

## President's Message

A belated *Happy New Year* to all!!

Reflecting on the year we just completed, I can say that 2024 was indeed a year of impressive **numbers** and **people** for Universal Logistics. First and foremost, we reached our 75-year anniversary as a company, an achievement we can all be truly proud of. In doing so, we can now boast 75 consecutive years of turning a profit. We hit another special milestone as well, exceeding 100 total employees with the company for the first time, a lofty benchmark for us to have finally reached.

The impressive numbers continue as we count those employees who have now dedicated many years and full careers to Universal... 31 of you for over 15 years, 18 for over 25 years, and 2 individuals (Louis and Diane) for over 40 years!! Your commitment to learning and education is clearly evident as well, knowing we have 26 employees with their CCS designations, and 14 with full CIFFA certifications.



As a leader in facilitating international trade, it is noteworthy that our employee group now represents over 20 countries and cultures, with more than 25 written and spoken languages. And our tremendous generosity stands out as well, having contributed another \$70,000 to HHTH in 2024, meaning that together, over the past 8 years, we have given over \$435,000 back to the community in support of those less fortunate.

Reaching these incredible milestones and achieving these outstanding numbers is one thing, but doing so while staying true to the core company values established by our predecessors is quite another. Each day, we go about our business with honesty, respect, integrity, fairness, inclusiveness and teamwork. Truly impressive people – loyal, knowledgeable, culturally diverse and generous people – combining to achieve truly impressive numbers. This is clearly a recipe for 75 years of success!

Another secret to this success is empowering our people and giving you the opportunity to develop and grow your careers. Our philosophy has always been to promote from within when trying to fill leadership roles in the company. Instead of looking outside the organization, we prefer to advance those who already understand our company history, our culture and our core values. We know these individuals are going to make the best leaders.

In 2024, we promoted another 2 employees to Manager positions, and announced 2 new Team Leaders. Today the Universal leadership team consists of 7 Directors, 12 Managers and 11 Team Leaders. We also had 10 individuals participate as part of our *LEAD* team, working on projects beyond their daily roles to enhance employee engagement and improve internal processes.

As we now turn our attention to the new year, Universal plans to build on the incredible foundation established over the past 75 years. We remain committed to the well being of our employees by providing a safe, healthy and positive working environment in which you can develop your skills and build a rewarding career. We plan to introduce new opportunities for you to get involved with company initiatives surrounding employee education and engagement, as well as our internal and external communications via *Universal & You* and *Route*.

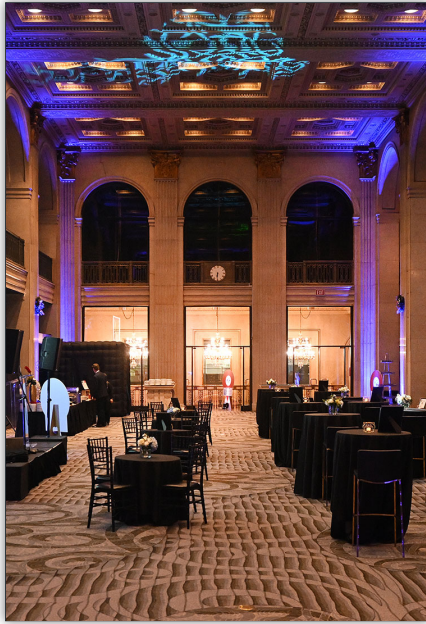
At the same time, we will collectively turn our focus to business development, together finding ways to uncover new revenue and profit opportunities in Canada and the U.S.. We want everyone to become involved in this top-level initiative, promoting revenue growth and ensuring the company will prosper for years to come.

On behalf of myself and my brothers, David, Mark and Paul, I would like to thank each and every one of you for dedicating another year of hard work and effort towards making our company a continued success story. Thanks to you, we are *75 Years Proud*, and we are most proud to call you part of our Universal family. We look forward to embarking together on our journey to the next big milestone!

Both personally and professionally, I wish each of you the very best for this New Year!

