

MOMENTUM

MOHAWK COLLEGE COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

FALL 2021



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ABOUT: Mohawk College educates and serves more than 32,500 full-time, part-time, apprenticeship and international students at three main campuses in Hamilton, Ontario and learning hubs across Hamilton through City School by Mohawk, and at the College's Centre for Aviation Technology at the Hamilton International Airport. Mohawk is among the top five colleges for applied research in Canada. It has been named one of Canada's greenest employers seven years in a row, holds a GOLD STARS rating from AASHE for sustainability achievements and is home to the country's largest and first institutional building to receive dual certification for Zero Carbon Building Framework design and performance for The Joyce Centre for Partnership & Innovation. More than 130,000 people have graduated from Mohawk since it was founded. **VISIT:** mohawkcollege.ca or mohawknewsdesk.ca to learn more. **PHOTOS:** The health and safety of our community is our highest priority. All of the photos used in this edition of Momentum Magazine were taken following Public Health's physical distancing protocols.

COVER: Left to right, Erycka Barcelon (3rd year Civil Engineering Technology), James Kretz (2nd year Civil Engineering Technology), and Erlinda Murdhany (3rd year Architectural Technology).

From the President

We have just embarked on a new chapter in the history of Mohawk College.

With our first standalone degree launched in September in Digital Health, our portfolio of credentials is growing. We will be launching degrees in Analytics and Data Management and a Bachelor of Business Administration (Trades Management).

These are degrees like no other.

As with all things we do at Mohawk College, they are built on a highly interdisciplinary approach, collaboration and our deep industry relationships.

The Digital Health degree combines computer science, health and business studies. Mohawk's degree graduates will be among the leaders who will shape the digital health landscape.

The new Analytics and Data Management degree is another unique program combining business, computer science, data modelling, storytelling and visualization. Graduates will help organizations maximize the impact of data.

When it comes to the Bachelor of Business Administration (Trades Management), we are so proud to be the lead on a ground-breaking collaboration with George Brown College and Algonquin College to answer a need for business skills matched with trades.

The great benefit of the college approach to postsecondary education—namely, small class sizes, skills-based learning outcomes, meaningful experiential learning and a drive to address emerging labour demands—will be embedded in these degree programs.

It truly is the best of both worlds.

This issue also highlights the growing pathways for students, whether they are coming to Mohawk, already studying here, or connecting their Mohawk studies to further education elsewhere. It truly illustrates that postsecondary education is an ecosystem of lifelong learning.

Finally, this issue celebrates the 25th anniversary of our Alumni of Distinction awards.

I am always amazed by the accomplishments of our Alumni of Distinction and we are grateful to have played a role in setting them on such a course of success. They are taking the impact of Mohawk across Canada and around the world. ■■■

Regards,
Ron J. McKerlie





Sylvia Lowndes, Dean of the McKeil School of Business, School of Creative Industries and Liberal Studies and Communication, Alison Horton, Vice-President Academic and Janet Shuh, Dean of Continuing Education and Academic Development

Constant anticipation of change

Developing new programs at Mohawk College is a multi-year, multi-stakeholder commitment



Mohawk College's second standalone degree program, Analytics and Data Management, is awaiting approval from the province and, if all goes according to plan, it will launch next fall. It is the first standalone degree for the McKeil School of Business and will add to a degree in Digital Health that began this past September.

The College is also leading the launch of a Bachelor of Business Administration (Trades Management) completion degree in conjunction with George Brown College and Algonquin College. It's the first three-way degree partnership in the Canadian college system and will be delivered entirely online and be self-paced.

"It's exciting to have our first standalone degree launched and others in the pipeline. Our degree strategy is now well underway with

a strong foundation to build upon," said Alison Horton, Vice-President Academic.

"We will be adding more programs in our key areas of strength. This growth will be supported by the strong planning structure we have in place that reflects our strategic and integrated approach to credential development, whether that's a postsecondary degree, diploma or certificate."

Forecasting the future

The process of identifying, testing, building and marketing new certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas, degrees and post-graduate certifications is a multi-year, multi-stakeholder endeavour with the goals of answering future job market needs, fulfilling student demand, attracting enrolment, and satisfying Mohawk's strategic priorities.

"It takes anywhere from two to four years to build from the initial idea to getting on the Minister's desk for approval," said Sylvia Lowndes, Dean of the McKeil School of Business, School of Creative Industries and Liberal Studies and Communication.

So that means by the time the first group of students graduates, it could be six or seven years down the road. So, to respond to the emerging needs of the learners and the workplace, we must have the foresight to anticipate what job competencies will be in demand, says Lowndes.

"When it comes to program design, we must have the intuition and the ability to validate where the emerging competencies for the job market are moving towards. We rely on faculty who are our subject matter experts, market research and our deep connections with industry."

– **Sylvia Lowndes**, Dean of the McKeil School of Business, School of Creative Industries and Liberal Studies and Communication

The new Analytics and Data Management degree is a great example of that in action, she says.

It's a unique program, says Lowndes, combining business, computer science, project management, data modelling, storytelling and visualization. She believes this kind of interdisciplinary approach will be a model for future degrees at Mohawk.

"This really points in a novel direction because it connects so many aspects together. A business analyst needs to be able to tell the story behind the data. That's a huge asset at the boardroom table."

'Constant anticipation of change'

When choosing directions for new programs, Lowndes says it's important to pay attention to strategic and emerging trends in the workplace.

"We must have exceptional listening and probing skills, be ready for opportunities, and listen to what employers are forecasting from a skills-requirement perspective. Anticipating change, is a constant."

Critical to that approach is having faculty who are well connected to industry and program advisory committees that are forward-thinking and innovative, says Lowndes.

"They are our guiding lights in many ways."

With that in mind, Lowndes' portfolio is adding diplomas in e-sports administration and a gaming program, and has just launched a graduate certificate in project management.

It's important to be strategic in terms of thinking about the mix of credentials the College offers, so there is a "strong learning ecosystem" that meets student needs, says Janet Shuh, Dean of Continuing Education and Academic Development.

Programs often come out of consideration of complementing existing strengths and offering options and pathways to multiple kinds of learners—those coming directly from high school, those with diplomas and degrees, and those looking to undertake in-career upskilling.

But being strategic is also about quality assurance at each step of program development and investing resources in developing programs that are viable in terms of workforce demand, Mohawk's capacity to deliver, and projected enrolment, says Shuh.

"It really is a tremendous undertaking, so determining that viability and validity early on is key."

