



FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: Business Board

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DATE: April 18, 2024 for April 25, 2024

AGENDA ITEM: 8

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

2023 Annual Report: People Strategy, Equity and Culture

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

This report is provided for information only. Business Board has jurisdiction over employee policies and terms and conditions of employment for administrative and unionized staff.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **Business Board for information [For Information] (April 25, 2024)**

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

This is an annual report. Business Board received the 2022 People Strategy, Equity and Culture Report on April 26, 2023.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The People Strategy, Equity & Culture Report 2023 highlights how the Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture has decisively moved its work to a strategic and proactive approach that is informed by community collaboration and consultation. Throughout 2023 we strengthened our supports as external events, both local and global, impacted our community and challenged everyone to work collectively to build more inclusive spaces and supports. Our newly conceived Divisional principles provided focus for our work: “Invest in People,” “Foster an Institutional Culture of Belonging,” “Be Guided by Our Community,” “Prioritize Employee Wellness,” and “Think Creatively.” Using the Division’s core principles to frame and organize activities and accomplishments, the 2023 Report includes a snapshot of efforts between January 1 and December 31, 2023.

Key Points from the Report:

- In 2023 the Division created opportunities to support our employees through innovative programs and initiatives that redefined leadership, advanced reconciliation, and enriched how we work together at the University. Our understanding of how our community experiences ‘belonging’ at the University continually evolves and expands, and in 2023 it inspired efforts to create inclusive resources and spaces; opportunities for connection, outreach, and recognition; and strategies to better prepare our community for change.
- The Division engaged in activities and initiatives related to actioning recommendations in the 2022 Review of the *Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment*, the Report on the Role of Campus Safety in Responding to Students in Mental Health Crises, Answering the Call: *Wecheehetowin*, and institutional equity-related reports.
- In 2023, the Division expanded benefits for many employees, developed wellness programming, created protocols, and improved services that support a healthy workplace culture. Applying a broad definition of wellness, we developed wide-ranging initiatives to support physical and mental health and built compassionate frameworks to respond to the needs of our community. The Division also improved and expanded safety tools, resources, and supports to enhance our preparedness as an institution and as a community.

Our work in 2024 will remain attuned to external challenges and opportunities. Global crises, an unpredictable financial landscape coupled with a high cost of living, and the exponential growth in AI-driven technologies are just some of the realities that remind us how deeply the University is connected to—and impacted by—the wider world. We remain committed to supporting our community through these challenges.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

- *Annual Report: 2023 People Strategy, Equity and Culture*



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

PEOPLE STRATEGY, EQUITY & CULTURE REPORT

2023



STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL LAND

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.



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Kelly Hannah-Moffat
Vice-President, People Strategy,
Equity & Culture

WELCOME FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT, PEOPLE STRATEGY, EQUITY & CULTURE

Since embracing the divisional name “People Strategy, Equity & Culture (PSEC)” two years ago, we have moved more decisively in our work from a “transactional and reactional” approach to a “strategic and proactive” approach informed by community collaboration and consultation. The necessity of this shift became abundantly clear in 2023 as external events, both local and global—including the attack at the University of Waterloo and war in the Middle East—deeply impacted our community and challenged everyone to work collectively to build more inclusive spaces and supports.

Within this context, PSEC concluded a long-term project to develop Divisional principles.

These principles form the headers for the first four sections of this year’s PSEC Report. Our fifth principle, “Think creatively,” has been replaced by “Be prepared” with the recognition that creativity (thinking about our work differently and looking for opportunities to innovate and improve) underlies all that we do.

We understand these principles to be “connective tissue” that joins and supports the incredible variation within PSEC’s teams and roles. For a Division that embraces everything from labour relations to safety and emergency preparedness, equity to human resources, compensation to benefits and pensions, these principles give us the cohesion we need to serve our community most effectively. Moreover, returning to these principles when faced with challenging situations and decisions will continue to be a useful approach as we plan, act, and adapt in the months to come.

We value our many roles in the U of T community and remain committed to working across our campuses to provide excellent service, to promote vital discussions, and to encourage mutual respect. I thank everyone who has collaborated with us on this journey to date.

Kelly Hannah-Moffat
Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity & Culture

Image above: Kelly Hannah-Moffat photo by Moussa Faddoul.

INVEST IN PEOPLE

Training is an important way our Division invests in people. Through learning, we can enrich how we work together at the University.

In 2023 we created opportunities to support our employees through innovative programs that expanded their personal and professional development.



