



Development &  
Alumni Relations Office

# Fostering Inclusion & Advancing Equity

Annual Impact Report  
2022–2023



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**  
SCARBOROUGH

INSPIRING  
INCLUSIVE  
EXCELLENCE

DEFY  
GRAVITY



# Contents

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Message from the Principal: ..... 3  
You made all the difference

The Year’s Highlights ..... 4

A New Generation of Creators: ..... 6  
Inclusive Entrepreneurship at U of T Scarborough

Inspired to Serve: ..... 8  
Why I Chose to Volunteer at U of T Scarborough

Shaping Futures: ..... 9  
The Role of the U of T Scarborough Annual Fund

Storytelling Beyond Boundaries: ..... 11  
Inside U of T Scarborough Library’s  
Storytelling Fellowship

Captivate: ..... 12  
U of T Scarborough’s Digital Storytelling Competition

U of T Scarborough Announces  
Inaugural Chair in Tamil Studies ..... 13

Forging Ahead with the Master Plan: ..... 13  
An Update on Capital Projects at U of T Scarborough

Unlocking Dreams: ..... 17  
Advancing Black Excellence at U of T Scarborough

Heather Benson  
Supports Mature Students ..... 19

Donors & Volunteer List ..... 21

Moments of Celebration ..... 26

**New feature this year! Click the play buttons wherever you see them to enjoy video storytelling**



*We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.*

## Message from the Principal:

# You all made the difference



Reflecting on the steady growth and evolution that the University of Toronto Scarborough (U of T Scarborough) has witnessed over the past year, I'm filled with immense gratitude and awe. Your generosity enabled our significant strides towards achieving our enduring goals for the campus and deepening our connections with the vibrant community we are a part of. Thank you for your support.

The future of health in the Eastern GTA looks brighter, in part, thanks to the transformative \$25 million gift from the Orlando Corporation toward the establishment of the Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health. This monumental project will serve as a hub for training a range of healthcare professionals and helping to build a community of practitioners dedicated to serving our diverse and growing community.

Equally monumental is the generosity of Scarborough's very own, Sam Ibrahim. His investment of \$25 million lays the cornerstone for the Sam Ibrahim Centre for Inclusive Excellence in Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Leadership. With a vision rooted in equity and inclusion, this Centre aims to harness U of T Scarborough's vast research and innovation prowess and global networks to empower aspiring entrepreneurs in the Eastern GTA, especially those facing financial barriers. Mr. Ibrahim's contribution is a testament to his belief in U of T Scarborough's potential to open doors of opportunity for generations of locally based, innovative, socially conscious, and inclusive leaders across various fields of endeavour.

This was also a year of firsts. We came together for the first-ever U of T Scarborough Homecoming, as over 5,000 of you joined us to

launch and to celebrate this new tradition. The day captured Scarborough's vibrant spirit as alumni, students, staff, and community members came together to create unforgettable moments.

U of T's inaugural Giving Day similarly surpassed all expectations. We were thrilled by the generous support that came in, a significant part of which was directed specifically towards the Indigenous House project and the Imani Black Academic Mentorship Program, enabling us to solidify our shared commitment to truth, reconciliation, and equity.

The eagerly awaited first annual edition of the U of T Scarborough Alumni Awards provided an excellent opportunity to show our appreciation to our exceptional alumni who make us proud and uphold the legacy of Inclusive Excellence, which is central to our efforts and aspirations.

Lastly, I applaud the generous contributions of creative talent, expertise, and time from members of our alumni community who, through valuable volunteer work, curated exciting professional development offerings and facilitated events that fostered mutually beneficial exchange of ideas, knowledge, and experiences. Their spirit of giving back captures and amplifies the essence of U of T Scarborough.

As you read about your impact on our campus and community, know that your ongoing support drives U of T Scarborough towards a brighter tomorrow. Together, we build bridges, inspire dreams, and transform communities.

With heartfelt gratitude,



**Wisdom Tettey**, PhD, FGA  
Principal,  
University of Toronto  
Scarborough  
Vice-President,  
University of Toronto

# The Year's Highlights

At U of T Scarborough, our unwavering commitment to Inspire Inclusive Excellence has been evident throughout the past year.

The creation of eight new student awards not only celebrates academic merit, but also ensures that more U of T Scarborough learners get the financial boost they need to improve their student experience and allow them to engage more fully with the many supports that the campus has to offer.

The strength of belief in the institutional vision is mirrored in our faculty and staff's outstanding involvement. 211 contributors from across U of T tri-campus, a record of 184 of which were from U of T Scarborough, went above and beyond to support a diverse range of 17 cross-departmental initiatives.



