

MOMENTUM

MOHAWK COLLEGE COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

FALL 2020



Powerful partnerships

How Mohawk supports social and economic issues and recovery.

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Dimensions Charter

Committing to equity, diversity and inclusion in research.

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Sharing space

Students learn their trades in shared industry spaces.

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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 10 colleges in Canada for applied research. 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, or were taken prior to March 2020. **COVER:** Javier Rumie and family in Hamilton, Ontario.

From the President

The theme of this issue of Momentum is partnerships.

That's also the theme of Mohawk College.

Our college would not exist without our partners. That is not an exaggeration or a figure of speech. Partnerships are embedded in our philosophy and are at the heart of our strategic plan.

They are the lifeblood of what we do every day and in every facet of our operations.

Our partners deliver critical experiential learning to our students in work placements and applied research challenges, and their guidance on program advisory committees helps us graduate future ready talent.

We partner on innovative joint programs with other postsecondary institutions, most notably McMaster University and Six Nations Polytechnic.

We are tightly woven into our community, aiding Hamilton and Burlington to attract, retain and grow local employers, and leading the way on local workforce development.

Now we are taking our approach to partnerships to a national stage. Canadian Colleges for a Resilient Recovery is a Mohawk-led initiative that galvanizes the leadership of the college sector to drive both climate change action and a post-pandemic economic recovery.

And Challenge 2025 will amplify the success of our City School access to education initiative by matching marginalized populations to educational and employment opportunities in sectors in need of talent. We believe that Challenge 2025 will have a transformational national impact through bringing partners together.

You will read about more of our partnerships, including an innovative program with IBM that will encourage more Indigenous students to find a career in technology, our participation in a national diversity pilot initiative, and an exciting new facility shared with KF Aerospace that will provide a premier experience to our aviation students.

We are better, stronger and more impactful through partnerships and that approach will continue to guide all that we do at Mohawk College. 🇩🇪

Regards,

Ron J. McKerlie





Ron J. McKerlie, President Mohawk
College and David Farrar, President
McMaster University

Power in partnerships

Mohawk College is amplifying its demonstrated
leadership in creating partnerships to take on
huge social and economic issues

A photograph of President Ron McKerlie, a middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing a dark blue suit, light blue shirt, and patterned tie. He is standing outdoors in front of a brick building and lush green trees. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day. The background is slightly out of focus, emphasizing the subject.

Mohawk College has long been a leader in building partnerships that optimize the student experience and drive value for partners, but now it is leveraging that track record of success to find local solutions to the world's most pressing challenges.

On climate change, post-pandemic economic recovery, poverty reduction, skilled trades shortages, and creating equity, diversity and inclusion, Mohawk is finding ways to amplify its impact by working with other postsecondary institutions, industry, municipalities, and community organizations.

Mohawk has developed partnerships with thousands of stakeholders, says President Ron McKerlie, and over the last several years, the college has been tactical and intentional about broadening and deepening its collaborations.

"Our strategic plan above all else values partnerships. They allow us to do bigger things than what we could achieve on our own."

Collaboration in action

It's through partnerships that Mohawk is demonstrating its thought leadership, innovation and ability to act as a catalyst and driver of collective action through Canadian Colleges for a Resilient Recovery and Challenge 2025, says Chief Operating Officer Paul Armstrong.

"This is an evolution in what people think partnership means at the college level. I think the most exciting part for us at Mohawk College is that we are positioning the college and the college sector to play a valuable role in solving huge problems."

And every day, in a myriad of ways, Mohawk is collaboration in action.

Mohawk faculty and students are working on applied research projects with companies of all sizes, college leaders are serving on crucial community initiatives, and Mohawk is working with industry stakeholders to offer innovative learning experiences to students.

Mohawk's range of partners includes small grassroots organizations, large global powerhouses and everything in between, says Armstrong.

"Collectively, what can be accomplished goes far beyond what you could ever do on your own. That's a philosophy we take very seriously and it's a message that resonates in our community. It's so worthwhile to make it a priority and invest in it as we do."

Collaboration allows Mohawk to amplify its scope of impact so it can make a contribution bigger than its size would suggest. That impact goes well beyond the college's boundaries.

For Alison Horton, Vice President Academic, partnerships are the "lifeblood of our institution."

What is striking, she says, is that what become broad and deep partnerships often start out in small ways that grow over time as synergies are discovered and developed.

"It may be a small project at first or an employer who sits on a program advisory committee. But from there the relationship continues to grow because we are responsive to their needs."

"Platinum standard"

Among Mohawk's foundational partnerships is one with McMaster University, says McKerlie. It has been recognized by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities as the "platinum standard" for what a college and university can achieve together.

The partnership includes joint programs, beginning with the establishment of the combined degree and diploma in nursing 20 years ago. From that has come 12 more integrated programs, including an engineering technology program that results in a university degree, advanced diploma and a certificate in business management.

"Collectively, what can be accomplished goes far beyond what you could ever do on your own. That's a philosophy we take very seriously and it's a message that resonates in our community. It's so worthwhile to make it a priority and invest in it as we do."

"These are fabulous programs that have been hugely successful because they combine the best of what we do with the best of what McMaster does," said McKerlie. What sets these efforts apart from other college-university pathway programs is that these are fully integrated from day one, says McKerlie.

Mohawk and McMaster jointly own the innovative Institute for Applied Health Sciences and, together with Redeemer University and the City of Hamilton, constitute CityLab, an initiative to apply the combined expertise, energy and resources of each institution's faculty and students to solve city problems.

The two institutions also work on a range of research collaborations, including autonomous vehicles, energy, and mobile and electronic health.

"That's the key: We work together, not compete together," McKerlie said.

"One of the things that makes this partnership so special and the reason it has grown over several decades is that we both know what we are and what we want to be and neither want to be each other. McMaster is a world-class university and we would never compete with them on that because we are a world-class college."

The depth and breadth of the partnership between the two Hamilton postsecondary institutions is rare, says David Farrar, President of McMaster. He has not seen another same-city university and college co-operate in such meaningful ways.

"In the areas we collaborate in, Mohawk brings a vision in the same way we bring a vision. The important characteristic of both institutions is that our people want to collaborate."

There are numerous opportunities to expand joint programs in healthcare, advanced manufacturing and technology, says Farrar.