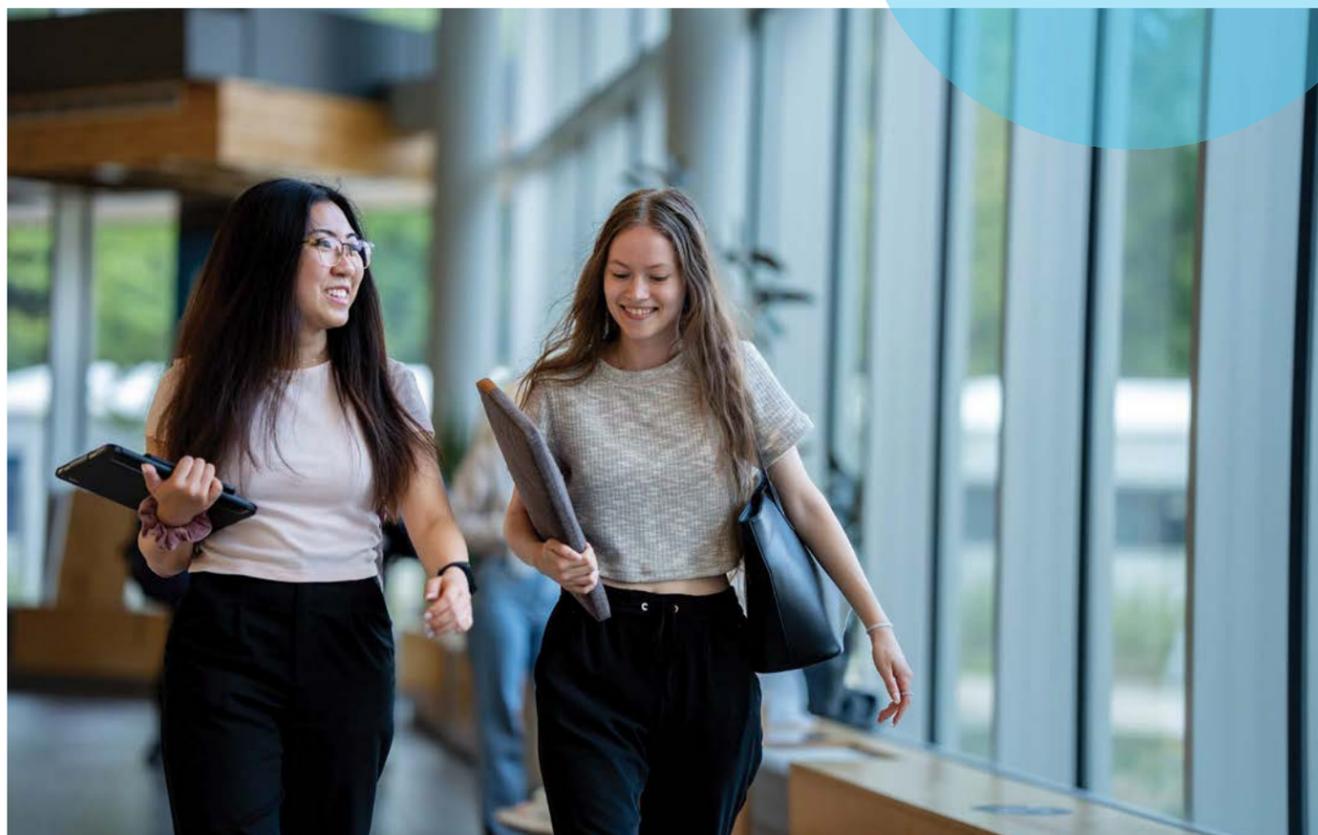


Image: Two people walk down a hallway in Highland Hall, U of T Scarborough. Photo by Matthew Dochstader.

REDEFINING LEADERSHIP

The Centre for Learning, Leadership & Culture (LLC) piloted the year-long People Leadership Program in 2023 with an ambitious goal: to advance a new model of leadership at the University. This model focuses on the concept of “people leadership,” which puts humanity, compassion, and respect at the forefront of a leader’s words and actions. It recognizes that team members will be motivated to stay and contribute to a workplace where they feel they can trust their leader and where their own identity and lived experience are affirmed.

Over nine months, 24 staff members from across the University participated in skill-building workshops and engaged in self-reflection and discussion.

The program concluded with three months of group coaching. An additional session involved leaders’ own direct reports, supporting the notion that teams and leaders are “partners” in creating a more positive work environment—and more meaningful work experience—for everyone.

Leader assessments completed before and after the pilot affirmed the program’s positive impact. Direct reports scored their leaders an average of 37% higher across all criteria—which included the leader’s ability to support trust, belonging, and diversity; to foster well-being and empathy; to develop and engage the team; and to collaborate with the team—after the leader had completed the program. The LLC will build on this success when the People Leadership Program officially launches in January 2024.