Their dedication was celebrated uniquely – in a memorable volleyball match with our executive leadership.

Our community’s bonds also deepened and grew stronger. With 766 donors and 1,328 generous gifts, and a notable engagement of 4,459 alumni, the spirit of connection and collaboration has never been more vibrant. Volunteers, all 358 of them, have been our backbone, driving 41 diverse development and alumni events that knit our community closer.

In a resounding testament to our shared vision, we secured two transformative gifts of \$25 million. A significant portion of these funds is earmarked to propel capital projects, benefitting both our campus and the wider eastern GTA, reinforcing the unique role that U of T Scarborough serves as an anchor institution.



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# A New Generation of Creators: Inclusive Entrepreneurship at U of T Scarborough

At U of T Scarborough, we emphasize fostering a culture of inclusive entrepreneurship, nurturing the potential of all students, and empowering them to become future leaders and innovators. This commitment, a cornerstone of our ethos, thrives with the support of visionary donors who understand the importance of innovation that comes from diverse voices, experiences, and perspectives.

Scarborough-raised entrepreneur Sam Ibrahim recently invested \$25 million to create the Sam Ibrahim Centre for Inclusive Excellence in Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Leadership at U of T Scarborough. His vision is to fuel economic growth in the Eastern GTA.

By investing in our students, Sam is not only infusing new energy and encouraging diversity in entrepreneurship, but his contribution will also shape how business is conducted, who conducts it, and its societal impact.

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## For Scarborough, by Scarborough

Growing up in Scarborough and attending U of T Scarborough in the 90s, Sam Ibrahim was inspired by alumni leaders and their accomplishments. Coming from an immigrant family, he understood the importance of access to opportunities for rising above circumstances and breaking the glass ceiling. Living in a co-op building, he appreciated the diversity and resilience around him. He also recognized the lack of support that limited potential in his community.

“In Scarborough, we have incredible talent and extraordinary potential for innovation and entrepreneurship. All we really need is the same level of access as everywhere else,” he said at the announcement of his gift. “No handouts, just access with strong examples. Access plus examples equals opportunity.”

As CEO of the Arrow Group of Companies, Sam is deeply committed to providing Scarborough residents avenues to financial security and creating a pipeline for local talent. “The most fulfilling thing you can do is help other people achieve their dreams,” he says.



*Sam Ibrahim*

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## Empowering Student Success

Set to open in 2024, the Sam Ibrahim Centre will elevate U of T Scarborough's innovation ecosystem. The Centre's mission is to anchor entrepreneurial endeavours in Scarborough, thereby enhancing the Eastern GTA's economy and elevating opportunities for the community.

Part of his investment includes three financial awards—the Sam Ibrahim Awards, the Gabriel Fanous Awards, and the Shaemin Ukani Awards, for students facing economic challenges. It will also establish a new Chair in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. This partnership will be instrumental in U of T Scarborough's vision to cultivate the next generation of Scarborough-based entrepreneurs.

"Scarborough is home to many young people with great ideas," says Sam. "As a Scarborough entrepreneur, I want to ensure the next generation can start and scale their ventures right here."



*In Scarborough, we have incredible talent and extraordinary potential for innovation and entrepreneurship. All we really need is the same level of access as everywhere else. No handouts, just access with strong examples. Access plus examples equals opportunity."*

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## Discover the Donor

Watch Sam's speech at the 2023 U of T Convocation to learn more about his motivation to support Scarborough and U of T Scarborough.



# Shaping Futures: The Role of the U of T Scarborough Annual Fund

Every esteemed university is built on a foundation: a community that deeply connects with its core values. These values drive the institution's key priorities, requiring a reserve of resources to address them effectively. At U of T Scarborough, the Annual Fund serves this critical role.

The Annual Fund helps fuel U of T Scarborough's commitment to growth, inclusivity, and academic excellence. Its unrestricted nature ensures that U of T Scarborough can respond to immediate needs while laying down the bricks for our future.



*Sometimes, the most pressing priorities of the institution demand resources and the flexibility to pivot according to the need of the moment. The Annual Fund serves as that crucial buffer, ensuring we are consistently prepared and can respond to the needs of our students and campus community with agility.”*

**- Celeste Richards, Director of Development, U of T Scarborough**

A central role of the Annual Fund is to level the playing field for students from various backgrounds. With the rising cost of living, many learners face financial hurdles. The Annual Fund seeks to alleviate these burdens, channeling support into critical areas, such as conferences, the student food centre and pathway programs, as well as enhancing co-curricular learning opportunities and volunteer programs.