"The joint programs that we're providing are great for our students, and show how partners can work together to make each other better," he said.

"Both Mohawk and McMaster are committed to moving the region forward. Individually, we have great capacity in that regard, but together we have massive power."

Strategic approach

Mohawk's Future Ready Premium Employer initiative both celebrates the multifaceted, deep and longstanding partnerships the college has with a number of organizations, but also attaches an intentional and strategic approach to using those relationships as a template for deepening relationships with others.

"We have such successful partnerships, so we are exploring how we can allow others to benefit in the same way and grow the ranks of our premium partners. That will mean we can best fulfil our role as a pipeline of talent and employment," said Armstrong.

How Mohawk works with Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) is an example of how a multi-layered and extensive partnership can transform both sides, says Armstrong.

HHS provides invaluable field and clinical placements, internships, and applied research opportunities for students. The two institutions work together to define future workforce needs and to develop curriculum and learning opportunities that will fully prepare students for future jobs.

"We could not be in health education without our health partners and hospitals know they can't meet their workforce needs without us. We modify, adapt and learn from each other," he said.

This approach is entirely different from how colleges have traditionally provided education.

"Education has historically not been demand-led. We used to educate people in a bit of a silo and send them out to be hired. That has changed. We are working with partners to set goals, and develop programs and curriculum. We have a full understanding of what employers need and are committed to meeting them."

“Collective vision”

Another key premium employer partner is ArcelorMittal Dofasco, which has been connected to Mohawk on multiple levels for many years, says Monique Biancucci, Vice President People and Culture at the steel producer.

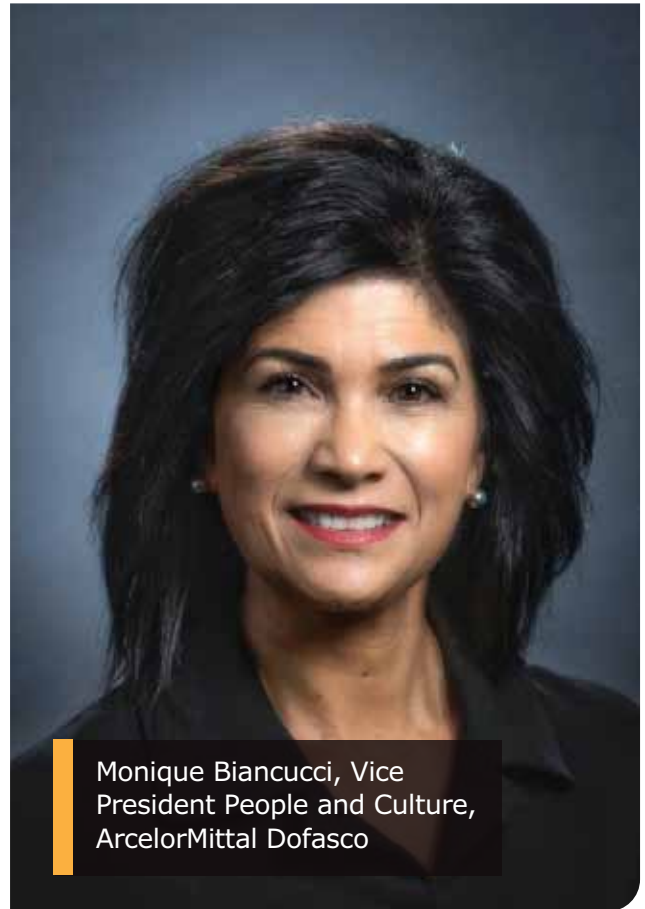
“We are a strong believer that the relationship, collaboration and collective vision of the future that we share is a win-win for everyone. This ongoing and sustainable collaboration has been a great success.”

And the list of outcomes is long. It includes partnerships on experiential learning and applied research, ArcelorMittal Dofasco’s role on program advisory committees and in specialized curriculum development, and the college’s provision of critical upskilling training that keep employees ahead of the curve.

The advanced manufacturer also works with Mohawk on initiatives to promote science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers to elementary and high school students through workplace tours, mentorship and interactive digital storytelling.

The college has a crucial role in developing the talent that attracts new companies and helps existing companies flourish and grow, says Norm Schleeahn, Director of Economic Development at the City of Hamilton.

“Mohawk is always ready and willing to talk about collaboration and is always there when we call on them.”



Monique Biancucci, Vice President People and Culture, ArcelorMittal Dofasco

He points to McKerlie’s roles chairing both the Mayor’s Blue Ribbon Task Force on Workforce Development and the newly formed Mayor’s Task Force on Economic Recovery as examples of the college leveraging its leadership and resources to benefit Hamilton and area.

“Mohawk is constantly looking out for the interests of the community.” ■■■

“Education has historically not been demand-led. We used to educate people in a bit of a silo and send them out to be hired. That has changed. We are working with partners to set goals, and develop programs and curriculum. We have a full understanding of what employers need and are committed to meeting them.”



Working as one

Alison Horton, Vice President Academic and Wendy Lawson, Dean School of Health and Community Services

Mohawk College and McMaster University began offering innovative joint programs 20 years ago that have established track records of success

Students in a range of programs attend Mohawk College and McMaster University at the very same time, earning both an advanced diploma and a degree.

The 20-year relationship in delivering joint programs is built on the “underlying premise that we are stronger together than we are alone,” said Alison Horton, Mohawk’s Vice President Academic.

“In careers combining both pure and applied components, such as nursing, medical radiation sciences, and technology, the partnership between the college and university provides a powerful and seamless education,” said McMaster President David Farrar.

The two institutions offer joint full-time programs in Medical Radiation Sciences, Bachelor of Science Nursing, Early Childhood Education, Bachelor of Applied Science Human Behaviour – Autism and Behavioral Science Specialization, and Bachelor of Technology.

“Because we recognize the strength of coming together and the strength in the differences in the two organizations, our partnership has a huge impact on our learners,” said Wendy Lawson, Dean of Health and Community Services.

At the Institute for Applied Health Sciences, which is jointly owned and operated by Mohawk and McMaster, students get access to leading-edge simulation suites and equipment. Shared programs also offer experiential learning, extensive field placements, and exposure to research opportunities allowing learners to show their agility, problem-solving, resilience and persistence.