BUILDING DIVERSE TEAMS

The Talent Management team worked closely with Divisional HR Offices to train managers on how to conduct “inclusive recruitment” at U of T. This approach supports the goal of fostering campus communities that reflect the diversity of the GTA. Managers learned how to use various tools such as LinkedIn to reach a broader applicant pool for their job postings. A newly expanded directory within PSEC’s [Diversity in Recruitment Manual for Managers](#) will support these efforts by identifying Black, Asian, and Indigenous recruitment partners who can work with managers in their searches.

The Talent Management team augmented these efforts by sharing information about job opportunities and advising on different career paths at diverse job fairs and other community events around the GTA. Reaching over 2,000 candidates, these events included the Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention, Trans Power Job Fair, Employment Connections Toronto, Fred Victor Job Fair, and the Administrative Professionals Conference.

SUPPORTING LIFELONG LEARNING, ADVANCING RECONCILIATION

The Office of Indigenous Initiatives (OII) piloted a highly successful Indigenous Book Club, engaging 12 members—faculty and staff from across the University—in a discussion of *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada* (2015) by Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker. This book supported the Club’s aim of challenging non-Indigenous understandings of colonialism and its impacts, historical and ongoing, on Indigenous Peoples. Through dialogue with each other and two facilitators from the OII, the group explored both individual connections to the system of settler colonialism and how this system persists in Canada today. Participants shared that it was a very useful experience and framework for viewing Indigenous issues and for considering their own potential actions to address colonialism. Based on its success, the Indigenous Book Club will officially launch in the 2024-25 academic year.



Image: Students work at a table in the William G. Davis Building, U of T Scarborough. Photo by Moussa Faddoul.

FOSTER AN INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE OF BELONGING

Being attentive to how our community members experience the University keeps “belonging” at the forefront of our Division’s work. It urges us to consider barriers to defining—and achieving—success on one’s own terms and to affirm the breadth of identities in our community.

In 2023, this approach informed wide-ranging efforts across our Division.

DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE RESOURCES AND SPACES

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Office developed resources to support our community’s understanding and application of Universal Design. Universal Design principles emphasize the need to make everything we create and do usable by all members of our community, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The course “[Universal Design 101](#)” officially entered our roster of regular employee trainings and a new [Universal Design Inclusive Employer Guide](#) launched to the community on this year’s International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

An additional resource, a new [Alt Text Guide](#) produced in collaboration with PSEC Communications, shares practical advice on how to make communications as accessible as possible. Collecting feedback on these resources as our community uses them will be crucial to ensuring they remain relevant and effective. More information about efforts to make our University more inclusive to members of our community who identify as having evident and/or non-evident disabilities can be found in the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\) Report 2023](#).

The Institutional Equity Office worked with partners across our three campuses to create inclusive programming and spaces this year. The Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office (ARCDO) continued their focused [Reflect. Restore. Action. series](#), which aims to address, through restorative activities, the impacts of racism and other forms of discrimination experienced by employee and student members of our community. Responsive sessions explored restoration for Jewish students and employees; rest and community care for Black students and employees; a creative writing workshop for Muslim students; community in-person African drumming workshops for faculty, staff, and students across

the tri-campus; restorative art therapy for Asian students and employees; and a contemplative movement session for the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

Experts at and beyond the University engaged with our community on the many ways that racism can intersect with other forms of discrimination. On the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (IDERD), speakers from the University of Toronto, Halton District School Board, and the Mosaic Institute highlighted connections between racism and faith-based discrimination at the event, “[Deepening Knowledge and Building Strategies: Faith, Anti-Racism and EDI](#),” hosted by ARCDO. Participants discussed how to bring this awareness to their own advocacy efforts, and build synergies between anti-racism, faith-based, and EDI initiatives and resources.

The [Inclusion in Action Speaker Series](#) (a collaboration between the Institutional Equity Office and UTM Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Office) provided space for challenging discussions, exploring topics such as living beyond the gender binary, understanding Black disability justice, and examining environmental racism and climate change. Led by the Sexual & Gender Diversity Office, the fourth annual [Angela Hildyard Symposium](#) gathered more than 150 emerging and established leaders from across the University of Toronto to consider strategies to better support 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion and belonging within post-secondary environments.

More information about these and other efforts to make our University more inclusive can be found in the [Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Report 2023](#).

Image above: Lee Airton speaks at the Angela Hildyard Leadership Symposium. Photo by Justin Anantawan.