A testament to its metamorphic impact, the Scarborough Campus Students' Union (SCSU) Food Centre, which started as a modest initiative in 2017, now plays a substantial role in student wellness. Addressing the dire issue of food insecurity – a factor that significantly impacts academic performance and quality of life – the centre currently serves 300 students weekly with affordable, nutritious, and culturally sensitive meal options. In 2022-23, the Annual Fund supported the Food Centre with a \$10,000 contribution, which allowed them to purchase two new freezers to store perishable goods and engage two more coordinators for facilitation.

## Highlights from the SCSU Food Centre

- The Food Centre has seen a 260% increase in weekly sign ups since the Summer 2023 semester.
- To help more students and to meet growing demands, they now offer grocery pick ups on two days instead of just one.
- Every first Wednesday of the month, they host the SCSU Coffee House where they serve free breakfast. In September, they provided hot meals, baked treats, coffee, and tea to over 300 students at the Student Centre.
- They also hire student musicians to perform at this event and pay them for it.



Another cornerstone initiative that is supported by the Annual Fund is student awards. These are more than financial aid; the awards allow students to channel their energies into their studies without the constant worry of finances. By supporting students from diverse backgrounds to attend U of T Scarborough, the fund enables the addition of invaluable perspectives that shape and enrich our academic fabric.

Beyond these tangible supports, the Annual Fund fuels our broader community's intellectual curiosity. It supports series like Great Explorations, which invites the community to engage with U of T's brightest minds on global challenges. For instance, this year's Fall series is focused on various aspects of climate change.

At its heart, the U of T Scarborough Annual Fund isn't just about monetary support; it's about possibilities. Every dollar to the Annual Fund strengthens U of T Scarborough's ability to level the playing field for all students and set them up for success as future leaders.



# Storytelling Beyond Boundaries: Inside U of T Scarborough Library's Storytelling Fellowship

Dr. Brenda Beck believes in the pivotal role stories play in shaping our world. As an anthropologist, she recognizes how storytelling, a timeless method for preserving knowledge and conveying vital information, has been indispensable to the evolution of everything from cultural heritage to the current climate change mitigation efforts.

Inspired by this profound influence of stories, Dr. Beck created an endowment fund through a generous pledge of \$375,000 to support the creation of the Sophia Hilton Storytelling Fellowship at the U of T Scarborough Library. Ushering in its third cohort in 2023, the fellowship awards students \$4,000 and an eight-month-long opportunity to explore and engage with the art of storytelling, crafting their own multimedia narratives under Dr. Beck's mentorship.

"Storytelling is a crucial skill across professions. As an anthropologist, I want to introduce students to unfamiliar stories, urging them to harness their inner storytellers to relate to and reinterpret them for today's audiences. So, I'm encouraging that kind of experimenting with bridging between the story as it was traditionally told, and the story as you can use it today. I want them to realize that even seemingly foreign tales have elements relevant to our shared human experience and concerns."

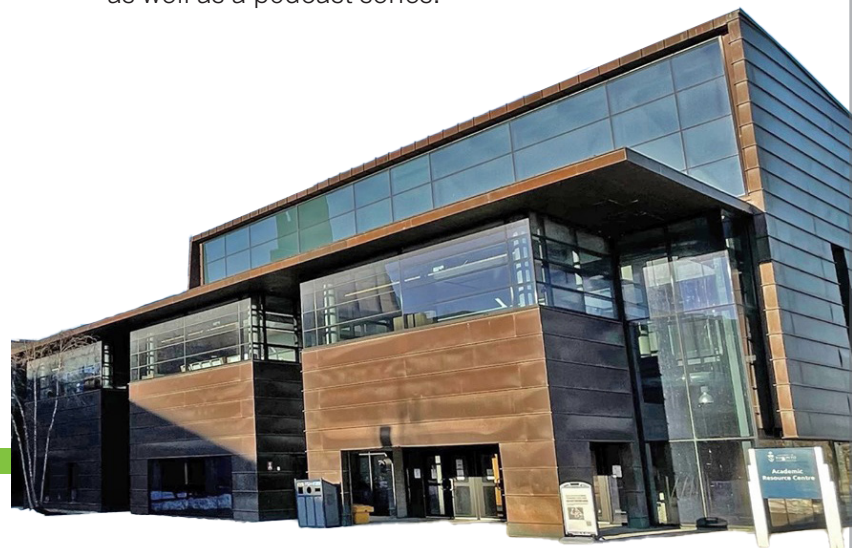
Central to the fellowship is *The Legend of Ponnivala*, an epic from Tamil Nadu in Southern India. The English translation of the title is *The Land of the Golden River*, which specifically refers to India's Kaveri waterway. Dr. Beck has presented this captivating tale, which spans three generations of divinely blessed farmers, to a global audience through illustrative graphic novels and animations. It's a story rich in characters, situations, and deep-seated social contexts.