Interdisciplinary degree

The degree in Analytics and Data Management complements and builds on the expertise Mohawk has established in its graduate certificate in Analytics for Business Decision Making that was established several years ago, says Dr. Steven Way, professor in business who is helping to lead development of the degree.

“Moving into the degree path is a natural extension. We have the core staff we need and the experience with work-integrated learning across just about every sector. There is also industry awareness about what we do thanks to the Higher Education Analytics Data competition that we launched three years ago.”

Backed by industry input into the kinds of skills graduates should have, the degree program was developed to prepare graduates to answer a fast-emerging demand for data skills by merging disciplines.

“Our students will have a strong business foundation when they enter the workforce. They will be able to analyze data as it applies to business, and effectively communicate observations and illustrate the connection to key decision makers.”

Way has worked alongside experts in the Centre for Teaching & Learning (CTL) at Mohawk to build the courses and curriculum and reviewers with the Postsecondary Education Quality Assurance Board (PEQAB) were impressed during a site visit in April of this year undertaken to assess academic quality and the College’s capacity to deliver.

For Lowndes, there is great excitement about the prospect of developing more interdisciplinary programs within her sprawling portfolio of 55 programs and six more in the pipeline.

“Bringing disciplines together for the purpose of innovative program design and delivery is a complex, however, rewarding undertaking.”

Shuh also believes that interdisciplinary and collaborative programs will be Mohawk’s greatest differentiator. She says the newly launched Digital Health degree, which combines engineering technology with a health lens, is a prime example of bridging sectors and disciplines together.

A model for collaboration

The four-year Bachelor of Business Administration (Trades Management) is generating excitement in industry and at the provincial level, says Laurence Smith, a business professor and program coordinator for Business Administration at Mohawk.

That’s both due to combining trades and business together, but also the three-way college partnership between Mohawk College, George Brown College and Algonquin College.

“This will be a model for how future collaborations can work. Each college will provide six or seven online courses and transfer the credits to each other.”

A PEQAB three-day site visit has recommended the program be approved by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. A Program Advisory Committee attracted 40 members, illustrating just how much interest there is in the approach, says Smith.



Dr. Steven Way



Professor
Laurence Smith

Students will get the technical and operational skills required in their field, combined with the business, marketing, finance, strategic planning and project management knowledge that will help a company grow, says Smith.

Students with a two-year trades diploma can generally enter in year three of the degree. The program's online and self-paced delivery will be highly attractive to those getting established in the trades and to mid-career employees looking to get into management.

The hope is that the program will eventually attract more young people into the trades.

"There is a desperate shortage of tradespeople but a lot of parents want their kids to get a degree," said Smith. "This may offer a career path that satisfies both a student who wants to pursue a trade and their families who want them to get a degree."

The future of program development

The pandemic has shown the power of fully online, self-directed learning, say Mohawk's academic leaders.

Horton believes future education will put a premium on flexible learning and virtual delivery options that combine simulations, virtual reality and other technologies with traditional lectures and labs.

"There are so many exciting innovations in teaching and learning that will offer the best experience for students."

A shift in approach doesn't only apply to new programs, says Shuh, because quality assurance doesn't end once programs are established. Each program is reviewed annually for retention, graduation and employment rates and comprehensive reviews are conducted every five years by the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Those reviews include interviews with Program Advisory Committee members, students and graduates, along with financial audits and other performance measures.

"That ensures programs are always meeting the needs of learners and industry." ■■■

How new programs are developed

The development starts with an idea from faculty, deans, industry including analyses of labour market trends, a statement of interest that broadly lays out the scope and rationale of the proposed program, highlighting how it aligns with the college's strategic mandate agreement with the province.

The statement of interest is presented to the Dean's Council for review and opportunity to explore whether an interdisciplinary aspect could be pursued.

From there, it goes through a comprehensive process that includes the subject matter experts within the college, including departments that oversee academic and program quality, and the Centre for Teaching & Learning.

This stage gathers data and input from across the college for academic delivery. Consultations are also held with members of industry, professional associations and accreditation agencies.

A feasibility study is conducted that includes enrolment data in similar programs, student migration, labour trend statistics, and revenue projections. After consultations with the industry sector, the data is incorporated into a report that is presented to the Strategic Enrolment Management Committee and then to the Board of Governors.

Approved programs are then validated by the Credential Validation Service and submitted to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

Once approved, detailed course outlines, learning outcomes and curriculum are built and the recruitment teams kick into action to create awareness and attract enrolment. ■■■

The upside of the pandemic: Innovation in Experiential Learning

The pandemic has caused academics, students and employers to change how experiential learning activities are taught and delivered. Co-op work terms, unpaid placements, labs, capstones, and applied research projects had to suddenly shift from in-person to virtual and remote offerings.

“It’s amazing how students, employers, staff and faculty responded and adapted,” says Amanda Malkiewich, Director, Cooperative Education and Experiential Learning.

“Experiential learning is imperative to student success and bridges the transition from school to work.”