Michael Glionna, President

## 75 Years Proud – A Night to Remember!



In 2024, Universal Logistics proudly celebrated a remarkable milestone – our 75-Year Anniversary. To mark this special occasion, company owners, Michael, David, Mark and Paul Glionna invited all Universal employees and their guests to a gala celebratory event at the **One King West** hotel in Downtown Toronto on Saturday, December 14th.

The party's **165** attendees experienced an unforgettable evening, including great food, entertainment and speeches honouring shared achievements and recognizing the dedication, passion, and hard work of our employees that have contributed to the longstanding success of Universal Logistics. The event featured an international theme in keeping with the incredible cultural diversity of Universal's employee group, where over **20** countries and more than **25** spoken languages are represented.



In addressing the party-goers, President Michael Glionna proposed a toast to his predecessors who founded the company, laid a strong foundation and built a well-respected reputation from which to grow the business.

*"Please raise a glass to Grandad and Dad, Frank Glionna Sr. and Frank Glionna Jr., who set the example and instilled in us our company values. They started the business, and grew the business, and paved the way for us to flourish for all these years. Here's to the Franks!"*

Universal Logistics was founded in 1949 when Frank Glionna Sr. left his job as a manager at railcar company, Universal Consolidated Car, to forge his own legacy. Initially only focused on Canadian customs brokerage, it didn't take long for Universal Customs Brokers Limited to become a recognized and trusted logistics partner.



In 1957, the next generation (Frank Glionna Jr.) took over and began modernizing our approach to client care. By putting our clients first, providing excellent service, and prioritizing long-term business relationships, the company's core values – **trust, reliability, integrity** – were established.

In 1969, international freight forwarding services were introduced by the company, while warehousing and distribution services were added in 1998. At Universal's 50-Year anniversary celebration in 1999, our current company name, Universal Logistics Inc., and logo were unveiled to



recognize the full logistics service offering of the business. And, in 2010, Universal Logistics USA was launched, expanding into US brokerage and US freight services to complement our Canadian operations.



Over the past 30 years, Universal Logistics has been run by the third generation of the family business, brothers Michael, David, Mark, and Paul Glionna. They remain committed to providing the latest logistics services while honouring the traditional, client-oriented values that make our company unique, and... 75 Years Proud!

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## Christmas Wrap-Up

In order to make sure that everyone was getting a piece of our Christmas cheer, we kicked off our 2024 Christmas celebrations by offering Gingerbread Kits (by [Parties Made Simple](#)) to each child of our Universal employees!

The Events Committee organized and distributed the kits.



*Sarah Scarlett – Daughter of Karen Gasbarino*



*Morrigan Tucci – Daughter of Sharon Fong*



*Kaylen Yim – Niece of Mandy Chan*



*Mandy Chan – Freight Solutions, Head Office*

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To celebrate Christmas this year, each office was encouraged to put together their own potluck luncheon and tune into Zoom on **Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>** for service award presentations by Michael Glionna. This year saw three major milestones. Universal's success is based on the skill, commitment and loyalty of our employees, and as such, the Christmas potluck luncheon was the perfect opportunity for us to recognize and celebrate our coworkers!

The Universal employees celebrated were John Leis (20 years), Andrew Doick (20 years), and Gary Volante (20 years). Thanks to the 75-Year Anniversary Party, the Glionnas were able to present Gary with his milestone gift in person!



Congratulations again John, Andrew and Gary!

At Head Office, everyone was able to enjoy the meal together while going around the office, showing off their ugly Christmas sweaters, and admiring the work put into decorating cubicles. In accordance with tradition, everyone voted for their favourite sweaters and cubicles. Congratulations to the *Ugly Christmas Sweater* contest winners, **Sharon Fong, Brian Rowe and Vincent Kwong**, and the *Decorate your Cubicle* contest winners, **William Sanchez and Lukas Hamann!**



A few days later, on Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, the Toronto Airport Office put together a wonderful meal for their potluck luncheon. Dishes included hot apple cider, cranberry feta bites, sweet potato stacks, baked pasta, butter tarts, and Indian halwa. Feature Head Office guests **Michael Glionna, Mark Glionna, Paul Glionna, Chris Cartan, John Leis, and David Lychek** were fortunate enough to attend this feast!