*This fellowship will allow me to actively refine my storytelling and communication skills so that I can better empathize with people and authentically represent their stories in my journalistic career, building meaningful connections that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries. I felt like this fellowship was calling my name."*

**- Christy Lorentz, Recipient of 2021-22 Sophia Hilton Fellowship**

Fellows tap into this tale's cultural and social richness, finding inspiration to retell the narrative for virtual and in-person audiences. They delve into themes like mythology, social justice, and more. Past cohorts have experimented with choreographed dances and live performances, as well as a podcast series.



Academic Resource Centre at UTSC

Importantly, the fellowship is inclusive. It's open to students from all study areas and isn't solely for those who speak Tamil. It embodies the library's commitment to inclusiveness, giving students from diverse backgrounds a platform to narrate their unique stories. These narratives are then preserved in the U of T Scarborough Library's Digital Tamil Collections.

"Through this fellowship, students not only learn about storytelling but also ensure their stories are preserved in the library for all to access," says Kirsta Stapelfeldt, Head of Digital Scholarship Unit at U of T Scarborough Library. She elaborates, "This initiative captures the essence of our current campus community and offers future generations insights into our present-day experiences through the voices of students."



Dr. Brenda Beck

## Captivate: U of T Scarborough's Digital Storytelling Competition



Winning entries from Captivate 2022

Professor Sandford Borins, the founding Chair of the Department of Management at U of T Scarborough, taught the Narrative and Management course for over 25 years. To mark his retirement in 2020, Professor Borins wanted to celebrate and cultivate digital storytelling skills. This desire evolved into Captivate, a multimedia short digital storytelling competition open to all U of T Scarborough students. In recognition of Professor Borins' contributions to the campus, donors came together to establish an endowed fund that will support student prizes and other costs associated with Captivate in perpetuity.

Captivate offers students the opportunity to craft a short digital story in any format, sharing their personal narratives and learning essential storytelling skills. In Professor Borins' words, "It's helpful for everyone to have a compelling narrative about themselves, whether it's for a job interview or introducing yourself at a party. Students have more access to tools to express themselves through multi-media than ever before. My hope is to arm them with the skills to use this technology to tell great stories."

# Inspired to Serve: Why I Chose to Volunteer at U of T Scarborough

An interview with former U of T Scarborough Alumni Association President Dorinda So on her experience of giving back to her alma mater.

## What inspired you to volunteer at U of T Scarborough?

I was inspired by those who came before me and introduced me to the university experience. As an immigrant woman, I understand that having role models with university degrees is a privilege not everyone has. I had such a great time at U of T Scarborough that I wanted to give back. My perspective on using my time revolves around service, and volunteering is my way of giving back.

## Why is volunteering crucial today?

Beyond online activism, physically showing up and actively contributing makes a significant impact. We need to be hands-on.

## How has volunteering shaped you?

I've gained more than I've given. Hearing the diverse stories at U of T Scarborough has been transformative. I've learned from students and alumni alike. It's about community, and I've seen life unfold through it. My interactions, like getting advice from past alumni presidents, highlight the importance of collective effort in volunteering. I have really grown as a person through all of these experiences and from all the years that I've been able to serve at U of T Scarborough.

## What's the most valuable lesson from volunteering?

Working with a diverse range of individuals from U of T Scarborough has taught me inclusivity and collaboration. It has given me priceless lived experience, embodying the inclusive excellence we champion. It's been incredibly helpful to gain experience from decades of alumni knowledge.



*Dorinda So*

## How do you balance life and volunteering?

Volunteering integrates both my personal and professional life. Volunteering at U of T Scarborough, for instance, offers avenues for learning through academic events, forging friendships, and establishing professional connections, be it potential business partners, mentors, or job opportunities. This holistic integration means I can allocate time to it naturally. I've realized that regardless of the time you can commit, be it an hour a month or more, there are meaningful opportunities to both give back and gain immensely. As my availability has evolved, so have the opportunities I've been able to embrace.

