

**VSB Adult Education  
Graduation Yearbook  
2019/2020**

**Congratulations, and thank you for letting us  
be part of your ongoing journey in education.**

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CELEBRATES THE  
**Graduating  
Class of 2020**

**Suzanne Hoffman, Superintendent of Schools**  
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Jennifer Reddy, School Liaison Trustee  
Gathering Place Education Centre  
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**Janet Fraser, School Liaison Trustee**  
**South Hill Education Centre**  
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CELEBRATES THE

# Graduating Class of 2020

# David Morita, Principal South Hill Education Centre and Gathering Place Education Centre

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## **My Adult Education Experience**

- *A Memoir and Advice*

I originally came to South Hill Education Centre in the Spring of 2019. I immediately set a plan with Noreen, an academic counsellor, on what I needed to accomplish to finish my high school education. Originally, I had dropped out of high school in the summer of 2007 to pursue a career in the Culinary Industry, and even though I enjoyed what I did for a living... I wanted more for myself. In doing my research regarding adult education I came across South Hill. It seemed like a perfect opportunity to finish my education requirements and hopefully set myself up for college or university.

After three weeks of classes in English 11 with Ms. Harker and Social Studies 11 with Mr. Everaars, I started to settle in from a working life to a student life. Unfortunately, I had a tragic personal issue come to light and had to drop my course commitment, yet again I was having to start from scratch. If I had one piece of advice for future students, it would be not to give up. I felt a heavy burden returning to South Hill in the Fall of 2019, but I was welcomed with a warm, kind embrace and started my journey over again. Even though I did not have Ms. Harker or Mr. Everaars as instructors moving forward, I was constantly encouraged by them to continue and excel with my studies.

- TROY RILEY - continued...1/3



As I restarted at South Hill I had great instructors in both classroom settings as well as the self-paced laboratory. For English 11 and 12, Ms. Gill was an inspiration on how to write effectively and convey emotion to other human beings. For Biology 12, Mr. Kirkwood was a highly educated individual who not only had a masterful way of teaching science, but an overall grasp of social and political events which was beyond the course at hand. For Mathematics, I had the blessing of working with Ivan to begin the process. Math was never a strong suit for me, however he gave me the confidence moving forward to tackle the rest of my necessary courses in the self-paced laboratory.

Furthermore, I want to express my sincere gratitude to South Hill for the possibility of self-paced courses. If you are looking for a way to challenge yourself and have the time to expend for dedicating yourself to your education, I whole heartedly recommend self-paced courses. The team of instructors in the laboratory were all brilliant in their skill sets and ability to give time to individuals having trouble. With the assistance of Ms. O'Brien, Mr. Vernier, Mr. Kuchmistrz and especially Mr. Buis I was able to complete Social Studies 11, Law 12, and three Mathematics courses in a condensed period of time.

- TROY RILEY continued...2/3

Finally, I would like to thank Ms. Cruz for her unwavering support as the outreach worker for South Hill. She has helped me with everything from scholarships to covering book costs and coming from a low-income family her advice and assistance has been invaluable. Since my recent graduation from South Hill I have been accepted at Langara College for an Associate in Fine Arts Degree specializing in Counselling Psychology.

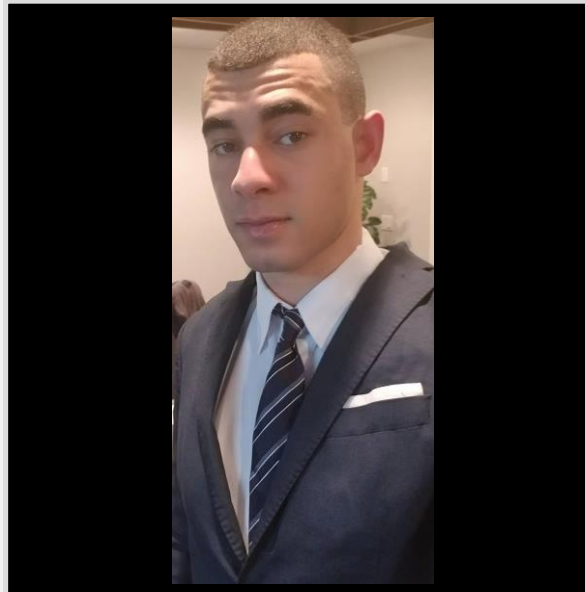
In conclusion, I would strongly recommend South Hill Education Centre to anyone looking to better themselves. Whether starting in a new country, continuing education, or like me finishing a long lost goal, this school is a fabulous option for anyone.