## Save the Date – Universal Summer Family Event Saturday, July 19<sup>th</sup>!!!

It might be cold outside, but the Events Committee is already planning Universal's Summer Family Event!

**Save the Date** and plan on attending – this year, we are going back to the Toronto Zoo!

Stay tuned for more details in the coming months!

**Mark your calendars – Saturday, July 19<sup>th</sup>!!**





## Something's Brewing

Contributor: Alice Yan

# Start the New Year Right: Organizing and Decluttering

One of the most practical and rewarding New Year's resolutions is organizing and decluttering your living space. Beyond simply tidying up, this commitment can transform your environment and mindset. Here are some key benefits:

- **Reduce stress and anxiety:** A clutter-free home can foster a calmer and more focused mind.
- **Save time and energy:** Organizing makes it easier to find what you need when you need it.
- **Boost productivity:** A tidy space encourages clearer thinking and efficiency.
- **Better use of space:** Frees up room for what truly matters.
- **Boost well-being and mental clarity:** Decluttering can spark a sense of accomplishment and empowerment. The neat space improves mood and creates a positive atmosphere.



The first step in your journey to an organized home is to choose which decluttering method works for you. Here are some **popular methods** to stimulate your interest:

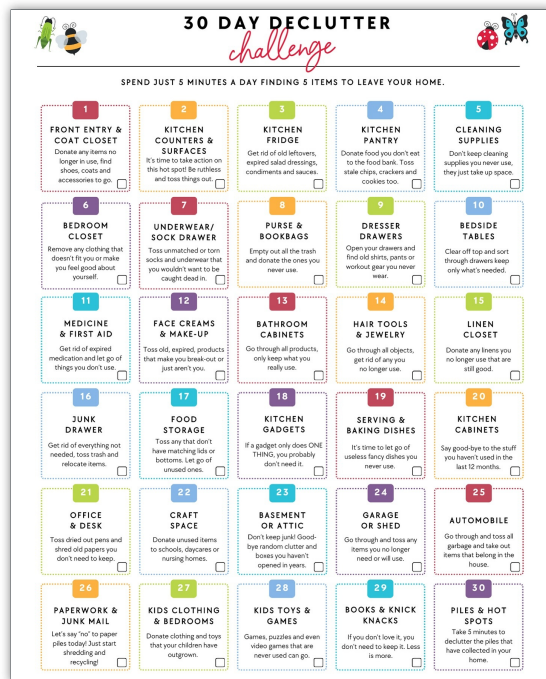
- **The Konmari Method** – *Joy in Simplicity*, created by Marie Kondo, involves choosing one category of belongings and collecting it into a pile. For example, gather all of your shoes from their various hiding places and pile them in one spot. As you pick up each pair, think about what these shoes mean to you. Do they still bring you joy? If so, put them in a *keep* pile. If not, thank them for their service and put them in a *discard* or *donate* pile.

- **The Four-Box Method** – Practical and simple for those who prefer a straightforward approach, the Four-Box Method is a classic and effective technique. It involves sorting all items into *four boxes: Keep, Donate, Discard and Relocate*. By systematically working through each space, this method ensures that every item is accounted for and has a clear purpose. It's particularly useful for individuals who struggle with decision-making, as the predefined categories simplify the process. This method is also family-friendly and can be adapted for group decluttering efforts.