## Any myths about volunteering you'd like to dispel?

One myth is that volunteering requires a lot of time. What I especially appreciate about the Development and Alumni Relations Office is their ability to find a role tailored to your availability. Regardless of the time you have, there's a volunteering opportunity that can fit your schedule.

## Any advice for newcomers to volunteering?

Start small. Whether you can donate money or an hour of your time, every bit matters. U of T Scarborough will find a meaningful way for you to connect with alumni and friends.

## U of T Scarborough Announces Inaugural Chair in Tamil Studies

Following an intensive selection process, we're thrilled to announce Dr. Sidharthan Maunaguru as the inaugural Chair of Tamil Studies at U of T Scarborough. Hailing from the esteemed National University of Singapore, where he held dual roles as an Associate Professor in Anthropology, jointly appointed with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and South Asian Studies Programme, and former Assistant Dean (Undergraduate Studies) at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore Professor Maunaguru comes with a unique blend of scholarly excellence and passionate commitment to the Tamil diaspora. He will assume the role on May 1, 2024.

We thank the Canadian Tamil Congress and Tamil Chair Inc. for their vision to create the Chair in Tamil Studies at U of T Scarborough. Please join us in welcoming Professor Maunaguru and in supporting his vision to advance Tamil studies at U of T Scarborough and in Canada.



*Dr. Sidharthan Maunaguru*

## Forging Ahead with the Master Plan: An Update on Capital Projects at U of T Scarborough



With the expanding needs of Scarborough and the Eastern GTA, U of T Scarborough recognizes the profound power of placemaking. It goes beyond the bricks and mortar of buildings to the creation of inclusive spaces that echo and amplify the voices of those often marginalized.

As we dive deeper, let's explore the progress of some inspiring capital projects that begin to build out the Master Plan.

## Indigenous House

This landmark, situated at the campus's heart, is more than a building—it's a symbol of U of T Scarborough's commitment to fostering bonds with Indigenous communities. The design, echoing Indigenous traditions, promises sustainability, innovation, and inclusivity for all learners. Two years since the first groundbreaking and blessing of the land, the structure inspired by Indigenous space concepts such as the wigwam and the longhouse can be visibly seen taking shape. Construction is advancing steadily as we prepare to welcome Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners to this space in 2024.



Drone image of the building



Artist Rendering



Drone footage of the building



Artist Rendering

### Highlights

- Designed by Formline Architects' Alfred Waugh, a member of the Fond Du Lac Denesuline Nation of Saskatchewan, in consultation with U of T Scarborough Elders' Circle and the Council of Aboriginal Initiatives Elders' Circle, Indigenous stakeholders, students, staff, and faculty.
- Modelled after Indigenous space concepts such as the wigwam and the longhouse, with embedded Indigenous Knowledge and symbolism throughout.
- Designed to achieve Toronto Green Standard Tier 3, maximizing the use of natural elements and building material, including cross-laminated timber, earth tubes, low energy heating, and water conservation.

Photos courtesy of Magil Construction and project architects LGA Architectural Partners.

## Sam Ibrahim Building

This centre at U of T Scarborough is emerging as an epicentre of innovation and education. Set to be a state-of-the-art structure, this space will foster entrepreneurship and fuel the Eastern GTA's economic growth. Beyond offering technologically advanced classrooms and study areas, the centre will house the Office of Student Experience and Wellbeing, Computer Science and Mathematics, the Academic Advising & Career Centre, AccessAbility Services and Health and Wellness Centre, as well as the Sam Ibrahim Centre for Inclusive Excellence in Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Leadership.



Drone footage of building



Artist Rendering



Artist Rendering

### Highlights

- A five-storey building built to sustainability targets that will meet high energy efficiency performance.
- Features 22 lecture halls, 133 faculty and staff offices, several active-use spaces that include welcome areas, a café, lounges, and informal collaboration spaces.
- The 500-seat round 'Campfire' classroom in the Arrow Innovation Hall and the group-oriented banquet 210-seat 'Collaboratorium' allow for group work and collaborative discourse.