Cindy Van Dyk, a fourth-year Medical Radiation Sciences student who is specializing in ultrasound, says she was drawn to the joint program because of “the credentials and established reputation,” the learning facilities at IAHS, and the opportunities for clinical field placements.

“I find that Mohawk and McMaster do a really great job at making the program seamless. It all works so well together and it’s so cohesive and well built. It seems effortless in the delivery. It really is two schools working as one.”

The joint programs have track records of success, says Lawson. “They are oversubscribed, and have high retention rates and high employment rates for graduates. We hope to grow the number of collaborative programs we offer because they are so successful.” ■■■



Path forward

Indigenous students have a growing number of options to study at Mohawk College

Providing pathways to postsecondary education for Indigenous learners is a priority for Mohawk College and its longest-standing partner in making that happen is Six Nations Polytechnic (SNP).

Since SNP formed in the early 1990s, the relationship between the two institutions has grown into joint program delivery of programs, says Rebecca Jamieson, President and CEO at SNP.

“SNP is very honoured to see graduates from programs such as the Practical Nursing program offered through SNP; remote northern delivery of continuing education on Indigenous Health Mental Health and Addictions; Personal Support Worker; Mental Health and Disability Management and Social Service Worker now working in their communities and making a positive difference.”

The mission of the partnership is to encourage access to a postsecondary education for all Indigenous learners, said Amy Kelaidis, Director and Special Advisor of Indigenous Initiatives.

“The programs we offer are built on the relationship we have developed over many years and they have made a real difference for so many students.”

SNP operates two campuses, one in Ohsweken and another in Mohawk’s former campus space in Brantford. That expansion allowed for more shared programs and deeper partnerships with Mohawk.

“In the last year, we’ve been able to increase enrolment in our shared programs by three times,” said Leah Hogan, Manager of Indigenous Education at Mohawk. That includes programs in the construction trades, health care, and community justice services.

“We work closely with SNP to focus on programs that fit the needs of the community and where jobs are in demand.”

The partnership has resulted in increased student success, measured by enrolment, retention, graduation and employment, says Jamieson.

“Students studying in a Mohawk/SNP program get the best of both worlds,” said Hannah

“Gold star” initiatives

Indigenous students at Mohawk benefit from an innovative new degree path and supports for online learning

An innovative new program at Mohawk College will allow Indigenous studies students to earn an Indigenous-focused diploma and university honours degree in four years.

Mohawk, together with Lambton College, McMaster University and Wilfrid Laurier University launched the 2+2 college-to-university pathway. It creates new opportunities for Indigenous studies college students to carry on their postsecondary education to earn a degree in Indigenous studies. “This is the gold star of pathways,” said Leah Hogan, Manager of Indigenous Education at Mohawk. “It will open many doors to our students.”

Mohawk’s Indigenous Student Services is also focused on reducing barriers to education for learners, including transportation, childcare, and limited access to technology and connectivity, for those living on Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. The latter issue became even more pressing with the shift to online learning. Mohawk’s Indigenous office worked with local communities to distribute loaner devices, including laptops, Wi-Fi sticks, and unlimited data hubs.

As well, students received a “virtual learning basket” of Mohawk swag, including a reusable cup, a USB flash drive, headphones and a gift card for office equipment. And Indigenous office staff were available for an hour a day, seven days a week, to connect with students throughout September. To overcome feelings of isolation and disconnection, Mohawk’s Indigenous office also rolled out a non-credit course that includes celebrations and the teachings of elders, along with a “wisdom deck,” a set of cards offering students words of encouragement from community leaders and elders.

Through City School, Mohawk also supports Homeward Bound at the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre in offering academic upgrading and skills preparation for Indigenous women as they embark on their college journey. ■■■

Abram, Acting Registrar at SNP. “SNP also values the partnership with Mohawk as it allows us to brainstorm and collaborate on ideas and programming beneficial to our students.”

It has been a privilege to partner with SNP on delivering programs and services to support Indigenous learners and communities, says Paul Armstrong, Chief Operating Officer at Mohawk.

The collaborative programs embed professional knowledge and skills along with Indigenous culture, traditions, healing practices and knowledge, he says.

As well, Mohawk and Six Nations are developing applied research projects in water safety and security in conjunction with McMaster University.

“We look forward to further expansion of programs and new initiatives to support Indigenous learners and communities.” ■■■

Pulling together

Mohawk is leading the way as colleges across the country band together in Canadian Colleges for a Resilient Recovery to tackle climate change and a green recovery

A ground-breaking cross-Canada initiative led by Mohawk College will be at the forefront of both climate change action and a post-pandemic economic recovery, and signals a “coming of age” moment for the nation’s college system, says a noted sustainability researcher.

Initially, Canadian Colleges for a Resilient Recovery (C2R2) brings together 16 colleges, institutions, polytechnics and CEGEPs and is close to its goal of representing every province and territory. Together, colleges will create an action plan that targets training a minimum of 50,000 Canadians for the low-carbon economy in the next three years.

“Mohawk is already at the forefront of sustainability and now we are aligning with partners with similar missions to drive action on skills development and applied research.”

C2R2 will champion green recovery projects that deliver good jobs to Canada while also addressing socio-economic inequality. The initiative was born to take meaningful action on the recommendations of the Task Force for a Resilient Economy, which called for a \$55.4-billion strategy for a green recovery in Canada.

Mohawk President Ron McKerlie began reaching out to his peers at colleges with leading sustainability programs before the task force issued its report this summer. He shared with

each the college’s 15-page proposal for its vision of the C2R2 and the impact it could make.

McKerlie, who will serve as the first chair of the C2R2, says he found nothing but support and enthusiasm from other colleges for starting work immediately and collectively.

“As the economy starts to recover, it will require retraining and reskilling the workforce to take on the kind of jobs that will drive the new economy,” he said.

“Colleges are at the very centre of that and the most effective way for us to drive rapid change is by collaborating right from the beginning to share resources and best practices.”

Mohawk’s Centre for Climate Change Management (CCCM), a hub of sustainability innovation, is acting as the secretariat for the initiative, along with David Wheeler, a noted sustainability researcher and advocate, as a special advisor.

“I’ve always sought to go where the action is in the public, private and academic sector. It’s clear that Mohawk is establishing national leadership on sustainability,” said Wheeler.

