

# Jason Blaine's College Experience Helped Get Musical Career Started

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Canadian Recording Artist Jason Blaine is incredibly talented, but before becoming one of Canada's top Country musicians, he was like many other young people who aren't sure what college program they should take.



I remember my first summer working at Algonquin College in 2000 when Jason and his father came to see me about what programs were still available. It was late in the admissions cycle and we talked about the Business program and how it could help support Jason's aspirations to turn his passion for music into a career.

The conversation went well and within a few weeks Jason was enrolled in the Business program learning about business plans, accounting, finance, marketing, and much more. He became so engaged in his college experience, he even ran successfully in the student elections to become a student representative on the Algonquin College Board of Governors.

While in college, Jason started writing songs. College was giving him the confidence that he needed to take the next step in pursuing a career in the highly competitive music industry.

Shortly after graduating he moved to the Toronto area where he started recording songs and connecting with other musicians. It wasn't long before he was being advised to move to Nashville, Tennessee, the epicenter of Country music, where he could access some of the best writers and music producers in the business.

Then the hits started coming. One after another, Jason's songs were getting air play on radio stations across the country. Top hits like "They Don't Make 'Em Like That Anymore" earned him awards and accolades and made him a household name.



Now well established, Jason has not forgotten his alma mater and his home town. When he started his own charity a few years ago, he made a commitment to help local organizations including Algonquin College, where his charitable fund has helped pay some of the costs of building the new Waterfront Campus in Pembroke.

Recently, Jason was back in Pembroke for his third annual charity concert and golf tournament, an event that raised \$80,000. Since it began, the two day event has brought in more than \$200,000, helping organizations like the Pembroke and Area Boys and Girls Club offer expanded programming to children in our area.

Could Jason Blaine have been as successful had he not attended college? Possibly, because his raw musical talent is extraordinary, but College helped him gain the confidence to take control of his career goals. As one of the college's highest profile alumni, he has become an ambassador for Algonquin College, talking to others about how college helped him.

More than 15 years ago, Jason Blaine wasn't sure what his future held. There are others who are facing the same doubts and are considering the same pathway that Jason took by going to college. Jason's story is proof that College is a great investment, and one that could pave the way for a bright future.