Images p.8: (Top) Progress Pride Flag raising. Photo by Polina Teif. (Bottom) Inioluwa Deborah Raji speaks at IDERD. Photo by Luke Ng.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTION, LEARNING, AND OUTREACH

The Office of Indigenous Initiatives partnered with the U of T Bookstore on an initiative to showcase the talent of Indigenous U of T students and inspire the non-Indigenous community to continue learning and action around reconciliation. The 2023 Orange Shirt Day Campaign invited Indigenous U of T students to submit designs for an “Every Child Matters” T-shirt to be produced in recognition of Orange Shirt Day on September 30, 2023. In the words of artist MJ Singleton, an Ojibwe, two-spirit UTM student from Migisi Sahgaigan First Nation, their winning design expressed “The importance of being able to heal the trauma of residential school by supporting and loving those around you.” To date, sales from the T-shirts featuring MJ’s artwork have raised over \$34,000 for the Orange Shirt Day Society, which supports reconciliation events and activities.

ENHANCING HOW WE CELEBRATE EMPLOYEES

In 2023 we significantly enhanced our employee recognition program to strengthen a culture of appreciation across our three campuses. This Spring marked the inaugural presentation of the Exemplary U of T Ambassador Awards, which recognize outstanding performance, dedication, and service to the University. The University’s Long Service Awards program doubled in size to recognize six service milestones: 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, and 50 years. This expansion ensures multiple opportunities to recognize the invaluable contributions of long-serving employees in all roles.

True Blue, our University-wide employee recognition platform, served more community members than ever before. The platform hosted 57% more recognition messages than 2022 and accepted an 86% increase in nominations for 13 award programs managed or supported by our Division. This year’s exponential growth in overall award nominations—an increase of 152% over 2022—affirms both the high calibre of our employees and our community’s motivation to recognize excellence.



CREATING INCLUSIVE FOUNDATIONS

We laid the groundwork for mutual respect within our work environments by continuing to ensure that new and renewed collective agreements supported institutional goals around equity, diversity, and inclusion. Working with chief administrative officers, directors, academics, and HR professionals, our Labour Relations team strengthened harassment, discrimination, and employment equity provisions in various collective agreements, ensured agreements incorporated the institutional Land Acknowledgement, and included language that supports gender diversity and expression and the integration of lived experience into hiring criteria. A major round of negotiations with the United Steelworkers (USW) union—covering more than 5,800 University employees—successfully concluded in 2023, and a further eight collective agreements were renewed.

In turn, we ensured the University’s physical foundations—the infrastructure and facilities across our three campuses—will meet the highest standards of accessibility by completing an intensive collaboration to develop the University’s [Facility Accessibility Design Standard \(FADS\)](#). The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Office collaborated with Facilities & Services (F&S) and other University representatives in a tri-campus Technical Working Group on this longstanding initiative, which supports U of T’s commitment to create inclusive and barrier-free environments for all members of the University. Future updates to the FADS will be made as needed in consultation with members of our community with lived experience of disability.

PREPARING OUR COMMUNITY FOR CHANGE

Employee Central, a multi-year initiative conducted in partnership with Enterprise Applications and Solutions Integration, will replace the core HR information system that currently houses all employment information and will integrate with various modules within SuccessFactors (such as recruitment, performance and goals, and learning). To prepare our community for this significant digital transformation, the Division and tri-campus HR Offices engaged in a series of comprehensive process design sessions led by Deloitte. These sessions explored how to streamline functionality in the new system and to support employees as they navigate an unfamiliar digital experience. By keeping our community’s experience top of mind, we aim to help employees better adapt to—and benefit from—the upcoming changes.



Image: Ayeza Ahmad, Alexandra Gillespie, and David Kim wearing orange shirts designed by MJ Singleton, seated next to Rose Patten at The National Day of Truth and Reconciliation event at Hart House, U of T St. George. Photo by David Lee.

Image above: Angela Hildyard Leadership Symposium; Tara Goldstein, Lance T. McCready, Fae Johnstone, and Seán Kinsella. Photo by Justin Anantawan.

BE GUIDED BY OUR COMMUNITY

Our Division exists to serve and support those who work and learn at the University. Establishing formal vehicles to seek guidance from our community focuses our efforts and deepens our impact.

In 2023, institutional reports provided critical direction for activities in our Division.



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DRAWING ON COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

The Final Report of the University of Toronto Anti-Asian Racism Working Group, commissioned by the President, Vice-President & Provost, and Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity & Culture, provided [40 recommendations](#) to address anti-Asian racism on our three campuses and better support Asian-identifying students, librarians, staff, and faculty. These recommendations drew upon research and extensive tri-campus feedback about the often invisible nature of anti-Asian racism and its wide-ranging impacts on the personal, academic, and professional journeys of Asian-identifying individuals at U of T.

Acting Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity & Culture Heather Boon opened the entrustment ceremony in which University leadership formally accepted all recommendations from the Report. In 2023, PSEC made progress on five of these recommendations, ranging from updating organizational competencies for the Performance Assessment process for all eligible staff to offering culturally relevant services through a new Employee and Family Assistance Provider, TELUS Health. Additional information can be found on the [Institutional Equity Commitments website](#).