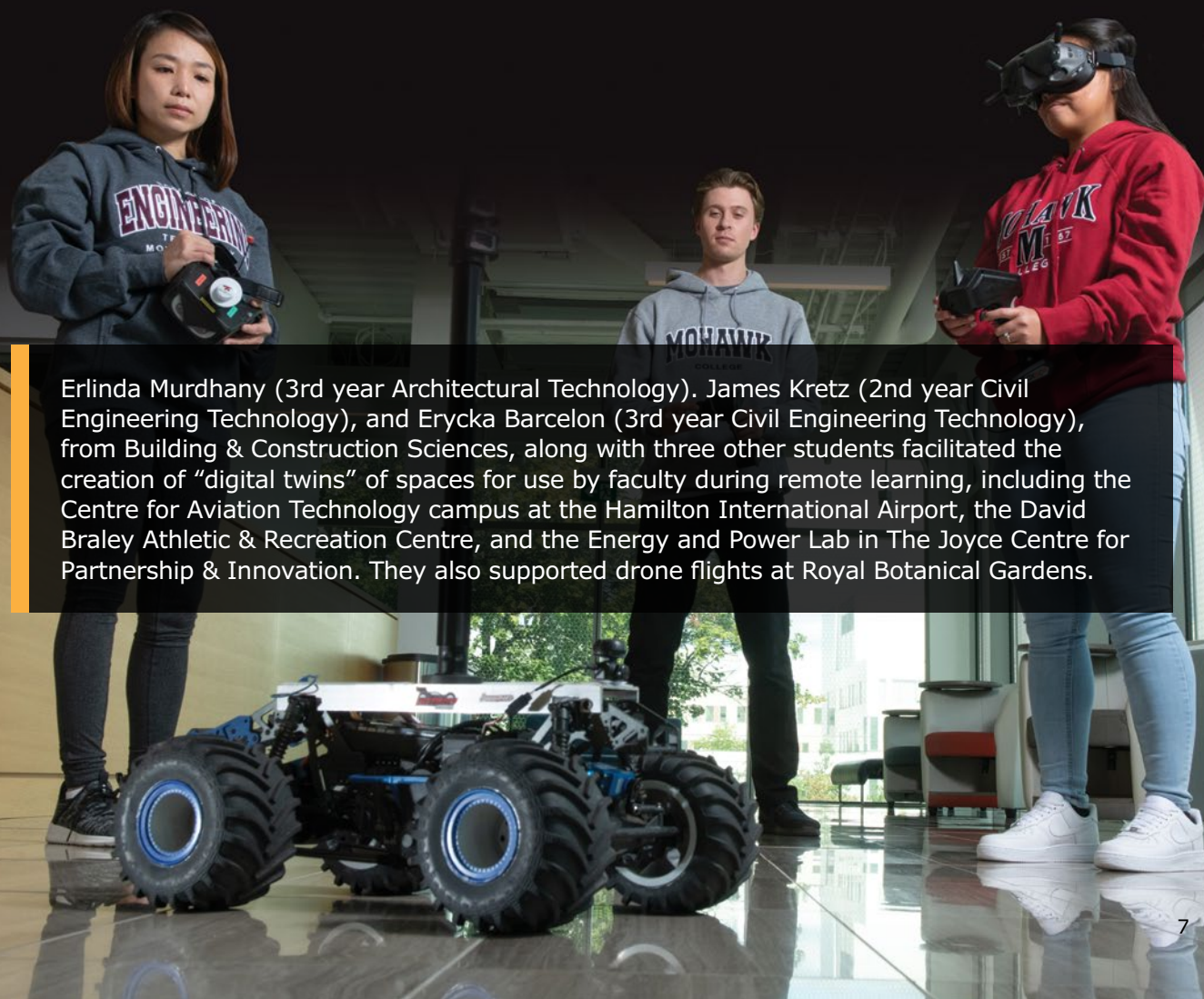
Experiential learning allows students to anchor their theoretical learning with a real-world experience that brings it to

life, says Jim Vanderveken, Dean of the Centre for Community Partnerships and Experiential Learning.

The pandemic shift wasn’t easy for Mohawk staff, students or employers, but it was successful, says Vanderveken.

“We made it happen because we just couldn’t leave our students without these incredible opportunities. We enjoyed tremendous employer support for our students.”

From lab kits mailed to students’ homes to the use of virtual and web-based tools, Mohawk students got critical hands-on experience with the community during the pandemic. To read more about the unique and innovative opportunities Mohawk students had, visit momentum.mohawkcollege.ca. ■■■



Erlinda Murdhany (3rd year Architectural Technology), James Kretz (2nd year Civil Engineering Technology), and Erycka Barcelon (3rd year Civil Engineering Technology), from Building & Construction Sciences, along with three other students facilitated the creation of “digital twins” of spaces for use by faculty during remote learning, including the Centre for Aviation Technology campus at the Hamilton International Airport, the David Braley Athletic & Recreation Centre, and the Energy and Power Lab in The Joyce Centre for Partnership & Innovation. They also supported drone flights at Royal Botanical Gardens.



“When employers identify their training needs and Mohawk College is able to quickly fashion micro-credential programs to precisely meet them, that is demand-led learning at its best,” says Jim Vanderveken, Dean of the Centre for Community Partnerships and Experiential Learning.

Micro-credentials: “Just-in-time” training and skills development to meet emerging workforce needs

Micro-credentials provide rapid and accelerated learning cycles in which learners can build concrete competencies and skills in days or weeks.

“Micro-credentials are a key emerging tool in the educational ecosystem and are complementary, not competing, to other formal credentials like college certificates, diplomas and degrees,” says Janet Shuh, Dean of Continuing Education and Academic Development.

A key advantage of micro-credentials over traditional college programs is the speed with which they can be developed and the ability to co-create them with partners. Mohawk College subject matter experts work with employers to co-define, co-design and sometimes co-deliver the curriculum that supports acquisition of skills.

“Another unique aspect is that micro-credentials are outcome driven and about meeting defined competencies, rather than

time spent learning. They are much more flexible for the learner,” said Shuh.

They can be standalone or stackable and many come with a digital badge that can be displayed on resumes and professional social media.

“Each micro-credential at Mohawk has the same quality assurances as all of our programs,” says Alison Horton, Vice-President, Academic.

“We expect the number of micro-credentials we offer to grow significantly as they will be an important differentiator in the job market.”

They are relevant in many sectors in our economy including business, technology, trades and health fields and run the gamut from highly technical skills to new regulatory areas to the soft skills needed for success in the workforce, including problem-solving, teamwork, communication and creativity.

A recent tally came up with about 60 micro-credentials offered now and more are in development, says Vanderveken. ■■■



Building pathways to a flexible educational journey

Today's educational landscape is all about providing pathways for students that link programs, institutions and credentials for a customizable, flexible and personal journey.

There are pathways for students transferring to Mohawk from another college or university program and pathways for students progressing from one program to another within the college, those looking to complete a degree after a diploma or to build an international experience into their pathway.

"Mohawk has valued transfer and mobility for students for many years and before the practice was a priority in the Ontario postsecondary system," says Linda Basso, who has been pathways coordinator at Mohawk College for 15 years.

"Regional universities are important partners with many established pathways for Mohawk students, but the list of agreements with other institutions is long," says Basso.

More than 20,000 students each year in Ontario transfer between colleges and universities, says Basso, and the framework of credit transfer is managed by the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT).

"There has been a great shift since ONCAT was formed in 2011. The emphasis on transfer and connections between institutions has grown exponentially. And that's all-in response to student demand for flexibility."

About 70 of Professor Laurence Smith's Business Administration students have completed a degree at Robert Gordon University (RGU) in Aberdeen, Scotland after graduating from Mohawk.

"It's a fantastic experience for them. They are challenged to go out of their comfort zone and they come back transformed in confidence and maturity," says Smith.

Kaitlin Ostrander says her experience at RGU ticked off two goals: finishing a degree and travel.

"I was worried the university classes would be a big jump for me but it was seamless. I was well prepared and there were so many supports in place. I would do it all again."

When Loramhel Mateo came to Mohawk to study in the two-year Recreation Therapy program, she knew there was an option to continue at Brock University for another year to complete a degree but didn't decide to do it until her final year.

