

## Alumna comes home to celebrate CCOVI

By Samantha Craggs Posted August 11, 2010



"I really do have a dream job," Elizabeth Grant-Douglas says.

Brock's Oenology and Viticulture (OEVI) program can be tough. The hours are long. The workload is heavy. It combines several disciplines tackled by its multitasking students.

But Elizabeth Grant-Douglas has seen the result - a career that has taken her to the position of head winemaker at an acclaimed California winery.

Grant-Douglas will attend the 10th anniversary of the OEVI program on Aug. 20. As a member of its first graduating class, she wants current students to know that the hard work is worth it.

"I'm happy to come home and let everyone know that a CCOVI degree opens a lot of doors for people," she said. "The light at the end of the tunnel is a fantastic career."

Grant-Douglas started university life as an undergraduate Economics student at the University of Waterloo. She still wasn't sure what she wanted to do as a career, she said.

Then her father, retired Brock employee Brian Grant, told her about the new OEVI program at Brock.

"It never crossed my mind that I could study wine making until Brock started this program," she said.

Grant-Douglas enrolled and loved it. An added bonus was walking the same halls as her father, who retired last year as CCOVI's experiential learning/co-op program co-ordinator.

Upon graduation, Grant-Douglas briefly worked in Niagara before moving to eastern Washington State to do a harvest at Columbia Crest. She moved to La Crema Winery in 2001. This year, facing her 10th harvest, she was promoted to head winemaker.

The job is exhilarating and constantly changing, she said.

"There's science. There's art. There are a lot of elements to what I do," she said. "Whether I'm in the cellar or walking through the vineyards, my job changes constantly with the seasons."

Grant-Douglas has found that her CCOVI degree is easily accepted at U.S. wineries. Her current employer wanted someone with cool climate experience, and "they knew I had it," she said. "It's right in the name."

Grant-Douglas' husband, David Douglas, was also in OEVI's first graduating class. He works at Laffort, a wine making supply company.

Grant-Douglas will attend the OEVI anniversary with her husband, her parents, and her 15-month-old son, Malcolm. She is eager to celebrate a program that has brought her so much happiness.

"This career is better than I ever hoped," she said. "I really do have a dream job."

The OEVI reunion will be at 6 p.m. at Pond Inlet. The celebration will include culinary treats and local wines. The musical act Chefs Without Hats will perform.

Tickets are \$65, with a portion of the ticket price going to CCOVI student awards. For more information, call 905-688-5550 x4949 or visit brocku.ca/ccovi