- **The Home Edit Theory** – It is a method for organizing your home that involves editing, categorizing, containing, and maintaining items with the following steps:
  1. **Edit** – Remove all items from the area you're organizing, and sort into "Keep," "Donate," "Recycle," or "Discard" piles (i.e. *The Four-Box Method*).
  2. **Categorize & Prioritize** – Group items by type or usage for further organization and labeling.
  3. **Contain & Arrange** – Put items into containers that are designed to fit together and label them. Create your organizational system based on your using habits, and invest in functional storage solutions that suit your space and needs.
  4. **Label & Finalize** – Add labels to the containers or shelves for clarity and consistency.
  5. **Maintain the System** – Regularly revisit and refine the setup, and try to encourage household members to follow the system for sustained organization.
- **The Decluttering Challenge** – Less is more! You can find many of these free challenges online, guided by organization and minimalist buffs. Each challenge starts on the first day of a new month, with new easy challenges each day. By the end of a month, you will have discarded or donated a great amount of clutter. This method pairs well with sustainable living, as it encourages thoughtful consumption and responsible disposal of unneeded items. Minimalism is perfect for those seeking a clutter-free environment that aligns with their values.





30-Day Decluttering Challenge by "ClutterBug" Cassandra Aarssen, Professional Organizer

Whichever method resonates with you, the start of the year is an ideal time to take control of your space and create a more organized, fulfilling lifestyle.

**Question: The opposite of organizing & decluttering is hoarding! The Collyer brothers are one of the most famous hoarders in history. Which US city declared their mansion a public health hazard due to the overwhelming number of hoarded items, and what is the estimated total weight of those items?**

- A. Philadelphia, around 50 tons
- B. Chicago, around 2,000 kg
- C. Boston, less than 10,000 kg
- D. New York City, around 120 tons

Click on the question above, submit your answer to Sharon, and you're eligible to win!

**Submission deadline**

Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup> (Noon)

**Prize**

\$25 Tim Hortons, Starbucks or Amazon gift card for the 2 winners

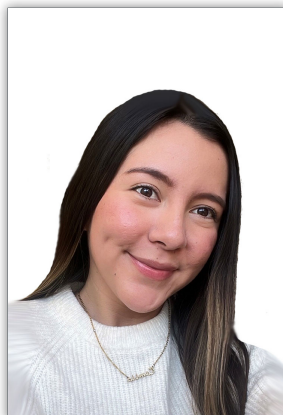
(If more than two contestants have the right answer, we will pick the winning names out of a hat)

## Growing again

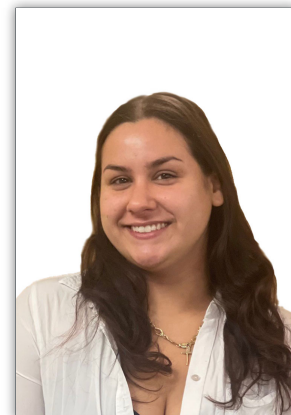
In *Universal & You*, we want to introduce all new employees. We have new additions at Head Office and the Airport office. Please join us in welcoming Chinmay Raval, Camila Fonseca, and Vanessa Varga to the team!



**Name:** Chinmay Raval  
**Team:** Distribution Services (Airport)  
**Start date:** December 4, 2024



**Name:** Camila Fonseca  
**Team:** Customs Consulting Services (Head Office)  
**Start date:** January 6, 2025



**Name:** Vanessa Varga  
**Team:** Customs Operations (Head Office)  
**Start date:** January 20, 2025

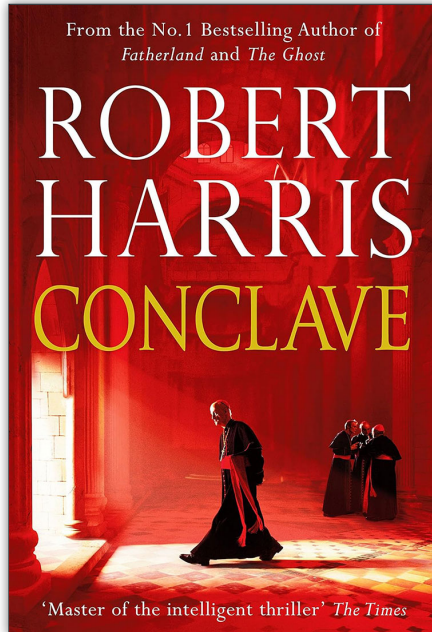
## Book Buzz

Contributor: Barbara Mulatinho

### Adapted Screenplay Nominees – Movie Award Season 2025

As we approach the 2025 Movie Award Season, one of the most intriguing categories is **Best Adapted Screenplay**, where the line between literature and cinema blurs beautifully. These adaptations not only bring beloved books to the big screen, but also breathe new life into their narratives, offering fresh perspectives while staying true to their literary roots.