The Sexual Violence Prevention & Support (SVPS) Centre took meaningful action to improve the inclusivity of its support services and educational offerings, guided by feedback gathered from nearly 700 participants as part of the [2022 Review of the Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) (Rec. 4 and 5). The SVPS Centre team maintained their commitment to providing accessible support and education, both virtually and in person. Additionally, they updated many of the Centre's existing offerings with inclusivity in mind (such as "Addressing Sexual and Racial Harassment in the Workplace," refreshed with the support of ARCD0)

and expanded their capacity to research, design, and launch new offerings by hiring a Curriculum Development & Training Coordinator. The team continued to offer regular community-building spaces for survivors and their allies to read, share, and decompress with their peers and hosted one-off workshops on a range of topics, including how to create and maintain healthy boundaries and how to engage in radical self-care.

Similarly, the University made progress in "increasing institutional accountability through robust annual institutional reporting at a senior level on sexual violence and sexual harassment," another recommendation from the 2022 Review (Rec. 2). New metrics received leadership approval after intensive consultation. A transitional report with existing metrics for the 2022-23 reporting period has been released, with plans to share a more fulsome report with the new, approved metrics in Fall 2024.

The Vice-President, PSEC and Vice-Provost, Students [released phase 2 of the administrative response](#) to community-driven recommendations on how to improve institutional responses to students experiencing mental health crises. The response, which contained updates from the respective Campus Safety team on each campus, identified progress in joint training, the expansion of training on mental health and EDI competencies, collaboration with Health and Wellness Services on each campus, and key hires to build the responsive capacity of Campus Safety teams. Progress will continue to be shared on the [PSEC website](#) and in annual reports of each Campus Safety unit.



Image above: President Meric Gertler and Professor Carol Chin at the entrustment of the Anti-Asian Racism Working Group's (AARWG) final report. Photo by Polina Teif. Images p.12: (Top) Indigenous Centre logo on a wayfinding sign at U of T Mississauga. Photo by Moussa Faddoul. (Bottom) The All-Nations Powwow at U of T Mississauga. Photo by Nick Iwanyszyn.



EXPANDING EFFORTS TO MAKE U OF T MORE ACCESSIBLE TO INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

A collaboration involving the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, members of Indigenous communities at and beyond U of T, and University administration created a new Indigenous Tuition Initiative. The U of T Indigenous Tuition Grant, launched in October 2023, covers the cost of tuition in eligible undergraduate and graduate programs (including professional programs) for students from nine First Nations communities whose territories include or are adjacent to U of T's campuses. Two additional programs enable eligible Indigenous applicants from the rest of Canada and Native American/Alaska Native applicants from the continental United States to pay domestic tuition rates. Together, the programs advance U of T's commitment to increase access, funding, and support services to Indigenous students, as outlined in the University's 34 Calls to Action in [Answering the Call: Wecheehetowin](#). Moreover, they foster and strengthen relationships between U of T and Indigenous communities in Ontario, across Canada, and in the United States.

REIMAGINING TOOLS TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY BETTER

In early 2023 we launched a revised [Employment Equity Survey](#) to all employees based on feedback from the Equity Survey Advisory Group, whose members collectively held wide-ranging experience working with, or being an end-user of, equity data. Survey revisions included new questions on religious or spiritual affiliation, Indigenous identity, gender identity and sexual orientation, updated language around evident and non-evident disabilities, and an updated and consolidated approach to questions on Racial/Ethnocultural Identity. These changes better aligned the Employment Equity Survey with the U of T Student Equity Census and marked an important milestone in responding to recommendations in the Final Report of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force. Ongoing work to improve data collection and governance will support a more accurate understanding of our employees' identities and needs and will help guide decision-making in academic and administrative units across our three campuses.

PSEC marked another significant milestone by launching, in partnership with the President's Office and Office of the Vice-President & Provost, a reimagined space to communicate and track our collective progress on recommendations from equity-related Reports. The new [Institutional Equity Commitments website](#) (formerly known as the Commitments Dashboard) relied heavily on community feedback for its transformation. It now offers new functionality, such as the ability to filter the entire page by specific Report. Its content has been significantly enriched to include featured stories, progress snapshots, and status updates on the Report recommendations. To date, the site reflects comprehensive updates on work supporting the recommendations of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force and Antisemitism Working Group. Substantial updates reflecting work to implement recommendations of the Anti-Asian Racism Working Group will be added in early 2024.

PRIORITIZE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

Workplace wellness has many dimensions and requires ongoing effort across our Division to nurture and maintain.