- Troy Riley, SOUTH HILL EDUCATION CENTRE

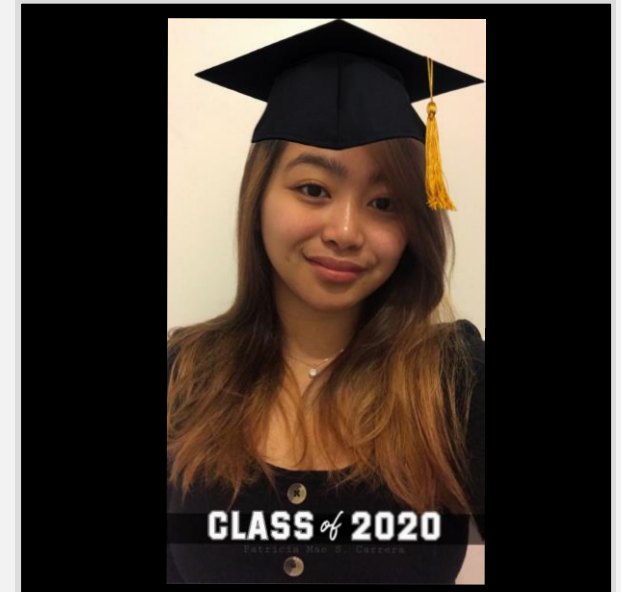
# Graduation Procession:



Nabi Hasan Akhtar

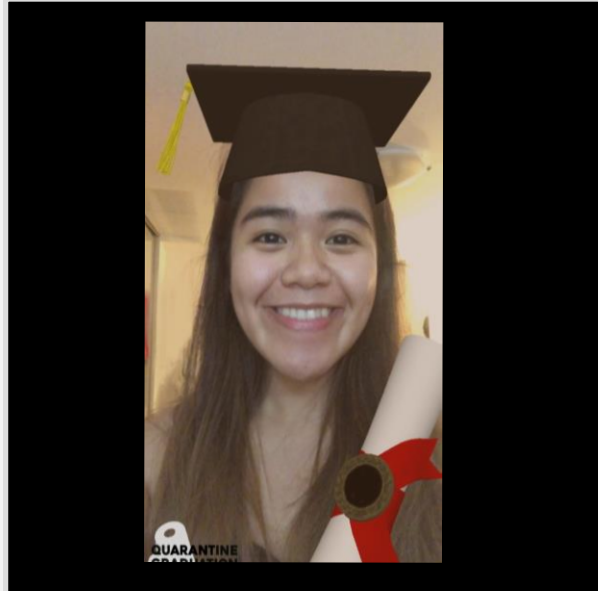


Caleb Nicholas Henry Brandt



Patricia Mae Carrera

# Graduation Procession:



Angelica Chrysta De La Torre



Altair Hernandez Perez



Maryam Hosseini

## **My Adult Education Experience:**

I would like to thank Gathering place school for all they're doing to help each student! When I first came to this school, I wasn't sure what to expect but I got nothing but warmth and welcoming.

I didn't know what direction to take but Donna Brack seemed to help guide me in all my courses! She knew exactly the ones that suited me and I followed what she saw in me that I didn't see in myself and I'm so glad she helped me. The staff is kind and caring and if not for them I wouldn't be here today! The volunteers have been an enormous help as well! If Gathering place wasn't here, I wouldn't be where I'm at now!

And now because of this school I get to receive my diploma! As a First Nation's not many of us get to be where I am and because of this school I was able to achieve this! Thank you to the Vancouver School Board for keeping this school open!