By working together, colleges will be the backbone of a shift to a clean economy, he says.

“I really think this is a moment where the college sector is coming of age,” said the former President of Cape Breton University. “This is not something that universities could do. That system is not geared to this level of national collaboration and responsiveness.”

Key global organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the World Bank are advocating for a post-pandemic focus on a green recovery.



Kate Flynn, Acting Director,
Centre for Climate Change
Management and Ron J. McKerlie
President Mohawk College

That can be built around a whole host of sectors, including zero-carbon buildings, industrial energy efficiency, and green agriculture.

Wheeler hopes to see governments provide tuition incentives for green programs and that a new sustainable economy will be inclusive of young people, women, Indigenous people, newcomers, those out of work, and anyone left behind by the pandemic.

C2R2 will harness the power of colleges, including their hands-on and experiential learning approach, the applied research that delivers innovation and investment, and their ability to act as demonstration sites and living labs for climate change solutions.

Collectively, they will build, implement and share curriculum and research initiatives in their areas of expertise that support a resilient recovery, while modelling and championing best practices on their own campuses and within their communities.

C2R2 will host a national webinar series,

showcasing faculty and researchers from each partner college, who will share transferable and scalable recovery solutions. The goal is to see each institution pilot a rapid training model to address a local clean economy skills gap by 2023, with each focused on serving underrepresented groups.

The scale of the need and the timeframe to meet it requires a national approach, says Tony Cupido, Mohawk's Research Chair in Sustainability at IDEAWORKS.

"Mohawk is already at the forefront of sustainability and now we are aligning with partners with similar missions to drive action on skills development and applied research."

There seems to be no precedence for this kind of nation-wide collaboration between colleges, says Kate Flynn, Acting Director of the CCCM.

"We are showing the college system can respond to this kind of need. We have the flexibility and resources to do this work and respond to the change that is coming." 🇩🇪



Clockwise from top left: Casey Goossens, TCI Business Development, Domenic Maniccia, Manager Facility Services GEDSB, Marie Cresswell, President Thomas Cole Inc., Tim Cresswell, CEO Thomas Cole Inc., Tony Cupido, Research Chair, Sustainability at Mohawk's IDEAWORKS

Future leaders

Mohawk College launches Climate Change Leaders, which will see students learn through real-world data

Ten school boards have made commitments to set carbon reduction goals and to partner with Mohawk College to bring climate change curriculum and awareness of low-carbon alternatives into elementary and secondary classrooms.

Climate Change Leaders will see Mohawk introduce micro-credits in climate change in which students learn from the energy use data collected in their schools and boards.

The goal is to both create understanding of sustainability beginning at a young age and to generate interest in low-carbon trades as a future career path. The model can be scaled across Canada.

Schools present an opportunity to be living labs of sustainability when it comes to energy consumption and clean air, says Tony Cupido, Research Chair, Sustainability at Mohawk's IDEAWORKS.

"We want students to learn about building systems and to understand how buildings work. That's important for the future we face."

An early aspect in the initiative was the installation of new air purification equipment in the ventilation systems in up to 10 schools. The project is a partnership between Mohawk, the Grand Erie District School Board, and Stoney Creek's NERVA Energy Group.

The technology, which has been shown to boost energy efficiency and reduce the spread of pathogens – including COVID-19 – through the circulation of air, has been used worldwide for years but has yet to be used in schools in Canada. Students will learn from the data generated by the new system and it is expected that absenteeism due to illness will be reduced.

"What impressed us the most about Mohawk's Climate Change Leaders partnership was the focus on creating capacity and capability in clean technology and sustainability but above all, their actions to empower students to contribute to Canada's efforts to meet our carbon reduction targets (Paris Accord)," said Rob Hallewick, CEO of NERVA Energy. ■■■



Amanda Collina, Manager
Indigenous Education
and Student Services and
Caroline Hill, student

"I learned I could."

Mohawk's Pathfinder program connects Indigenous youth to higher education

Caroline Hill found her way to Mohawk College thanks to the Pathfinder program.

The program engages with Indigenous youth, to teach them about their culture and to equip them to pursue postsecondary education.

"Pathfinder introduces young people to the college environment and gives them a hands-on experience that sets them up for success," said Amanda Collina, Manager of Indigenous Student Services.

"It shows them that postsecondary is possible and attainable."

Pathfinder participants, who are generally ages 16-21, build relationships with peers, mentors and Mohawk staff, and earn a dual credit that shows up on both their high school and college transcripts.

Pathfinder students stay in residence on campus during a three-week summer program. The program was extended to a winter edition this year, though COVID-19 forced the cancellation of the summer program.

Hill, who is Seneca Nation, began attending Pathfinder at Mohawk when she was 14. She's now 24, in her second year as a recreation therapy student, and served as a mentor in the winter program.

She has learned much about her culture by spending time with Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Over the years, she got to kayak on the Grand River, took a trip to see an Indigenous exhibit at the Royal Ontario Museum, and attended a hoop dance at Mohawk.

Hill also got to know staff in Mohawk's Indigenous Student Services and was made to feel welcome at the college, she says.

"The program really helped me to build skills and build confidence," she said. "I was struggling at 14. I was a bit lost and didn't have a direction."

Pathfinder helped Hill find her way to postsecondary education.

"I think it's amazing that Mohawk offers this program. When I started, I had no aspirations to go to college, but I learned I could." ■■■

New dimension

Mohawk is among just 17 postsecondary institutions nationwide chosen for a pilot that embeds equity, diversity and inclusion into research practices

Mohawk College, a national leader in applied research, is among 17 Canadian postsecondary institutions chosen by federal research funding agencies to act on a commitment to building principles of equity, diversity and inclusion into all areas of academic and research activities.

After being a signatory to the Dimensions Charter, Mohawk is one of just five colleges asked to join the two-year pilot of the Dimensions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Canada program.

"That is a tremendous honour to be on the national stage in something so important," said Jeff McIsaac, Dean of Applied Research at Mohawk.

"We know we have best practices we can share and that we can learn from the best practices of other institutions."

The college has committed to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in its strategic plan and established a director and special advisor dedicated to EDI in its leadership group.

Maxine Carter took on that role in 2017.