In 2023 we prioritized employee wellness by expanding benefits for many employees, developing wellness programming, creating protocols, and improving services that support a healthy workplace culture.





SUPPORTING PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

The Benefits, Pension & Payroll team managed the implementation of substantial benefits enhancements resulting from the renewal of several collective agreements. Plan maximums increased across various areas, including hearing care, mental health services, paramedical practitioners, vision, and dental care. Coverage for prescription drug dispensing fees also expanded.

Meanwhile, the Health and Well-being team expanded efforts to promote employee wellness by adding a second Healthy Workplace Challenge to their annual roster of programming. The 10,000 Steps Challenge, offered in May, encouraged employees to get outside and enjoy the warmer weather. The October challenge, coinciding with Canada's Healthy Workplace Month, invited employees to log activities ranging from seated meditation to [LIFT session workouts](#). Combined, the two initiatives engaged more than 1,400 employees with diverse fitness levels and degrees of physical mobility. In post-challenge surveys, 84% of respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that the May challenge supported team morale and engagement. Ninety-seven percent of respondents felt exercise during the October challenge helped them stay productive at work—an 8% rise over 2022.

CREATE CONSISTENT AND COMPASSIONATE FRAMEWORKS

A joint initiative between the Community Safety Office, Workplace Investigations Office, Central Administration HR Services, and the Office of Safety and High Risk developed a protocol to manage disclosures of intimate partner violence in the workplace. The protocol advises on procedures for intake, assessment, notifications and case management, special considerations and supports, reassessment triggers, and standardized templates. Following this protocol will support a compassionate, coordinated, and consistent response to impacted community members across our campuses.

In turn, the Family Care Office (FCO) deepened its commitment to supporting family status accommodation, which recognizes the duty to accommodate based on caregiving responsibilities. Work is underway to create a "Family Status" definition for posting on the FCO website. In the meantime, the FCO continued to meet with students, faculty, librarians, and staff with diverse caregiving concerns to review all possible options—such as childcare, caregiver leave, and/or a temporary flexible work or academic schedule. In all its consultations, the FCO maintained an inclusive approach to family, recognizing that our tri-campus community has different caregiving needs at different life stages and encompasses a broad range of identities and lived experiences.

APPLYING AN INCLUSIVE MINDSET

The Workplace Investigations (WPI) Office intensified efforts to embed the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion across the spectrum of their services, including investigations, restoration, informal resolution, and workplace climate and culture reviews. As part of this work, they conducted specialized training sessions to enhance the complaint intake process with a trauma-informed, anti-oppression approach, focusing on issues such as antisemitism and anti-Black racism. In addition to these sessions, WPI provided U of T's Human Resources community with comprehensive and proactive training on workplace investigations. This training emphasized the importance of creating inclusive work environments to nurture a healthy workplace culture.



Image above: Students in the William G. Davis Building, U of T Scarborough. Photo by Matthew Dochstader. Images p.15-16: Robarts Library Reflection Room (p.15), and Robarts Library exterior stairs (p.16). Photos by Moussa Faddoul.

BE PREPARED

Being prepared is a state of mind and a state of action. It means anticipating needs, constantly assessing risk, and developing responsive solutions.

In 2023 we improved and expanded safety tools, resources, and supports to enhance our preparedness as an institution and as a community.



DEVELOPING A ROBUST SAFETY TOOLKIT

The Office of Safety and High Risk (OSHR) partnered with the Office of the Vice-President & Provost, Procurement Services, Enterprise Applications and Solutions Integration, and University of Toronto Communications to upgrade [UTAlert](#), the University's mass notification system for emergency alerts, notices of building evacuations, and snow closures. Upgrades improve delivery rates and enable our community to manage their notification preferences, including multi-campus alerts.

To support this work, OSHR established a University-wide protocol to streamline how mass notifications are deployed during a developing crisis or emergency and collaborated with tri-campus partners to identify where—and how—shelter points can be used during large-scale emergencies. They also heightened efforts to raise community awareness of the [U of T Campus Safety app](#), which

enables live chat with Campus Safety and includes such features as TravelSafer (for monitoring routes on campus), Mobile Bluelight (which sends on-campus locations to the Campus Safety team), and Friend Walk (assisting users anywhere in the world).

The enhanced [preparedness.utoronto.ca](#) website—launched in October following extensive consultation with the Office of the Vice-President & Provost—compiles these and many more safety resources. The site provides our community with clear pathways to access emergency contacts and detailed information about how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a range of emergency scenarios.

OSHR deepened our institutional preparedness by piloting an initiative to familiarize senior leaders with the University's Crisis Framework. This pilot initiates an annual cycle of training to support emergency preparedness across our three campuses.