"All my field placements and hands-on experience has made me feel more confident in the classroom at Brock. It's made me a much better student," said Mateo.

"Having that path to a degree has been really motivating for me because I can now go into management and get advanced certification in my field. ■■■

Mohawk and triOS College partner on programs for international students at Mississauga campus

International students now have an opportunity to study at the Mississauga campus of private career college triOS College to earn Mohawk College credentials.

The partnership agreement has been two years in the making, says Cebert Adamson, Vice-President, Students, International and Alumni, at Mohawk.

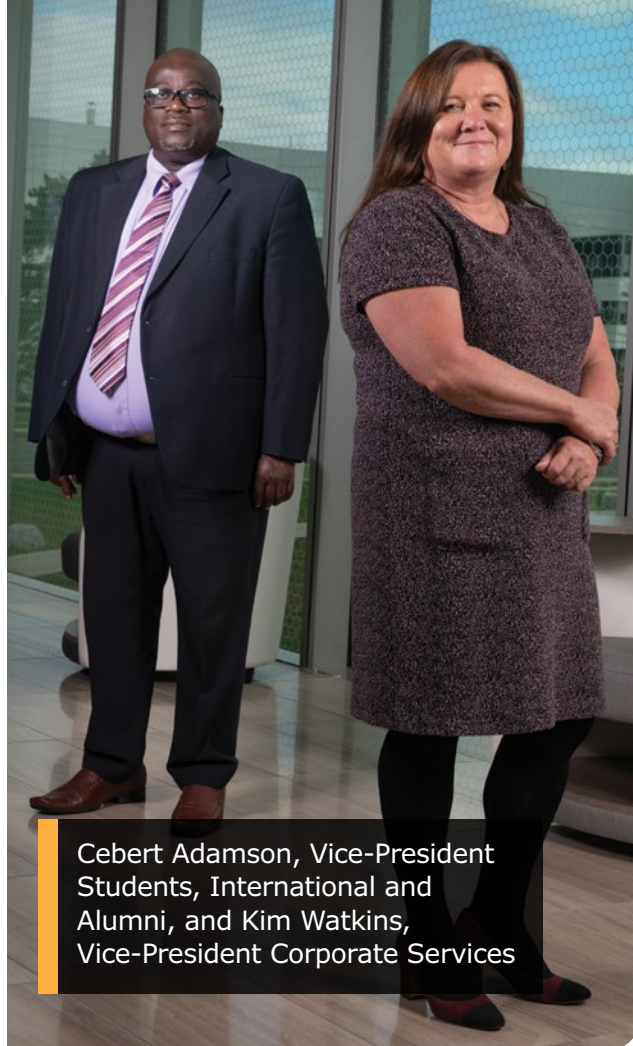
“There has been a shift in thinking about how private colleges and public institutions can work together. We are two established partners with good quality programs that are known for a focus on technology and business. This relationship makes sense.”

Since late 2019, the Ontario government has allowed for contractual arrangements between public colleges and private career colleges.

Initial offerings in the fall 2021 semester through the triOS partnership are Business (General), Global Business Management, Computer Systems Technician-Network Systems, and Office Administration-Health Services.

In the winter 2022 semester the programs offered will expand to include Supply Chain Management, International Business Management and Computer Systems Technician-Software Support. Future offerings will be established based on market demand.

Mohawk is responsible for recruiting and registration, while triOS will deliver curriculum and campus services to students. A robust quality-assurance framework ensures students will receive the same quality education



Cebert Adamson, Vice-President Students, International and Alumni, and Kim Watkins, Vice-President Corporate Services

and services as they would if they were at a Mohawk home campus, says Adamson.

They will earn a Mohawk credential and will qualify for a post-graduate work permit to work in Canada after graduation. “We heard a lot during recruiting that students wanted a Mohawk College credential but they wanted to be able to live and study in Toronto,” said Kim Watkins, Vice-President, Corporate Services.

Some prefer a big-city experience, while others have family in the GTA and want to live with them, but all want the “great reputation for quality that comes with Mohawk College.” 🇨🇦



Supporting demand

New funding stream ramps up Mohawk's impact in health technology

Mohawk College has well-established expertise in digital health and emerging medical technologies and a new funding stream supporting the commercialization of innovation will only make that more impactful.

FedDev Ontario announced the launch of the Southern Ontario Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Innovation Ecosystem (SOPHIE) in the spring. It will provide faster access to technology support for life science and health tech companies, says Doug Ward, General Manager of Mohawk's MEDIC (mHealth and eHealth Development and Innovation Centre).

SOPHIE will invest \$6 million in the Hamilton area through Innovation Factory and the Synapse Life Sciences Consortium of which Mohawk College is an anchor partner.

Mohawk has been working with industry partners in digital health for more than a decade, primarily focusing on app development and integration of apps with healthcare platforms and databases.

"There is so much demand out there for what MEDIC can do to get apps to market," said Ward.

"SOPHIE is exciting because it provides life science companies with a clear path to launch

new products and grow their businesses with the support of Hamilton's leading institutions and unlock the expertise available here at Mohawk at both MEDIC and the Medical Technologies Innovation Centre," said Jeff McIsaac, Dean of Applied Research at Mohawk.

Medical Technologies Innovation Centre brings together experts in engineering, health and education and offers product improvement, and testing and validation. Its facilities include the Centre for Healthcare Simulation, the Point of Care Ultrasound Applications Lab and the Medical Radiation Lab.

Companies can access up to \$100,000 in SOPHIE funding by committing to contribute a further 35 per cent of the funded amount, along with in-kind contribution.

"The real advantage for both MEDIC and our partners is the speed with which we can do this work. We can move very quickly because the funding is earmarked," said Ward.

So, the six to eight months that it can take to secure funding under traditional models is compressed to just a few weeks under SOPHIE.

"Start-ups need to get to market quickly in such a competitive landscape. That makes a huge difference for our partners." ■■■

Quarter century of distinction

Mohawk College has been recognizing its standout alumni for 25 years

Over the past 25 years, Mohawk College has recognized 160 of its successful and accomplished graduates—standouts among the 134,000 alumni of the college—with its Alumni of Distinction award.

“Alumni of Distinction are doing tremendous things socially and economically to support their community, their city, their province, their nation and their world,” said Wendy Makey, Director of Alumni Relations.

“Many have also given back to Mohawk College by volunteering on our board, contributing to program advisory committees, mentoring students and supporting our foundation.”

The awards were first handed out in 1996 with four categories. Over time, that’s grown to 10. And 15 years ago, the awards added a gala dinner to celebrate the award winners.

