

MY QUESTION. MY QUEST.



**QUEST**  
UNIVERSITY

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curiosity required

Imagine being able to design your education around a Question you create. Imagine discovering new and relevant ways to learn, explore, grow and transform. Imagine fitting in, but standing out. Imagine being a student at Quest.

Quest means carving your own path while working with a faculty mentor. It means pursuing a Question rather than a traditional major. It means immersing yourself in one course at a time on the Block Plan and capping it all with a Keystone project. It means being part of something unique—something you can truly be proud of.

The Quest community is remarkable. Our students do the most amazing things—writing significant Questions, presenting at conferences, pursuing meaningful Experiential Learning opportunities, and actively shaping campus life.

Our alumni are making a difference. About 45% go on to advanced studies in dozens of programs in North America and beyond, including at UBC, McGill, Queen's, Harvard, Stanford, Yale, Johns Hopkins, NYU, Oxford, Cambridge, Uppsala University, the University of Toronto, Peking University, and the London School of Economics.

Almost all who seek a job right after graduation are employed within six months.\* Whatever they do, Quest alums carry with them a tradition of excellence and curiosity.



Meet some of the budding artists, scientists, lawyers, teachers, doctors, entrepreneurs, thinkers and dreamers who are stepping up to shape our world.

*\*Based on data gathered in 2018. For a longer list of programs, schools, and employers of Quest alumni, please see final pages.*

# Veronica Galvin '12

*My Question: What is consciousness?*

I'm currently pursuing a PhD in Neuroscience at Yale. With each new institution I have been exposed to, I've developed more appreciation for the exceptional teaching I encountered at Quest, and the wonderful human beings who teach there.

I came to Quest planning to focus on environmental science & sustainability or marine biology, but ended up really loving the philosophy classes that were required courses during my first two years. I also enjoyed a neuroscience course so much that I wound up writing a neuroscience-psychology-philosophy Question. I still fondly remember the ecology and marine science courses too. The conservation Field Course in Borneo changed my life!

I loved the diversity of the Quest curriculum—how it brings together multiple areas of study to create the most fascinating courses, where you learn about the ways academic disciplines intersect in the real world. I appreciated the hands-on experience, and how group work, class discussion, research projects and presentations were incorporated into almost every course.

One of the best things about Quest was the closeness of the community. I was able to develop much more personal relationships with faculty than I would have at a larger institution, which was a major contributing factor to my success at Quest.

I remember a specific moment in my advisor's office discussing my Keystone project. I'd hit another road block and was so frustrated I was almost in tears! My advisor consoled me—and then giggled and said "Yep, this is science!" How comfortable she was facing adversity has stuck with me ever since.

Having exposure to failure in such a supportive and safe environment prepared me to face and overcome challenges while working at UBC, and now at Yale.



# Evan Blackwell '16

*My Question: How can we learn from history to positively influence our political future?*

I earned a Master's in International Studies at Simon Fraser after Quest, and I'm now working for BC Public Service as a Policy Analyst. My work primarily focuses on doing research and analysis for provincial anti-money laundering measures.

Quest did an incredible job of providing me with the necessary critical thinking, discussion, communication, and writing skills to work in a policy-related field.

The ability to produce polished papers and presentations on short deadlines (something all too familiar to Quest students!) is a highly valuable skill in my field. Quest provides

students with a well-roundedness and ability to apply their skills to a range of different subjects.

For example, during my time at Quest I did a co-op as Junior Policy Analyst with Global Affairs Canada working on the NAFTA (now USMCA) negotiations; wrote a series of journalistic-style articles as an intern for NATO Atlantic Council (now NATO Association of Canada, NAOC); wrote a thesis on a variety of IR and terrorism-related topics, and wrote my thesis on Islamic State propaganda.

Now I am developing anti-money laundering policies. I don't think I would be able to shift gears between different subjects in the same way if it wasn't for the diverse subject matter I was exposed to at Quest.



# Anika Watson '18

*My Question: How can analogical reasoning facilitate scientific inquiry?*

The most amazing thing about Quest was the amount of academic guidance, personalized feedback, and collaboration I experienced from the faculty. They were always exceptionally dedicated, respectfully critical, and endlessly supportive.

I grew up trying various types of alternative learning including French Immersion, “unschooling,” outdoor leadership education, mainstream high school and international baccalaureate courses. When looking for a university, I wanted a school that put an emphasis on learning rather than passing, and that would allow me to explore multiple disciplines.

