



**BUSINESS IS BREWING**  
HR grad finds recipe for success

**HITTING A CAREER HOME RUN**  
Jeff Boyce wins Premier's Award

**HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS** - Sherry Bassin, a favourite professor for many.

# BUSINESS IS BREWING

by Chase Hadden



PICTURED HERE IS CHRISTY STONE-CURRY, A 1997 DURHAM COLLEGE HUMAN RESOURCES GRADUATE WHO IS ALSO THE OWNER OF THE PIANO CAFÉ, LOCATED IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN PORT PERRY.

As the owner of the Piano Café in Port Perry, Ontario, Christy Stone-Curry has indeed found a recipe for success in north Durham.

A 1997 graduate of the Human Resources program at Durham College, she has worked diligently over the past four years to keep things fresh and fun while adhering to the strict standards her clients have grown accustomed to.

To that end, the Piano Café offers the finest coffees, lunches, catering, and venue rentals, as well as a rotating art gallery that displays the work of local and regional artists. It is all found in the former Lenard Building, located in the heart of Port Perry, which still looks as it did in the 1800s.

“There is a lot of pride in the building the Piano Café is located in,” said Stone-Curry. “My grandfather purchased it over 30 years ago and created a highly successful real estate business next door to where I am now. In the 12 years since my grandfather’s death, my grandmother and my dad have worked very hard to

bring the building back to its original splendor. It has won awards including one from Lincoln Alexander, former lieutenant governor, a few years back. It is a huge asset to have the café in the best location in Port Perry.”

The Piano Café provides full service catering, party planning and event management to meet any need, from corporate receptions to rehearsal dinners, and from fundraisers to holiday house parties. Stone-Curry is delighted to have an outstanding client list that includes production companies for *The West Wing* and the Gene Hackman film *Welcome to Mooseport*, among others.

“The film and television companies are all closely linked,” she said. “Our first catering job was for *The West Wing* while it was filming in Port Perry. We made sure we worked extra hard and made no profit due to the fuss of wanting things to go well. That was a good move as we have a lot of return television and film people. Currently, I am learning to create beautiful celebration cakes, which I may make into

another arm of the Piano Café.”

Of course, you don’t have to be a TV celebrity or Hollywood star to get the royal treatment. Everyone gets red-carpet service – especially students and alumni of Durham College, to which Stone-Curry credits much of her success.

“The training I received from Durham prepared me for the human resources field but my teachers prepared me for the social aspect,” says Stone-Curry. “I remember I really respected one of my teachers, Carolyn Rekar. She was always interested in seeing her students do well both in the classroom and at co-op. She went out on a limb to get me a co-op at the Sheraton Centre in Toronto, Ontario. This is what got me hooked in the hospitality industry and Carolyn helped me propel myself to excel. She was a mentor although she did not know about the mentor part. I continue to pick mentors without them knowing. This system seems to work well for me in business and life in general.”