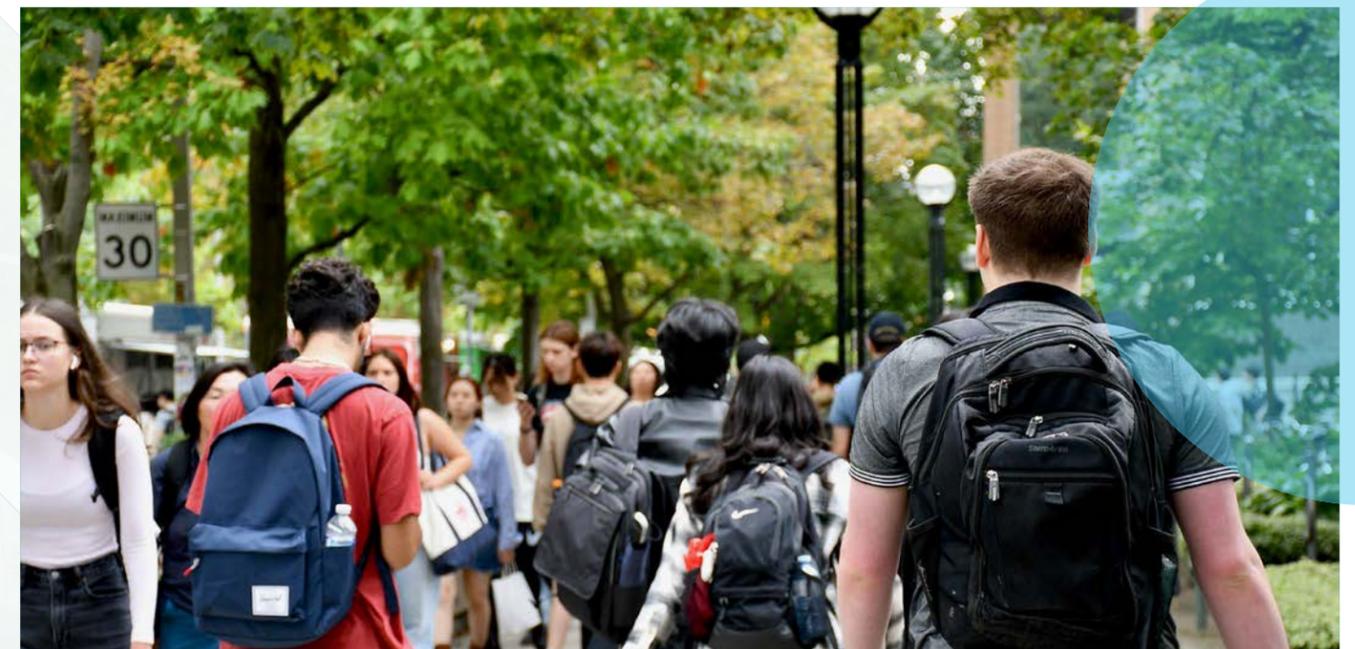


Image above: People walking on St. George Street, U of T St. George. Photo by Diana Tyszko.
Images p.18: (Top) A campus emergency phone on the Valley Land Trail at U of T Scarborough. Photo by Moussa Faddoul. (Bottom) The sky over U of T Scarborough. Photo by Matthew Dochstader.



Image: Inside Robarts Library, U of T St. George. Photo by Moussa Faddoul.

EXPANDING SUPPORTS AT AND BEYOND U OF T

An additional pilot at the Women and Gender Studies Institute enabled OSHR, in collaboration with tri-campus Campus Safety teams, the Institutional Equity Office, and others, to create a support program for academic units with high-risk safety concerns. The program is organized around five pillars (ongoing assessment, preparedness initiatives, monitoring, training offerings, and support services), any or all of which can be activated as needed. The program's collaborative structure is its strength, ensuring units can receive timely and responsive support from subject matter experts. Plans are underway to expand the program to other units next year.

Meanwhile, OSHR achieved the goal of establishing a Critical Incident Response Team in Fall 2023. Now ready to deploy during an institution-wide crisis,

this diverse group of mental health professionals has the capacity to provide timely trauma-informed support to those who need it.

We continued to share expertise and information with peer institutions across Canada to broaden our impact outside the University. This Fall, OSHR hosted a one-day symposium—attended by student service professionals from Ontario post-secondary institutions—to discuss strategies to better support international students. Moreover, in partnership with the Ontario Association of College and University Security Administrators, OSHR successfully piloted a platform to share resources and expertise. The platform will engage administrators nationwide in 2024.

Images p.21: (Top) Clouds drifting over U of T Scarborough. (Bottom) A student using a computer at U of T Scarborough. Photos by Ken Jones.

