

The annual Distinguished Alumni Awards program honours Fanshawe graduates who use their skills to improve themselves, their career field, their community and their world. The gala awards dinner this year was hosted by the Fanshawe College Alumni Association, in conjunction with generous sponsors, and welcomed alumni, family, friends, faculty, administrators, past DAA recipients and community leaders.



*From left to right standing: Bruce Bonner, Ian Campbell and Randy Zupanski. Seated in front: Danielle Aziz, Dr. Howard Rundle (President of Fanshawe College) and Jane Gershon. Lucky Heeley was unable to attend the gala but her parents attended and accepted on her behalf.*

*Thank You!*

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## *Danielle Aziz* *Community Service*

Child and Youth Worker '91

Founder, Director and Group Facilitator of Onward Social Skills Program

More than 2,000 children have come through the doors at Onward since Danielle Aziz first founded her unique social skills program almost 15 years ago. Based in London, Ontario, her program helps children and young people emerge stronger, happier and more self-aware as a result of joining in weekly activities, games and role playing. Building social skills is so important for children who sometimes struggle to fit in, but at Onward they get to share their challenges with each other. Guided by their counselors, they work together to find solutions that they can put into practice at school and at home.

Using group dynamics, Danielle and her team show children ways to make friends and keep them; how to better control their anger and frustrations; and how to set goals and achieve them. Danielle's programming also helps them deal with bullying, peer pressure, and life in general. It is all done in a supportive and fun environment.

As a community leader in her field, Danielle mentors Fanshawe students from the Child & Youth Worker programs each year, giving them valuable work experience while they are studying for their diplomas. Many members of her current team are either past youth leaders with Onward or Fanshawe graduates.

Danielle has also been an active advocate for children, youth and women within several community service organizations. She is in the process of writing several children's storybooks that will help children and their parents deal with the pressures of growing up. Once published, these books will bring her message of hope and encouragement to more and more children, brightening their days and giving them skills for life.



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