“To see the journey of our graduates and what they’ve accomplished is inspiring. It’s a great sense of pride for the college.”

Makey, who has been in her role since 2005, says graduates always look back at their time at Mohawk as a positive, formative experience that set the foundation for their career.

Alumni of Distinction nominations are accepted from October to February each year.

Recipients in each category are chosen by a selection committee made up of past



recipients, a student, and representatives of the alumni advisory committee, the Mohawk Foundation, and human resources.

Recipients often don’t know they’ve been nominated until they get a call from Mohawk College President Ron McKerlie.

“We are very proud of our winners but we are also proud of our award program,” said Makey. “It’s an amazing achievement to reach 25 years and it’s a testament to the incredible graduates that complete their credentials at Mohawk and go on to achieve such impactful things.”

Each year, a number of recipients are selected to be considered for a Premier’s Award, which recognizes college graduates from across Ontario. As well, to honour each recipient, the Alumni Association makes a one-time donation of \$500 to a Mohawk College bursary to support current students in achieving their goals. That has amounted to \$80,000 over the past 25 years. ■■■

Recent recipients



Bella N. Dietrich
Alumni of Distinction –
Technology, 2020

*Architectural Technology & Civil
Engineering Technology (2008)*
European Sustainability
Program Manager, Amazon

As the European Sustainability Program Manager at Amazon, Bella N. Dietrich is heading up efforts to achieve net-zero carbon efficiency by 2040. Prior to that, she headed an \$8.7-million research portfolio at an engineering consultancy. She has also taken part in engineering and construction research around the world that has led to publication and two patents.



Jad Saliba
Alumni of Distinction –
Technology, 2018, Premier's
Award, 2018

*Computer Systems Technician –
Network Systems (2001)*
Founder & CTO, Magnet
Forensics Inc.

Jad Saliba was a digital forensics investigator with the Waterloo Regional Police Service when he decided to tackle the challenges of technology in modern crime. In 2011, he retired from the police service and founded Magnet Forensics. As chief technology officer, Saliba is focused on staying ahead of criminals in all of their attempts to stay hidden in the digital world.



Dr. Bonnie Freeman
Alumni of Distinction –
Health Sciences, 2019

*Native Community Care –
Mental Health, 1992*
Assistant Professor,
School of Social Work,
McMaster University

Dr. Bonnie Freeman is an assistant professor at McMaster University and acting director of the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute (MIRI). Freeman, who is Algonquin/Mohawk, Bear Clan from the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, credits her time at Mohawk College for both laying the foundation for a career in academia, but also for setting her on a path to healing and advocating for Indigenous people. ■■■

2021 Alumni of Distinction Recipients

Albert Duwyn
Technology
Architectural Technology (1978)

Carlos Barrios
Health Sciences
Diagnostic Cardiac Sonography (2002)

Daniel Guest
Apprenticeship
Plumber (2013)

Katherine Kalinowski
Community Services
Social Service Worker (1993)

Kelly Dunham (posthumous)
Affinity
Office Administration – General (1991)

Leen Alramlawi
Recent Graduate
*Broadcasting – Television &
Communications Media (2016)*

Len Larose
Entrepreneur
Business – Marketing (1995)

Lori Morgan
Mohawk College Employee
Advertising (1988)

Nicole McCormick
Creative Arts & Design
*Broadcasting – Television &
Communications Media (2002)*

Ryan Roberts
Business
Advertising (2003)



David Parkinson, Learning Support Officer; Jim Vanderveken, Dean Centre for Community Partnerships & Experiential Learning; Natalie Shearer, Manager, Future Skills Partnerships; Dr. Pamela Ingleton, Learning Outcomes Assessment Consultant; Rida Masood, Research & Policy Analyst

Mohawk exports City School model to three other community colleges

With a goal of better matching local workforces to the needs of employers, Mohawk College is leading a partnership with the Future Skills Centre (FSC) to deliver training programs to equity-seeking groups across Canada.

Through the partnership, Mohawk is now exporting its City School by Mohawk training model for a Material Handling program to three other community colleges—Vancouver Community College, Red River College in Winnipeg and Nova Scotia Community College in Halifax.

“There are emerging needs within the goods movement area and those can be met by groups of unemployed and underemployed people in the local market,” said Natalie Shearer, Manager of Future Skills Partnerships at Mohawk.

“This partnership will mean a larger collective impact through shared values and goals and leveraging resources and reach. We believe this model of free, community-based education will bring positive economic benefits.”

Shearer expects the initiative to expand, with new program offerings and as the partnerships with these colleges grow.

A third cohort has now begun the program in Hamilton, which focuses on both

technical and 21st-century employment skills, including problem-solving, teamwork and communication. Six weeks of training is followed by a two-week paid placement.

Funded by the federal government, the Future Skills Centre is a pan-Canadian initiative, connecting ideas and innovations generated across Canada so that employees and employers can succeed in the labour market, and to ensure that local, regional and national economies thrive.

“This program fills a gap in the skills ecosystem by connecting postsecondary education with workforce development to prepare people for the careers of the future,” said Pedro Barata, FSC Executive Director.

“Employers in the supply chain and material handling sector are facing labour shortages, while workers need different, more technical skills to meet the demands of this evolving sector. We’re pleased to support a learning model that has expanded across the country and that may apply to other sectors and regions.”

FSC has granted Mohawk funding to support the training of 135 students in the Greater Hamilton Region, with an additional 108 students to be trained by the three partner institutions across Canada. ■■■

Mohawk partners with YMCA on Newcomer Mentorship Program

Mohawk has partnered with the YMCA Newcomer Mentoring Program to offer mentorship matches to learners at the college and in the community.

Through this collaboration, we expanded the benefits of the YMCA Newcomer Mentoring Program to the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) students at Mohawk College. We also provided access to more mentors for the YMCA of Hamilton Burlington Brantford to meet the increasing demand and serve internationally trained newcomers in the community, says Yudara Weerakoon, a Training Specialist in Mohawk's Community Access Engagement and Research.

"We felt we could leverage our staff, alumni and community partners, to boost the number of mentors they were getting."

That has certainly been the case. In fact, in the first cohort, there were more than twice as many volunteer mentors as there were newcomer mentees.

"We've now got more than 100 mentors in a pool, so we can facilitate many more applicants to the program."

It was delayed in 2020 by the pandemic, but three cohorts are going through the program in 2021.

Mentors and newcomer mentees have met virtually during the three-month program, with many saying they have really appreciated the connection during these challenging times, says Weerakoon.

Moutaz Sheikh Alard is a Workplace Preparation Program (WPP) student and an internationally trained graphic designer.