"The goal of the Dimensions Charter is to foster transformational change in EDI in postsecondary institutions and to raise the level of research excellence. Researchers are often the ones we depend on to make decisions that drive progress," said Carter.

But if research only looks at issues through one lens, it leaves many out.



Jeff McIsaac, Dean Applied Research and Maxine Carter, Director & Special Advisor, Equality and Social Inclusion

"It's critical that researchers have a deep understanding of EDI and the importance of being reflective of their community. The work they produce should include an understanding of the systemic barriers and gaps so that results represent all voices and identities of the community in a much more authentic way."

The Dimensions Charter comes at a time when the fight for racial equity is front and centre, a profound illustration of why the ongoing work to advance an agenda of equity, inclusion and social justice is critically important, says Carter.

She was one of the stakeholders who consulted with NSERC on the initiative, which was adapted from the United Kingdom's Athena Forum.

Mohawk's EDI initiatives include a focus on groups traditionally underserved or underrepresented in postsecondary education.

"It's critical that researchers have a deep understanding of EDI and the importance of being reflective of their community. The work they produce should include an understanding of the systemic barriers and gaps so that results represent all voices and identities of the community in a much more authentic way."

"Our strategy includes a commitment to addressing barriers to education for Indigenous people, women, racialized groups, persons with disabilities and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community," said McIsaac.

As well, Mohawk's City School and Challenge 2025 initiatives target delivering educational opportunities to those impacted by socio-economic structural disadvantages, including those on social assistance, and living in targeted low-income neighbourhoods.

"When it comes to poverty, we need to be intentional and examine the intersectionality within the five disadvantaged groups we are focused on and can only emphasize why we need to dig deeper to identify root causes," said Carter.

"The philosophy I bring to my equity work is to examine the status of the most marginalized groups within larger groups. If we plan to really address systemic barriers and gaps, we must do so for the most marginalized people. If those people are served well, we are serving a much larger group, too."

McIsaac says the intersectionality of identities of disadvantaged groups makes solutions complex. But Mohawk's across-the-board and top-down commitment to EDI is "driving a fundamental shift in mindset and culture at Mohawk that is continuing to make us better."

Turning an EDI lens to applied research is an important next step in Mohawk's journey, says McIsaac, a process that has begun with the college's submission to the Dimensions Charter pilot. That resulted from broad input from the Mohawk community, including senior leadership, recent graduates, researchers, faculty, staff in human resources and administration, and those from target groups.

"The intent is to challenge our own biases, even the ones we may not be aware of, and to ensure we use multiple lenses to look at issues," said McIsaac.

As the pilot begins its rollout, it will require building a structure to embed EDI in applied research activities and raising awareness across Mohawk about what is underway, says Carter.

"We were already doing this work, but the charter elevates it, brings more synergy, and shares it with institutions across the country."

Dimensions Charter is led by the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council, in collaboration with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. ■■■



Mark Steffler, Manager of Innovation and Partnership, Burlington Economic Development Corporation and Norm Schleeahn, Director of Economic Development, City of Hamilton

Talent ally

Economic development teams in Hamilton and Burlington depend on partners in Mohawk College

"Mohawk College is important to so much of what we do at the City of Hamilton," said Norm Schleeahn, Director of Economic Development.

"They have always been a phenomenal organization to partner with, whether it's helping existing companies train employees for new skills, landing new companies, or supporting business innovation, Mohawk is always at the table."

"Access to talent is top of mind for businesses in every sector," says Schleeahn.

Mohawk leaders have long gone out on corporate calls with city staff, participated in trade missions across Canada and internationally, and opened their campuses to companies considering an investment in Hamilton, he says.

"To continue to grow Hamilton's economy we need to attract, retain and develop talent and Mohawk College is a key partner in helping the city achieve this goal. Mohawk College helps us keep the talent we need right here in Hamilton."

Mohawk has also been a key collaborator for Burlington business, says Mark Steffler,

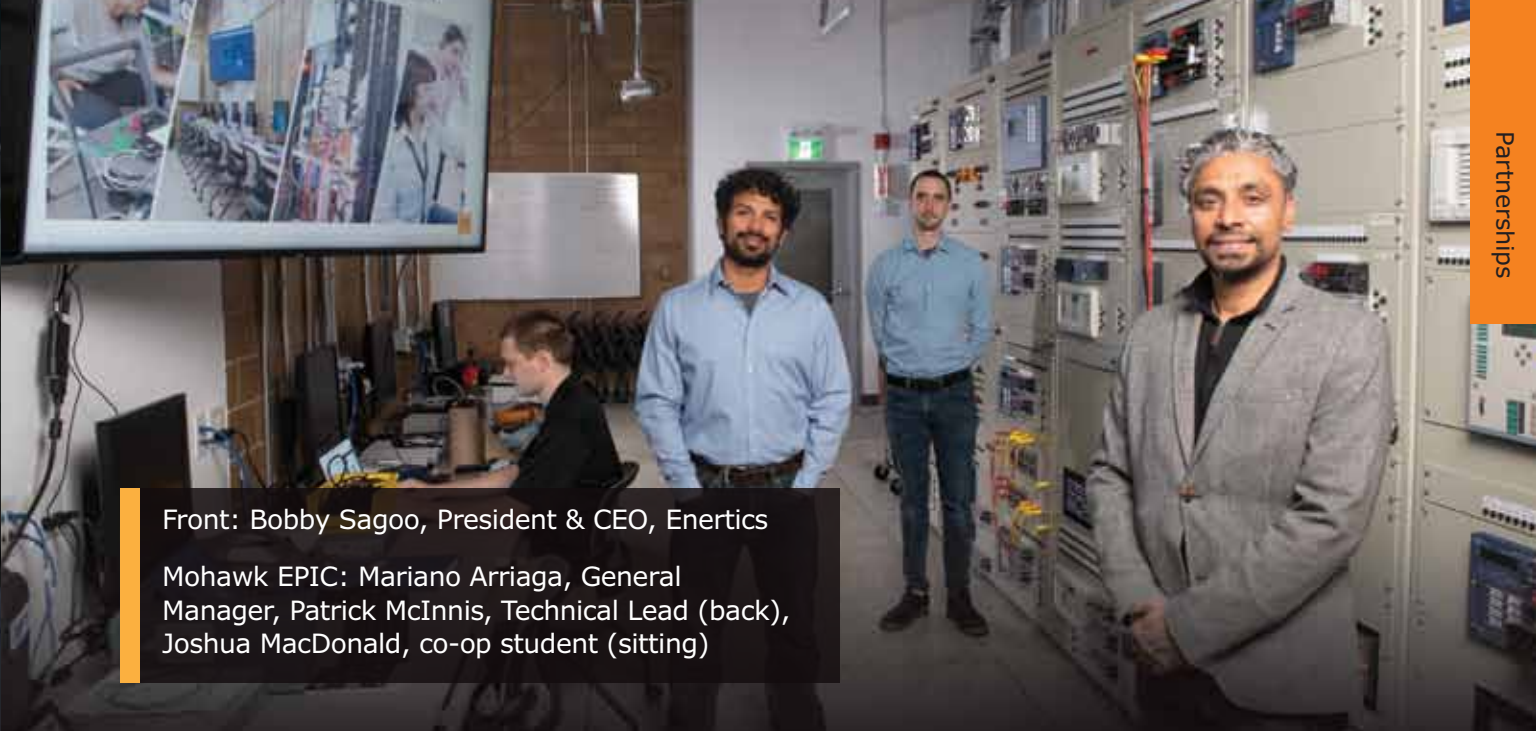
Manager of Innovation and Partnership at the Burlington Economic Development Corporation.