- Roberta Keepness, GATHERING PLACE EDUCATION CENTRE

# Graduation Procession:



Roberta Keepness



Sanming Liu



Joanna Ma

# Graduation Procession:



Muhammad Baig Mirza



Svetlana Moukhanov



Hon Nguyen

## **My Adult Education Experience:**

I am hardly a sentimental person, but I wouldn't be truthful if I said the fortuitous encounter I'd had with an Adult Education Instructor at the hotel I'd resided some years ago didn't evoke some tendency toward such incantations. Fortuitous as it was, it certainly was not a meeting held in vain; I'm pleased to say I'll be starting my first college term this September (something I still now find a bit shocking).

As a member of a more vulnerable population that has not been given the same opportunities as others have, this fact is something that may not have materialized if I hadn't had access to the resources adult education provided me with. We live in an increasingly knowledge-based economy; the jobs of which are rooted in degrees obtained in post-secondary institutes. Places like the Gathering Place and South Hill have been the keystone in the arch on the bridge to prosperity and freedom I now proudly march towards.

The intelligence, diligence and kindness the staff and educators have showed me during my time with them is something I will always remember. They've shown me things about the world I'd hardly ever have considered and have opened the gates to places I'd never thought was possible for me. I will forever be grateful for it. Thank you.

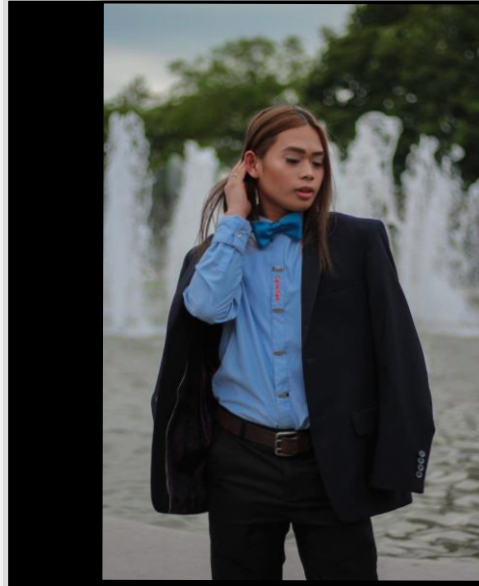
- Connor Arsenault, GATHERING PLACE EDUCATION CENTRE



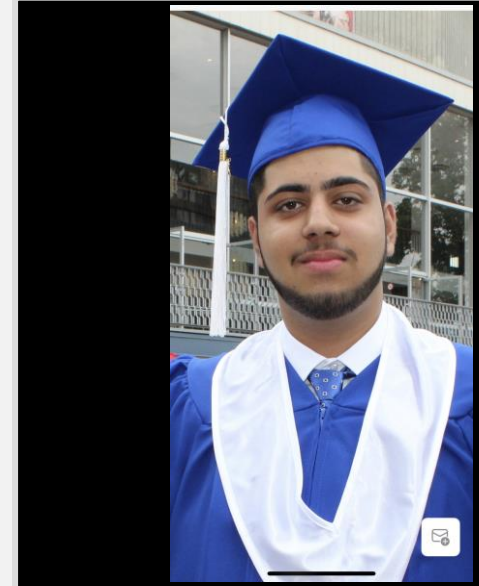
# Graduation Procession:



Mohommad Subhan Omar



Omar Maramba Pamintuan



Anish Parmar

# Graduation Procession:



Blue Pham



Troy Riley



Harkitrat Singh

# Graduation Procession:



Queenzy Joi Gano Teneza



Camryn Vanderlee



Zilan Yousefi

## **My Adult Education Experience:**

Congratulations, Class of 2020! It has certainly been an unusual year, and I am glad we were able to finish all the schoolwork on time.

When I was a kid, my parents had very high expectations for me. There was a lot of pressure, and academic achievement was directly tied to bringing honour (or shame) to the family. When I was one of the students chosen to make a speech at my elementary school's Grade 7 graduation ceremony, I can say with confidence that neither the teachers, nor the students, would have had even the slightest suspicion that I would end up dropping out a few years later. If I were to give any sort of advice, it would be that if you have a dream, you should pursue it, no matter how old you are. Whatever pain and regret you have in the past, please don't allow it to stop you from pursuing happiness in the future.