Mentor Christina Birmingham

"My mentor, Christina, has many experiences in the workplace and IT field, which gave me the opportunity to extend my knowledge and prepare for my next career."

Mentor Christina Birmingham, a business owner and human resources consultant in Waterdown, says her mentee had concerns about fitting into a workplace in Canada.

"I think I equipped him with advice he could use. He relaxed, and his personality came out during the course of our meetings. It was so rewarding." ■■■

Learn more about the mentorship program: mohawkcollege.ca/newcomer-mentorship



Mohawk College Training Specialist Michael Campbell, and Indwell Manager of Commercial and Social Enterprises Hannah Pahuta

City School, Indwell gather for new SkillsAdvance Ontario training program

Together with affordable housing provider Indwell, Mohawk College is offering a unique, free program aimed at training people for culinary and environmental services jobs in hospitals, long-term care homes and other institutional settings.

Mohawk's City School participants learn to cook in a working kitchen at an Indwell facility in the morning and are trained in cleaning, sanitation and health and safety in the afternoon over an eight-week period. That is followed by a paid work placement at an employer partner—Compass One Healthcare and Thrive Group.

Employers are heavily involved in the development of the programming, says Michael Campbell, a Training Specialist at Mohawk who leads the project.

The roots of the initiative are in Indwell's Gather Culinary Academy, which leveraged the kitchens that provide food to residents into training facilities.

"This is a unique job-skills training program for people living in poverty. We are seeing many lives transformed, leading to flourishing families and communities," said Hannah Pahuta, Manager of Commercial and Social Enterprises at Indwell.

"Our partnership with Mohawk College's City School and Workforce Partnerships is an alignment that deepens our shared commitment to serve vulnerable populations in support of healthy community outcomes."

The first group has completed its training and the second is set to begin.

"It's really a remarkable experience for low-income and vulnerable people," said Campbell. "They become like a family and they are so supportive of each other. There is a profound transformation in confidence for many of them."

One participant wrote that the program had been "a blessing."

"To me, I will always be grateful for this chance for a better future."

Another, who had been out of the workforce for four years, wrote that the program "has given me back my energy, a routine, a sense of purpose and has helped me personally in many ways."

SkillsAdvance Ontario supports training for specific jobs in which there is a workforce shortage for people who are unemployed, underemployed or on social assistance and not in school. The Employment Ontario program is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario. ■■■

The gift of education

Catalogue supports students in need

The Mohawk College Foundation's Give the Gift of Education catalogue eases the burden for students facing financial challenges.

"People often think the only means to support a student is through a scholarship or a large donation, but that's not the case, there are so many ways to give," said Linda Rourke, Acting Director of Development. "The gift catalogue connects staff, alumni and the community to how they can truly support our students.

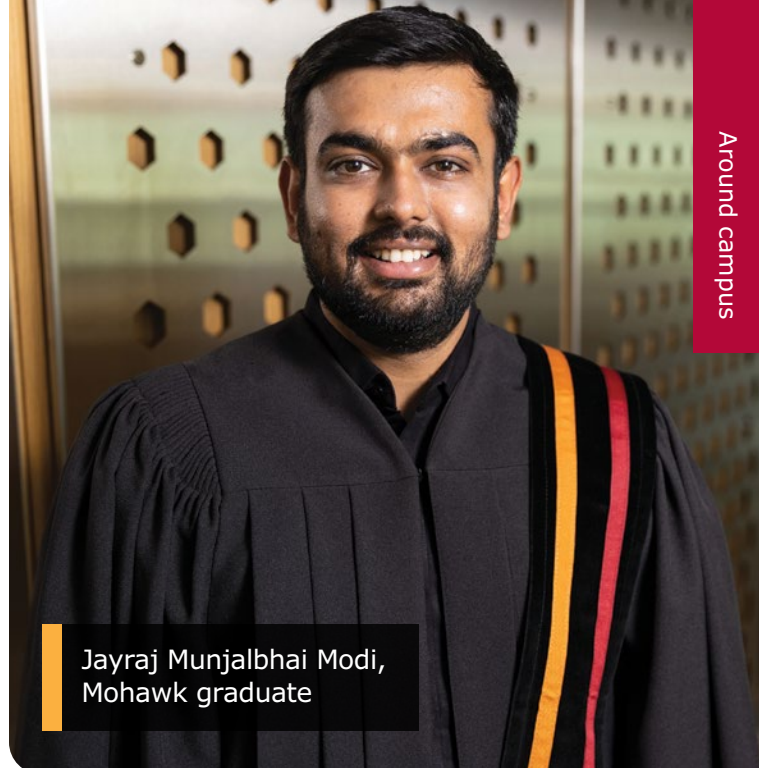
There are a wide range of options: reduce the rent; food assistance; or help with technology or program equipment for school.

"We don't often see the struggles of students who are choosing between paying rent, paying a bill or putting food on the table," said Rourke.

"The financial assistance received from Mohawk will be of great help to me in paying my educational expenses, and it will allow me to concentrate more of my time on studying."

Those challenges were only deepened during the pandemic, when students weren't able to work or couldn't rely on as much support from their families.

President Ron McKerlie is a former chair of the board of World Vision and was inspired by the international charity's gift catalogue that clearly shows the impact of a donation of any size. He says financial stress often



Jayraj Munjalbhai Modi,
Mohawk graduate

plays a role when students decide to abandon their studies.

"The Give the Gift of Education catalogue is a direct response to that reality. We have increased our efforts to address student financial stress and we are turning to the community to help us do even more."

The initiative earned Mohawk a bronze in the Canadian Council for Advancement of Education Prix d'Excellence Awards in 2020 for best fundraising materials.

It often takes five years for a new fundraising initiative to become firmly established, says Rourke. Each year, contributions to the Gift Catalogue grow. Between November 2020 and September of this year, 83 donors have contributed 122 items, with an average gift of almost \$350.

Student Jayraj Munjalbhai Modi says receiving financial aid at Mohawk eased his worries. He arrived in Canada from India during the pandemic to study International Business Management.

"The financial assistance received from Mohawk will be of great help to me in paying my educational expenses, and it will allow me to concentrate more of my time on studying." ■■■

Learn more about how to support our students: giftcatalogue.mohawkcollege.ca

Challenge 2025



Jim Vanderveken, Dean Centre for Community Partnerships & Experiential Learning and Grace Mater, General Manager, Healthy and Safe Communities, City of Hamilton

Life Stabilization Project aims to address life challenges of City School learners

When important parts of life are unstable, including housing, childcare, access to transportation and mental health, it makes it difficult to set goals, plan for the future and be successful in pursuing education or securing or maintaining employment.

