, 2006 grad Nick Bockstael achieves career success as the Vice-President of Construction for Bockstael Construction Ltd. He is part of the fourth generation to lead the family business founded more than 108 years ago by his paternal great-grandfather, Theodore.

[Learn more about Nick's story and how he's achieving career success today.](#)



Hi Friend of RRC,

As industries evolve, Red River College's alumni keep pace – remaining nimble and responsive in the face of rising challenges, including a pandemic that continues to change the way that we work. They are **all in**, and so is Red River College.

### Enter for a Chance to Win Career Boosters



Exciting career boosters are available for RRC alumni to win:

- **New online micro-credential courses** (max. value of \$265) that allow you to quickly gain skills and show them off to employers with a digital badge
- **One-on-one career consultations with an RRC expert**, where you can share your career goals and get advice on next steps

Enter to win today!

# Marketing Creative

## Organic Social



redrivercollege  
Treaty No. 1

Tell us the bold direction you've taken in your life. Enter today for your chance to win 1 of 3 incredible prize packages, each worth approximately \$1,500.

From a once-in-a-lifetime helicopter ride to a relaxing spa experience, plus brand-new RRC Polytech swag and products from our talented alumni makers, these prize packages celebrate RRC Polytech, as well as alumni-owned and operated businesses.

Check out the full prize listing and contest rules at the #inkinbio. Contest is open to all alumni and runs until Friday, November 5.

View Insights

Liked by rrc.campusstore and 203 others

OCTOBER 7

Add a comment...



redrivercollege  
Treaty No. 1

This is the final week to enter our Bold Future alumni contest!

Enter now for your chance to win 1 of 3 incredible prize packages celebrating RRC Polytech's bold legacy, our exciting future, and our talented alumni makers.

Simply share how RRC Polytech has helped you get in front of what's ahead in your industry before Friday, November 5 for your chance to win.

For full prize descriptions and contest rules, head to the link in our bio.

View Insights

Liked by rrc.library and 57 others

NOVEMBER 3

Add a comment...

Red River College  
Published by Darren Lamb (Marketing) · March 9

2006 Hospitality and Tourism Management grad Laneil Smith has been co-owner of one of St. Boniface's most beloved restaurants - Marion Street Eatery - since 2014.

Her passion for the industry, paired with her RRC education, has made her (and her team, many of whom are also RRC grads) uniquely prepared to deal with the many challenges posed by the pandemic this past year.

Learn more about Laneil's blueprint for career success and enter to win exciting career boosters to help you reach your own goals at <https://www.rrc.ca/.../hospitality-and-tourism-grad-...>



RRC.CA

Hospitality and Tourism grad builds comfort-food career from backbone of RRC training

40,484 People Reached    4,331 Engagements    Boost Post

Red River College  
Published by Hootsuite · March 3

From the oil fields of Northern BC, to the ER of Manitoba's busiest hospital, Jaime Manness's career path has been anything but linear.

The 2009 Bachelor of Nursing grad and founder of Hike Manitoba is no stranger to the scenic route, applying the same sense of adventure to her career as to hiking Manitoba's trails.

Learn more about Jaime's blueprint for career success and enter to win exciting career boosters to help you reach your own goals by visiting [https://www.rrc.ca/.../career-path-leads-through-red-...](https://www.rrc.ca/.../career-path-leads-through-red-.../)



A 1983 grad of Red River College's Civil Engineering Technology program, Robert Okabe leads CTAM - an organization that certifies engineering and applied science technicians and technologists, while connecting them to resources and each other.

Learn more about Robert's blueprint for career success and enter to win exciting career boosters to help you reach your own goals at <https://lnkd.in/gqhE635>



Civil Engineering grad holds deep RRC roots through support and certification



redrivercollege  
Treaty No. 1

RRC Polytech's alumni community is a diverse network of entrepreneurs, contributors, and innovators with essential skills to drive industry Manitoba.

Share with us how RRC Polytech prepared you for work after grad and enter to win 1 of 3 incredible prize packages.

Prize Package #3's theme is Ski Trades. Enter for your chance at an exclusive DIY woodworking workshop with an expert RRC Polytech instructor (and go home with a luxury too) two early bird tickets to @thirdchristmasmarket, and a fabulous custom art piece by artist and

View Insights

Liked by rrc.campusstore and 65 others

OCTOBER 27

Add a comment...



redrivercollege  
Treaty No. 1

redrivercollege RRC grad Nina Widmer is no stranger to her own path. As Manitoba's first female student to lead Seal M, she's also the sole female student on her program at the U of M.

And, if the experience of being the only woman in her class had any influence on Widmer, she's the one who has permanent signature on the College today, having her name on the exterior facade of RRC's Paterson Global Foods Innovation Centre.

"To bring these buildings back to life and help teach future generations, to me, is the perfect combination of our heritage while building our future."

Learn more about Nina's blueprint for career success [#inkinbio](https://www.rrc.ca/.../inkinbio)

#redrivercollege #rrcalumni #rrcblueprints #careergrowth #womeninbusiness #masonry #rocklayer @nina\_widmer @alpha\_masonry

Edited · 48w

terrapint000 You are the pride of Red River College! Congratulations on all your accomplishments.