"Mohawk always welcomes us with open arms and they are always very receptive to our inquiries. As ecosystem partners for innovation, applied research, and talent, they are real team players."

Most recently, Mohawk experts and staff answered questions from Burlington business leaders in a pandemic business forum. Mohawk has hosted Burlington Day at its Fennell Campus to allow local business to tour facilities, meet with faculty, and explore training and applied research opportunities.

TechPlace, the innovation hub where Steffler is also manager, in the past has hosted monthly Mohawk Days where college representatives present the range of what the college has to offer to startups. As well as a Mohawk Career Crawl for International students to visit Burlington employers to learn about job opportunities.

The college also delivers a digital literacy series covering blockchain, cybersecurity, internet of things and robotics. ■■■



Front: Bobby Sagoo, President & CEO, Enertics

Mohawk EPIC: Mariano Arriaga, General Manager, Patrick McInnis, Technical Lead (back), Joshua MacDonald, co-op student (sitting)

Stronger together

Four centres of research excellence at Mohawk are combining their expertise to find solutions for industry partners

Mohawk, one of Canada's leading applied research colleges, is now embarking on collaborations that will overlap layers of expertise to answer complex problems.

"We are leveraging our strengths and deep expertise in our four research centres of excellence to deliver comprehensive skill sets to our partners," said Jeff McIsaac, Dean of Applied Research. "What I am most proud of is how we have come together as a research team to share our services and funding, and to combine our knowledge to provide the best value to our partners."

Mohawk realized a strategic goal to rank among the country's top 10 research colleges when it reached Number 7 in 2019. It was second among large colleges in industry research income.

Mohawk is home to two federally funded Technology Access Centres in the mHealth and eHealth Development and Innovation Centre (MEDIC) and the Energy and Power Innovation Centre (EPIC).

MEDIC and EPIC, along with the Additive Manufacturing Innovation Centre, and the

Centre for Climate Change Management are undertaking joint projects to benefit partners.

"They are coming to us with challenges that are broader than a single area of expertise. When we work together, we wrap around our industry partners and give them one-stop solutions," said Mariano Arriaga, General Manager at EPIC.

For instance, EPIC and MEDIC provided critical testing and validation for Enertics Inc.'s technology to monitor and maintain electric motors, says President and CEO Bobby Sagoo.

"Our ongoing association with the EPIC and MEDIC centres has been very productive and has helped us accelerate the commercialization of our technology into the global market."

Turning ideas into prototypes "requires teams that are cross-functional and able to work in a highly collaborative and dynamic environment," said Andrew Norgate, General Manager at MEDIC.

"We're trying to find solutions to complex problems that the industry hasn't been able to solve or is too costly and high risk for them to take on." ■■■



High-flying new home

Mohawk aviation students are about to move into the state-of-the-art Centre for Aviation Technology thanks to a partnership with KF Aerospace

The Centre for Aviation Technology at Hamilton International Airport will soon be a state-of-the-art new home for Mohawk College's Aircraft Maintenance Engineering program.

It will bring the college's three aviation streams – now spread out at four learning sites – together under one roof. That roof is shared with KF Aerospace (KFA), one of Canada's largest aircraft maintenance providers.

The company opened a \$30-million expansion of its Hamilton facility a year ago and then got to work on an 80,000-square-foot hangar and learning hub for Mohawk students right next door that the college will lease for 10 years.

"It's a real operational setting. You couldn't find a better location," said Paul Armstrong, Mohawk's Chief Operating Officer.

"There is no better place to run an aviation program than right at the airport," agreed Dean of Engineering Technology David Santi. "Students will be learning right next door to

hundreds of aviation engineers, mechanics and aerospace companies. That is a huge bonus."

Another key advantage, says George Miltenburg, Associate Dean of Engineering Technology, is the facility's airside access to an international airport.

"Any-sized airplane can land there and taxi right up to the school."

The airport learning site will also feature a new \$260,000 L3Harris Boeing 737 virtual maintenance training system. Mohawk is the only school in Canada to use the virtual tool and is the largest academic user in North America.

The aviation hub will also include an applied research centre that will undertake exploration into composite materials and perhaps aerospace manufacturing in the future, says Santi.

KFA has been working in its part of the new facility since November 2019, says Grant Stevens, Vice President of Corporate Services.



"We are really excited to see Mohawk students move in. This will be a beautiful training facility. It's state-of-the-art and has a lot of natural light and lots of flexible learning spaces. They can open the hangar doors and see the planes coming and going."

A similar facility shared between Okanagan College and KFA in Kelowna, B.C. has been a great recruitment tool for the college, says Stevens.

"There is power for students and parents to visit a school and working environment that are side by side. They can see first-hand where the education will lead. It's a job fair and orientation all at once."

Students and KFA employees will share common space, including the cafeteria and the parking lot, leading to a "cross pollination between students and professionals that is unique in Ontario and maybe the country," said Miltenburg.