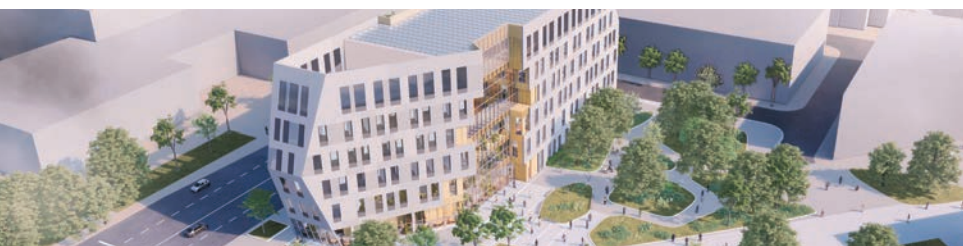


Artist renderings by CEBRA and ZAS Architects + Interiors

*Forging Ahead with the Master Plan:  
An Update on Capital Projects at U of T Scarborough*

# The Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health

The Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health (SAMIH) promises to revolutionize healthcare education at U of T Scarborough and create unprecedented access to public health services for the Eastern GTA community. Serving as a hub for world-class health education for learners of diverse backgrounds, SAMIH will cultivate compassionate health professionals primed to serve the local community. We thank Orlando Corporation for their generous gift of \$25 million in support of SAMIH. With the recent groundbreaking in November 2023, this initiative, slated to complete in 2026 will bolster the region's clinical capacity and fortify community health.



## Highlights

- Future home to 320 students per year (MDs, Physician Assistants, Physical Therapists, and Nurse Practitioners), plus 1,200 life science students for a total of 1,520 students per year.
- Will house three public service clinics, i.e.: clinical psychology clinic, a nurse-practitioner-led health clinic, and a discovery pharmacy clinic.
- Residence placements at four hospital partners, including Michael Garron Hospital, Scarborough Health Network, Lakeridge Health, and Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences.

*Artist renderings by Diamond Schmitt Architects, MVRDV*



# Unlocking Dreams: Advancing Black Excellence at U of T Scarborough

Black communities, especially in North America, have faced systemic educational barriers. U of T Scarborough, committed to inclusive excellence, collaborates with Black communities on and off-campus to dismantle these barriers, championing an inclusive future and Black excellence within the University for the youth in Scarborough and the Eastern GTA.

The following are some initiatives, supported by the Student Success Fund, that are designed to harness Black excellence at U of T Scarborough.

## Imani Black Academic Mentorship Program: A Circle of Empowerment

The African proverb, “If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together,” resonates with the core of the Imani Black Academic Mentorship Program (Imani). Established in 2005, Imani, meaning “belief” or “faith” in Swahili, aims to empower young Black individuals from marginalized communities by building enduring support networks. It bridges the academic gap between Black university students and high school students, creating a familial mentor-mentee bond. Besides academic aid, it addresses systemic barriers through Anti-Black racism workshops, networking opportunities, and “Day in the Life” events, providing a glimpse into post-secondary education. Throughout the pandemic, Imani addressed various challenges faced by Black youth in East Scarborough, like food insecurity and technology access, creating a safe learning environment. Many mentees, post-Imani graduation, return to engage in the program in a number of ways, continuing this nurturing cycle.

UTSC is deeply committed to the sustained growth of the Imani program, its initiatives, and directly supports the staff positions and a significant portion of the program’s costs. The program relies on philanthropic contributions from sponsors such as Scotiabank (2017-present), La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso (2020-22), and individual donors, to enhance the quality of our offerings, provide direct support to mentors and mentees, and help offset program costs.



*I hoped to create a safe environment for the Black students in Imani. It’s hard to find students to connect with, especially during the pandemic. And with the need that students have to find others that resonate with them, I wanted to be there to support them.”*

**- Adelaide Adu Kwarko,  
Imani Mentor**

## New awards created to support Black students

### BlackNorth Initiative Computer and Applied Sciences Award

Six entrance awards for Black full-time domestic students entering their 1st year at U of T Scarborough in Computer Science (3 awards) or Environmental Chemistry (3 awards), with demonstrated financial need. These awards are renewable annually for four years, contingent on maintaining good academic standing.

### Optimus SBR Award of Excellence

Two \$2,500 awards are designated for Black full-time domestic students advancing to their 3rd or 4th year at U of T Scarborough, with a preference for those demonstrating financial need.

## Transitional Year Program at U of T Scarborough (TYP@U of T Scarborough): Crafting New Beginnings

Acknowledging education as a catalyst for progress, TYP@U of T Scarborough facilitates individuals to reenter academia and pursue higher education. Embracing the principle of inclusive excellence, it welcomes students from diverse backgrounds, especially those facing educational barriers. The program actively recruits Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ+ students, sole-support parents, persons with disabilities, and individuals from working-class backgrounds. Applicants are assessed individually based on their barriers, motivations, and academic qualifications. Through university-level courses, workshops, and personalized support, TYP@U of T Scarborough provides mature learners a chance to redefine their academic pathways.