At Quest, I was thrilled to find opportunities to study ecology, creative writing, literary analysis and physics. I surprised myself by falling in love with mathematics! I also loved Quest’s Block Plan, the small class sizes, and the culture of challenging norms and questioning everything.

For my Keystone, I used the coding language R to write a guide introducing biologists to a mathematical technique that could help them crunch data. This experience introduced me to the world of scientific research, giving me the opportunity to practice researching independently and to collaborate with and seek guidance from experts in the field before I hit a wall.

In addition to opening many doors for me, Quest has opened my mind to consider possibilities I had never imagined.

My ultimate goal is to teach at the university level. Perhaps I’ll be back at Quest in 20 years— as faculty!



# Esteban Cruz '19

*My Question: What are the effects of sharing economies?*

In high school, I was looking primarily for a medium-size university with a small number of students per classroom. The largest school I applied to had a size of 2,500, which is considered small for the US. I also wanted a school that had a high number of international students and high ratings.

I initially went to another university. After a couple of months, I knew the place was not right for me. I had a problem with how the classes were taught. There was little class interaction between classmates and teacher, and we were not being challenged. My school life became monotonous, and I needed a change. My sister came to Quest, and I saw it was the change I needed. So I reapplied and came here.

I want to see how new internet business is affecting traditional business, like Airbnb vs. hotels, Spotify vs. Apple, Expedia vs travel agencies. I am interested especially in seeing how many people are going to be affected positively, such as cheaper stuff in the markets, but also negative consequences, such as how many people are going to lose their job or business bankruptcy.

The most special things about Quest are the small classrooms and the interaction between the faculty and students. It is unique and you can learn more as it is not the one opinion of the professor in a lecture hall.

Most of the classes I have taken here have changed the way I see the world, for sure. Every class brings a new perspective, and because the world is evolving in so many different ways, I feel that I can see how it is changing instead of looking at it through a lens.



# Natasha Weninger '16

*My Question: What is the role of chemistry in environmental remediation processes?*

I'm in law school now, where most of my classmates have similar undergraduate backgrounds. There is a lot of material to learn and comprehend, especially in first-year law. Because the Block Plan at Quest was intense, I really learned how to stay focused throughout my semester and maintain my stamina while internalizing the material.

I also stand out in law school because I did things at Quest that wouldn't happen elsewhere. For my Keystone project, for example, I did a statistical analysis on the predictive variables of the discharge of Fitzsimmons Creek, and looked at how the

creek will be affected by climate change. In upper years of law school, we are required to complete a major research paper. I feel confident in my ability to complete a major writing assignment that involves substantial research.

For my Experiential Learning Block at Quest, I worked in Vernon, BC with Environment Canada—specifically, Water Survey Canada. I had an amazing experience working in the office with the water data as well as being able to go into the field and collect my own data. I had a supportive and enthusiastic supervisor who shared a lot of knowledge in the water survey field.

Thompson Rivers University is the first post-secondary school I have attended since Quest.

When talking with professors and peers who know of Quest, they speak highly of its education, students and faculty. It is great to hear the positive and professional reputation that Quest has amongst other academics and in professional programs such as law.



# Mathias Horne '19

*My Question: How can we tell stories through visual art?*

The way Quest classes are structured is aligned with my desire to incorporate my artistic practice and visual thinking into different academic disciplines and student-led initiatives.

My Keystone project is an illustrated book revolving around endangered species in Canada. The project aims to create dialogue around various populations adapting to life in urban environments.

Through my artwork, I try to bring the outside in, to create a dialogue between the natural environment and our modern existence, while presenting the viewer an honest lens. I see my creations not only as stories. They also serve as a

tool for reflecting upon the ways human nature has an everlasting impact on our surroundings.

I've had the privilege to be involved with a multitude of different organizations and institutions around the Sea to Sky Corridor. This includes working three years at the Audain Art Museum in Whistler as a summer student in the education and curatorial departments.

I have a close association with the Squamish and Whistler arts councils, and have participated in various events to engage with the artistic community.

I recently worked on some graphic design projects in collaboration with Bike Magazine. In my free time, I am often asked to create commissioned works for friends, colleagues and institutions within the corridor.

Currently, some of my commissions and donations are displayed in Garibaldi Highlands Elementary, Howe Sound Secondary School, Quest University and UBC.