The new facility could allow Mohawk to double enrolment in its three two-year programs – maintenance, structures and avionics – that cover aircraft from nose to tail. The first group of avionics students graduated in 2020.

Santi says the college is focused on becoming a premier aviation maintenance school in Canada.

"Mohawk is very eager to continue to enhance their aviation program and we've seen that in action in the number of students they are graduating and now the new facility they will have," said Kal Rebin, Vice President of Maintenance and Engineering at Jazz Aviation.

Rebin, who sits on Mohawk's program advisory committee, says the industry has been in urgent need of talent for years. The pandemic has put that on pause, but when a rebound occurs, a wave of early retirements is expected to make the shortage even more acute. ■■■

MCKEIL

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



Vaidehee Patel, graduate

"A natural fit"

The deep partnership between IBM and Mohawk is growing into access-to-education programs and pandemic response

Mohawk College and IBM continue to expand a partnership that includes technology education for young Indigenous learners, advanced micro-credentials for college faculty and students, and help with pandemic response.

The technology company recognized Mohawk as a partner in its Premier Academic Initiative in 2018, formalizing a longstanding relationship that has only grown since.

This spring, when the college was dealing with a flood of questions about how the pandemic would affect programs, financial assistance and modes of learning, Mohawk called on IBM Watson Assistant to provide 24/7 online support.

"IBM is a crucial partner for Mohawk College," said Alison Horton, Vice President Academic. "That is realized in curriculum and training, applied research projects, work placements for students, and most recently in the collaboration with IBM Watson Assistant, a virtual agent that responds to student questions and concerns in real-time."

Another new layer of the Mohawk-IBM partnership is P-TECH (Pathways in Technology, Early College High School). The initiative brings together the Six Nations Polytechnic (SNP) STEAM Academy, IBM and Mohawk to encourage Indigenous high school students to pursue higher education and a technology career.

In four to six years, successful students graduate high school, earn a tuition-free two-year college diploma in software engineering technology, and experience mentoring, workplace visits, paid summer internships, and a guaranteed job interview at IBM.

The initiative "strengthens proven pathways for student success," said Rebecca Jamieson, President and CEO of SNP. "We all share this land and this alliance models the cooperation that is critical to our future sustainability."

Mohawk is the first P-TECH partner in Ontario, joining four in Canada and 220 globally. The local initiative is also the first with an Indigenous focus, says Drew Davidson, Manager of Corporate Social Responsibility Education Programs for IBM Canada.

"IBM has a very longstanding relationship with Mohawk College and the partnership continues to expand. When we were looking to bring P-TECH to Canada, Mohawk was a natural fit."

Another pillar of the IBM-Mohawk collaboration is the IBM Skills Academy that offers seven industry-recognized micro-credentials.

Vaidehee Patel says the Business Process Analyst and Business Intelligence Analyst micro-credentials she earned while completing a post-graduate certificate in Business Analysis at Mohawk were a "tremendous opportunity" to gain industry-validated expertise.

The tools and skills she learned were put to immediate work in research projects in her program and having the badges on her LinkedIn page and resumé are key, says Patel. And the micro-credentials were made highly affordable through her program fees.

"Getting hands-on experience with such tools is very valuable. The fact we could do that free of charge through Mohawk is amazing." ■■■



Chiamaka Maduikwe, student

Leading the way

Challenge 2025 is an ambitious five-year Mohawk initiative to tackle poverty, skills shortages and under-education in a post-pandemic economy

The access to education offered to marginalized people by Mohawk College's City School has been transformational at the individual, family, neighbourhood and city levels.

With Challenge 2025, Mohawk aspires to amplify, accelerate and scale the effects of

City School by providing tuition-free training for vulnerable populations that leads to family-sustaining jobs with employers in need of labour.

The vision is to see the model adopted by postsecondary institutions across the country.

At its heart, Challenge 2025 tackles poverty, barriers to education, labour shortages, neighbourhood decline and post-pandemic economic recovery by building community-wide partnerships.

Challenge 2025 is aimed at reversing the fortunes of those living in low-income neighbourhoods, along with those thrown out of work by disruptive technologies or by the downturn caused by COVID-19.

The regional goal is to provide pathways to college for 4,000 people and build partnerships with 100 employers facing labour shortages.

The college assembled a taskforce of leaders to forge the next level of the City School strategy. It was chaired by Mohawk President Ron McKerlie and Bill Young, President of Social Capital Partners, a catalyst for public-private partnerships to address poverty and joblessness.

The taskforce completed its work in August.

"We are very pleased that we are gaining traction with people who believe in what we're doing with City School and Challenge 2025. We want to make a larger impact by amplifying this locally and across the country," said McKerlie.

A proven model

Since its launch in 2015, City School has served close to 600 people in marginalized communities, offering more than 100 credit courses at 10 community sites and two mobile units.

City School has been proven to remove barriers to postsecondary education; mitigate growing skills gaps; and create stronger and more resilient neighbourhoods

by breaking cycles of under-education and unemployment.

“Education leads to family-supporting jobs and the economic independence that many aspire to but haven’t been able to achieve,” said Jim Vanderveken, Dean of the Centre for Community Partnerships and Experiential Learning.

“We know City School has been a catalyst for the transformation of learners’ lives, so we’re now focused on building greater collective impact and increasing capacity. The work is underway to create systemic change.”

Mohawk is investing in a rapid skills training team and an innovation fund to support research and to develop a replication model for other institutions to implement.

The college is leveraging that investment to access government funding and is embarking on a campaign to secure financial support through partnerships with local donors and national foundations.

Demand-led model

Challenge 2025 is centred around a demand-led workforce development model that responds directly to the needs of employers.

“The approach is that employers define the skills and competencies they require in their workforce, and we reverse-engineer the plan to deliver them,” said McKerlie.

Challenge 2025 is now in the hands of a community stewardship committee that will determine governance, lead strategic planning, and evaluate progress. A secretariat led by Emily Ecker, Associate Dean of Community Partnerships and Learning, will implement strategies, build partnerships, and govern a pilot to bring City School to three Canadian colleges.

The secretariat will also explore opportunities for industry-specific training initiatives.

The first is a City School training program for the supply chain sector that will serve an initial group of 144 people who receive Ontario Works social assistance, as well as newcomers and

Success story

Chiamaka Maduiké says City School has set her on a path to fulfil her dream of becoming a registered nurse.