Unfortunately, life is full of twists and turns, and things don't go the way we planned; here I am, 31 years old, a married mother of two, graduating from Grade 12. I am very blessed to be in Canada, where places such as the Gathering Place Education Center exist. When I came to GP, I felt the weight of all society bearing down on me as I was so far behind my peers who graduated in 2006. What I didn't expect was to find such kindness and support. The teachers (Donna, Nick, Todd, Janek and Cathleen) and outreach worker (Namorsh) were so gracious and encouraging. It really did make a difference.

- Nicole Alakhverdians (continued...1/2)

I hope that we can all look back on this strange and stressful year of 2020 and remember it as a year of perseverance. No matter how old you are, 18 or 80; no matter how you ended up taking Adult Ed classes; no matter what society holds as the “standard” path; I hope we can all look back to this graduation as the start of something bright and full of possibilities.

I would like to thank my parents, but especially I want to thank my brothers for thinking I’m awesome despite my myriad faults (Happy Grad 2020 to you too, little brother!) and my husband for putting up with my Pre-Calculus rants and tears.

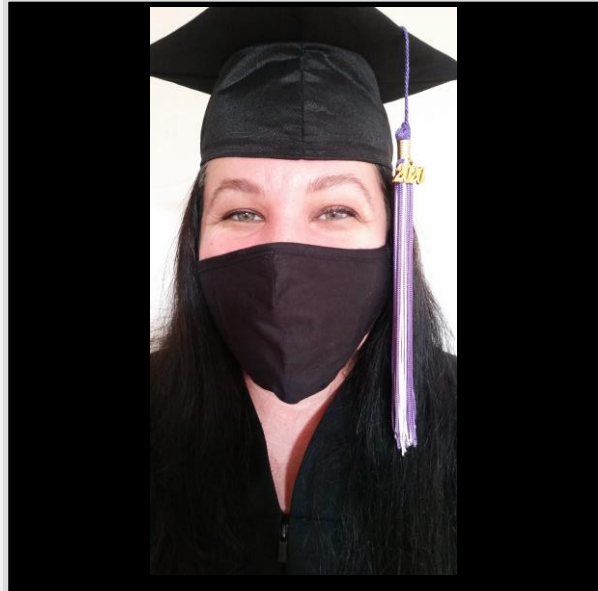
To my boys: You don’t have to be doctors (although that would be nice!) and I will love you unconditionally no matter what.

And to Kathleen: I love you and I miss you so much. I wish you were here.

**GOOD WORK, EVERYONE!**

- Nicole Alakhverdians, GATHERING PLACE EDUCATION CENTRE

# Graduation Procession:



Stefana Carmichael



Jatinder Kaur



Lazara Retana

# GRADUATION CLASS OF 2020 SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES:

## DISTRICT SCHOLARSHIPS:

**Nicole Alakhverdians**, Gathering Place Education Centre

**Connor Collin Arsenault**, Gathering Place Education Centre

**Caleb Nicholas Henry Brandt**, South Hill Education Centre

**Angelica Chrysta De La Torre**, South Hill Education Centre

**Troy Christopher Riley**, South Hill Education Centre

# GRADUATION CLASS OF 2020 SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES:

VANCOUVER ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS &  
VICE PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION (VEPVPA) BURSARY:

**Lazara Libis Retana**, South Hill Education Centre

VANCOUVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION  
(VESTA) BURSARY:

**Jennifer Barroquillo Bishop**, Gathering Place Education Centre  
**Muhammad Baig Mirza**, South Hill Education Centre





# GRADUATION CLASS OF 2020 SCHOLARSHIPS & BURSARIES:

GEORGE STEINER BURSARY, South Hill:

**Muhammad Baig Mirza**

DOREEN DAVID TAKAHARA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP, South Hill:

**Zefanya Hardhian**

VANCOUVER ARBUTUS ROTARY CLUB SCHOLARSHIP:

**Mohammad Suliman**, South Hill Education Centre

FROM  
EVERYONE  
AT



SOUTH HILL +  
GATHERING PLACE -



Hats off to you!

**Congratulations** to the  
Vancouver School Board's  
Adult Education  
Class of 2020!