## Black Student Engagement: Fostering a Sense of Belonging

Every student's journey is influenced by the opportunities and challenges encountered. Students navigating systemic barriers along with academic pressures often feel overwhelmed. The Black Student Engagement program, under the Office of Student Experience & Wellbeing, directs Black students to essential resources, people, and support. It creates spaces for dialogue on various topics through weekly drop-in sessions, ensuring students not only survive but thrive academically.

Recently, the U of T Scarborough Black Alumni Network was launched to create a space for Black students to engage with Black alumni and receive guidance and support from them. Find out how you can become a part of the U of T Scarborough Black Alumni Network at <https://uoft.me/utsc-black-alumni-network>.

Every initiative, every program, and every gesture of support toward advancing Black excellence is a brick in the wall against systemic barriers, paving the way for generations to come. With your support, U of T Scarborough is forging a world where dreams are accessible, where the colour of one's skin isn't a barrier but a testament to resilience, strength, and brilliance.



## Learn More

Watch the video "Out of Many, One - Celebrating Black Entrepreneurship at U of T Scarborough", featuring Black alumni who are partnering with the campus to support Black entrepreneurship and underrepresented students in business and STEM.

## Heather Benson Supports Mature Students

**“I wanted to put some of the money I had into a continuing legacy for other kids, so they have the same opportunities I did.”**

Heather Benson first stepped onto the U of T Scarborough campus in 1968. It wouldn't be until 1998—30 years later—that she finally walked across the stage at Convocation Hall to receive her bachelor of science.

Both her stints at U of T were fun. In the '60s, she played hockey and volleyball. In the '90s, she sang in the choir and musical theatre. “I really enjoyed the experience the second time around. It meant a lot to get that degree,” she says.

For Heather, returning to complete her degree was a transformative experience. “It really felt like a privilege to go back after my first attempt right out of high school,” she says. She was also motivated by her own experiences. “I wanted to put some of the money I had into a continuing legacy for other kids, so they have the same opportunities I did,” she says.

That's why she set up the Heather Lynn Benson Scholarship in Biological Sciences & Psychology in 2010. Awarded to a U of T Scarborough student entering second, third, or fourth year, the scholarship gives special consideration to students who have been away from high school for four or more years prior to coming to U of T. “There's a lot of us out there who want to get a degree and have to do it on a part-time basis,” says Heather, “or come back after it's been a while.” She began growing her gift through monthly donations in 2019.

Along with the scholarship, Heather has made two planned gifts to ensure other students also get that same chance.



Heather Benson



*To me it makes sense to contribute to the education of young people, because they'll turn around and help someone else. And that will get passed along from generation to generation. You've got to look at it that way when you're leaving something in your will.”*



*U of T Scarborough expanding into the medical area is very important. It's something that is really needed and if my little bit of financial input is going to help expand the education of doctors and nurses, that certainly means something."*



Benson (back row, third from right) with the U of T Scarborough hockey team in the 1960s.

the future. Establishing a student award in your lifetime and adding to it with a gift in your will achieves two objectives, says Michelle Osborne, Executive Director, Gift Planning at U of T. "Creating it now allows you to learn about the students you are helping and the work they are doing—seeing the impact of your gift as it happens. When you add to your award with a gift in your will, that impact might grow from one student a year to five students. Your legacy continues the good work you started in life."

"To me it makes sense to contribute to the education of young people, because they'll turn around and help someone else," says Heather. "And that will get passed along from generation to generation. You've got to look at it that way when you're leaving something in your will."

Considering a planned gift? please contact Samantha Barr, Senior Development Officer at [samantha.barr@utoronto.ca](mailto:samantha.barr@utoronto.ca).

In 2014, Heather established the Heather Lynn Benson Athletics and Recreation Fund to help boost experiential learning opportunities through the Department of Athletics and Recreation.

## **A planned gift ensures impact to come**

More recently, when she learned about the new Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health (SAMIH), Heather reached out to plan another estate gift using her Registered Retirement Investment Fund (RRIF). "I had wanted to be a doctor myself," she remembers. "Maybe if I had gone back to school when I was a little bit younger, I might be!" But she saw a way to be part of other students' dreams by designating any remaining balance in her RRIF to support the SAMIH project. By doing so, Heather will not only benefit students, but her estate will benefit from probate fee savings.

"U of T Scarborough expanding into the medical area is very important," she says. "It's something that is really needed and if my little bit of financial input is going to help expand the education of doctors and nurses, that certainly means something."

