**We call on the jewellery industry, alumni, students, educators, and supporters across Canada and internationally to stand together and urge George Brown Polytechnic to reinstate the Jewellery & Gemmology Programs.**

# CALL TO ACTION

- **Write letters/emails of support. As industry professionals and members of the jewellery community, your voice matters!**
- Please send to <u>all</u> email contacts below.
- Guide to paragraph structure of support letter:
  1. Introduction and your expression of distress over the decision to suspend programs.
  2. What GBP Jewellery & Gemmology means to you personally as a professional/alumni/student.
  3. The impact/ what will be lost if these programs are suspended.
  4. Encourage immediate reversal of the decision to suspend programs.

## <u>FACT SHEET</u>

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROGRAM SUSPENSIONS

George Brown has announced that **all Jewellery programs will remain suspended to new intakes for 2027–28.**

- Current students (140+ across 3 programs) will finish their programs by April 2027.

The Polytechnic has stated that this is **not a reflection of the quality of the programs or their impact on the sector**, and that the decision does not constitute a formal closure. However, it has also confirmed that **no future delivery model has been approved.**

At the same time, there has been a lack of transparency about the decision-making process, including **who was consulted, what information was considered, and how the feedback from students, faculty, PAC members, and industry partners influenced these decisions.**

This is particularly concerning at a time when the jewellery industry is facing a shortage of skilled tradespeople and a wave of retirements.

These programs represent more than 55 years of specialized knowledge, skilled-trades training, industry connections, facilities, and equipment. **Once this educational infrastructure is lost, it will be extremely difficult to rebuild.**

**CURRENT PROGRAMS OFFERED**

GBP Jewellery & Gemmology offers a diverse range of certificate and diploma programs offering basic to advanced goldsmithing techniques, gem setting, repair, gemmology, metal finishing, model making, enamelling, production techniques, history, jewellery design, rendering, CAD/CAM, and jewellery manufacturing theory.

- **F114 Jewellery Arts** (3-year advanced diploma) – **<u>SUSPENDED</u>** -
- **F110 Jewellery Methods** (2-year diploma) – **<u>SUSPENDED</u>** -
- **F111 Jewellery Essentials** (1-year certificate) - **<u>SUSPENDED</u>**
- **F105 Gemmology** (1-year certificate) – **<u>SUSPENDED</u>** -

**DIVERSITY AND CURRENCY OF PROGRAMS**

The Jewellery and Gemmology programs at George Brown Polytechnique are part of the School of Fashion & Jewellery. The School has over 55 years' experience providing education in traditional goldsmithing skills, jewellery design and gemmology. In addition to the traditional skilled trades, CAD/CAM skills are a focus for all jewellery students for the past 20 years. We are the largest school in North America training students for the jewellery industry with extensive facilities incorporating 150 jewellery benches and 30 gemmological testing stations. Our location in downtown Toronto (where 40% of the Canadian industry is located) gives students direct access to supplies, materials, and a network of industry professionals as mentors and employers. Our enrollment levels are high due to consistent demand.

**WHAT WILL THE JEWELLERY COMMUNITY LOSE?**

- Largest jewellery school in North America
- Unique and irreplaceable education in Ontario/Canada
- Extensive facilities and equipment
- Abundance of highly developed teaching materials
- Faculty – award winning professional goldsmiths and teachers
- Students come from all over Ontario and Canada
- World renowned reputation and prestige
- Graduates that are employable in all facets of the jewellery industry
- A community hub

**INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS CREATE A SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION**

- Strong and active Program Advisory Committee keeps curriculum current
- Excellent relationships with key international jewellery/diamond brands
- Extensive alumni and community support
- Work placements for students
- Student awards/scholarships from industry partners
- Partnerships with international universities (Birmingham City University, London College of Fashion, KEA)
- Community engagement as a Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) conference host
- Connections through associations and memberships (Canadian Jewellers Association, Canadian Gemmological Association, Society of North American Goldsmiths, British Gemmological Association, MJSA, etc.)

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Our graduates pursue careers as bench workers, designers, gemmologists, studio jewellers, CAD technicians, retail sales and management professionals.

- Graduate employment: Custom jewellery makers, designers, skilled trades people, gemmologists, appraisers, watchmakers/repair technicians, CAD technicians, entrepreneurs, retail and management professionals, arts administrators, educators.
- Many graduates operate small businesses and shops in towns and cities throughout Canada and internationally.
- We are a hub for industry seeking employees.
- Generational retirement within the industry (replacement demand) is very high
- The Government of Canada predicts 1000 job openings expected across Canada between 2024-2033.
- Growth in industry in Canada.