A native of Nigeria, she joined her husband in Canada in January. Just a month later, she was taking the Foundations 1: Personal Support Worker credit course.

“After a few classes, I found out I have a heart to help people,” said Maduiké, who is now employed at Thrive Group’s AbleLiving York Project, which provides supports to individuals with physical disabilities in an apartment setting.

“City School has prepared me mentally, physically and emotionally for the task ahead. I feel prepared for the nursing program and I know what’s expected of me.”

For Jacob Wolsey, 19, City School’s College 101 preparatory course and PSW foundations course, has led to both studying at college and employment as a personal attendant.

“City School is a great opportunity. It’s a beneficial thing for students who are thinking about going to college.” ■■■

youth. That is funded by a \$1.95 million grant from the Future Skills Centre.

When the vision of Challenge 2025 is realized, it will be one of the highlights of his 40-year career, says McKerlie. He shared the story of one City School graduate, a second-generation Ontario Works recipient who was getting her first job. She told McKerlie, with tears in her eyes, that her son had just enrolled at Mohawk. That would have never happened without what City School had done for her, she said.

Her story has stuck with McKerlie. “This is making a significant difference in people’s lives and there is no greater legacy than that.” ■■■

A helping hand

Students struggling financially because of the pandemic have found Mohawk College is there for them when they need it most



Javier Rumie, Sandra Velasquez and family

The Mohawk College Foundation and Mohawk International have found innovative ways to help students in need during this pandemic crisis.

In addition to supplying ad hoc emergency support funds, the Foundation developed a gift catalogue in 2019 that allows donors to provide practical gifts to students in need. Donors can fill a fridge for \$100, contribute to utilities for \$50, or pay into a travel fund to get students home for \$75. The gift catalogue also includes textbooks, medical and dental insurance, and school supplies, such as lab safety glasses, specialized calculators, or skilled trades tools.

The catalogue was a lifeline and provided direct financial support to students, particularly international students who were stranded in Canada by the pandemic, says Katie Burrows, Director, Development.

“We tried to meet the most tangible needs of students. It’s a way for donors to support students by donating small amounts, much like crowdsourcing.”

Burrows says she’s not aware of another college with such a catalogue, an initiative that won an award from the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education this year.

“We didn’t set these programs up for COVID-19, but they have made such a difference to students and that showed we were focused on the right things. It was very heartening to learn we could help,” said Burrows.

At the end of April, Mohawk International launched Helping Hampers, an initiative that began with friends and family donating food to help students from abroad. The program

expanded, eventually delivery close to 100 baskets filled with food, gift cards, and personal care items to students stuck far from home or in quarantine.

Phase 2 of the program is possible thanks to a \$25,000 grant from the Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) to support International students with food insecurity issues.

The HCF grant recognizes “the unique and pressing needs being faced by Mohawk International students as a result of the pandemic,” said Sharon Charters, Manager of Grants at HCF. “We were particularly impressed with the significant role of the students themselves and the openness to work with community partners.”

Javier Rumie and his wife Sandra Velasquez and their two children arrived from Bogota, Colombia in December.

“The pandemic changed our plans, like everyone around the world,” said Rumie, who came to Mohawk to pursue a Global Business Management graduate certificate.

When COVID-19 hit, Velasquez couldn’t find a job and the couple’s savings were depleted by the pandemic’s toll on the peso.

Helping Hampers pitched in with two deliveries of food, shampoo, soap and toothpaste, along with a grocery store gift card. The children, 9 and 6, got gifts, including stuffed animals dressed in Mohawk jerseys.

The family never expected to get that kind of help from a college, says Velasquez.

“It’s so great to know someone is out there who cares that you can call in an emergency.” ■■■

**Give the gift
of education**

Make a difference in the life of a Mohawk student. Explore ways to give the gift of education at mohawkcollege.ca/gift.

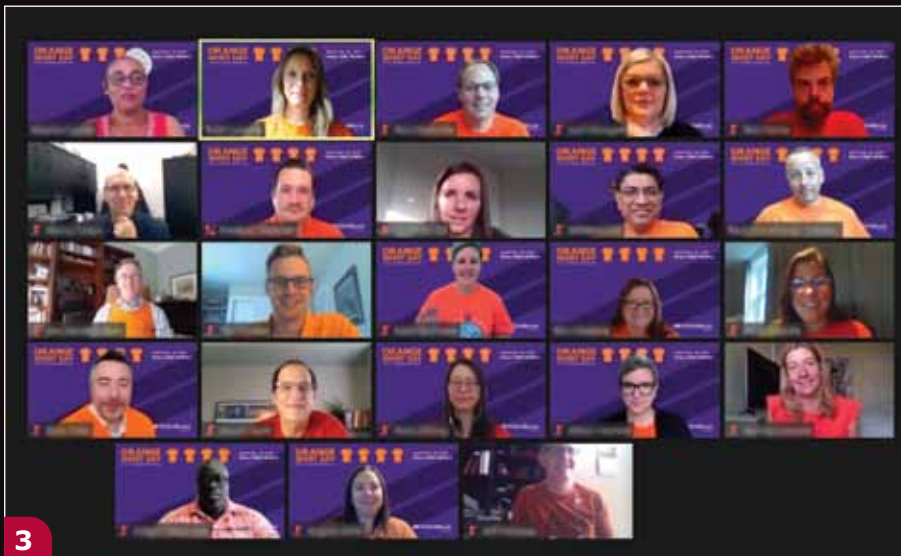
MOHAWK IN THE COMMUNITY



1



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1. In March, Mohawk donated two truckloads of medical supplies to support healthcare workers in response to the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. **2.** The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) recognizes Mohawk College with the Chief Public Safety Officer's Special Recognition Award. **3.** Mohawk's Senior Leadership Team recognizes Orange Shirt Day. A college-wide virtual event was held with Phyllis Webstad as the guest speaker, telling her story and raising awareness about the impacts of the residential school system. **4.** Mohawk honours 10 outstanding graduates as Alumni of Distinction. Pictured is the Alumni of Distinction award made by local artist Kelly Lowe.

To learn more about Mohawk in the community and more about the stories inside, visit MohawkNewsdesk.ca

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