#### Conclave by Robert Harris



Conclave – Robert Harris



Conclave – Released in theatres October 2024

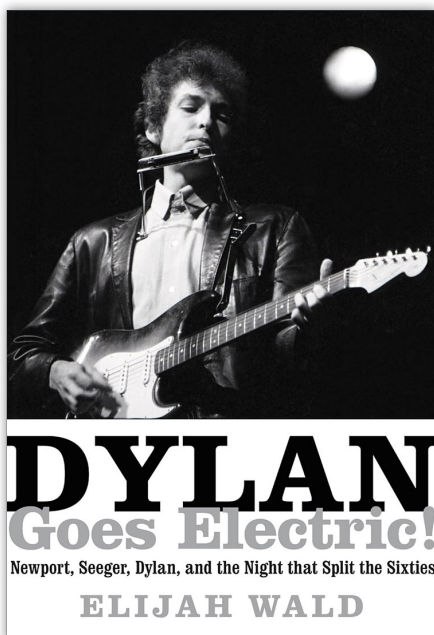
The pope is dead.

Behind the locked doors of the Sistine Chapel, one hundred and eighteen cardinals from all over the globe will gather to cast their votes in the world's most secretive election. They are holy men. But they are not immune to the human temptations of power and glory. And they are not above the tribalism and factionalism that consumes humanity.

When all is said and done, one of them will become the most powerful spiritual figure on Earth.

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#### Dylan Goes Electric! By Elijah Wald



Dylan Goes Electric! – Elijah Wald



A Complete Unknown – Released in theatres December 2024



*Dylan Goes Electric!* by Elijah Wald explores the pivotal moment in Bob Dylan's career when he controversially switched from acoustic folk music to electric rock in the mid-1960s. Wald examines the cultural and musical impact of this shift, challenging the common narrative that Dylan's move was a betrayal of his folk roots. Instead, he frames it as a natural evolution of Dylan's artistry, highlighting how this change reflected broader shifts in both music and society during the 1960s. Through historical context and analysis, Wald offers a fresh perspective on one of the most defining moments in rock history.

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### [The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead](#)



*The Nickel Boys – Colson Whitehead*



*Nickel Boys – Released in theatres December 2024*

*The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead is a powerful and haunting novel set in the 1960s, inspired by the true story of a reform school in Florida known for its brutal treatment of its students. The story follows two boys, Elwood Curtis and Jack Turner, who are sent to Nickel Academy, where they endure physical and psychological abuse. Whitehead delves into themes of racism, injustice, and resilience, contrasting Elwood's idealism with Turner's cynicism as they navigate a system designed to break them. With sharp prose and emotional depth, *The Nickel Boys* sheds light on the trauma of institutionalized violence while capturing the hope that persists even in the face of systemic oppression.

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## Culture and Entertainment

**Contributor:** [Barbara Mulatinho](#)

### Formula 1

As a new **Formula 1** fan as of February 1, 2024—when Hamilton's big move to Ferrari after 12 years and 6 world championships with Mercedes was announced—I eagerly dove into various forms of entertainment to better understand the sport and its intricacies. Nearly a year later, after a variety of experiences, I can honestly say I'm more excited than ever for the upcoming 2025 season. Below, I've shared a few watches for fellow F1 enthusiasts like myself to help pass the time as we eagerly await the start of the 2025 season in March.

#### Senna

**Senna** is a Brazilian biographical drama television miniseries that delves into the life and legacy of Brazilian *Formula 1* legend *Ayrton Senna*.

The series combines archival footage, interviews, and personal insights to trace Senna's rise to stardom, his intense passion for racing, and his tragic death at the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix.