The Life Stabilization Project is a partnership with the City of Hamilton's Healthy & Safe Communities team to help learners in City School by Mohawk.

"They have the ability to help us understand the barriers learners face and help us formulate some potential strategies for moving forward to address them," said Jody Brown, Manager of Community Access, Engagement and Research in the Centre for Community Partnerships and Experiential Learning.

"They know that population best."

"The City of Hamilton Healthy and Safe Communities Department is excited to collaborate with Mohawk College through the Challenge 2025 initiative and City School," says

Grace Mater, General Manager, Healthy and Safe Communities.

"The focus within our Ontario Works program is to connect those who rely on social assistance programs with the supports and services they need to move towards greater independence and employability. We work to assist individuals to address barriers by connecting them to agencies and programs that focus on Life Stabilization and we can deliver on this by connecting individuals to the City Schools by Mohawk program."

Healthy & Safe Communities staff now promote City School as part of their intake process and as learners are introduced to the program, City School staff are asking about potential barriers to success and making referrals to community programs.

The goal of Mohawk's Challenge 2025 initiative is to accelerate and amplify the impact of the City School by Mohawk model, which brings education to targeted neighbourhoods and demographics. If more students can access

education or stick with it once they've started because their lives outside the classroom are stable, that's a win for City School, says Brown.

It's also a win for learners who, through City School, gain access to a pathway into either postsecondary education or meaningful employment.

Partially funded by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Labour Market Partnership, Challenge 2025 is engaging partners in collaboration and systemic change in a way that removes barriers for learners from traditionally underrepresented groups but also meets the labour demand needs of employers.

The Life Stabilization Project requires a whole-of-community approach that brings together specialists and ensures that City School staff are well aware of the network of resources available, says Brown.

Local research, made possible by the federal College and Community Social Innovation Fund, is also underway to understand how best to strengthen collaboration and referral processes between City School and local health and human services organizations, says Brown.

More broadly, Challenge 2025 will identify where gaps in services exist and bring together partners to collectively advocate for funding for new programs, says Brown.

"Mohawk's expertise and mandate is education and we now recognize that need can only be met by addressing a whole suite of potential challenges. By leveraging partnerships and integrating City School in a broader network, we can increase the people we reach." ■■■

Partnership is taking on the Future of Work

Future of Work is a partnership tackling present, emerging and future workforce needs in a wide range of sectors.

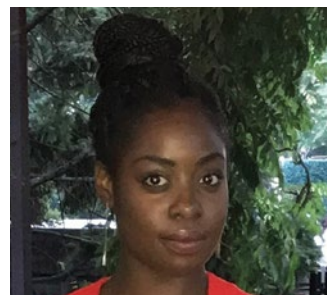
A component of Mohawk's Challenge 2025 initiative to accelerate and amplify the impact of City School, Future of Work is undertaking high-level planning and development of training programs for entry-level positions in manufacturing, materials handling, logistics, goods movement, environmental services and health care.

"We hear so much from employers that there is a labour shortage, yet there are so many in receipt of social assistance who say they want to work or are underemployed and want to work more. There is a disconnect," said Sarah Bradshaw, a Training Specialist and project lead.

The initiative, made possible by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Labour Market Partnership, involves extensive consultation with a Stewardship Committee of the Workforce Planning Hamilton, City of Hamilton Economic Development and local employers and industry.

"Workforce Planning Hamilton is determined to continue lending a helping hand in this initiative with Mohawk College by providing local labour market data as well as passing on our expertise in workforce engagement in the Greater Hamilton region," said Khadija Hamidu, Executive Director of Workforce Planning Hamilton.

"I am very excited to see how our ongoing support will impact our community in the next few years." ■■■



Khadija Hamidu,
Executive Director
of Workforce
Planning Hamilton

HOME OF THE

mountaineers

Satbir Singh, Sports Information Coordinator; Matt Schnarr, Supervisor, Varsity & Community Engagement; Matt Ferreira, Director, Athletics & Recreation; Ray Williams, Varsity Academic Coach

A new era

New high-performance vision in place for Mountaineer athletics after rebuild

Mohawk College Athletics has undergone a transformation in its coaching ranks, hiring prominent coaches in the community—many with national and international experience—to lead its teams into the new era.

“When I came to Mohawk two years ago, there were very few female leaders and role models,” said Matt Ferreira, Director of Athletics & Recreation.

“It was time for a rebuild.”

That rebuild included shifting the culture of Mohawk College Athletics into an era modelled after the catchy and motivating acronym of G.R.I.T. (Grit, Resilience, Initiative and Tenacity) to attract the best coaches and athletes available for the varsity program.

Some of the programs required entire new coaching staffs to align with Ferreira’s new high-performance vision. His focus shifted to the recruiting and hiring of high-performance individuals with historic playing and coaching

backgrounds to lead Mountaineer squads. These coaches bring a winning attitude and wealth of knowledge of their sport, and are firmly engrained in community sports programs.

“Those who run club programs or have deep connections into clubs reach the best young athletes and will wear a Mohawk College recruiting hat. When academic interests align, athletes will follow a great coach.”

Among the talent the Athletic department has brought on board is Taylor Brisebois, an assistant volleyball coach, who won an OUA championship with McMaster University and was also named an OUA all-star during her time with the Marauders. Following her collegiate career, Brisebois headed to Europe where she played three pro seasons in Sweden, Denmark and Germany.

She was recently named to the Coach 2 Coach Mentorship Program, a prestigious OCAA coach development initiative.

Another recent addition is women's basketball head coach Hali Burns, who has an extensive coaching resume, including serving as an assistant coach at University of Toronto-Mississauga, Team Ontario, and with the Kia Nurse elite under-16 team.

Burns earned all-star honours in both provincial and national championships as a player with Sheridan College. She was also an OCAA league scoring champion.

One coach Ferreira retained when he came to Mohawk was men's curling coach Betty Calic, one of the few women to head a men's college team in the country. Under her leadership, the Mountaineers curling program has won four OCAA medals since 2010.

"She is one of the most talented and determined coaches in the country."

Ferreira stresses that the high-performance approach extends beyond the field of play and into administration and support staff. That includes varsity academic coach Ray Williams, facilities representative Erica Hubert, and Danielle Brisebois, who is varsity home game operations lead. All three women had highly successful athletic careers of their own.

Ferreira came to Mohawk by way of Humber College, where he was head baseball coach and served as a manager of athletics and community engagement.