**STUDENT AND GRADUATE SUCCESSES**

- Benefit to the jewellery community
- International reach
- Prestige is difficult to calculate but ultimately is gauged by our alumni success
- Students and graduates regularly win competitions (De Beers, CGA, SNAG, LA Pai, etc.)
- Industry accreditations

# CALL TO ACTION

- **Write letters/emails of support. As industry professionals and members of the jewellery community, your voice matters!**
- Please send to all email contacts below.
- Guide to paragraph structure of support letter:
    - Introduction and your expression of distress over the decision to suspend programs.
    - What GBP Jewellery & Gemmology means to you personally as a professional/alumni/student.
    - The impact/ what will be lost if these programs are suspended.

| Name | Title | Organization | Contact Info |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Board of Governors General contact | George Brown Polytechnic | boardsecretariat@georgebrown.ca |
| Gervan Fearon | President | George Brown Polytechnic | Gervan.Fearon@georgebrown.ca |
| Gervan Fearon | President | George Brown Polytechnic | president@georgebrown.ca |
| Gervan Fearon | President | George Brown Polytechnic | PresidentFearon@georgebrown.ca |
| Anne Sado | Former President | George Brown Polytechnic | asado@georgebrown.ca |
| Hassun Malik | Provost and VP, Academic | George Brown Polytechnic | coryross@georgebrown.ca |
| Leslie Quinlan | SVP, People Enablement and Exp. | George Brown Polytechnic | Leslie.Quinlan@georgebrown.ca |
| Michael Herrera | SVP, Inst. Planning and CFO | George Brown Polytechnic | Michael.Herrera@georgebrown.ca |
| Janene Christiansen | Registrar | George Brown Polytechnic | Janene.Christiansen@georgebrown.ca |
| Ana Rita Morais | Dean | George Brown Polytechnic | AnaRita.Morais@georgebrown.ca |
| Jill Andrew | MPP | Toronto-St. Paul's (Former) | JAndrew-CO@ndp.on.ca |
| Stephanie Smyth | MPP | Toronto-St.Paul's | ssmyth.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org |
| Nolan Quinn | Minister | Ministry of Colleges and Universities | nolan.quinn@pc.ola.org<br>minister.mcu@ontario.ca |
| David Piccini | Minister | Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skilled Trades | david.piccinico@pc.ola.org |
| Doug Ford | Premier of Ontario | Ontario Government | doug.fordco@pc.ola.org<br>premier@ontario.ca |
| | | Canadian Jewellers Association | info@canadianjewellers.com |
| Angela Betteridge | Past Chair – Board of Directors | Canadian Jewellers Association | https://angelabetteridge.com/contact-angela-betteridge/ |
| Chau Lui | Co-Chair-Board of Directors | Canadian Jewellers Association | online@parisjewellers.com |
| Eric Senftleben | Co-Chair-Board of Directors | Canadian Jewellers Association | esenftleben@citizenwatchgroup.com |
| Marco Pasteris | First Vice Chair, Birks Group | Canadian Jewellers Association | info@birks.com |
| Kevin Vantyghem | Second Vice Chair, Vantyghem Diamonds | Canadian Jewellers Association | *kevin@vantyghemdiamonds.com* |
| Shant Purutoglu | 3rd Vice Chair, Gem Lab | Canadian Jewellers Association | info@gemlab.ca |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Canadian Gemmological Association | info@canadiangemmological.com |
| Roger Grochmal | Chair Board of Governors | George Brown Polytechnic | linkedin.com/in/rogergrochmal |
| Saeideh Fard | Vice Chair Board of Governors | George Brown Polytechnic | linkedin.com/in/saeidehfard |

**MEDIA CONTACT LIST**

| **Name** | **Organization** | **Contact Info** |
|---|---|---|
| Tamanna Bhasin, Managing Editor | Jewellery Business | tbhasin@jewellerybusiness.com |
| Joshua Feeman | CP24 | joshua.freeman@bellmedia.ca |
| Janet Hurley | The Star | jhurley@thestar.ca |
| Jessica Wong | CBC Digital | jessica.wong@cbc.ca |
| Joe Friesen | Globe and Mail | jfriesen@globeandmail.com |
| Helen Bagshaw | CBC | helen.bagshaw@cbc.ca |
| David Common | CBC | david.common@cbc.ca |
| Muriel Draaisma | CBC | muriel.draaisma@cbc.ca |