## **A personal legacy, rooted in sports, medicine, and the future**

She has now made a bequest in her will to ensure that her legacy of philanthropy will extend into

# Donors & Volunteers List

Thank you to each of our generous donors and association volunteers!

The following donors and volunteers list represents the reporting period of May 1, 2022 - April 30, 2023 and includes all donors over \$1,000 who made new gifts or pledge payments.

In the event of an error or omission, please accept our apologies and contact Mary Stangolis at mary.stangolis@utoronto.ca or 416-208-5185 to ensure our records are accurate.

## \$1,000,000+

Sam Ibrahim  
Orlando Corporation

## \$500,000 - \$999,999

African Impact Initiative

## \$250,000 - \$499,999

Brenda Beck  
BMO Financial Group  
Charles W. Brown

## \$100,000 - \$249,999

BlackNorth Initiative  
Epigenes Australia  
Joe Gagliese and Emma Ferrara  
Wendy Wacko  
Helen Xiaoyan Wu

## \$25,000 - \$99,999

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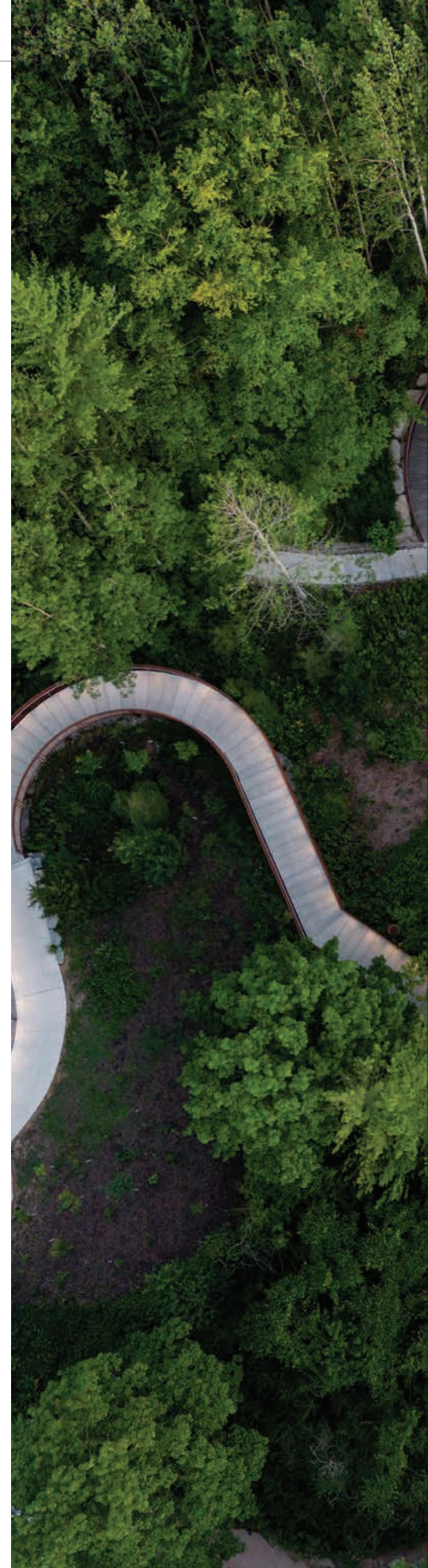
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# Moments of Celebration



Learn-to-Golf participant at UTSC Golf Day



Rex and friends at the Alumni Reunion



Melisa Ellis and friend at the Evening of Appreciation



Tamil Heritage Month celebrations



A young guest at the Alumni Reunion



Group gathering for Campus Tours at the Alumni Reunion



A grad with their family at the Grad Gift Pick-up event



A foursome at the U of T Scarborough Golf Day



Guests enjoying making s'mores at UTSC Homecoming



Artist-performer at the Tamil Heritage Month celebrations



Performers from Niro Dance Creations at the Tamil Heritage Month celebrations



Lisa Lemon announcing the U of T Scarborough Alumni Awards



Chinese calligrapher at UTSC Homecoming



David Palmer, Gabriel Fanous, Meric Gertler, Shaemin Ukani, Sam Ibrahim and Wisdom Tettey at the launch of the Sam Ibrahim Centre



Alumni at the annual U of T Scarborough Afternoon Tea



**For more information, please contact:**

**Lisa Fenton Lemon**

Executive Director

Development and Alumni Relations

University of Toronto Scarborough

Tel: 416-208-2942

[lisa.lemon@utoronto.ca](mailto:lisa.lemon@utoronto.ca)



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