# Martin Lentz, LEAP\*

*My Question: How does water shape the earth?*

I initially chose Quest for the location. Access to the outdoors is hugely important for me, and in Squamish I could get out into the mountains, forests, and oceans. But my experience at Quest has taught me to be highly adaptable. I have gained such a broad perspective on so many different fields and ways of thinking, that I have been prepared to take on new skills and knowledge, and inform them with a wider understanding.

The Field Courses have been incredibly important for my learning. Because of the flexibility of the Block Plan, we have the opportunity to travel to unique locations. Students

are constantly learning together, working together and living together on these trips, which adds a critically important element of community to our education. On these field trips I have also developed valuable relationships with faculty that would not be possible just in the classroom.

Being a LEAP athlete has been awesome. The program allows me to design my schedule in a way that balances my academic and athletic goals. I perform at my best when I am able to invest myself fully into whatever I'm doing, whether that is school or skiing.

A turning point for me was in a course called The Sociology of Skiing. We spent seven days in a remote backcountry hut skiing, learning technical avalanche skills and examining the group dynamics of our class.

The week gave me the space to critically engage with the sport I spend my life on, and provided a thought-provoking combination of my academic and athletic pursuits. I think I came out of the course with a new appreciation for skiing and more importantly a happier, kinder person.



\*Our Leaders in Elite Athletics & Performance [LEAP] program provides high-level athletes and performers a chance to get an education while continuing to thrive in their sport or art. Learn more: [questu.ca/leap](http://questu.ca/leap).

# Dini Vermaat '22

*My Question: I just started, so I don't know yet!*

I have so many interests—anthropology, physics, environmental science. The list keeps growing as I'm exposed to different disciplines here. Among my first courses is Post-Humanism, which is very intertwined with Critical Race Theory and Afro-Futurism and hence very much shaping my interests! I'm interested in exploring effective and creative ways to communicate this information to a diverse audience, too. What I want to focus on changes on a daily basis, and at Quest, that's okay.

During my search for a university, I was looking for a school where I could continue exploring my various interests and look for ways to combine them.

I also found it important to go to a university that values experiential learning and sees academia as a medium to develop responsible ways of influencing the world.

I chose Quest for its alternative approach to education with an emphasis on social and environmental responsibility in its mission. I had a feeling that I would really be challenged both intellectually and physically, in the classroom and outside of it.

Being a small university, it allows students to actually shape what they need from this community and have access to its resources. I wanted to be part of such a community. The mountains and the forests were definitely a bonus!

The people I've met so far are amazing, driven and unique. They have allowed me to develop a sense of home here and feel continuously inspired.

The Block Plan has also been great! I had merely hypothesized that the Block Plan might complement my way of learning and perhaps help my procrastination tendencies. Now, I really see how it helps me focus, and gives me space to puzzle together my degree a few steps at a time.



# Lars Laichter '19

*My Question: How do we form a mind?*

I come from the Czech Republic. Only one of my parents went to college, and they were restricted in what they could study because of the Communist regime.

They were not easily allowed to travel outside of the Eastern Bloc, either. When I told them I was going to study on the other side of the planet, at a university where I would not even have to commit to one subject, the idea seemed outlandish to them.

Although the world has changed since the end of the Cold War, most educational institutions have not. People are equipped with a communication device that gives them access to all the world's information, but most universities still focus on information

delivery. People feel overwhelmed with the volume of information they are exposed to on a daily basis, but most universities still do not teach them how to navigate it.

Quest has figured out how to adapt the educational system and how to offer an education that is relevant to the time we live in. I wanted to study artificial intelligence from an interdisciplinary perspective, and Quest offered me the flexibility to do that.

While a lot of my friends in other universities seem to be unsure about their commitment to their field of study, Quest has allowed me to explore various fields and gave me the confidence that the discipline which

I want to pursue is well suited to my interests and aspirations.

It appears to me that this is the best choice I have made in my life so far.



# Céline Allen '15

*My Question: How can we ensure effective and responsible health care?*

I am in medical school at Queen's University, where I'm planning to specialize in Internal Medicine. When I consider my time at Quest, it's hard to narrow down the single best thing I got out of it, because there was so much!

In high school, I wanted to attend medical school, but I enjoyed all of my classes equally. I wanted the chance to study humanities and the social sciences, while still getting a foundation in the life sciences.

At Quest, I was able to take courses in all disciplines to refine my broader interests into an interdisciplinary Question. I found incredibly dedicated faculty committed to engaging students in

the course material and beyond the classroom. I was so fortunate to count several as mentors in my coursework, research and pursuit of further education.