He was a collegiate athlete on scholarship at both Western Texas College and Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

When the pandemic put a halt to games for the 2020 season, Ferreira invested his time into developing performance indicators, including retention and graduation rates (setting a target of at least 90 per cent), podium relevance, community impact and leadership development.

With the right structure, talent and mindset, Ferreira says Mohawk will be poised to win its fair share of provincial and national championships.

"It's a new era of Mountaineer Athletics." ■■■

All-female coaching squad leads Mountaineer softball team

The Mohawk Mountaineers women's softball team hit the field for 2021 under the direction of three female coaches: co-head coaches Erin Forman and Logan White, and assistant coach Taylor Robblee.

As far as director of athletic and recreation Matt Ferreira knows, it's the only all-female coaching staff in the province and possibly nationally.

All three come to Mohawk with U.S. collegiate playing pedigrees and the two head coaches are in their respective schools' sports hall of fame. Both also played for Team Canada.

"When it comes to recruiting, when a player googles a coach and sees hall of fame credentials, there is not much of a sales pitch that has to happen after that," said Ferreira.

Like Mohawk's other teams, it has been a long break from the field for the softball players. The coaching staff added six recruits in the off-season, and we can't wait to see how this new squad and staff represent Mohawk in 2021. ■■■

Missing from photo: Brittany Galan, Athletic Therapist; Danielle Brisebois, Varsity Home Game Representative; Chad Van Dyk, Supervisor, Athletic Facilities; Erica Hubert, Facilities Evenings and Weekends Representative; Colin Beam, Facilities Evenings and Weekends Representative



International team guides students through “leap of faith”

Students from 118 countries, making up 28 per cent of the student body, are studying at Mohawk College. Each has made a “leap of faith,” says Dean of International and Partnerships Anuraj Bajwa.

The first point of contact for students and families—the international face of Mohawk College—are the eight market specialists who work in key regions.

Market specialists hold recruitment fairs, predeparture orientations, and meetings with families. Having that personal connection is key, says Bajwa.

“Families want to know their children are in good hands with us. That is a huge responsibility.”

The pandemic has meant all those relationships have to be formed online—sometimes in

the middle of the night here, depending on time zones.

A great deal of effort also goes into building relationships with key stakeholders in the city, including housing providers, banks, municipal agencies, transit and police, so that students from abroad feel welcomed and safe in Hamilton, says Bajwa.

“It’s a big leap of faith they are taking in Canada, Ontario and Mohawk.”

The vast majority—63 per cent—of Mohawk’s international students come from India. Bajwa says the college is working to diversify the mix.

“We are doing constant number-crunching about demographics, where students are coming from and what they are studying to see where new markets are possible.”



Market Specialists David Thompson and Vinay Joshi

But there is ever-increasing competition from global destinations, including the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

"We first talk about Canada, then Ontario, then we talk about Hamilton and Mohawk."

Bajwa has an extensive background in international education and is a permanent resident with family. When he arrived in Canada from India, he did a one-year graduate certificate at Georgian College.

Market Specialists Vinay Joshi, who works with students in South Asia, and David Thompson, who handles the African, Caribbean and U.S. markets, are both Mohawk graduates who came as international students.

"We really understand what it means to come from overseas and study in Canada," said Thompson, who is from Nigeria.

"I think it adds credibility to what we are saying because we have lived that path," said Joshi, who hails from India. "I had 30 choices after I chose Canada. But choosing Mohawk and Hamilton was one of the best decisions of my life."

As they walk students through studying in Canada and the application process to Mohawk, they serve as examples, says Thompson.

"In us are the dreams of what students can see themselves become. That's an education, a good job and becoming a permanent resident or a citizen in Canada." ■■■

WiTT kits aimed at drawing girls and young women into trades and technology

Though the activities may be fun, a new series of STEAM kits from Women in Technology and Trades have a message behind them: girls and women have a place in STEAM fields.

The idea is to provide easy, achievable tasks for students primarily in high school. The WiTT kit provides instructions through various steps ranging through different areas of STEAM which the students haven't necessarily been exposed to through their curriculum and course selection.

"People might not even realize it, but they are learning to code or doing something mechanical with their hands while they are doing the activities in the kit," said Karla Hall, an instructor in Mohawk's Mechanical Engineering program and a member of the WiTT team.

"The goal is to expose the students to different areas they might not otherwise seek out and to show them they can accomplish anything."

The kit activities include programming a smartwatch, lock-picking, discovering how mRNA vaccines work, measuring voltage of fruits and vegetables, and building a brush motor to name only a few.

What makes the WiTT kits powerful, says Liz Fabbroni Martin, Associate Dean of Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology, is



Karla Hall P.Eng, Instructor in the School of Engineering Technology and a member of the WiTT Team

that the activities and associated learning materials, including worksheets, slides and videos, have been developed by women studying in Mohawk's trades and technology programs.

The women are featured in the videos to build their personal confidence and help other young women understand that any career is possible for them, says Martin.

"The women in our programs are empowered by serving as mentors."

The pandemic forced a pivot in rolling out the kits. They are available online on WiTT's website and Martin expects to have an awareness-raising kickoff event sometime in the future.

Hall wishes there had been something like this initiative when she was figuring out her path but she's happy it will be in place for her young daughter.

"My passion is encouraging more women into trades and tech fields." ■■■

"The goal is to expose the students to different areas they might not otherwise seek out and to show them they can accomplish anything."

Highlights

MOHAWK HAPPENINGS



1 Mohawk College hosted a Let's Get Together to welcome faculty and staff back on campus at our three main campuses. **2** Rick Hill helped Mohawk College recognize the first National Day of Truth & Reconciliation on September 30. **3** Mohawk's Emily Ecker, Associate Dean, Community Partnerships and Learning, is the Gold recipient in the Managerial category for CICAN's national Awards of Excellence. **4** Mohawk was named one of Canada's Greenest Employers for the 8th year in a row.

To learn more about the happenings at Mohawk, visit mohawknewsdesk.ca

OPEN HOUSE+

Online November 1-12



Register today!

mohawkcollege.ca/OpenHouse

MOHAWK
COLLEGE



Mohawk College recognizes three outstanding employees

Jennifer Jahnke

Professor/Coordinator,
Accessible Media Production

Adam Luyk

Learning Management System
and Technical Support

Cathy O'Donnell

Director, Security Services

*"Congratulations to our
2021 Award of Excellence
recipients, Jennifer, Adam
and Cathy. The outstanding
contributions you make to
our college make it a better
place for students and
colleagues alike."*

Ron J. McKerlie,
President & CEO,
Mohawk College

Learn more about each of these recipients at
mohawknewsdesk.ca