It highlights not only his exceptional skill on the track but also his deep connection to his fans and his home country of Brazil.

Senna captures the spirit of a racing icon whose legacy transcends the world of motorsport, portraying his journey as one of both triumph and heart-wrenching loss.



*Available on Netflix*



### Drive to Survive

**Drive to Survive** is a gripping *Netflix* docuseries that offers an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the high-stakes world of *Formula 1* racing.

The show follows the lives of drivers, team principals, and other key figures throughout the F1 season, revealing the intense pressure, rivalries, and drama that unfold both on and off the track.

With its fast-paced editing and insider access, *Drive to Survive* captivates fans of motorsport and newcomers alike, providing a thrilling exploration of the sport's personal and professional challenges.

The series has played a major role in expanding *Formula 1's* global fanbase, making it more accessible and exciting to audiences around the world.



Available on Netflix

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### F1

The upcoming **F1** movie, set to be released June 27, 2025, is directed by *Michael Mann* and is expected to bring the high-octane world of *Formula 1* racing to the big screen in a thrilling and dramatic way.

Centered around the intense rivalry between two F1 drivers, the film is rumored to focus on the personal and professional challenges faced by its characters, with a special emphasis on the 2023 F1 season.

Known for his work on *Heat* and *The Insider*, Mann is expected to deliver a visually stunning and emotionally charged experience that captures the speed, danger, and passion of motorsport.

With a stellar cast and a focus on the sport's adrenaline-fueled drama, the movie is already generating buzz among racing fans and cinephiles alike.



In theaters on June 27, 2025

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## Health and Lifestyle

**Contributor: Veena Ramesh**

### The Importance of Friendship & Human Connection

As we step into another year, it's natural to reflect on the previous one. We think about the best moments, the challenging times, and how we coped with the hardships.

Often, we realize that special people—friends—helped us navigate through the tough times. While romance plays its role in life, it's often a good friend who is there when you need support the most.

A friend is someone who accepts you as you are, offering an unconditional bond. It's a relationship built on mutual affection, where even if you haven't been in touch for a while, you can instantly reconnect as though no time has passed. This sense of friendship brings a deep feeling of security.



Despite living in an age where everyone seems constantly connected through the internet and social media, many people still feel profoundly lonely. That's why it's essential to put effort into cultivating and maintaining friendships—they play a crucial role in our mental well-being. Friendships during your childhood was easy and almost effortless. There is a feeling of community and togetherness as everyone is doing a similar activity, finding themselves together celebrating milestones, or meeting up at the same place (school, the park, etc.). This is one of the reasons you can find friendships between children happier and less complicated than those between teenagers or adults. As we grow older and have to move away from home, what we tend to miss most are our friends.

Friendships are as important to our health as eating right and exercising. Good friends encourage positive habits and push us to try new things.

On the other hand, a lack of friends can lead to social isolation, which is associated with health risks such as substance abuse, heart disease, depression, and stress.

Friends offer support and are always there for you in times of need, providing a shoulder to lean on.

Making friends can be challenging at any age.

Some friendships begin in childhood and last a lifetime, while others may only last through certain phases, such as grade school or college.

Sometimes interests change, or the friendship might not be reciprocated equally, leading to its end.

Successful friendships require mutual effort—both parties need to invest time and care for the relationship to flourish.



As we get older, it's common for friends to drift apart due to circumstances beyond their control.

This can be hard to accept, but some friendships remain strong despite the distance.

You might still make an effort to stay in touch or meet up once a year, depending on how deep the connection is.

Keeping in touch with friends should be actively practiced as it keeps you in a better mental space and helps combat loneliness.

Statistics now show that a person's day is enriched by positive interactions, even small gestures like a smile or a fist bump can make a big difference.

This can be with anyone from the barista at a coffee shop, to a person who you see every day on the subway. These simple acts help us get through the challenges of daily life and remind us of the importance of human connection.