Many students come to medical school having completed lots of basic science coursework, which is helpful for a small fraction of only the first year. The breadth of subjects I encountered at Quest equipped me to understand the broader context of patient care, and gave me the skills to relate to patients from many backgrounds. I gained experience in being a self-directed learner at Quest, which has been invaluable in medical school and in the transition to residency.

Another valuable aspect of my Quest experience was being so engaged in my own education, especially by designing my Question and developing my Keystone project. Outside of class, the strong friendships I made created such a welcoming and supportive environment.

Approaching common subjects in new ways taught me to think critically and broadly about issues I encounter to this day.



# Dustin Eno '13

*My Question: How do leaders shape the world? Or do they?*

I started my time at Quest planning to pursue a course of study that would prepare me for medical school. That plan quickly changed. I am fascinated by how things work, and I thought learning how the human body worked would be the ultimate conclusion of this interest. However, I soon realized that I was actually much more fascinated by how society works, how people and groups interact, how decisions are made and how opinions are formed.

There are four words that best describe the curriculum and the faculty at Quest. Challenging. Intense. Diverse. Engaging. But the best part was the discussions outside of class. Living in close proximity with a group of intelligent, intellectually curious individuals was

an incredible experience. Without departments or fraternities to divide us, with all four years of students often represented in a club, class or dinner party, the conversations were among the most stimulating of my life.

After Quest, I went on to receive my Master's in Communications (MSc) from the London School of Economics. Today, I am the COO and Crisis Response Manager at Navigate Response, a global crisis communications and media management company for the maritime sector. I plan and direct our business development strategy, manage and consult on crisis communications for major shipping incidents, and coordinate the operations of our

international network of 43 independent offices in 29 countries around the world.

Quest helped me refine my creative, critical and analytical thought processes. I learned to problem-solve under tight time pressures and I learned to throw out imperfect solutions and start over again and again, always looking for better.

Most importantly, Quest helped me refine my communication skills. The ability to write, simplify complex ideas and speak confidently in front of large audiences has allowed me to progress much more rapidly in my career than would otherwise have been possible.



# Cello Mizumoto '17

*My Question: How do people become parents?*

Throughout my studies, I was driven to pursue midwifery and I tailored my Question to prepare me for a health sciences career. After Quest, I went straight into the Midwifery Education Program (MEP) at Ryerson University. After so many years of dreaming about this program, it feels surreal to be living it.

Quest's interdisciplinary approach has been a strength. In midwifery, we are encouraged to hold multiple perspectives to provide client-centred care. Quest challenged me to confront my strongly held beliefs and hold tension between my personal values and the values held by others. I gained an understanding of different

disciplines, which has offered me lenses through which I can better listen to what my colleague or client is sharing with me.

My years at Quest provided me with a maturity, both academically and socially, that has proven integral to my path. The intimacy of the Quest community meant that learning did not stop when I left the classroom. The high level of engagement that I saw in my peers encouraged my own enthusiasm for digging into the uncomfortable aspects of learning.

I am also deeply grateful to have been a guest and resident in Squamish. The biggest gift of studying at Quest was the proximity

to the land. Right from the start, I felt encouraged to build a relationship with the surrounding forest, rivers, and mountains. Now that I have moved to a city, I recognize how invaluable this relationship continues to be for my health and education.

What continues to stand out for me about my Quest experience, is how much I cared. As an alum, I appreciate how much I still care for the stories we made. It set a high bar for the expectations I hold when I join a new community.



# Ally Just '13

*My Question: What is the nature of the mind?*

In high school, when I was deciding what to do, all I knew was that I wanted to leave my hometown and explore. It was either school or travel. Drawn to the ocean and the mountains, I had my eyes set on the West Coast.

It turned out that Quest offered me things I didn't even know I wanted. It spoke to my very nature—an education tailored to my developmental trajectory.

The small class sizes and the location are great, but most importantly, Quest didn't make me choose between my passions. I didn't have to decide, at the age of 17, what I wanted to do with my life. It gave me the opportunity to explore my interests.

My academic interests included neuroscience and philosophy of mind, but I was also interested in ecology (mycelium and fungi in particular!), health, nutrition and wellness, to name a few. Quest gave me space to grow and the tools to create a path for myself.