2024 & BEYOND

In 2024, we will remain attuned to external challenges and opportunities. Global crises, an unpredictable financial landscape coupled with a high cost of living, and exponential growth in AI-driven technologies are just some of the realities that remind us how deeply the University is connected to—and impacted by—the wider world.

Our efforts in the coming year will focus on the following themes:

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH GLOBAL AND LOCAL CHALLENGES

We will enhance strategies to address forms of discrimination identified in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, including ancestry, citizenship, creed, disability, ethnic origin, gender expression, gender identity, place of origin, race, and sex, and will redouble efforts to deepen awareness and understanding of the interconnections between racism and faith-based discrimination. Community check-ins with academic units, Faculties, campuses, and student groups will be vital to this work, ensuring that supports, services, and training meet the needs of our diverse community. The inaugural Assistant Director, Faith and Anti-Racism will play a pivotal role in realizing and promoting these efforts. Moreover, through extensive community consultation, the Assistant Director and Executive Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will develop a preliminary Faith and Anti-Racism Framework for the University. The Institutional Equity Office will lead additional consultations to review the University's Statement on Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment and related policies.



Image: Pardeep Singh Nagra, Hiren Mistry, Dr. Umberin Najeeb speak at a U of T event marking the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (IDERD) 2023. Photo by Polina Teif.

EMBRACING STRATEGIES AND TECHNOLOGIES TO INCREASE OUR EFFICIENCY

Across our Division, we will seek opportunities to increase the efficiency of our operations, processes, and systems. This comprehensive approach will take many forms. For instance, we will launch a review of our Division's payroll-related activities, identifying where we can streamline workflows, eliminate duplicated effort, and automate tasks that currently prevent staff from focusing on more expertise-driven work. Additionally, we will mindfully embrace technologies of the future such as AI, keeping accessibility a priority in our decision-making and ensuring these decisions support the aims of our draft Institutional Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. In all our efforts, we will be prudent with our resources, recognizing that operational excellence can still be achieved in a time of local and global financial challenges.

ASSESSING AND IMPROVING OUR PATHWAYS TO WELLNESS AND SAFETY

The work of our tri-campus Wellness Review Committee will sharpen our Division's focus on how to improve supports for employees across the many dimensions of health. This Committee will conduct extensive consultations with staff, faculty members, and librarians about existing wellness services and programming and will consider a broad range of factors, such as the impact of employee mental health on job satisfaction, performance, and engagement.

In tandem with this work, we will support the continued implementation of recommendations to better equip tri-campus Campus Safety teams with the training and knowledge to respond effectively to students in mental health crises. We will also enhance our current strategies to address incivility, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace.

The Office of Safety and High Risk (OSHR) team will in turn expand their services and supports to Faculties, departments, and units with specific high-risk safety concerns. OSHR will additionally launch an Emergency Preparedness Review to strengthen the University's ability to respond to wide-ranging threats to our community's safety. In this way, our institution and our community will be ready to meet the challenges that the larger world presents us, at a more rapid rate than ever before.



Additional Image Credits

Cover: Outside Hart House, UTSG (2023) by David Lee.
p.2: A deer at UTM (2020) by Nick Iwanyszyn; Philosophers's Walk at UTSG (2019) by David Lee; Front campus at UTSG (2023) by Polina Teif.
p.5: UTSG Woodsworth College & Robarts Library (2022) by Moussa Faddoul.
p.14: UTSG Indigenous Graduation (2022) by Johnny Guatto.
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People Strategy, Equity & Culture Report 2023

Office of the Vice-President,
People Strategy, Equity & Culture



PSEC Principles



Invest in People



Foster an Institutional Culture of Belonging



Be Guided by Our Community



Prioritize Employee Wellness



Think Creatively



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Invest in People

Redefining Leadership

- Year-long pilot of the People Leadership Program.
 - Direct reports scored their leaders an average of 37% higher across all criteria – including the leader’s ability to support trust, belonging, and diversity; to foster well-being and empathy; to develop and engage their team; and to collaborate.



Be Guided by Our Community

Drawing on Community Experience and Expertise

- Accepted all 40 recommendations to address anti-Asian racism on our three campuses.



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Prioritize Employee Wellness

Create Consistent and Compassionate Frameworks

- Specialized training sessions on the complaint intake process.
- Tri-campus protocol to manage disclosures of intimate partner violence in the workplace.



Be Prepared

Developing a Robust Safety Toolkit

- Partnered to upgrade UAlert, the University's mass notification system.
- Enhanced the University's preparedness website.
- Established Critical Response Team.
- Piloted support program for units with high-risk safety concerns.



2024 & Beyond

- Supporting our community through global and local challenges.
- Embracing strategies and technologies to increase efficiency.



Questions?

people.utoronto.ca/about/reports



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