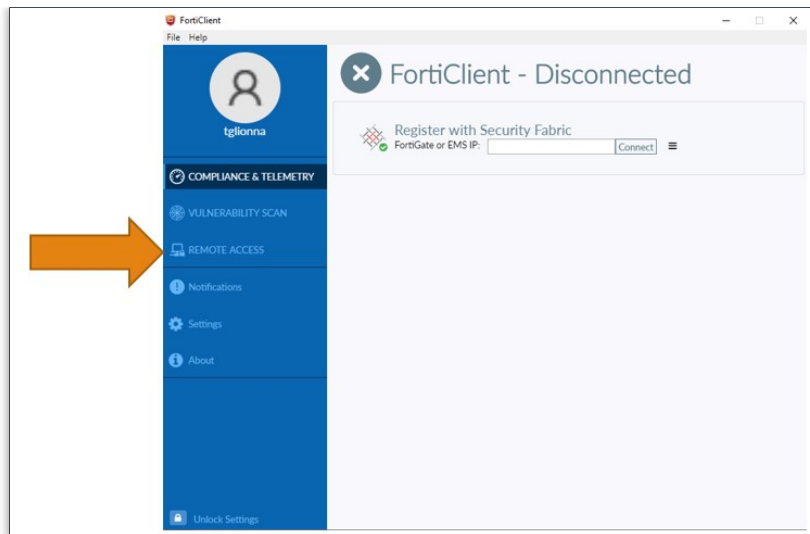


## IT Corner

### Hybrid Applications - General Applications

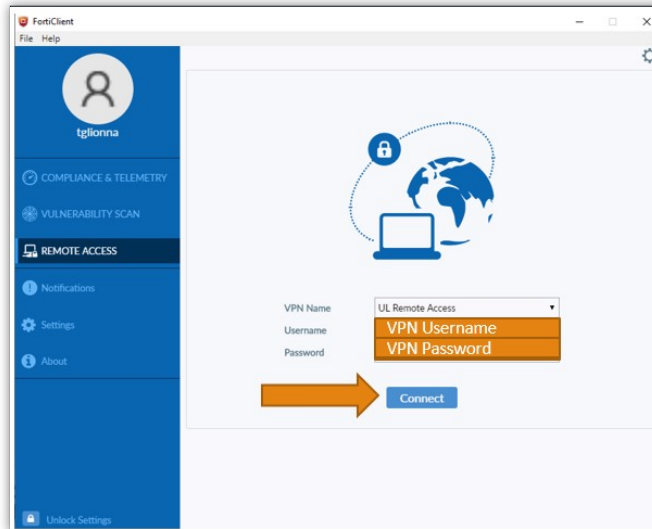
#### 1. FortiClient VPN

- **Required for:**
  - Access to General Drive (G:)
  - Bria Softphone
  - FileMaker Databases
- **How to Enable:**
  - Run the FortiClient application
  - Go to Remote Access

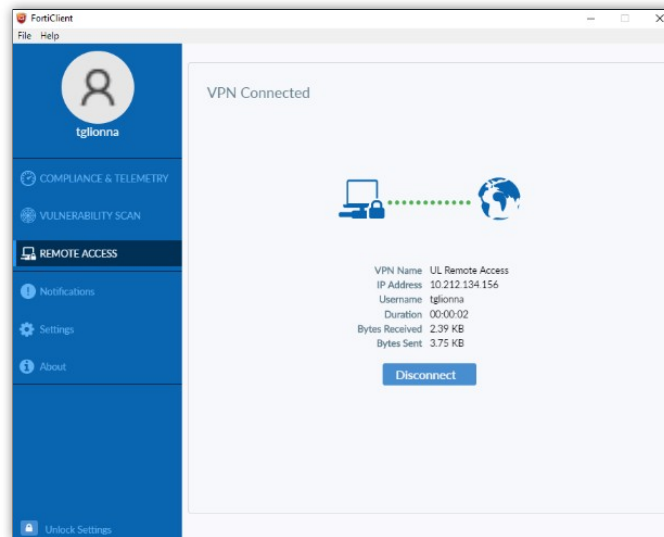




- Enter VPN Password (VPN Password is NOT your login password)

