

# IGNITE Student Advocate Champions Social Justice both on and off Campus

*This article is about a two minute read.*



**Above:** Photo of Meshanda Philips in the Humber Arboretum (she/her).

*Photo credit Meshanda.*

Meshanda Philips not only works as a Student Advocate at IGNITE, a non-profit representing Humber College and Guelph-Humber students, but she also organizes charitable events for folks experiencing food and housing insecurity, all while being a single parent of two boys.

Meshanda is a two-time Humber College graduate with a degree in Criminal Justice and an Ontario Postgraduate Certificate in Alternative Dispute Resolution. Meshanda returned to academia after a 10-year hiatus and that is when she became inspired by her peers to advocate for herself and pay it forward by teaching others how to do the same.

Meshanda's work at IGNITE includes providing students with conflict coaching, academic support and ensuring their voice is heard by stakeholders across Humber College.

**Through this role, Meshanda sits on various institutional committees that includes Humber College Council, Equity and Inclusion, Black Excellence and Pride Scholarship Decision Panel. Meshanda ensures that the work she does at IGNITE positively impacts Humber students' learning experiences and engages stakeholders from a lens of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).**

Meshanda works with IGNITE to prioritize the social and environmental benefits of the services and products they procure for Humber. Some of the questions they ask include "Are the products you produce or services you provide certified by an accreditation body that prioritizes social or environmental standards?" and "Is your company owned by any of the following groups: women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, racialized persons, persons from diverse gender identities, and persons who identify as 2SLGBTQ+?"

**"Sustainability is important to me because it improves our quality of life and preserves natural resources for my sons and future generations."**

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**On top of sustainable procurement, IGNITE also frequently posts about sustainability on their social media and website, hosts events geared towards sustainability (Eco Closet in November!) and actively works to uphold its internal Sustainability Action Plan through waste audits and a paperless office.**

Outside of Humber, Meshanda and a close friend collaborate on a charitable initiative called "Pay it Forward Event" where they offer free catered meals to local youth homeless shelters. For those that wish to get involved in social and environmental projects, Meshanda recommends "lead[ing] with kindness, empathy, and love." There are many different social justice initiatives out there so make sure you have room on your plate before giving to others as you can't pour from an empty cup.

Meshanda is currently working on launching a non-profit organization supporting survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) and their children.

As someone that actively participates in many social and environmental causes both on and off campus, Meshanda Philips promotes mental health and wellbeing and recommends visiting the Humber Arboretum for a mindset reset.

**To learn more about Meshanda's charitable initiatives you can follow her on Instagram @beyondhercomfortzone and you can read about her mental health journey on her blog linked [here](#).**

**To learn more about IGNITE visit their website [here](#).**



**Above:** Photo of Meshanda Philips meditating in the Humber Arboretum.

*Photo credit Meshanda.*