I know it's said all the time at Quest, but the most special thing was the level of engagement. You went to class and everyone wanted to be there; students wanted to learn, teachers wanted to teach, and everyone wanted to contribute. To grow emotionally, academically, and personally in such a rich and nurturing environment was invaluable.

After Quest, I obtained my Master's in Medical Science from Cambridge University, where I was a Gates Cambridge Scholar. Cambridge and Quest lie at two opposite extremes. Cambridge is steeped in tradition and rooted in history. There, students fight the status quo. At Quest, we created it.

The fourth year I applied to medical school at UBC, the year I was truly ready, I was accepted. Now, I'm excited to continue moving forward in my life with intention and focus.



*Here are some of the institutions, programs and employers that Quest alums have chosen.*

#### INSTITUTIONS

- Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine
- British Columbia Institute of Technology
- Case Western Reserve University
- Columbia University
- Dalhousie University
- Eastern Washington University
- Emily Carr University of Art and Design
- Harvard University
- Johns Hopkins University
- Karolinska Institutet Sweden
- Makerere University
- McGill University
- New York University
- Ontario College of Art and Design
- Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences
- Peking University
- Portland State University
- Queen's University
- Ryerson University
- San Francisco State University
- Seattle University
- Simon Fraser University
- Stanford University
- Stockholm University
- The London School of Economics
- Université de Montréal
- University College London
- University of Alaska
- University of Arizona
- University of British Columbia
- University of Calgary
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Irvine
- University of Cambridge
- University of Chicago
- University of Colorado Boulder
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Illinois
- University of Lethbridge
- University of Manitoba
- University of Missouri
- University of Ottawa
- University of Oxford
- University of St. Andrews
- University of Toronto
- University of Victoria
- University of Washington
- Uppsala University
- Wilfrid Laurier University
- Yale University

#### PROGRAMS

- Anthropology, Environment and Development
- Apparel Design
- Biochemistry
- Bioethics
- Business Analytics
- Child and Youth Care
- Clinical Psychology
- Computer Science
- Digital Media
- Environment and Resource Studies
- Forestry and Biodiversity Management
- Geography
- Geomatics
- Geophysics
- Global Affairs
- History
- Humanitarian Governance
- Hydrogeology
- Immunology
- International Relations and Strategic Studies
- Landscape Architecture
- Law
- Mathematics
- Medical Science
- Medicine
- Midwifery
- Molecular Science
- Native Law
- Naturopathic Medicine
- Neuroscience
- Nursing
- Operations Research
- Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
- Peace and Conflict Research
- Philosophy
- Physical Geography
- Physical Therapy
- Political Science
- Population and Public Health
- Psychology
- Public Health
- Public Policy
- Race, Gender, Sexuality and Social Justice
- Reproductive and Developmental Sciences
- Social Work
- Soil, Water and Environmental Science
- Strategic Foresight and Innovation
- Urban Design

#### EMPLOYERS

- Adbusters
- Alberta Health Services
- Alveole
- American Whitewater
- Astellas Research Institute of America
- BC Housing
- BioFields
- Boundary Bend Ltd
- Bridge Brewing Company
- Canadian Red Cross
- Caprico Biotechnologies
- Carnegie Middle East Center
- Center for Rural Health Research
- Cerebral Palsy Association of Alberta
- Children's Hospital Colorado
- Cresco Capital Group
- Cushman & Wakefield
- Deloitte LLP
- Ecoworks
- Facebook
- First Nations Health Authority
- Format Magazine
- FrontFundr
- Geosyntec Consultants
- Global Filtration
- Government of Alberta
- Government of British Columbia
- Government of Canada
- Greater London Authority
- Green Schools Nova Scotia
- IMRSV Data Labs
- InStream Fisheries Research
- Integra Partners Ltd.
- International Organization for Migration
- Jezebel
- MakerKids
- McGarryBowen
- MI Capital Research Ltd.
- Navigate Group
- New Israel Fund
- Nike
- Open Door Group
- Outward Bound
- Parks Canada
- PartnersGlobal
- Payments Canada
- Phillips Brewing
- Pietrow Law Group
- Right to Play
- Skyrocket Digital Inc.
- SNOLAB
- Swirl
- TD Bank Group
- The Arthritis Society
- Tourism Vancouver Island
- U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology
- Uganda National Academy of Sciences
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- Vancouver Aquarium
- Vancouver School Board
- Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board
- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Wiland

**WHAT WILL YOUR QUESTION BE?**



Quest University Canada is a registered charity that relies on philanthropic support to deliver its mission.