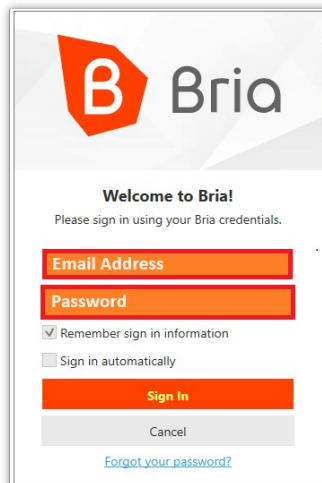


- Connection Successful

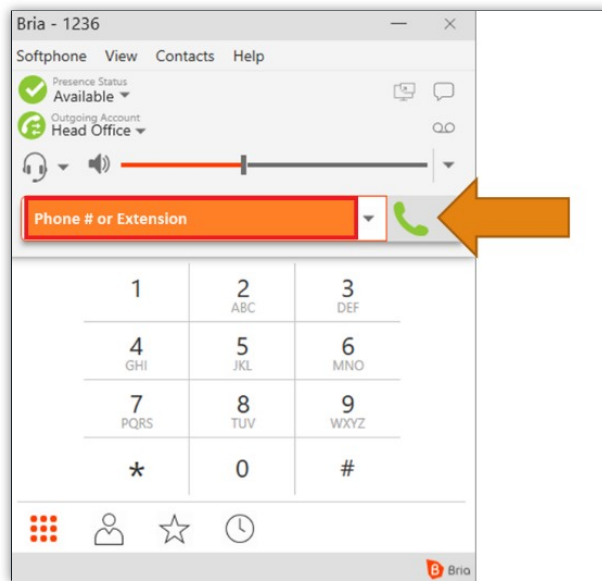


## 2. Bria Softphone

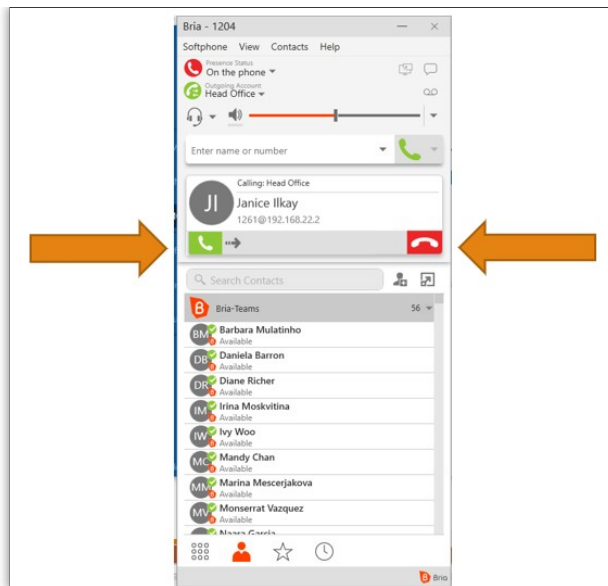
- **Required for:**
  - Access to your desk phone
- **How to Enable and Call:**
  - VPN needs to be enabled to access Softphone
  - Run the Bria application and login with saved username and password



- Type in the phone number or internal extension you want to call & Click on green phone icon to dial



- **How to answer a Call:**
  - Click on GREEN phone icon to pick up and RED phone icon to hang up



If you experience any sound quality issues while using the Bria Softphone application, please reach out to the *IT Solutions Team* at [tickets@universallogistics.ca](mailto:tickets@universallogistics.ca)

### Calling all Universal Employees!

We are looking for volunteers to contribute short articles to *Universal & You*. Topics can be team or industry-related or you might want to share a personal experience (e.g. volunteer work or travel) with your fellow employees.

Please forward your ideas to [Sharon Fong](#).

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*Universal & You* is produced by Universal Logistics, Editor: Sharon Fong, email: [sfong@universallogistics.ca](mailto:sfong@universallogistics.ca).

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