48w · 1 like · Reply

View Insights

Liked by rrc.library and 165 others

APRIL 12, 2021

# Marketing Creative

## Paid Digital Ads

**RRC POLYTECH**

HAIR MASQUES - 25  
SHEER BUTTER MASQUES - 30  
SPECIALTY MASQUES - 32  
HAIR SERUM - 15  
SEA SALT SPRAY - 15  
SERVING CONDITIONS

### Share Your Bold Story to Win

In Front of What's Ahead

**RRC POLYTECH**

### Share Your Bold Story to Win

In Front of What's Ahead

**RRC POLYTECH**

### Share Your Bold Story to Win

ENTER TO WIN

**RED RIVER COLLEGE**

### Career-boosting courses and consultations.

ENTER TO WIN

**RED RIVER COLLEGE**

## I'M ALL INDUSTRY.

Discover our graduates' blueprints for career success.

LEARN MORE

**RED RIVER COLLEGE**

## I'M ALL INDUSTRY.

RRC grad **Sheila North** achieves career success coaching Manitoba's businesses in diversity.

EXPLORE SHEILA'S CAREER BLUEPRINT

**RED RIVER COLLEGE**

## I'M ALL INDUSTRY.

Succeed in your profession like RRC grad **Sam Aminian** with our career-boosting courses and consultations.

ENTER TO WIN

**RED RIVER COLLEGE**

## I'M ALL INDUSTRY.

RRC grad **Laneil Smith** achieves career success running one of Manitoba's most popular restaurants.

EXPLORE LANEIL'S CAREER BLUEPRINT

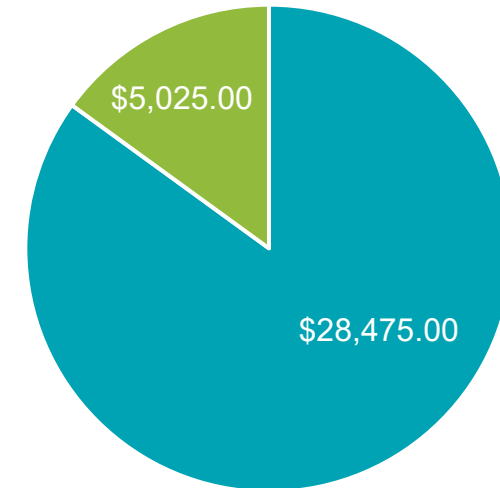


# Effective Use of Resources

The campaign was built by a small team, consisting of:

- Business Development Marketing Manager
  - Developed campaign strategies and marketing pieces, oversaw execution of the campaign
- Alumni Engagement Officer
  - Developed marketing pieces, project managed the campaign including coordinating alumni interviews
- Creative/Design staff (3)
  - Designed all marketing creative
- Web staff (3)
  - Built website landing pages, created social media posts

## Budget Allocation



■ Paid Media (Advertising) ■ Contest Prizes

Total budget: \$33,500. Advertising was purchased across digital channels frequented by RRC Polytech alumni, including social media platforms, third-party sites, and streaming audio.

# Achievements

Through this strategic storytelling campaign, we:

- ✓ Grew our database by **891** new invested (i.e. highly-engaged) alumni **contacts**
- ✓ Generated more than **6.8 million impressions** and **54,000 engagement actions** across digital media
- ✓ Drove **28,215** people to the RRC Polytech Alumni Engagement website.
- ✓ Supported **seven alumni-owned or operated businesses**
- ✓ Gathered **365 alumni testimonials** for use in future campaigns and alumni profiles, helping our internal fundraising team identify donor prospects



RRC Polytech Masonry graduate Nina Widmer

# Lasting Impact

Instead of putting RRC Polytech at the centre of our storytelling campaign, we put our alumni at the centre – because our alumni success stories are our success stories, and when our alumni shine, RRC Polytech shines.

Our goal was to feature the amazing work our alumni have done since graduating from RRC Polytech (some more than once!) and showcase their success not only to their peers (fellow alumni) and the RRC Polytech community, but also to the wider business community in Winnipeg.

There's a bias in our province that elevates university education over technical, hands-on training; by proudly staking our claim as a Polytechnic – Manitoba's *only* Polytechnic – we are finally able to boldly proclaim the success of our institution via the success of our graduates. When our alumni talk about themselves and when our community talks about RRC Polytech, we don't want a tone of surprise – we want a tone of pride.

Our alumni are top achievers thanks to the hands-on training they received through RRC Polytech and they deserve their success. By sharing positive alumni success stories, we're changing how Manitoba thinks of RRC Polytech and instilling pride in our alumni community. This alumni-centric approach has been the key to rebuilding our alumni database and strengthening relationships with our alumni partners.

This two-part multi-channel digital campaign achieved success in strengthening relationships with our sprawling alumni network and laying the groundwork for a future alumni giving campaign.



**RRC**  
POLYTECH